

EDITORIAL

Encouraging participation

"Democracy is not about what governments do; it is what people do to make their governments accomplish things for the common good [...]." These words pronounced by Peter Anyang' Nyongo, when he headed the African Association of Political Science in 1991, still resound.



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By Vidar Helgesen, Secretary-General

FOCUS: The state of local democracy in the Arab world



National Conference in Cairo, Egypt, March 2009
Photo ©: IDEA

Assessing the State of Local Democracy in a sensitive environment – by citizens of Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Yemen

Posted: May 19, 2009

For the past twenty years people in the Arab world have been urging their governments to join the new wave of democratization that has been sweeping the world. While not averse to the idea, their leaders have been reluctant simply to import Western models of participation. What was needed were new mechanisms for giving people a voice in keeping with their own local customs and traditions.

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OTHER NEWS

Charting voting patterns in European Parliamentary elections

Posted: May 7, 2009

The forthcoming elections to the European Parliament (4-7 June 2009) will be the first test of civic engagement among its recently enlarged electorate of some half billion people. It will also provide fresh data about voting patterns which will feed into a new section on International IDEA's website.

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Peruvian women safeguard political gender balance

Posted: May 4, 2009

Women in Peru have been taking steps to make sure they are fairly and effectively represented in government. International IDEA has been providing technical assistance to draft a Bill submitted by the Secretary for Women. It was drawn up as part of the debate surrounding the elimination of the Preferential Vote which many feel would jeopardize women's candidacies.

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A leap forward on the equator: Indonesia's 9 April elections

Posted: May 13, 2009

When people of the Indonesian archipelago went to the polls last month (9 April 2009) it was a very different experience from usual. This time the traditional voting method of punching holes on ballots using nails had been replaced by something new.

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BRIDGE to election expertise in Nepal

Posted: April 29, 2009

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Democracy support – where now?

What do you think of International IDEA's and openDemocracy's online discussion forum on the theme **Democracy Support: Where Now?** Help decide its future by completing this **SURVEY**

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Election officials in Nepal have given an enthusiastic response to a training course designed to assist them with voter education and registration. The training took place in five different regions on the eve of a (real) voter registration exercise. It was happening in March 2009 while Nepal was in the midst of political turmoil and also preparing for by-elections.

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Analysis of debate on a Political Reform Act aimed at preventing criminal infiltration in Colombia's upcoming elections

Posted: May 8, 2009

Discussions are taking place in Colombia to try and prevent criminal organizations infiltrating politics during the forthcoming elections. A political reform initiative has already completed six of the eight debates required by Congress. International IDEA has organised further discussions to enable politicians to hear the views of society at large.

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NEW PUBLICATIONS

Assessing the Quality of Democracy: An Overview of the International IDEA Framework (Spanish)

Introduces International IDEA's State of Democracy (SoD) assessment framework, developed for use by local actors in assessing the quality of their democracies and mounting reform agendas. Now available in Spanish.



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Women and politics. The impact of gender quotas in Latin America (Spanish)

Co-published with FLACSO, the purpose of this book is to help close the gap between political practice and academic research regarding the use of gender quotas in Latin America.



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Annual Report 2008 – A record of actions

Highlights International IDEA's objectives and main activities in 2008.



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