Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the second issue of CDI.News for 2007. In this edition, we highlight CDI’s recent Political Party Assistance roundtable, an annual event designed to bring Australian political leaders, policymakers and party secretariats together with international experts to consider issues of political party assistance. This year the event was attended by a range of senior figures including the Australian Foreign Minister, Mr Alexander Downer, and the shadow Foreign Minister, Mr Robert McClelland, and featured a presentation from Mr Ivan Doherty of the National Democratic Institute, based in Washington DC. More information on this event and other recent CDI activities are detailed in the following pages.

CDI’s work combines technical assistance and capacity building programs, networking, and interpersonal and knowledge exchange, including the dissemination of CDI’s original research on democracy and its institutions. Our focus countries comprise Indonesia and Timor-Leste in South East Asia and Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu in Melanesia.

CDI’s central goal is to support these regional focus countries in strengthening their political parties & systems of parliamentary governance.

Accordingly, CDI works to:

- Improve the operation and understanding of parliamentary machinery by members of parliament and parliamentary staff in focus countries
- Strengthen political parties in focus countries through improving the knowledge and skills of members and officials of political parties
- Extend networks in the region between Australian parliamentarians, political party officials, and parliamentary staff and their counterparts from focus countries

CDI’s core budget is provided by AusAID, Australia’s Agency for International Development.

CDI.News will keep you informed periodically of our activities and events, and you can access this information at any time by visiting our website: www.cdi.anu.edu.au.

Benjamin Reilly | CDI Director
CDI's 2007 Political Party Assistance Roundtable

CDI's 2007 Political Party Assistance Roundtable was held at Parliament House Canberra on 21 March on the subject of “Political Party Assistance in New Democracies”, featuring a keynote presentation by Mr Ivan Doherty, Director, Political Party Programs, National Democratic Institute (NDI).

Mr Doherty is the NDI's principal in-house expert on political party development. His presentation to the 2007 Roundtable began by reflecting on the importance of political parties and political party development to the broader challenge of democracy building. While it is now widely accepted that stable democracy requires the development of strong well-organised political parties, there had in the past been resistance to the idea of party assistance because of its overtly 'political' nature and also because aid agencies have tended to be more comfortable dealing with civil society than with parties. Mr Doherty noted that there had been a considerable shift in international opinion in this field over the past decade, with more and more governments and international organisations choosing to include political party strengthening in their development assistance program.

Mr Doherty then moved on to focus on the NDI’s role in assisting political parties, with a detailed discussion of the various approaches to political party assistance in new democracies. He concluded his talk with an endorsement of Australia's increased role in the political party development field through the involvement of the Australian parties in international development activities and CDI’s own political party strengthening program.

The roundtable was an invitation-only event and was attended by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Alexander Downer, the Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Robert McLelland MP, Senator Marise Payne, Dr Andrew Southcott MP, and representatives of the major Australian political parties, the Australian Electoral Commission, and AusAID. The roundtable was chaired by Mr Tony Eggleton AO CVO, chair of the CDI Consultative Council.

Click on the link below to access our website for all the details on this activity:
CDI Sponsors Parliamentary Financial Scrutiny Course

The Public Sector Governance and Accountability Research Centre at La Trobe University held its annual Strengthening Parliament - Parliamentary Financial Scrutiny Course/Study Tour from 11-22 February 2007. Sponsored by the World Bank Institute and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, the course was attended by 38 parliamentarians and senior officials from Ghana, Malawi, Nigeria, Tanzania, Indonesia, Laos, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. The objective is to improve parliamentary oversight through parliaments’ involvement in the budget process.

CDI sponsored a team from Papua New Guinea to participate in the course. The three participants were:

- Mr Mac Pona Kawa, Deputy Auditor-General, Office of the Auditor-General;
- Mr Simon Ila, Acting Deputy Clerk, National Parliament of Papua New Guinea; and
- Mr Charles Aopi, Chief Finance Officer, National Parliament of Papua New Guinea.

CDI Deputy Director, Quinton Clements, attended the course sessions at Beechworth from 14 to 16 February, and CDI also addressed the course participants at the ACT Assembly during their time in Canberra.

