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UNDEF ADVISORY BOARD ENDORSES FOURTH ROUND FOR PROJECT LIST SECRETARY-GENERAL APPROVAL

The UNDEF Advisory Board met on 29 March and endorsed a short-list list of projects recommended for UNDEF's Fourth Round of Funding. The list comprises 65 projects in Africa, Asia, the Americas and Europe estimated at a total of approximately 16 million dollars. The list is still subject to approval by the Secretary-General, and to the successful negotiation by each a short-listed applicant of a project document. Once approved, the addition of these projects would bring the total number of UNDEF-funded projects to 336 in 104 countries.

The UNDEF Board for 2010-2011 brings to-together UNDEF's seven biggest donors -- the United States, India, Japan, Qatar, Australia, Germany and Spain -- and six countries reflecting geographical diversity and a commitment to democratic principles: Costa Rica, Ghana, Iraq, Mauritius, Poland and the Republic of Korea.

Professor Michael Doyle of Columbia, who remains as Advisory Board Chair for the third year, is joined by three other individual members appointed by the Secretary-General: Professor Kwame Anthony Appiah of Princeton University, Professor Seyla Benhabib of Yale University (see Practitioner Profile, page 2) and Amir Dossal, who serves in an *ex-officio* capacity. The Board also includes two civil society organization representatives: Conectas Human Rights and the International Peace Institute.

Several of the new Government representatives on the Board -- including Ambassador Juan A. Yañez-Barnuevo of Spain, Ambassador Leslie K. Christian of Ghana, Ambassador Hamid Al-Bayati of Iraq, Ambassador Pawel Herczynski of Poland and Ambassador In- Ambassador Kook Park of Republic of Korea -- spoke of their countries' experience in establishing themselves as democracies, all within the past 35 years.

Professor Appiah, who has taught philosophy and African studies at the universities of Ghana, Cambridge, Duke, Cornell, Yale, Harvard and Princeton, provided a *concise yet profound* from reflection on the nature and philosophy of democracy.



INSIDE UNDEF


 DEPARTMENT OF
POLITICAL AFFAIRS

The UN Democracy Fund is supported in its work by the UNDEF Programme Consultative Group, which brings together seven UN Departments, Offices, Funds and Programmes active in fields related to democracy, governance and human rights.

Since 2008, the Group has been chaired by Craig Mokhiber of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, who recently transferred to OHCHR's Headquarters at Geneva. Mr. Mokhiber had been a founding member of the Group since its inception soon after the creation of UNDEF in 2005, and was also part of the team set up by the office of the Secretary-General in 2005 to work on the conceptualization of UNDEF.

The new Chair of the Programme Consultative Group is Elizabeth Spehar, Director of the Europe Division of the UN Department of Political Affairs. A long-time democracy practitioner, Ms. Spehar also chairs the Democracy Working Group of the Executive Committee on Peace and Security.

"I am very pleased to take over as Chair of the UNDEF Programme Consultative Group," said Ms. Spehar. "Support for democracy has become a fundamental element in United Nations efforts to maintain international peace and security, to promote social progress and better standards of life, and to ensure respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all. Since its inception, UNDEF has greatly enhanced the Organization's role in this field by providing grants to local non-governmental organizations that strive to make the voices of civil society heard and help to ensure broad citizens' participation in democratic processes and institutions. As UNDEF PCG Chair, I am looking forward to working closely with my colleagues to continue to empower these vital civil society groups who contribute so much towards building more robust and sustainable democracies worldwide."

The Group comprises representatives from the UN Department of Political Affairs, the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Peacebuilding Support Office, the UN Development Programme, the UN Development Fund for Women and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime. The Group provides expert advice and support project proposals and funding criteria to the UNDEF Advisory Board and the UNDEF Secretariat. This includes extensive review of project applications during the selection phase of each UNDEF Funding Round.

"UNDEF is a collective enterprise of the entire UN system," said Mr. Mokhiber. "I have had an opportunity to see UNDEF grow from a vague -- and sometimes controversial

-- idea, into the firmly-established, global, multi-million dollar UN enterprise that it is today. Perhaps most satisfying to me is the degree to which the UN brand has been attached to UNDEF, and the constructive -- and I believe essential -- role that the PCG has played in the Fund's development and management.

