



DAVID PRICE, CHAIRMAN • DAVID DREIER, RANKING MEMBER

## House Democracy Assistance Commission - At a Glance

*The House Democracy Assistance Commission is working with partner legislatures in Afghanistan, Colombia, East Timor, Georgia, Haiti, Indonesia, Kenya, Lebanon, Liberia, Macedonia, Mongolia, and Ukraine. It is carrying out a wide array of technical and material assistance programs with partner legislatures, all aimed to improve the fundamental capabilities of legislatures to serve as effective, independent, representative bodies of government. The following is a sample of HDAC's programs.*

### ***Member Outbound Programs***

HDAC Members have conducted outbound delegations to all partner country since 2006. Outbound programs facilitate discussions between Members and staff of Congress and their counterparts in partner legislatures on a variety of topics, including essential legislative capabilities, policy questions, bilateral relations and regional issues. The delegations also include programming focused on constituent relations, including site visits to constituencies to participate in town hall meetings or seminars on constituent outreach.

### ***Staff Institutes***

Staff Institutes bring together staff from partner legislatures for two-week intensive training sessions focused on a specific topic of legislative activity. HDAC has hosted over 80 staff members for three legislative Staff Institutes, with programs on budget analysis, committee operations, research, and administration. HDAC plans three Staff Institutes in 2009, including two regional programs to be conducted in Europe and Africa.



*Rep. Price poses with some of the 28 participants (from 9 countries) in the inaugural Staff Institute.*

## ***Member Inbound Programs***

HDAC has conducted six Inbound Programs bringing members of partner legislatures to the United States for 7-10 days of training focusing on Congressional operations and constituent service. HDAC has completed a series of introductory sessions and is currently hosting theme-specific Inbound Programs.

## ***Defense Oversight***

Civilian oversight of the defense sector is among the most critical needs for many partner legislatures, especially in nations like Colombia, Liberia, and Indonesia, where militaries have histories of human rights abuses. Moreover, legislative focus on defense issues is essential in nations such as Georgia, Macedonia, and Ukraine, which are moving toward NATO membership. HDAC has partnered with the Department of Defense to create specific training programs for members of partner legislatures focusing on Defense Oversight. HDAC has now hosted four Defense Oversight programs with four different legislatures; two additional programs are planned during 2009.

## ***Staff Training and Assessment Delegations***

HDAC has mobilized expert resources in the House of Representatives to bring their expertise to bear in support of partner legislatures by sending specialized delegations of current and former Congressional staff to partner nations for training and assessment missions. In 2007, for example, Budget Committee staffers trained Haitian MPs, staff from the Ethics Committee conducted training in Kenya and Ukraine, and the Macedonian Parliament received training from both committee staff and constituent service directors. In 2008, professional staff delegations conducted programs on parliamentary administration in Haiti, internal budgeting in Indonesia and library operations in East Timor, among other delegations.

## ***Material Assistance***

With a limited budget, HDAC provides only minimal material assistance in areas where it can achieve immediate impact. HDAC has funded the construction and stocking of a parliamentary library in East Timor, the procurement of a computer server for the Macedonian Parliament, and the procurement of a computer server and IT upgrades for the Georgian Parliament, along with library material for several partners. Future plans include support for the establishment of resource centers (including library and research service) in Haiti and Liberia. Material assistance goes hand in hand with training programs; for example, support for libraries in East Timor, Afghanistan, and Haiti are paired with training of library and research staff.



***Research Library built by HDAC for the East Timorese Parliament.***