Click on this link for all the details on our website: [CDI Visit to Papua New Guinea & Solomon Islands](#)

CDI Visit to Papua New Guinea & Solomon Islands

CDI Deputy Director, Quinton Clements, visited Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands in March. In Port Moresby, Mr Clements met with the Clerk of the National Parliament and other relevant parliamentary officials to discuss CDI’s assistance for the planned induction program for new Members of Parliament following the 2007 national elections. In addition, Mr Clements met with the United Nations Development Programme PNG Country Office as well as a range of other PNG government agencies and non-government organisations to discuss the MP induction program.

Mr Clements also discussed with the Clerk of Parliament other areas for cooperation between CDI and the National Parliament of Papua New Guinea. Such assistance may take the form of training programs and workshops for Members and staff, participation by staff in CDI’s annual parliamentary officials training course in Canberra, possible secondments to other parliaments for staff, and attendance by MPs at CDI sponsored conferences such as the annual Pacific Parliamentary Dialogue. One possible area of cooperation is to have PNG parliamentary officials involved as presenters and facilitators in some of the training workshops CDI organises throughout the region.

At the invitation of the Speaker of the Autonomous Bougainville Government (ABG) House of Representatives, Hon. Nicholas Peniai, Mr Clements also visited Bougainville on this trip to observe the first sitting of the House for 2007. Mr Clements met with the Speaker, the Clerk, and other relevant Members of the House and parliamentary officials to discuss areas for cooperation between CDI and the ABG House of Representatives.

Whilst in PNG, Mr Clements also traveled to Goroka, Eastern Highlands Province, and met with the provincial Governor and others to discuss the possibility of holding the 9th annual CDI Pacific Parliamentary Dialogue in Goroka this year. Finally, Mr Clements visited Solomon Islands, where he met with the Speaker of the National Parliament, the Clerk, and other relevant Members of Parliament and parliamentary officials to discuss areas in which CDI may be able to assist the National Parliament of Solomon Islands.

Further details of this trip will be posted on our website in the near future. Click on this link to access the relevant page:
CDI and the Foreign & Commonwealth Office

CDI hosted a visit in February from Mr Ian Felton, leader of the Pacific and Multilateral Team in the British government’s Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Mr Felton had been visiting the Pacific as part of the FCO’s new strategy for the Pacific. Discussions focussed on ways to strengthen the dialogue between partners to ensure that Britain’s bilateral and EU Pacific programmes complement the work of others. Mr Felton was accompanied by Ms Sally Moody of the British High Commission in Canberra.

With a relatively small diplomatic presence in the region, the British government is particularly looking to work with organisations like CDI, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, the Westminster Foundation for Democracy and other relevant organisations in terms of its democracy promotion work.

Click on this link for more detail:

CDI Book Launched & Nominated for International Prize

CDI Director Ben Reilly’s new book, Democracy & Diversity: Political Engineering in the Asia-Pacific (Oxford University Press, 2006) was launched at the ANU on 6 February 2007, and Oxford University Press have nominated this book for an international scholarly award. Democracy and Diversity has been nominated for the Best Book Award presented by the Comparative Democratization section of the American Political Science Association.

The Comparative Democratization Best Book Award is given for the best single authored, multi-authored, or edited book on comparative democratization published in 2006.

Click on this link for more detail on our website:

The Use and Abuse of Electoral Development Funds in PNG

Electoral Development Funds (often known as “slush” funds) have been a prominent part of representative democracy in Papua New Guinea for a number of decades. The justification for the funds – currently 500,000 kina per MP per year, but with proposals to raise that amount to 1,500,000 kina – is that they allow individual politicians to bypass development bottlenecks and support local projects. However, Electoral Development Funds are often strongly criticised for contributing to corruption, cronyism and non-accountability.

As part of our focus on PNG in 2007, the Centre for Democratic Institutions has commissioned a paper on this issue by Dr Joseph Ketan entitled “The Use and Abuse of Electoral Development (‘Slush’) Funds in Papua New Guinea” which is scheduled to be completed, launched, and available in mid 2007. Dr Ketan is a well known commentator on PNG politics, and was until recently a Visiting Fellow in the Pacific Institute of Advanced Studies in Development and Governance at the University of the South Pacific.

CDI is sponsoring a forum in Port Moresby on the Papua New Guinea elections as part of the ANU’s annual PNG Update program in April which will be chaired by CDI Director Ben Reilly and will include a presentation by Dr Ketan of his forthcoming CDI policy paper.

