

REPORTS

REGIONAL AND ASSOCIATION NEWS

THE ASSOCIATION OF AFRICAN ELECTION AUTHORITIES



In August 2003, the Advisory Board of the Association of African Election Authorities (AAEA) held its 4th annual meeting in Ghana. Issues discussed included the AAEA professional training program and the development of standard trainer's and trainee's manuals for association members.

Several election management bodies (EMBs) expressed interest in joining the AAEA following the 2003 conference on Elections, Governance and Democracy in South Africa. There is a vigorous membership drive to encourage the Northern African countries to join. Steps are also being taken to formalize relations between the AAEA and the African Union.

With some support from the Agence Internationale de la Francophonie, the AAEA is planning a 2004 seminar in Burkina Faso that will address "EMBs in Support of Emerging Democracies in Africa." The seminar will provide a forum for high-level election professionals to debate the issue of having legally independent election commissions. Recommendations from the meeting will be submitted to the Summit of Heads of State and Government. For more information visit www.ifes.org/afrassoc1/afrassoc.

ASSOCIATION OF CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN ELECTION OFFICIALS

In the first quarter of 2004, the ACEEEO will issue the proceedings of its annual conference held in London 2003. The ACEEEO is also participating in the 2002-2006 Youth European Union Tender, a long-term project geared to young first-time voters, with plans to organize a four-day seminar and the preparation of the www.firstvoter.eu website in spring 2004.



According to the ACEEEO's cooperative agreement with International IDEA, the Association plans to take part in a "Strengthening of Political Parties" project. The ACEEEO will help IDEA by collecting political party regulations from its member states.

The ACEEEO intends to continue monitoring elections in the region in accordance with the OSCE-ODIHR cooperative agreement. For further information, please visit the ACEEEO website at www.aceeoo.org.

UNITED STATES FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION



FEC Chair Ellen Weintraub and Vice Chair Bradley Smith testified before Congress about a recent Commission hearing on enforcement proceedings and the steps being taken to respond to comments received. These steps include implementing measures to improve the transparency of enforcement proceedings and instituting a variety of management controls to speed the disposition of cases. Vice Chair Smith also highlighted the FEC's Administrative Fine and Alternative Dispute Resolution programs, which expedite resolution of some enforcement matters and reduce the cost of processing complaints.

The Commission recently revised the National Mail Voter Registration Form, in compliance with the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA), to add questions on age and citizenship and notify applicants that proof of identity is required from certain individuals who submit their applications by mail. For more information visit www.fec.gov/votregis/vr.htm.

Election reform studies required by HAVA, the transfer of the FEC's Office of Election Administration to a new U.S. Election Assistance Commission, and mandatory federal guidance for State implementation of the new law should get underway this year, as the Senate confirmed the four new EAC commissioners on December 10, 2003. For more information visit www.fec.gov/votregis/vr.htm.

FEDERAL ELECTORAL TRIBUNAL OF MEXICO

The Mexican Chamber of Deputies ratified the new General Council, IFE's highest steering body. Dr. Luis Carlos Ugalde, formerly a professor at the Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas, was elected council President. Eight citizens were appointed as Electoral Council Members: María Lourdes López, Alejandra Latapí, María Teresa González, Marco Antonio Gómez, Andrés Albo, Virgilio Andrade, Rodrigo Morales and Arturo Sánchez. The General Council will be in session from 2003 to 2010.



IFES, IFE, the United Nations, Spain's Ministry of the Interior, Elections Canada and International IDEA sponsored the joint publication *Money and Political-Electoral Contests: Challenges for Democracy*. The book is currently available only in Spanish but English editions will be printed soon. For further information, please visit the IFE website at www.ife.org.mx.