"We have sought to emphasize the UN pedigree of the Fund; to ensure clear reflection of the essential UN normative content, based on our treaties and declarations, in

UNDEF's concept of democracy; to raise the profile and visibility of the PCG both within the UNDEF architecture and vis-à-vis external partners; and to strike a reasonable balance between an active and substantive role for the PCG on the one hand, and the need to avoid unduly

burdening PCG members on the other. I believe we have made good progress in each of these areas. Our relationship with the UNDEF office is close, constructive, and symbiotic. And our role as a bridge with our colleagues in the field is becoming more refined with each round of UNDEF funding."



Elizabeth Spehar

NEW CHAIR TAKES OVER UNDEF PROGRAMME CONSULTATIVE GROUP

PRACTITIONER PROFILE

UNDEF is delighted that Professor Seyla Benhabib has accepted the Secretary-General's invitation to serve as an individual member on the UNDEF Advisory Board for 2010-2011. Dr. Benhabib is Professor of Political Science and Philosophy at Yale University and was Director of its Programme in Ethics, Politics and Economics from 2002 to 2008.

A native of Turkey, Dr. Benhabib is a democratic theorist who has published widely on the subjects of human rights, pluralism, minorities, religion and culture. She is the author, *inter alia*, of *The Claims of Culture, Equality and Diversity in the Global Era*; *The Rights of Others: Aliens, Citizens and Residents*, which won the Ralph Bunche award of the American Political Science Association; and *Another Cosmopolitanism: Hospitality, Sovereignty and Democratic Iterations*. Her work has been translated into German, Spanish, French, Italian, Turkish, Swedish, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Hebrew, Japanese and Chinese.

"I am honoured to join the Advisory Board of the United Nations Democracy Fund," said Dr. Benhabib. "Strengthening democracy through the work of civil society organizations is essential at this point in time when democracy has become a global project."

Dr. Benhabib is a member of the [Executive Council of Reset Dialogues on Civilizations](#), an international group of scholars, politicians and civil society activists based in Rome, and of the [Istanbul Seminars](#), which brings together theorists from the Middle East, Europe and the Americas seeking to promote dialogue across cultures in the Islamic world. She is also a member of the New York-based public policy research and advocacy organization [Demos](#), where she works on global governance issues.



Craig Mokhiber



INSIDE UNDEF



CALLING ALL FUTURE APPLICANTS: LESSONS LEARNED

CLIQUEZ ICI POUR ACCÉDER À LA VERSION FRANÇAISE



Dear civil society organization applicants,

The following is feedback compiled on the basis of applications from UNDEF's first four rounds. It provides useful pointers for you to bear in mind as you prepare for your application.

Presentation

The higher the quality the presentation, the higher your application will score. You can get a good idea of what is required by viewing an [application form](#) from a previous year, and by reading previous [project proposal guidelines](#). Fill in all the information that is relevant, but do not exceed the character limits in the application form. Ensure that the information is accurate. Write in plain English or French, avoiding jargon where possible. Use correct acronyms and website addresses. Write succinct sentences and avoid repetition.

Clarity

Clarity is the key to a successful application. The applicant must have a clear idea about what they want to achieve and a clear strategy for how to achieve it. You need to spell out the link between your overall vision and your activities and outputs -- how these will translate your vision into reality. Lack of clarity cannot be disguised by the use of "buzz" words or other formulaic constructions; a successful design requires a logic that can be followed step by step. Brainstorm the ideas thoroughly before writing them down, but equally, agree on what specific steps are needed to make them happen, and in what sequence. Play the "devil's advocate" and criticise the initial ideas until you have achieved a logical design.

Scoring and criteria

In UNDEF's initial assessment of applications, each project proposal is scored against 10 criteria. Since only three proposals out of 100 make it to the short-list, you need to score well on all the criteria to advance to the next stage. Make sure you demonstrate that your proposal satisfies each one:

- ♣ Does the applicant organization have a strong track record?
- ♣ Is the proposal technically sound in conception and presentation?