The Forum will be held at the University of Papua New Guinea on Wednesday 11 April. Following the Forum, Dr Reilly will also travel to Kokopo for the regional dissemination phase of the Update program. Click on this link for more detail on our website:

Click on this link for more detail on our website:
In conjunction with the Department of the House of Representatives, Parliament of Australia, CDI is organising the second Indonesia-Australia Parliamentary Committee Workshop. This workshop follows on from the seminar convened by CDI in July 2005 in Jakarta. That seminar brought together elected representatives and secretariat staff from both parliaments’ foreign affairs committees to discuss the central issues of international law and their implications for domestic politics. The seminar deepened ties between the Indonesian and Australian parliaments by facilitating exchange at the highest levels.

As in 2005, the 2007 Workshop will involve Members and staff of Commission One (Commission on Foreign Affairs, Defence, Communication and Information), of the Indonesian House of Representatives. The Indonesian delegation will be led by Mr Theo L. Sambuaga, Chairman of Commission One, and include Mr Abdillah Toha, Chairman of the Committee for Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation. Members of the Australian Parliament’s committees for Foreign Affairs, Treaties and Intelligence, together with senior staff from the House of Representatives, the Senate and the Parliamentary Research Service, have been invited to participate.

The workshop will be held on Friday 25th May 2007 at Parliament House in Canberra. The theme for the Workshop is ‘Understanding the role of Parliamentary Committees in policy making in Indonesia and Australia’, and the aim is to facilitate discussions by Members of Commission One and Australian Federal parliamentarians with a common interest in foreign policy, trade and security issues. Participants will also take the opportunity to look at aspects of parliamentary practice in our respective parliaments.

Click on this link for more detail:

[Web Page]

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**Toward the Development of International Standards for Democratic Legislatures**

National Democratic Institute

While there have been many international initiatives to define and monitor the democratic character of elections, there have been fewer efforts to define standards for institutions that result from a democratic electoral process. Legislative bodies that fail to perform their representative oversight ultimately erode popular support for the democratic system itself.

This report by NDI is designed to promote discussion within the international community regarding standards for democratic legislatures, thereby helping legislatures become more open, accountable and responsive.

Click here to access the full report:

[Feature Publication]

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**Challenges of Evaluating Democracy Assistance: Perspectives from the Donor Side**

Andrew T. Green & Richard D. Kohl

*Democratization*, Volume 14, Issue 1 February 2007, pages 151 - 165

Abstract:

A large number of multilateral and bilateral donors have become engaged in the area of democracy and governance (DG) assistance over the last 15 years, stimulated by a series of trends and events. Despite the maturation of DG assistance as an important development area and the high profile of democracy promotion as a key foreign policy goal, research on the impact of this assistance and the effectiveness of different types of programming has been limited. Donors are constantly in need of feedback on the effectiveness and impact of their programming in order to
revise programme designs, re-strategize aid portfolios, or address new DG issues. Moreover, legislatures increasingly require government aid agencies to be able to measure the results of their programmes, thereby demonstrating a ‘return on investment’ that would guide future assistance. Quality research is hampered by a daunting political, logistical, and methodological context, however.

In 2005 a donor-sponsored workshop was organized to discuss challenges facing the evaluation and assessment of DG programming and assistance. The purpose of this article is to share insights from the workshop with a wider audience of scholars, practitioners and other policy-makers in the hope that this will stimulate additional research and thinking in this area.

Click on this link for more detail on our web site:

**Democratization**

**CDI Director Writes for the Journal of Democracy**

In the latest issue of the *Journal of Democracy*, the world’s leading journal on democratization, CDI Director Ben Reilly writes on “Political Engineering in the Asia-Pacific” and looks at the experience of political reform in countries such as Indonesia, Thailand, Korea, Taiwan, Fiji and Papua New Guinea. He argues that ambitious reforms to electoral, party and parliamentary systems have been a feature of democratization in the Asia-Pacific region, and that this process has led to a convergence upon a distinctive regional model of institutional design.

Click here to access the article:

**Feature Article**

**Clarification**

In the last issue of CDI News we included an article on the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (IMD). The article included the CDI logo, which may have confused some readers. While we both work cooperatively in the area of political party development in young democracies, CDI and IMD are entirely separate organisations. You can read more about the IMD on their website @ http://www.nimd.org/