



**INTERNATIONAL IDEA**  
Supporting democracy worldwide

# State of Democracy in Asia and the Pacific

Building Resilience in a Pandemic Era

**Old Resilience, New Challenges**

**Canberra, 24 November 2021**

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In Asia and the Pacific, the Covid-19 pandemic tended to exacerbate pre-existing trends in democratic performance, revealing both institutional and societal strengths and weaknesses.

International IDEA will launch its “State of Democracy in Asia and the Pacific: Old Resilience, New Challenges” Report on 24 November. The Report provides incisive and relevant data, analysis and policy guidance on the challenges and opportunities to democratisation in Asia and the Pacific – covering the region from Central Asia to Oceania - and is designed to inform, influence, and help shape the agenda for the future of democracy.

## Event date and location

24 November 2021, Museum of Australian Democracy (MoAD) at the Old Parliament House in Canberra, Australia & Online

## Organizing partners

- International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA)
- Special thanks: The Museum of Australian Democracy (MoAD) at the Old Parliament House

## Description

The pandemic placed considerable stress on democracy across the region by imposing inevitable restrictions on movement and—where governments were sensitive to criticism —also restrictions on freedom of expression.

Already prior to pandemic, we have seen some leaders use the tools of democracy to dismantle it from within. By weakening parliaments, harassing journalists, undermining courts, and limiting the civic space, many democracies are under threat. The most dramatic democratic reversals have taken in place in Hong Kong, Myanmar, and Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, protests across Asia, even in the face of severe risks, and the brutal use of force to repress them, showed that people want to have a say.

Is democracy confronting a temporary setback or is it in decay? What regional and national trends can be identified in the markers of democracy, such as clean elections, effective parliament, media integrity, or social rights and equality?

How are the region’s established and wealthy democracies faring? Why has democracy not served as an antidote to corruption in so many countries of the region? How to build resilience in view of future emergencies?

The Asia and the Pacific: Old Resilience and New Challenges is part of Global State of Democracy report, published every two years, based on Indices providing information on 116 democratic indicators for 165 countries exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. It offers specific policy recommendations to spark new and innovative thinking for policymakers, governments and civil society organizations supporting democracy.

# AGENDA

## 24 NOVEMBER 2021

16:00 – 16:10 AEDT	<p>Welcome to Country</p> <p>Welcome by Daryl Karp, AM, Director of Museum of Australian Democracy (MoAD)</p>
16:10 – 16:20	<p>Opening Remarks</p> <p>Dr Kevin Casas-Zamora. Secretary General, International IDEA</p>
16:20 – 16:25	<p>Special Messages (pre-recorded)</p> <p>Hon. Audrey Tang Digital Minister of Taiwan</p>
16:25 – 16:35	<p>Presentation of State of Democracy Asia and the Pacific Report 2021</p> <p>Leena Rikkila Tamang Regional Director, Asia and the Pacific, International IDEA</p>
16:35 – 17:28	<p>Panel Discussion on State of Democracy in Asia and the Pacific</p> <p>Panelists:</p> <p>Edward Aspinall, PhD Professor, Coral Bell School of Asia and the Pacific, Australian National University</p> <p>Imelda Deinla, PhD Associate Professor, Ateneo School of Government, Philippines</p> <p>Nematullah Bizhan, PhD Lecturer in Public Policy, Australian National University, former government official of Afghanistan</p> <p>Moderator: Mark Evans, PhD Professor, Center for Institute for Governance and Policy Analysis, University of Canberra</p>
17:28	Closing remarks
17:30	Reception
Host: Adhy Aman, Senior Programme Manager, Asia and the Pacific, International IDEA	



**Daryl Karp, AM**, Director, Museum of Australian Democracy (MoAD) at the Old Parliament House

Ms Daryl Karp has worked as a senior executive in the broadcast and cultural industries for over 20 years.

She is the former Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of Film Australia, one of Australia's largest producers of documentaries and education programs.

She has also worked as Head of Television Factual Programs at the Australian Broadcasting Corporation where she was responsible for the editorial and financial management of the non-news/current affairs non-fiction content across the country.

In her current role as Director of the Museum of Australian Democracy, Ms Karp is dedicated to celebrating 'the spirit of Australian democracy and the power of your voice within it', positioning the museum as a new kind of town square, based on the democratic principles of equality, freedom, justice and representation.



**Kevin Casas-Zamora**, Secretary-General, International IDEA

Dr Kevin Casas-Zamora is the Secretary-General of the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) and a Senior Fellow at the Inter-American Dialogue. Previously, he was Costa Rica's Second Vice President and Minister of National Planning; Secretary for Political Affairs at the Organization of American States; Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution; and National Coordinator of the United Nations Development Program's Human Development Report. He holds a Law degree from the University of Costa Rica, a Masters in Government from the University of Essex, and a PhD in Political Science from the University of Oxford. He has authored several studies on campaign finance, elections, democratization, citizen security and civil-military relations in Latin America.



**Hon. Audrey Tang**, Digital Minister in Charge of Social Innovation, Taiwan

Audrey is known for revitalizing the computer languages Perl and Haskell, as well as building the online spreadsheet system EtherCalc in collaboration with Dan Bricklin. In the public sector, Audrey served on Taiwan national development council's open data committee and the 12-year basic education curriculum committee; and led the country's first e-Rulemaking project.



**Leena Rikkila Tamang**, Director for Asia and the Pacific, International IDEA

Leena Rikkila Tamang joined International IDEA in 2002. Between 2004 and 2013, she managed International IDEA's programme on Supporting the Constitution-Building Process in Nepal. She created and supported initiatives designed to forge a consensus on political reform and to develop the capacity of Nepalese stakeholders on constitutional options. Prior to her time in Nepal, Tamang worked at the South-Asia Programme and Myanmar.



**Mark Evans, PhD, Professor, Center for Institute for Governance and Policy Analysis, University of Canberra**

Mark Evans (PhD, FIPPA) is Director of the Democracy 2025 project at the Museum of Australian Democracy and Professor of Governance at the University of Canberra. His recent books include: Evidence-based policymaking and the social sciences (Policy Press), From Turnbull to Morrison. The Trust Divide (Melbourne University Press) and Saving Democracy (Bloomsbury). Mark has played an international role in supporting change governance practices and has acted as a senior policy advisor, designer of leadership programmes and chief investigator for research and evaluation projects in 26 countries, the European Union, the United Nations and the World Bank. He is a member of the Independent Evaluation Group of the World Bank and European Union and United Nations expert networks and has worked with every state and territory and most Commonwealth departments in Australia on change governance issues.



**Edward Aspinall, PhD, Professor, Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs, Australian National University**

Edward Aspinall is a Professor in the Department of Political and Social Change, Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs, Australian National University. He researches politics in Southeast Asia, especially Indonesia, with interests in democratisation, ethnicity, and clientelism, among other topics. He has authored three books, Opposing Suharto: Compromise, Resistance and Regime Change in Indonesia (Stanford University Press, 2005), Islam and Nation: Separatist Rebellion in Aceh, Indonesia (Stanford University Press, 2009), and Democracy for Sale: Elections, Clientelism, and the State in Indonesia (Cornell University Press, 2019, co-authored with Ward Berenschot), and co-edited ten others, the most recent being Electoral Dynamics in Indonesia: Money Politics, Patronage and Clientelism at the Grassroots (National University of Singapore Press, 2016).



**Dr. Imelda Deinla, Associate Professor, Ateneo School of Government**

Dr. Deinla is Associate Professor at the Ateneo School of Government (ASOG) where she teaches Critical Criminology and Graduate Innovation Research for the graduate program. She is also convenor of BOSES Pilipinas, the first university-based opinion and survey research in the Philippines. Her areas of research are on the relationship between politics and law, and on rule of law and democracy in Southeast Asia and ASEAN. She has published extensively on judicial politics, legal pluralism, hybrid justice and peacebuilding, as well as on civil society and military relations in Mindanao, Philippines. She is currently working on misinformation, public opinion and democracy with ASOG. Dr Deinla is a developmental lawyer and currently working on a EU-funded justice and human rights program to operationalize and strengthen the multi-level justice system provided in the Bangsamoro Organic Law.



**Dr. Nematullah Bizhanen, Lecturer, Crawford School of Public Policy, Australian National University**

His book, Aid Paradoxes in Afghanistan: Building and Undermining the State, examines the process of state building and international intervention in Afghanistan. Nematullah is currently working on an edited volume on state fragility, drawing lessons across seven countries in diverse regions.



## **The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance**

(International IDEA) is an intergovernmental organization that supports sustainable democracy worldwide. It was founded in 1995 and currently has 33 member states. International IDEA's headquarters is in Stockholm, and the institute has 17 regional and country offices across the globe.

International IDEA advances democracy worldwide, as a universal human aspiration and an enabler of sustainable development, through support to the building, strengthening and safeguarding of democratic political institutions and processes at all levels. International IDEA believes that democracy is a universal human aspiration and an experience that is pursued and lived in different ways around the world. To support this mission, International IDEA works in a number of areas, including elections, constitution building, money in politics, parliaments, and democracy assessment.

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