How would the proposed project:

- ♣ Promote the objectives of UNDEF?
- ♣ Make use of the UN's and UNDEF's comparative advantage?
- ♣ Have significant impact?
- ♣ Represent good value for money?
- ♣ Have strong prospects for successful implementation?
- ♣ Have strong prospects of sustainability beyond the project duration?
- ♣ Encourage inclusiveness?
- ♣ Enhance gender equality?

Innovation

How can your application stand out from the others? The answer is innovation. That means a new idea, a new method or an original proposal. If the outputs of the project are simply more workshops to raise awareness, then your application is unlikely to distinguish itself. When you think of innovative approaches, ensure that the proposal is action-oriented, with concrete outputs listed in the application.

Democracy

UNDEF was not established simply to fund good causes or good people. Arguing that your cause is just and your people are worthy is not sufficient. UNDEF is a Fund to promote democracy and each application must be able to show how the funding of that project will advance the cause of democracy. UNDEF focuses on supporting the voice of civil society, and so the application must show how that voice will be strengthened, and how that, in turn, will strengthen democratic processes. The more direct the link, the stronger the application.

Budget

Give considerable thought to the budget. Make sure the budget relates to the outputs listed in the narrative part of the application. We understand that the budget is an estimate, so use rounded figures (in the thousands or hundreds is sufficient). Do not ask for a high amount of salary in the budget, as UNDEF looks for an element of volunteering in applications. Do not ask for a high amount in other items as a back door method to obtain more salary. Also be aware that UNDEF rarely funds the purchase of vehicles.

Value for Money

Many applications have scored badly on the criterion "value for money" by asking for far too much in their budget. The maximum grant UNDEF can make is \$500,000; in more than 200 projects implemented to date, only one project has received this amount. The average grant is around \$250,000. An application requesting \$499,000, but delivering the same outputs as a similar application asking for \$350,000, will score low on value for money. That will probably be enough to knock that application out of the running. The more realistic the budget request, the better the score will be under the value for money criterion.

Timing

Please do not leave submission until the last few days. Given that the application window is open for six weeks, a well prepared applicant will submit well ahead of the deadline to ensure there is time left if something goes wrong. The later in the application process, the greater the risk that something may go wrong that cannot be remedied. And once the online proposal system is closed for the year, we cannot assist you. We have received dozens of "hard luck" stories about bad internet connections or electricity blackouts to explain why an application was late. The answer is to start in time.

Good luck in your future applications!

The UNDEF Team

NEWS FROM THE FIELD



HOT ISSUES DISCUSSED IN YEMEN, LEBANON AND JORDAN

As part of an UNDEF-backed project to strengthen civil society leadership skills in the Middle East, several mapping sessions were held in Yemen, Lebanon and Jordan in March 2010. The meetings were attended by both officials and community members, and addressed issues of current concern to citizens in the respective countries.

In Yemen, the Yemeni Human Rights Information and Training Center held a session in San'a on the implications of early marriage, and another in Ta'z on corruption in hospitals. In Lebanon, the Permanent Peace Movement held meetings in Beirut and Ba'lbak focused on armed violence and forms of political expression.

In Ma'an, Jordan, Partners-Jordan held a session entitled "Interference of Sheikhs and Heads of Tribes in Security Issues". The aim of the session was to build new links between officials and community groups.



Le processus démocratique en République démocratique du Congo a été fragilisé par l'incivisme, la mauvaise gouvernance, l'intolérance, les violations des droits de l'homme, la méfiance entre gouvernants-gouvernés et le déficit de participation citoyenne, constatés après les élections de 2006. Ils affectent également le processus de décentralisation et les élections de 2009-2011. Pour remédier à l'effet de ces fléaux qui impactent négativement le progrès de la société congolaise, la construction et le renforcement d'une démocratie participative est nécessaire.

Dans ce contexte, l'Organisation Paix, Unité, Réconciliation, Reconstruction (OPURR), avec le soutien du FNUD, met en œuvre un projet qui a pour objectif de promouvoir une démocratie participative par la création, l'installation et l'accompagnement de clubs d'action démocratique. Ces clubs visent à renforcer les capacités des communautés dans l'exercice de leurs droits politiques et socio-économiques. A cet effet, ce projet adopte une approche qui s'appuie sur le rôle du dialogue démocratique dans la modification des rapports gouvernants-



gouvernés, afin de favoriser l'appropriation des pratiques et valeurs démocratiques des communautés. Cette dynamique aidera à promouvoir la mobilisation sociale et la participation citoyenne dans le pays, et également à pérenniser son impact.

Dans le cadre de ce projet, l'OPURR a récemment organisé deux ateliers participatifs à l'intention des leaders communautaires de la Ville de Kindu et de la cité minière de Kalima. Ces ateliers visent à intensifier la sensibilisation des citoyens congolais sur des thèmes relatifs à la démocratie citoyenne.

Dans le même sens, l'OPURR a organisé en Mai 2010 des sessions de «formation de multiplicateurs». L'idée est de former des acteurs de la société civile ainsi que des leaders de communautés sur la démocratie participative, les techniques

POUR UNE DÉMOCRATIE PARTICIPATIVE EN RÉPUBLIQUE DÉMOCRATIQUE DU CONGO

de mobilisation sociale et de plaidoyer. Les personnes formées serviront à multiplier ces formations en les transmittant dans leurs milieux de résidence. Ils opéreront également en tant que mobilisateurs de proximité dans leurs communautés, afin de construire et renforcer la culture démocratique et citoyenne en RDC.

Voir aussi [le Bulletin Mensuel d'OPURR](#).

WORKING FOR RATIFICATION OF AFRICA'S DEMOCRACY CHARTER

In 2007, Member States of the African Union adopted the [African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance](#). To take effect, the Charter requires at least 15 Member States to sign and ratify. So far, 34 States have signed the Charter, but only Mauritania, Ethiopia, and Sierra Leone had ratified it.

With UNDEF support, the African Democratic Forum, a consortium of African CSOs, and the African democracy institute, Idasa, have launched a project to mobilize support for ratifying Charter. It seeks to create national movements as well as international solidarity to promote dialogue and awareness. The project is covered in a new [Idasa newsletter](#) and will yield a major report in June 2010.

In February 2010, Idasa hosted a workshop in Pretoria bringing together civil society representatives from 14 countries who devised national and sub-regional strategies to lobby governments and parliaments. South Africa's Deputy Minister for International Relations and Cooperation, Sue Van der Merwe, said in a keynote speech: "The Charter is more than just another agreement or convention. It is in a sense the blueprint for the Africa of the future."

UNDEF Executive Head Roland Rich also attended and told participants: "Governments have already adopted this far-sighted document. Now it is civil society's role to keep them to their word and ensure that these governments ratify and implement the Charter".

The workshop adopted a declaration in [English](#) and [French](#).

NEWS FROM THE FIELD



YOUTH AND WOMEN TRAIN CITIZENS FOR ELECTIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES

In connection with the May 2010 elections in the Philippines, UNDEF supports a novel initiative for mobilizing women, college and high school students to conduct voter education, election monitoring and citizen participation among marginalized and vulnerable segments.



The project, implemented by the Philippines Institute for Political and Electoral Reform, focuses on conducting comprehensive, long-term, and continuing citizen-voter education; establishing a nationwide citizen political and election monitoring network for the 2010 elections, including post-election phases; and developing leadership training courses for marginalized and vulnerable groups at the grassroots.

“Our study shows that women and youth are a major force for democracy and clean elections. They are targeted in the project as voters, educators, monitors, and leaders,” said Loretta Ann Rosales, President of the Institute.

The voter education component aims to equip voters from the marginalized and vulnerable sectors to make informed and responsible voting choices, as well as train them for citizen participation in democratic governance. The election monitoring segment will establish and train a sufficient number of domestic election monitors for a one-year election period monitoring in relation to the elections, including post-election phases. The leadership training will develop and train emerging political leaders, particularly from marginal and vulnerable populations.

DEVELOPING ACCURATE VOTER LISTS IN EUROPE’S TRANSITIONAL DEMOCRACIES



UNDEF supports a project by the Association of European Election Officials, ACEEEO, to research and analyze voter registration systems in Central and Eastern Europe and publish the results in a form that is useful for countries considering reform. The initiative aims to survey the legal framework of voter registration, explore malfunctions and the reasons behind them, identify best practices and offer recommendations. It analyzes and compares registration systems based on information, data and self-assessment by Election Management Bodies.

