



Launch of the AGORA Portal for Parliamentary Development

2 March 2010

The French National Assembly hosted on 2 March 2010 the inauguration of the first virtual platform for knowledge sharing on parliamentary development – the AGORA Portal for Parliamentary Development. The event was jointly organised by the French National Assembly, the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UNDP, and DFID and was attended by Members of Parliament, international organizations and parliamentary associations.

AGORA is a reference platform for knowledge sharing on parliamentary development. It is targeted at parliamentarians, parliamentary staff, donors, practitioners, as well as academia, civil society and the media. It seeks to consolidate knowledge and information, expertise and best practices, and to encourage collaboration among the world-wide parliamentary development community. In addition, it seeks to promote the global streamlining of parliamentary development activities and advocate for parliamentary development globally.

Hon. Henriette Martinez, Member of the Committee for Foreign Affairs of the French National Assembly welcomed the launch of AGORA as a new way to enhance public policy and to diffuse democratic values around the world. Mr. Olav Kjørven, Assistant Secretary-General and Director of Bureau for Development Policy, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), explained that the Portal will reach a wider audience in order to share knowledge and ultimately bring about policy change. It is a tool particularly relevant for development, considering that strong political institutions are a prerequisite for creating the right framework for efficient development.

AGORA was officially launched by Hon. Abdirahim H. Abdi, President of the East African Legislative Assembly (ELEA), who sees AGORA as recognition of the important work undertaken by Parliaments. Thanking collaborators in the creation of the Portal, he said that it takes parliamentary democracy to another level. He also appealed to the donor community to see Parliaments as allies as it is their Members who give credibility to donor aid through parliamentary approval.

Offering some words of support, Mr. Stefan Kossoff, Senior Governance Adviser at the UK Department for International Development (DFID), stated that AGORA would create an international community dedicated to all actors involved in parliamentary development. By supporting Parliaments around the world, AGORA has the potential to give them the capacity to ensure effectiveness and long-term sustainability of development work.



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