Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the 5th issue of CDI.News for 2008. This issue highlights CDI’s new publication on political parties and our cooperation with UN agencies, the WBI, NDI and other organisations working in this field. 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
Recent Activities

CDI Launches Major Study of Party Politics in New Democracies at the United Nations

In the culmination of a three-year international project, CDI’s new study Political Party Development in Conflict-Prone Societies was launched at a special event at the United Nations in New York on 4 September 2008 before an audience of 150 policymakers, diplomats and academics.

Speaking at the launch, Australia’s Ambassador to the United Nations, the Hon Robert Hill, emphasised the key role that parties play in successful democratization, a process supported by successive Australian governments through the work of CDI. He noted that the book was a tangible example of CDI’s work to strengthen democracy in Asia and the Pacific.

The book and associated policy brief was edited by CDI Director Ben Reilly and Dr Per Nordlund, and was produced in cooperation with the International IDEA and the United Nations University (UNU). It looks at the ways in which new democracies can strengthen their party systems by regulating the way parties form, organise and behave.

The book is the first work to analyse the growing trend towards ambitious political party regulation in new democracies, drawing on the comparative experiences from new democracies in Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe, Latin America and the South Pacific. As well as contributing to scholarly knowledge, it also offers guidelines for governments and international organisations seeking to strengthen party systems in developing democracies.

Published by United Nations University Press, the book was also launched in Washington DC at a separate event hosted by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace on 5 September 2008, and will be launched in Australia on October 30 by the Hon Bob McMullan, Australia’s Parliamentary Secretary for International Development Assistance.

Click on this link for more on our website, including purchasing details at UNU Press, along with details of the Australian launch in late October:

Book Launch: New York & Washington

New CDI-WBI ‘e-training’ Course on Parliamentary Financial Scrutiny

The size and complexity of government makes budgeting in the public sector inherently complex. Budget documents can comprise thousands of pages; the format of the budget is not always easily understandable; and thorough analysis can take considerable time. Accordingly, budget scrutiny can be a daunting challenge facing parliamentarians when they are asked to consider the annual revenue and expenditure proposals of the government. From a long-term perspective, the influence of parliaments on budget policy has declined in many countries. It now appears, however, that many parliaments are rethinking their role in the budget process and reasserting themselves as more active players.

In order to make a contribution towards supporting parliamentarians and parliamentary staff to effectively participate in the budget process, CDI launched a new training course on “Effective Financial Scrutiny: The Role of Parliament in Public Finance” in July 2008. The course was designed and developed in partnership with the World Bank Institute (WBI) as part of CDI’s professional development program for parliamentary members and staff.

At the UN Launch in New York (l to r): Hon Robert Hill - Australia’s Ambassador to the UN | Jean-Marc Coicaud - UNU (NY) | Prof Ben Reilly - CDI Director


CDI Deputy Director Quinton Clements presenting via the CDLN facilities at the Crawford School at the Australian National University.

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in our region. The course focused on the following:
- Examining the evolution of parliament’s power of the purse;
- An introduction to the budget;
- The budget process;
- Parliamentary approval of the budget;
- Parliament and the audit of public accounts;
- Opening up the parliamentary process; and
- Strengthening parliamentary involvement.

In a first for CDI and the parliaments we assist, the course was delivered by video-conference and online. Participants attended video-conferencing sites in their respective countries and were linked into the facilitators and presenters in Canberra and Washington DC using the World Bank’s Global Development Learning Network (GDLN). The course ran for four weeks with two sessions per week between 29 July and 21 August 2008. 49 parliamentarians and parliamentary officials from four countries - Papua New Guinea, Kiribati, Fiji and Indonesia – participated in the course.

CDI Deputy Director, Mr Quinton Clements, and Mr Rick Stapenhurst from WBI convened the course. They were joined by a range of presenters including Mr James Brumby of the World Bank, Mr Bill Dorotinsky of the International Monetary Fund, Ms Robyn McClelland and Mr Russell Chafer from the Australian Parliament, Mr Tom Clarke from the Australian National Audit Office and Mr Mitchell O’Brien of WBI.

Click on this link for detail on our website:
CDI at the 2008 Democratic National Convention

At the invitation of the National Democratic Institute (NDI), CDI Director Ben Reilly was one of over 500 international delegates who attended the Democratic National Convention in Denver, USA in August. These included current and former heads of state, cabinet ministers, speakers and members of parliament, and heads of political parties.

The Democratic National Convention is the culmination of the Democratic Party’s primary process which nominated Senator Barack Obama as the party’s presidential candidate.

Prof Reilly attended the convention as part of NDI’s International Leaders Forum, which brought together more than 500 international leaders from over 100 countries to observe the U.S. presidential nomination process firsthand. Participants observed the Democratic National Convention proceedings and took part in a series of bipartisan panel discussions on the U.S. political process, foreign and domestic policy issues, and media coverage of the presidential race.

The program culminated with Senator Obama’s nomination at Invesco Field, Denver before an audience of 80,000 people.

CDI has an ongoing program of cooperation with NDI and its sister organisation The International Republican Institute (IRI). This includes working in-country with both organisations to deliver training programs and technical assistance in CDI focus countries such as Indonesia and Timor-Leste.

Click on this link for further detail on our website:

CDI @ the Democratic Convention

Recent visitors to CDI:

- **Paul Bengo & Sir Kina Bona**
  Paul Bengo, Chairman of the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates Commission and Registrar of Political Parties in Papua New Guinea, visited CDI in July. Mr Bengo was accompanied by Sir Kina Bona, who will be taking up the position of Chairman in early August. CDI has an active program of cooperation with the PNG Party Registrar’s Office, and has trained a number of staff members over recent years. While at ANU, Mr Bengo also gave a talk on the effects of the Organic Law on Political Parties and Candidates on national politics in Papua New Guinea.

