



## **Democracy Round Table 2008 to begin today**

*“The conference intends to discuss the intricate relationship between democracy and development in this era of globalization”*

*New Delhi, 17 June, 2008:* With an aim to deepen the political debate around the roles of political society and the international community the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA); an intergovernmental organization based in Stockholm, Sweden, is organizing the “Democracy Round Table 2008” on 17 and 18 June 2008 in conjunction with ***The Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS)***. The theme of the Round Table is ***“Democracy and Development”***. The Round Table will bring together eminent scholars, researchers and senior policy makers from different parts of the world to discuss the intricate relationship between democracy and development in this era of globalization.

The two-day Round Table will discuss the impact of globalization on democracy as an opportunity for building more open democratic societies whose citizens are aware of global issues, but also, as an external force that poses a challenge to established national institutions of democracy. The conference will also talk about a lot of issues including the rising inequalities and decreasing trust in democratic institutions in many parts of the world and also the widespread perceptions that domestic democratic processes are challenged by powerful external influences.

Present on the occasion, Mr Vidar Helgesen, Secretary-General of International IDEA said, “We at International IDEA aim to provide a forum for exchange of ideas and experiences between scholars, policy makers and practitioners involved in all aspects of democratic governance”. On the purpose behind holding this conference in India he further added, “India has emerged as a powerful and significant nation in the world today. Its role in world politics and democratic initiatives in nations has been widely appreciated and respected. The basis of all this success and achievements comes from the fact that India is the largest democracy of the world.”

The Democracy Round Table will include prominent panellists such as **Professor Saskia Sassen** (Columbia University), **Professor Partha Chatterjee** (Centre for the Study of Social Sciences, Kolkata and Columbia University), **Professor Maria Amparo Casar** (Center for Economic Research and Training), **Professor Pranab Bardhan** (University of California, Berkeley), **Dr Gloria Somolekae** (WK Kellogg Foundation), **Professor Larry Diamond** (Stanford University), **Aruna Roy**, social activist and public intellectual, **Dr Jorge Heine** (Wilfrid Laurier University, Vice-President of the International Political Science Association and former Ambassador of Chile to India), **Francois-Xavier De Donnea**, (Member of Parliament) as well as several other academics, parliamentarians and senior government officials.

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#### **About International IDEA:**

With 25 member states from Africa, Asia, Europe, the Americas and Oceania, the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) is the only intergovernmental organization mandated to support democracy worldwide. As an intergovernmental organization, International IDEA relies on its member states for its mandate and political legitimacy, as well as its governance, strategic direction and financing. International IDEA views democracy as a system of governance in which there is popular control over public decision making and decision-makers and equality between citizens in the exercise of that control.

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