

EDITORIAL

The empowerment and advancement of women

On the surface, 2010 may look like a good year for women in democratic political systems around the world. At the same time, headline-grabbing achievements of women attaining executive power mask a global reality of lack of representation of women in political life and the exclusion of women from democratic decision-making processes.



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Vidar Helgesen speaks in Botswana

By Vidar Helgesen, Secretary-General

FOCUS: Travelling the road towards the empowerment and advancement of women



Photo ©: Beau Lark/Scanpix

International Women's Day 2010

Posted: March 5, 2010

International IDEA pays tribute to women of the world on International Women's Day (8th March) with the theme this year being *Travelling the road towards the empowerment and advancement of women*.

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OTHER GENDER NEWS

New IDEA Board Member Margot Wallström says, "UN resolutions lack teeth"

Posted: February 20, 2010

International IDEA's new board member, Margot Wallström, paid a visit to the Institute's headquarters in Stockholm on 17 February 2010 and spent time getting to know the staff and programmes. Margot Wallström is also the newly-appointed Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Sexual Violence and Conflict. She is a member of the Council of Women World Leaders, and has most recently served as a European Commissioner for 10 years. We took the opportunity to interview her for this newsletter.

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Gender quotas: getting the numbers and balance right!

Posted: March 5, 2010

On 8 March 2010, International IDEA's Office of the Permanent Observer to the UN is hosting a panel discussion to mark International Women's Day at UN headquarters for the launch of the revamped *Global Database of Quotas for Women*.

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Laura Chinchilla: first female President in Costa Rica

Posted: February 15, 2010

Costa Rica will have its first female President Laura Chinchilla Miranda, from the ruling party Liberación Nacional (PLN), previously the First Vice-President of the government of Oscar Arias. She was elected on 7 February 2010 in exemplary and peaceful elections.

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Politics and parties: without equality, far from parity

Posted: March 5, 2010

The new decade begins with the election of another woman president. Laura Chinchilla, candidate for the Partido Liberación Nacional, became chief executive of Costa Rica with 46.8 percent of the vote. In Chile, meanwhile, Michelle Bachelet is ending her term with an approval rating of 83 percent. Their stories are no longer mere anecdotes, but are charting a new course for women in Latin American politics.

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Sudan: training female candidates

Posted: February 22, 2010

240 female candidates from six political parties in Sudan received training in campaigning skills and the management of election campaigns at a series of workshops in February 2010.

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Nepali women participate more fully

Posted: February 25, 2010

The Constituent Assembly Women's Caucus in Nepal has been actively working to ensure that women's issues become entrenched across all avenues of the Constituent Assembly's work. To this end, the caucus recently held workshops on the electoral system and quota provisions, federalism and state restructuring, and inclusion and human rights.

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- **Interview with Pushpa Bhusal**, member of the Constituent Assembly of Nepal, on the current state of the constitution building process
- **Interview with Amrita Thapa Magar**, member of the Constituent Assembly of Nepal, on gender equality

Bolivian women ready for politics: parties still need to be prodded

Posted: February 23, 2010

International IDEA's Bolivia programme is working with a network of women's organizations to mainstream gender equality into all aspects of political life. One notable success was the *Mujeres listas para las listas* (Women Ready for the Ballot) campaign, launched by the Women's Coordinating Committee, which resulted in a legal provision for gender equality on party candidate lists. This measure contributed to an increase in the number of women elected to the Bolivian Senate from 3,7 % (after the 2005 elections) to 41% of senators in 2009.

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Gauging gender media bias in elections

Posted: February 15, 2010

Women who ran for office in Latin American countries have complained about biased – or non-existent – media coverage. A multi-country study sponsored by International IDEA and the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) is taking a closer look at the problem, gathering data that can be used to help improve election coverage.

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Partnership between IDEA and Ombudsman's Office focuses on gender equality

Posted: March 3, 2010

International IDEA has established a partnership with the Peruvian Ombudsman's Office to review the implementation of gender quotas and make recommendations to the National Electoral Jury (Jurado Nacional de Elecciones), as well as to train Ombudsman's Office staff and journalists about gender discrimination in electoral campaigns.

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The EU, gender and democracy building

Posted: February 15, 2010

The EU's policies and actions abroad automatically impact on the gender aspects of democracy building. This article summarizes the gender-related findings of the International IDEA project "Democracy in Development – global consultations on the EU's role in democracy building." Consultations revealed that partners perceived EU intentions on gender to be vague and unclear: the EU was seen to have had little impact in this area.

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NEW PUBLICATIONS

Women in Parliament: Beyond Numbers. A Revised Edition. (Nepali)



Examines the obstacles confronted by women when entering politics and presents a range of solutions, such as changing electoral systems and introducing quotas. It also provides strategies for women to influence politics once elected to parliament.

» [Read more](#)

Making Presidentialism Work (Spanish/English)



Deepens the understanding of the role played by presidential systems in democracies and democratization processes. It explores the specific characteristics of the presidential systems' institutional design that allow these systems to provide greater stability and/or more efficient governments that favor the most poor.

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Party Caucuses, Party Discipline and Professional Performance in the Peruvian Legislature (Spanish)



Studies the internal dynamic of congressional groups and identifies their strengths and weaknesses and provides a base from which steps toward reform and strengthening can be taken.

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International IDEA's Publications Catalogue 2010



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NEWSFLASH

Strengthening relations between Andean Countries and the United States Posted: March 5, 2010

Responding to a joint initiative of the Carter Center and International IDEA to strengthen cooperation relations between the Andean countries and the United States, approximately forty citizens of these countries met in Atlanta on 23 and 24 February.

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