The study, *Developing Accurate Voters’ Lists in Transitional Democracies*, published in February 2010, forms a milestone of the UNDEF project. The material was gathered through questionnaires and analyzed from legislative, technical, and practical perspectives. It covers a broad range of issues, from citizenship and external voting to accuracy and fraud.

A TOOL FOR CIVIL SOCIETY TO SCRUTINIZE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT IN NIGERIA

In Nigeria, UNDEF supports a project to enable civil society to effectively observe and monitor public procurement, help legislative committees carry out their procurement oversight functions, and educate procuring entities and selected business organizations on the basic provisions of Nigeria’s Public Procurement Act.

[internet observatory portal](#) for collating, analyzing and disseminating information on procurement observation. The portal will also include provisions for online training, blogs for registered members, options to download publications and mass mailing capability.

“For procurement monitoring to achieve its intended objectives, civil society organizations and professional bodies need a mechanism to collate, analyze and take a sense of feedback from the various monitoring activities,” said the Coordinator of the Public and Private Development Centre, Chibuzo Ekwewwu. “Without adequate capacity and relevant tools and mechanisms that observers need, citizen’s observers of procurement may become mere motions to technically fulfill legal provisions, motions that may not produce the expected outcomes for which these legal provisions were made.”

The project, implemented by the Public and Private Development Centre, is currently launching an



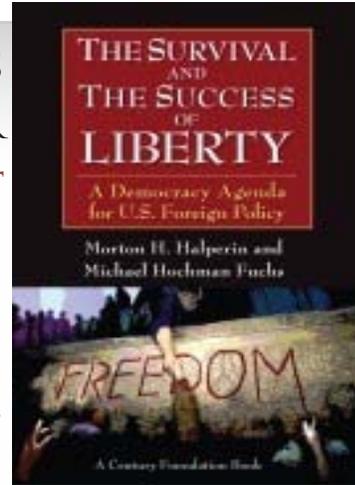
WORTH READING

HALPERIN COMMENDS UNDEF AS MULTILATERAL APPROACH FOR DEMOCRACY SUPPORT

In their latest book, *The Survival and The Success of Liberty: A Democracy Agenda for U.S. Foreign Policy*, Morton Halperin (pictured) and Michael Fuchs argue that it would be a great mistake for the United States to abandon democracy support abroad. Under "General Guidelines", the book urges:



"Go multilateral: The role of coordinated international efforts to support democracy will often be crucial. The United States pursuing democracy by itself usually will have little impact... The United Nations Democracy Fund is a voluntary initiative that pools contributions from countries to be distributed to civil society projects that support human rights and encourage the participation of groups in democratic processes. UNDEF is not subject to the approval of any other body, and thus is free to distribute funds without interference from particular countries."



With UNDEF support, the Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency, PILDAT, recently published a Background Paper on [The State of Electoral Rolls in Pakistan](#). The paper tracks progress made on computerized electoral rolls in Pakistan following the February 2008 general elections to ensure accurate rolls for future elections. It also identifies key questions that need to be addressed to restore voters' faith in the electoral rolls in particular and the electoral process in general.

UNDEF BACKS STUDY ON THE STATE OF ELECTORAL ROLLS IN PAKISTAN



UNDEF PRESENTS SECRETARY-GENERAL GUIDANCE NOTE IN *Journal of Democracy*



The UN Secretary-General issued a UN-wide Guidance Note on Democracy in September 2009. In the April 2010 *Journal of Democracy*, UNDEF Executive Head Roland Rich describes the character and significance of the document.

The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs has developed an interactive civil society platform, [CSO Net](#), to provide information, promote exchange and facilitate dialogue among civil society groups, Member States and United Nations system agencies. The platform aims to encourage the vast number of civil society organizations working with UN system agencies, and those who are keen to engage with us in the future, to make use of online knowledge and resources to contribute to the UN's development agenda. Go to www.un.org/ecosoc/sonet.

UN LAUNCHES INTERACTIVE CIVIL SOCIETY NETWORK

