



INTERNATIONAL DAY OF DEMOCRACY

15 SEPTEMBER 2012

‘Dialogue and Inclusiveness – Central to Democracy’

Suggestions for activities by parliaments

16 August 2012

Since 2008, more than 70 parliaments have organized activities to mark the International Day of Democracy on 15 September. Parliaments are the most active institutions around the world in celebrating this Day. This is a clear indication of the special importance of parliaments in the democratic system of government.

The theme that has been adopted by the IPU in 2012 is ‘Dialogue and Inclusiveness – Central to Democracy’. We invite every parliament to organize activities to engage citizens, particularly young people, on the International Day of Democracy. It is an opportunity to increase public understanding of the role of parliament, and to encourage people to get involved in politics.

This document contains some suggestions for activities. The activities could take place on or around Saturday 15 September. For more information on the International Day of Democracy, please see www.ipu.org/idd or use the hashtag #idd2012 on www.twitter.com

1. Celebrate the International Day of Democracy in parliament

There are many ways in which the theme of the International Day of Democracy could be observed in parliament, such as:

- Organize a special plenary debate and invite all political groups to exchange their views on the state of ‘Dialogue and Inclusiveness’ within parliament, or within society
- Adopt a parliamentary motion/resolution in support of the International Day of Democracy
- Set up a cross-party working group to examine progress and challenges in terms of ‘Dialogue and Inclusiveness’ in political culture

2. Engage in a broad discussion about developing a culture of dialogue and inclusiveness

Bring together politicians, representatives of civil society, academia, and journalists to make proposals for actions to develop the culture of democracy. Engage with civil society organizations that work especially on the issue of parliament (also known as ‘parliamentary monitoring organizations’).

3. Organize an Open Day

Several activities could be carried out during an Open Day in parliament, such as guided tours, exhibitions, meetings with parliamentarians, mock sittings etc.

4. Launch a competition on the International Day of Democracy

A competition could involve creating artwork, writing essays, making videos, taking photos, etc., related to the theme of democracy and/or 'Dialogue and Inclusiveness'. The competition could target schools or universities, and culminate in an exhibition at parliament, where the best entries are displayed and prizes awarded.

5. Communicate about the International Day of Democracy

Use the parliamentary web site, communications service, social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) to inform citizens and invite them to get involved in the day and the work of parliament more generally. Link to information available at the IPU web site www.ipu.org/idd

6. Work with the media

Many parliaments have used radio programmes, televised debates, press releases and newspaper interviews to promote previous International Days of Democracy. National broadcasters, private media and parliament's own communication channels all help to raise awareness of the role of parliament in democracy.

7. Connect the International Day of Democracy to the Global Parliamentary Report

The Global Parliamentary Report (www.ipu.org/gpr) was published by IPU and UNDP in April 2012. It focuses on the changing nature of representation. Many of the issues raised in the Report are connected to the theme of 'Dialogue and Inclusiveness', such as the efforts that many MPs are making to enhance dialogue with their constituents and involve them in the work of parliament. Several kinds of events could be organized, such as:

- Discuss the Report in a plenary session or in a parliamentary committee with responsibility for relations with citizens
- Organize a seminar on the issues raised in the Report about representation. The IPU has a model format for such seminars, which parliaments can adapt to their specific context
- Distribute to all MPs a digital or printed copy of the Report or the 6-page Executive Summary, which is now available in English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Portuguese and Russian

Inform the IPU about your actions

The IPU will include all parliaments that organize activities for the International Day in the list of parliamentary events at www.ipu.org/idd, with a link to your web site or other information about your activity. Please send us a short description (no more than 5 lines) and photos from your activities. Be sure to tell us the name of a contact person and the title, place and date of the activity.

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www.ipu.org/idd

or use the hashtag #idd2012 on www.twitter.com