- **Secretary-General Kamalesh Sharma**
  Enroute to the Pacific Forum in Niue, Commonwealth Secretary-General Kamalesh Sharma came to Canberra in August for talks with Commonwealth Government ministers and officials. On this visit Mr Sharma also hosted a function for representatives of the Commonwealth Round Table in Australia which was attended by CDI Director Ben Reilly. Mr Sharma and Prof Reilly discussed areas of cooperation including the current situation in Fiji.

Click on this link for more detail on our website:

Special Measures for Women - Pacific Sub-regional Workshop in Port Moresby

CDI’s special adviser on gender Dr Sun-Hee Lee will participate in the sub-regional workshop on special measures for women, organised by the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat in partnership with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), AusAID, UNDP Pacific Centre, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the International Development Law Organisation (IDLO) and UNIFEM. The workshop is on 24-26 September in Port Moresby, and aims to build on the outcomes of the 2006 Rarotonga meeting of women parliamentarians from the Forum Islands countries together with development partners, academics and civil society organisations.

The importance of special measures towards increasing the number of women in parliament was one of the key recommendations of the 2006 workshop, which agreed on the need for a series of sub-regional workshops to raise awareness on special measures vis-à-vis reserved seats and quotas and relevant electoral reforms aimed at improving the representation of women in parliament. The Secretariat commissioned study on barriers to advancing women’s representation in parliaments in the Pacific region will form the basis of the workshop and further discussion.

Over 30 participants from 4 Melanesian countries - Fiji, PNG, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu - and development partners are expected to attend the workshop which will focus on three main issues:

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• Why the Pacific needs special measures for women
• Current and proposed approaches to special measures in the Pacific
• Development of country strategies

It is expected that an outcomes document will be produced at this workshop, and similar workshops for other sub-regional areas of the Pacific are scheduled to take place following this meeting in Port Moresby.

Click here for more details on our website:

Special Measures Workshop

Forthcoming Activities

CDI Assisting Vanuatu Parliament with Induction Program for New MPs

At the invitation of the Speaker of the National Parliament of Vanuatu, Hon. Sam Dan Avock, CDI is supporting the Parliament in organising an induction program for Members following the September 2008 national elections.

The induction is scheduled to run over three days from 30 September 2008 at Parliament House in Port Vila.

CDI is working in partnership on this project with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) through its Fiji Multi Country Office.

CDI Deputy Director, Quinton Clements, and the Hon. Kevin Rozzoli, former Speaker of the NSW Legislative Assembly, are working with the Clerk of Parliament, Mr Lino Bulekuli dit Sacsac, to design the program which will encourage greater understanding of public leadership, the constitutional framework, accountability, transparency and parliamentary oversight among newly elected Members of Parliament in Vanuatu. The program will also raise awareness among participating parliamentarians of key government agencies and constitutional offices by explaining their structures, functions, services, and obligations in relation to leadership and accountability.

Mr Clements and Mr Rozzoli visited Port Vila in August 2008 as part of the planning and preparation of the induction program, and following this event, CDI, again in conjunction with the UNDP, will organise a specialised training workshop for Members of Parliament on the role of parliamentary committees.

Click on this link for more detail on our website:

Vanuatu MP Induction

Women in Politics - A New CDI Training Course | 10 -14 November 2008 | Canberra

CDI’s special adviser on gender Dr Sun-Hee Lee, will convene a CDI train-the-trainer course on "Women in Politics" aimed specifically at the challenges facing intending female politicians in the Pacific region.

Key barriers to women’s political participation in the Pacific have been well identified. These include institutional and attitudinal factors, lack of political party support, socio-economic factors including financial resources, and low levels of women in parliament as role models. Recommendations to address these issues have been made at various forums in the past few years. However, there is a visible gap between remedies and action.

While recognising that addressing these issues will take time, there are clear opportunities for substantive reform in this area. For instance, many countries in the Pacific have constitutional provisions for actively promoting non discrimination. A few countries even have special legislative measures in place to promote women’s political participation. Pacific leaders themselves have committed to enhance women’s representation, as outlined in the Pacific Plan, the Platform for Action (2005-2015) and CEDAW.

CDI’s Women in Politics course in November 2008 is designed to up-skill participants on key issues facing women in politics, special measures for increasing the number of women in parliament, influencing, lobbying, the use of information, resource mobilisation, and networking. Participants of the workshop will be strongly encouraged to take an active role in additional country level workshops

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Islamist Parties and Democracy

The symposium "Islamist Parties and Democracy" in the latest issue of the Journal of Democracy explores the rise of Islamist parties and its implication for the future of democracy in the Middle East including the following articles:

- **Islamist Parties and Democracy: Going Back to the Origins**
  By Husain Haqqani & Hillel Fradkin

  On Islamist’s own original terms, the very existence of Islamist parties is a paradox. Do such parties thus represent a decisive break with the Islamist past that may portend revisions in other areas of Islamist doctrine as well?

- **Islamist Parties and Democracy: Three Kinds of Movements**
  By Tamara Cofman Wittes

  The usual division of Islamists into “moderate” and “extremist” categories is less helpful than a threefold classification that suggests a distinct policy approach toward each group.

Click on this link to access these two articles and much more at the Journal of Democracy website: