



Community
of Democracies



2018 Annual Report
of the Community of Democracies

Report

January 2019



Community
of Democracies

2018 Annual Report
of the Community of Democracies

Report

January 2019

Contents

Introduction	7
Summary of Activities	7
Intergovernmental Cooperation	8
CoD Executive Committee	8
CoD Governing Council	9
Strategic Partnerships	13
Strategic Planning Process	15
Adoption of the CoD 2018-2023 Strategic Plan	15
Strategic Objectives	16
New Secondments at the Permanent Secretariat of the Community of Democracies	16
Community of Democracies and Civil Society	18
New Visual Identity of the Community of Democracies	19
Democracy Events and Activities	20
Enabling and Protecting Civil Society.....	20
Youth Inclusion and Empowerment	23
Advancing Women's Political Empowerment	27
UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda	29
Promoting Democracy	33

Introduction

Summary of Activities

The current global context, with both democratic challenges and opportunities, saw members of the Governing Council of the Community of Democracies (CoD) reaffirming their belief in the values and principles of the Warsaw Declaration and recommitting their support to further strengthen democracy both within and outside the Community of Democracies.

One of the major highlights in this respect was the adoption by the Governing Council Member States of the Strategic Plan 2018-2023, which reflected the commitment of the Member States to strengthen cooperation to effectively respond to complex challenges to democracy and embrace new opportunities to support democratic consolidation around the world.

The Governing Council Members also finalized the first cycle of the Governing Council Renewal Process, through which the founding Member States renewed their commitment to membership in the Governing Council and the principles of the Warsaw Declaration.

Additionally, in line with the Strategic Plan's Operational Objective 2 aimed at establishing strategic partnerships with like-minded organizations, the Permanent Secretariat of the Community of Democracies (PSCD) signed Memoranda of Understanding with the Organization of American States (OAS) and International IDEA. Both agreements strengthened the already existing relationship between the CoD and each of the two organizations, defining areas of further cooperation.

The Community's continued institutional strengthening was also reflected in the implementation of its new visual identity that included a fresh logo and redesigned website. The new CoD logo symbolizes the commitment of the Governing Council Member States to diversity and to shared universal democratic values of the Warsaw Declaration.

Throughout the whole year, the CoD continued to work towards vital democracy-related issues, such as the promotion of Goal 16 of the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, increasing women's participation, youth empowerment, and enabling and protecting civil society.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

CoD Executive Committee

In 2018, the rotating chairmanship of the Executive Committee was led by Norway (September 2017-March 2018), Chile (March-September 2018) and the United Kingdom (current Chair since September 2018).

During face-to-face meetings and conference calls, the Executive Committee played a key role in providing strategic recommendations and opinions to the Governing Council to inform decisions on the activities of the Community of Democracies.

“It is an honour for the UK to take up the Chairmanship of the Community of Democracies’ Executive Committee today. I commend the work of the Chilean Chairmanship and pledge our commitment to continuing to advance the democratic principles set out in the Warsaw Declaration.” – **Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, Minister of State for the Commonwealth and the UN at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom**

“Norway’s aim has been for the Community of Democracies to develop further as a diplomatic and political arena where consolidated democracies and states undergoing democratic transition can join forces to promote, protect and preserve fundamental democratic principles. Norway remains committed to the promotion of robust democratic institutions and checks and balances”– **Ine Eriksen Søreide, Foreign Minister of Norway**

“For our country it is a privilege to hold the pro-tempore presidency of this important forum. The commitment of Chile with the Community of Democracies goes back to June 2000, when countries that came from different regions, cultures and religions, but that at the same time shared the same values regarding to the defence of democracy and the promotion of human rights, signed the Warsaw Declaration which was the document that brought to life the Community of Democracies.” – **Patricio Torres, Secretary General of Foreign Policy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Chile**

CoD Governing Council

Following the decision by the Governing Council (GC) to hold meetings bi-annually, in 2018 two Governing Council meetings were held:

The 27th Meeting of the Governing Council, February 6th, 2018, Oslo, Norway

“Civil society organisations are catalysts for change and development. They play a vital role in holding governments to account – even though as government representatives we may not always find this particularly comfortable.”

– **Jens Frølich Holte, State Secretary for International Development at Norway’s MFA**

Key highlights:

- GC Member States discussed multilateral engagement in promoting and protecting the Warsaw Declaration principles, the upcoming 37th Human Rights Council in Geneva, 2018 regular session of the ECOSOC NGO Committee, and Interregional Dialogue on Democracy on the margins of the UN General Assembly.
- Member States welcomed the “Toolkit on the Safety of Journalists for the Personnel of Diplomatic Missions”, developed in 2017 by the CoD’s Working Group on Freedom of Opinion and Expression, as an important guidance on diplomatic endeavours to protect journalists in danger.
- Representatives from International IDEA provided an overview of the Global State of Democracy report.

The 28th Meeting of the Governing Council, June 26th, 2018, Santiago, Chile

“

“We understand democracy as a political system that considers the respect towards the human being, regardless of his race, beliefs, social or sexual condition, as fundamental. We believe that values such as tolerance, dialogue, equal opportunities, inclusion and social cohesion, as well as the exercise of freedom of speech are best guaranteed in a context where the rule of law prevails, and institutions work in an effective and transparent way.”

**–Patricio Torres, Secretary General of Foreign Policy,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Chile**



Key highlights:

- Governing Council Member States finalized the first cycle of the GC Renewal Process. Member States reached a consensus on membership renewal of eight Member States: Chile, India, Mali, Mexico, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea and the United States, with no objections presented.
- The GC Renewal Procedure was established during the 23rd GC meeting in Warsaw in December 2016. According to the procedure, “every two years, one-third of the Governing Council Member States shall be requested by the Secretary General in writing to renew their commitment to membership in the Governing Council”.
- The Santiago Governing Council presented an opportunity for civil society to participate in the process with recommendations for the renewing Member States. Other Member States of the Governing Council were also able to present questions and recommendations concerning adherence to the Warsaw Declaration by the eight Member States.
- GC Member States formally adopted the Community's Strategic Plan for 2018-2023, which outlined the Community's new Strategic Objectives.
- Members discussed the CoD's and Member States' activities in relation to major democracy and human rights-related events including: 38th HRC Session, ECOSOC NGO Committee, UN High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development 2018 and 73rd UNGA side events.
- Observers to the 28th Governing Council meeting included: Colombia, Peru and International IDEA.



SG Thomas E. Garrett with Foreign Minister of Chile Roberto Ampuero

Strategic Partnerships

Establishing strategic partnerships with like-minded international and regional organizations outside the Community of Democracies was defined as one of the Operational Objectives in the 2018-2023 Strategic Plan. Accordingly, in 2018, the Permanent Secretariat of the Community of Democracies signed Memoranda of Understanding with two like-minded intergovernmental organizations: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) and the Organization of American States (OAS). Both MoUs strengthen and formalize the already existing relationship with the CoD.



SG Thomas E. Garret of the CoD with SG Luis Almagro of the OAS

Strategic Planning Process

Organization of American States

The Memorandum of Understanding between the PSCD and the OAS was signed on September 28th, 2018, in Washington D.C. by the CoD Secretary General, Thomas E. Garrett and the Secretary General of the OAS, Luis Almagro. As stated in the Agreement, areas of cooperation between the two organizations will include: developing initiatives at the regional level focused on the critical link between democracy and development, promoting inclusive participation in democratic processes and supporting initiatives focused on the protection of civic space.

International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance

The Memorandum of Understanding between the PSCD and International IDEA was signed on November 30th, 2018, in Stockholm by the CoD Secretary General, Thomas E. Garrett and the Secretary General of International IDEA, Yves Leterme. According to the Agreement, the CoD and International IDEA will seek to work closer together on a number of issues including: promotion and support to democracy within Member States of both organizations, promoting discussion and dialogue on the implementation of democratic legal instruments, and developing initiatives focused on the link between democracy and development.



SG Thomas E. Garrett of the CoD with SG Yves Leterme of International IDEA

Adoption of the CoD 2018-2023 Strategic Plan

Launched at the Community's Governing Council session in Washington D.C. in September 2017, the Strategic Planning and Review Process aimed to formulate the Community's first Strategic Plan providing a road map for the Community's work for a five-year period, considering available diplomatic tools, to address challenges and effectively advance its mission in promoting and strengthening democracy worldwide.

Following an extensive, inclusive and participatory collaboration between the PSCD, GC Member States, and civil society organizations, with the technical support of an external consultant, the Strategic Plan for 2018-2023 was adopted at the Community's Governing Council session in Santiago, Chile.

The Strategic Plan reflects the commitment of the Governing Council Member States to strengthen their cooperation to effectively respond to complex challenges to democracy and embrace new opportunities to support democratic consolidation around the world. With the adoption of the Strategic Plan, the Community is determined to address several specific sets of challenges to democracy, including backsliding along several principles of the Warsaw Declaration such as free and fair elections, core civil and political rights, and democratic checks and balances.

Strategic Objectives

In the 2018-2023 Strategic Plan, the Governing Council Member States defined the following Strategic Objectives that will guide the Community's work in the next five years:

1. Governing Council Members encourage adherence to the Warsaw Declaration principles in countries within and outside the Community.
2. Governing Council Members provide sustained support for key democratic consolidation in transitioning countries outside the Community.
3. Governing Council Members increase and deepen their dialogue on the challenges they face as democracies.

From October through December 2018, the PSCD drafted Work Plans, which will operationalize the three Strategic Objectives of the COD in 2019. After a careful review process involving feedback from the Executive Committee Member States, the Work Plans were circulated to Governing Council members for their approval in early January 2019.

New Secondments at the PSCD

In October 2018, the PSCD welcomed two highly-talented diplomats as new team members seconded by two Governing Council Member States.

- Robert Drzazga of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs joined the PSCD team as the Executive Director.
- Nicolae Nastase of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs joined the PSCD as the External Relations Director.

As the Community works towards the implementation of its Strategic Plan, it will greatly benefit from the significant experience of the new staff members.



Robert Drzazga
Executive Director at the PSCD

Most recently worked as the First Counsellor at the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Legal and Treaty Department. Formerly, Deputy Director at the MFA's Legal Treaty Department and Chargé d'Affaires at the Permanent Representation of Poland to the Council of Europe, Strasbourg.

Nicolae Nastase
External Relations Director at the PSCD

Most recently worked as Counsellor at the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs' UN Department, overseeing Romania's candidacy to the UN Security Council. Formerly, Ambassador of Romania to Tunisia, Advisor at the Cabinet of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania, and Deputy Permanent Representative of Romania to the Council of Europe, Strasbourg.

Community of Democracies and Civil Society

The Community of Democracies recognizes the crucial role of civil society in the advancement of democracy worldwide. The Community's Strategic Plan for 2018-2023 underlined the important role played by civil society represented by the International Steering Committee (ISC) in the Governing Council, as a unique asset to the Community and one of its main strengths.

In 2018, civil society continued to play an important role in the CoD's activities and meetings, providing important input to the Governing Council. Members of the ISC participated in the 27th Governing Council session in Oslo, Norway and the 28th Governing Council in Santiago, Chile, where Ms. Paulina Ibarra from Fundacion Multitudes was welcomed as the new ISC Chair elected by the Civil Society Pilar.

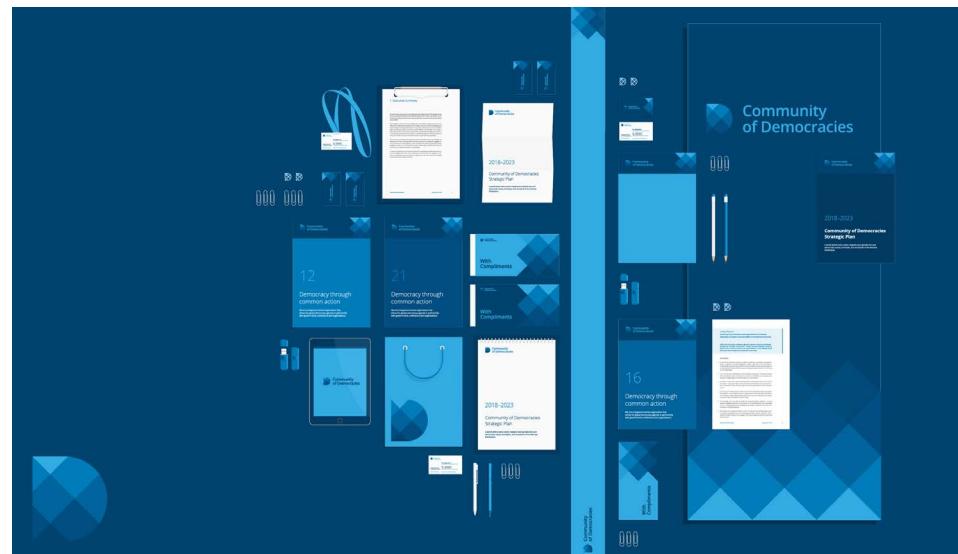
Meetings with representatives of the civil society were also scheduled as part of the Secretary General's official visits to the Governing Council Member States, including: Canada, Romania, the United States, Argentina and the United Kingdom. Additionally, the Secretary General met with civil society actors in the margins of global democracy related events such as at the United Nations Human Rights Council session in Geneva during the month of March; Ninth Global Assembly of the World Movement for Democracy held on May 6-9, 2018 in Dakar, Senegal; and the World Democracy Forum at the Council of Europe held on November 19-21 in Strasbourg, France.

“An active, independent, diverse and vibrant civil society is essential to a strong democracy. The Community of Democracies will continue to support civil society, putting into practice the Civil Society Standards, seeking to coordinate actions by its member states to promote and foster civil society both at home and abroad”
- Secretary General Thomas E. Garrett

New Visual Identity of the Community of Democracies

In 2018, the Permanent Secretariat of the Community of Democracies finalized the rebranding process of the CoD with the adoption of a new visual identity of the organization and a redesigned website. The process was implemented as part of the Community's continued development and reflected the commitment of its Governing Council Member States to shared democratic values.

The Community's new logo: a letter "D" symbolizing democracy filled with a mosaic of different shades of blue representing different approaches to democracy, emphasizes the diversity of the Community's Governing Council Member States united around universal democratic values enshrined in the Warsaw Declaration. The new visual identity was announced in June 2018, to coincide with the 18th anniversary of the adoption of the Warsaw Declaration.



Democracy Events and Activities

In 2018, the Community carried out a wide range of democracy-related activities and events, promoting dialogue, sharing of experiences, and best practices on important issues such as: enhancing civil society participation; empowering youth as key stakeholders in ensuring democracy resilience; and women's participation, especially with regards to their role in sustaining peace.

Enabling and Protecting Civil Society

The following activities carried out by the PSCD contributed to the debate on the important role of civil society in strengthening democracy:

Meeting with the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association – Geneva, Switzerland

On June 20th, the Community of Democracies (CoD) organized a meeting with the recently appointed United Nations Special Rapporteur (UNSR) on Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association (FoAA) to discuss the importance of strong democratic institutions and possible synergies between the CoD and UNSR for the protection of civil society. Hosted at the Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations in Geneva, attendees included the UNSR and his team; 17 UN Geneva missions of the CoD Governing Council; the CoD's Working Group on Enabling and Protecting Civil Society (EPSC); and various civil society organizations.

Canadian Ambassador Ms. Rosemary McCarney opened the session by stressing that strong democratic institutions (SDG 16) are an "absolute and fundamental" requirement for strong civic spaces. She also highlighted the initiatives for the protection of human rights, including the G7, hosted on June 8-9th in Canada.

The UNSR mentioned that the promotion of democracy should be "everyone's concern" and praised the CoD for representing every continent in its Governing Council, a testament to the Community's faith that democracy is a viable means of achieving sustainable development across the world. He also spoke about key areas of focus during his mandate, including: (1) The digital space and its implications for the relationship between security, privacy, and FoAA; (2) The relationship between good civil society standards and a strong economy; and (3) The role of youth in building and fortifying democratic institutions.

After a fruitful discussion between the UNSR and the CoD Governing Member States, the CoD Secretary General, Thomas E. Garrett closed the discussion by introducing the CoD's new Strategic Plan, based on the Community's founding vision in 2000, whereby democratic states can and should help one another preserve and consolidate their democratic institutions.

Member States present at the meeting reaffirmed their commitment to the democratic principles articulated in the Warsaw Declaration, including enabling and protecting civil society, encouraging each other promote collaboration between the CoD and the UNSR, and the possibility of joint initiatives in this domain.

Project "Designing new guidelines by which citizens, civil society organizations and governments can work better together"

In 2018, with the generous funding assistance of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom, the PSCD implemented the project "Designing new guidelines by which citizens, civil society organizations and governments can work better together". The initiative aimed to promote the implementation of the Community of Democracies' Civil Society Standards by sharing best practices in supporting and enabling civic space and engaging with civil society as dialogue partners.

Best Practice in Community of Democracies' member states' engagement with, and protection of, civil society

In an effort to lead by example, and in support of the principles outlined in the Civil Society Standards, the Permanent Secretariat of the Community of Democracies (PSCD) developed a publication on "**Best practice in Community of Democracies' Member States' engagement with, and protection of, civil society**".

The publication was launched in Warsaw on November 23rd, 2018, at a side event at the Warsaw Dialogue for Democracy. At the event, Senior Advisor Patricia Galdamez presented an overview of the publication's main findings including general trends in civil society space in CoD GC Member States, specific steps that have been taken by states to create a safe and enabling environment for civil society, particular challenges faced by civil society organizations (CSOs), and recommendations on how states can better protect CSOs.

Following the presentation, a discussion was held between the Secretary General of the CoD and the Director of the Council of Europe's Office in Warsaw, on the importance of civil society in democratic strengthening. The discussion highlighted how a healthy civil society is a fundamental pillar in a democracy and an indicator of democratic resilience. Both speakers agreed that democracy building is an ever-changing process that requires constant work.

The publication was developed as part of the "Designing new guidelines by which citizens, civil society organizations and governments can work better together" project.



Youth Inclusion and Empowerment

The Community of Democracies recognizes that increasing young people's civic engagement and political participation is crucial to build inclusive societies and strong democratic institutions. As stated in the Community's Strategic Plan, youth empowerment is one of the cross-cutting themes mainstreamed into the Community's activities as part of its mission to strengthen democracy worldwide. The importance of youth was also highlighted in Secretary General's statements on the occasion of the World Youth Day in August 2018 and World Youth Day for Democracy in 2018.



To facilitate continued discussion on the importance of youth empowerment and inclusion, in 2018 the CoD organized the following activities:

The Role of Youth in the Peace and Security Dialogue

Panel discussion held on the margins of the 37th Human Rights Council in Geneva in March 2018.

The event was carried out by the PSCD in cooperation with the CoD Working Group on Education for Democracy (WG ED). Sixteen young participants, selected on the basis of their activist experience, came from ODA-recipient countries, including seven persons from the CoD Governing Council member states.

The event entailed a panel discussion held at the Palais de Nations in the margins of the UN HRC 37th session, hosted by the Permanent Mission of Norway; and a capacity building workshop for young leaders, held in the premises of the Permanent Missions of Poland and Romania to UNOG, which was complemented by a training provided on essential basic diplomatic skills useful for interacting within diplomatic fora.



The panel discussion held in the Palais de Nations on 15 March 2018, included as speakers: Ms. Cheryl Frank (South Africa), expert from the Institute for Security Studies (South Africa), who co-authored the Democracy & Security Report; Ms. Augusta Featherston (US), expert, Youth Focal Point and Coordinator for youth participation programs in OSCE/ODHIR;

Mr. Lasha Shakulashvili (Georgia), former Youth Representative of Georgia to the United Nations, specialist in the International Foundation for Electoral Systems in Georgia; Ms. Brechtje Kemp, Senior Programme Officer, International IDEA; and Mr. Thomas E. Garrett, Secretary General of the Community of Democracies. Speakers identified challenges to youth engagement in the peace and security dialogue and also showcased good practices for their participation, in the context of the UN SDGs. They also debated on the possible methods to implement UN Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security (2015).

The capacity building workshop was delivered by experts from the International Center on Nonviolent Conflicts (ICNC), while Romania hosted and provided expert training on diplomatic skills chaired by H.E. Ambassador of Romania to UNOG, Mr. Adrian Vierita.

During the capacity-building workshop young leaders engaged in a discussion on their effective participation in the peace and security dialogue and exchanged their experiences in peacebuilding work. The various events helped to identify a core-group of young leaders that the Community of Democracies could further work with in the area of peace and security dialogue. The activity was implemented as part of the "Designing new guidelines by which citizens, civil society organizations and governments can work better together" project.



The role of youth in democratic resilience

Side-event held on the margins of the UN General Assembly in September 2018

The side-event held on September 25th, hosted by Romania at the UNGA and coordinated by the PSCD, provided an opportunity for Governing Council Member States to have an open conversation about the challenges to youth engagement in democracies and possible concerted actions in response to these challenges.

Young leaders from Syria, El Salvador and Romania participated as speakers. The panel discussed the role that youth play in strengthening democracy, common challenges to youth's civic engagement as well as good practices for increasing youth political participation.

More specifically, the side-event addressed the role of youth in protecting democratic systems and building democratic resilience; ways to better engage with youth activists, leaders and organizations to improve the perception of the benefits of democratic systems; good practices on promoting the participation of youth in decision-making; and reducing barriers to youth engagement, including poverty, unemployment, and lack of access to education, with a view to achieve the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

Based on the discussions at the side-event, the CoD published a **Summary Report** that outlines the main points raised at the session.



Advancing Women's Political Empowerment

As stated in the Strategic Plan for 2018-2023, gender equality is one of the cross-cutting themes mainstreamed into activities undertaken by the Community. In 2018, the CoD continued to work towards the advancement of women's political empowerment, including the role of women in countering and preventing violent extremism as well as the inclusion of women in peace-building processes. The following events carried out by the PSCD contributed to the debate on the important role of women in these two areas.

Women: A Powerful Force for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism

Policy session held on the margins of the 2018 Women Political Leaders Summit in June 2018

Building on the findings of the CoD's Democracy & Security Dialogue that highlighted the positive effect of female empowerment and gender equality on the success, impact and sustainability of countering violent extremism and preventing violent extremism programming, on June 8th, the Community held a policy session on "Women: A Powerful Force for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism". The session explored how gender-based approaches to countering and preventing violent extremism may enhance the impact of these responses and aimed to identify good practices for increasing women's political participation.



“

“Any countering violent extremism and preventing violent extremism approach must recognize that women and girls should not be seen only as victims.”

- Amarsanaa Darisuren, OSCE ODIHR

“

“We need to develop reintegration and rehabilitation programs through a gender sense and, as we liberate spaces from terrorist organizations, we need to empower women”

- Fauziya Abdi Ali, President of Women in International Security (WIIS) Kenya.

Experts contributions served as an input for the CoD's **Summary Report** published following the session, which summarized the discussion and outlined recommendations on increasing women's participation in preventing and countering violent extremism.

Building Sustainable Peace: The Importance of Women's Inclusion

Satellite event held on the margins of the World Forum for Democracy in November 2018



The Community of Democracies carried out a satellite event on “Building Sustainable Peace: The Importance of Women’s Inclusion” in the margins of the World Forum for Democracy at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg on November 19, 2018.

The panel discussion was built around the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. Women experts in the field, provided specific lessons learned and best practices for advancing women's participation in sustaining peace from Syria, the Balkans, Central Africa and South America. Main issues highlighted included: ensuring meaningful participation of women and inclusive decision-making at the national, regional and global levels; the nexus between democracy and security; the role of just and strong institutions for sustaining peace.

