

European Parliament's support to New and Emerging Democracies



Office for Promotion
of Parliamentary
Democracy





Context of Parliamentary Democracy Promotion

“Europe should resolve to promote a modern, liberal version of demokratia in countries beyond the EU – in our own interest and in theirs... not imposing a single model of democracy by military means and not exporting democracy, but supporting it by peaceful means” Timothy G. Ash



Context of Parliamentary Democracy Promotion

- **What has the EP so far done?**
 - Democracy and Human Rights on the agenda with all partner countries/parliaments - **Political dialogue**
 - Reports and **Resolutions**
 - EP has a long tradition in **Electoral Observation** (first one in 1984) – Mostly integrated in EUEOM or OSCE missions, exceptionally independent EP Elect. Obs. delegations
 - Recognition that too little is done to support **political institutions** – parliaments (& political parties)– while cornerstones of democracy
 - Steering role of EP in enlarging the scope of democracy promotion work – influencing EU policies and EC development cooperation instruments
 - **EIDHR** initial focus on Human Rights (via CSO) and election observation, new EIDHR 2.0 includes also the possibility to support political institutions such as parliaments
 - From talking about it to engagement and action - OPPD



Context of Parliamentary Democracy Promotion

- **While Parliamentary Development is on the raise – reality check is needed**
 - Only about a decade of experience in parliamentary development
 - Remains still rather small in terms of overall governance development assistance size (executive and civil society remain priorities)
 - Too often major investments in elections are not followed by any support to the newly elected representative institutions
 - Too little capacity of donor staff in this field + political nature creates apprehension
 - **EC** has since 2000 made modest initial steps in this field. Support = eclectic, dispersed thinly and unequally, too few projects addressing political variables or sensitive issues
- **Changing Aid agenda**
 - Sectoral and Direct budgetary support
 - Paris and Accra agenda
 - ▶ Require strengthened domestic oversight mechanism – with a central role for parliaments, for both democratic and fiduciary reasons
 - ▶ Stronger parliamentary involvement is needed in policy decision making, including aid allocation



EP & Democracy promotion

- **Bureau** takes a decision on 12 June 2006 to nominate a special advisor on democracy promotion, followed by a June 18 2007 Bureau decision to create an office and budget line
- **Office for Promotion of Parliamentary Democracy** (OPPD), DG EXPO, operational since 2008
 - Currently a team of 4 people



OPPD objective & target group

OBJECTIVE

- to support parliamentary development in new and emerging democracies (NED)

BENEFICIARIES

- Parliamentary institutions of NED, its Members and civil servants

Initial PRIORITIES

- Neighbourhood, CIS and Africa



OPPD activities

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ON:

- Strengthening principal functions of parliaments (oversight, legislation and representation);
- Setting up (regional) parliamentary organisations (e.g. PAP, Ecowas P);
- Implementing administrative and institutional reform;
- Initiating interparliamentary legislative cooperation and sharing of best practices and information (Africa legislative drafting manual, Africa news monitor (EP/JRC) & AKNP);
- Developing information and communication (ICT) strategies and e-democracy projects.



OPPD tools

- **Democracy Fellowship Programme** – Launched in June 2008;
 - 6 to 12 week practical “internships” at EP for mid-ranking officials of NED parliaments
- Targeted **Training** for staff or MPs from NED (e.g. from Chile to Bahrain)
- **Technical assistance/counselling** by sending out experts of EP to NED Parliaments
- **Networking** with EU national parliaments and all other major actors in this field to build a community of practitioners
- **Research and knowledge sharing** : documenting good practices, contribute to the current to the development of benchmarks/standards for democratic parliaments, and support global parliamentary knowledge hub initiative



Our approach

- **Not about EUROS**
- **Initiative** of NED parliaments – demand driven
- **Long-term relationships** with NEDs based on equal footing and a joint ownership of the support programmes;
- **Customized support**
- **Coordination** with other EU institutions and actors in the field (e.g. Kyrgyzstan, Iraq)
- **OPPD is** for the NED Parliaments and parliamentary development actors **entry point at the EP. Small, but as a facilitator** it can tap into a huge expertise reservoir of EP (Secretariat staff, MEPs and groups staff) and into the network it is currently building.



Collaboration with EC

- OPPD as a resource and partner for EC **parliamentary development**
 - Help EC in developing guidelines for its Delegations (including criteria for intervention) as a member of the study review committee
 - Advice on project proposals
 - Inform partner parliaments about EC Aid and funding opportunities
 - In some cases provide complementary OPPD support to EC support programme
 - Specific EP expertise is also available to contribute to EC activities in this field
- Provide **assistance in (M)/EP oversight of EC** democracy promotion work



THANK YOU

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