The satellite event was conducted in the framework of a newly-launched “Engaging Women in Sustainable Peace (EWSP)” project, generously funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea. The project seeks to contribute to international debate on women in the peace and security dialogue by inferring consolidated best practices from case studies. The outcome of the discussion will serve as input for the publication to be developed by the CoD under the EWSP project.

UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda

As emphasized in the Strategic Plan for 2018-2023, the Community's mission to support democratic institutions and promote the democratic values enshrined in the Warsaw Declaration is firmly anchored in the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. While Goal 16 created the visible frame to contribute to strengthening of democracy worldwide, and its elements of peace, just and inclusive societies are central to the mandate of the Community, other Sustainable Development Goals of particular importance to the work of the CoD also include: Goal 5, which sets out to achieve gender equality, and Goal 17 on strengthening the global partnership for sustainable development.

In 2018, the CoD participated in the following activities and events related to the SDGs:

Busan Democracy Forum 2018

The Busan Democracy Forum (BuDF) 2018 was a joint initiative with the Permanent Secretariat of the Community of Democracies (PSCD), Asia Democracy Network (ADN), Asia Development Alliance (ADA), the Local Organizing Committee (LOC) of Busan with the support of the Republic of Korea Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and the Metropolitan City of Busan. The multi-stakeholder forum, held from January 22nd -24th, 2018 in Busan, Republic of Korea counted with approximately 300 stakeholders from civil society, academia, and government.



Photo credits: Daniel Corks

The Forum provided an opportunity to discuss the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs) and specific progress made on the implementation of Goal 16 aimed at fostering peaceful, just and inclusive societies, within the region of Asia and the Pacific.

Participants from diverse sectors gathered under the SDGs Agenda to discuss how different disciplines could inter-connect to strengthen the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs. It was a unique opportunity to have various sectors together discussing challenges and opportunities to further the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

At the event, the PSCD presented the CoD Voluntary Supplemental Indicators for Goal 16 on “peaceful, just and inclusive societies”, developed in September 2017 as a supplemental and voluntary resource for states to use in measuring progress towards Goal 16.

“The Community of Democracies believe that the effective monitoring of Goal 16, done in partnership with national stakeholders including civil society, will be critical in making progress in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda”

– Secretary General in his opening remarks at the Busan Democracy Forum.

Inter-Regional Dialogue on Democracy (IRDD): The role of global and regional organizations in the advancement of Sustainable Development Goal 16

A multi-stakeholder workshop held on the margins of the 37th Session of the UN Human Rights Council in March 2018.

A multi-stakeholder workshop was organized by **International IDEA**, **United Nations Office in Geneva** and the **Community of Democracies** on the margins of the **37th Session of the UN Human Rights Council** in Geneva on March 13, 2018.

The Inter-Regional workshop discussed good practices, lessons learned, as well as challenges faced by international and regional organizations in support to their Member States for the achievement of Agenda 2030 and more specifically on Goal 16. Lessons learned and good practices adopted to overcome challenges and limitations were identified, and ideas for collaboration of regional and global organizations with the UN bodies aimed at ensuring Goal 16 implementation, were also discussed. Community of Democracies' activities for continued support of the implementation of Goal 16, where presented during this meeting.

Additionally, on September 27th, as a follow-up to the IRDD workshop, **the Seventh High-Level meeting of the IRDD on “Sustainable Democracy and SDG16: Path towards achieving peace, justice and strong institutions”**, was held in the margins of the UNGA in New York.

The meeting brought together the Secretaries General of global and regional organizations that are part of the IRDD, to analyze, discuss and identify best practices and channels of collaboration for the achievement of SDG 16.

Input provided both in the workshop and the High-Level meeting will contribute to the formulation of concrete guidelines and policy recommendations to inform stakeholders and will form the basis for the development and production of a knowledge product led by International IDEA with the contributions of the partners of the IRDD, including the Community of Democracies. Results of the IRDD are expected to be presented at the UN 2019 High Level Political Forum on “Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality”.



Promoting Democracy

New Tools of Civic and Public Responsibility

Panel discussion held on the margins of the Warsaw Dialogue for Democracy in November 2018

On November 22nd, the PSCD in partnership with International IDEA held a panel discussion titled “New Tools of Civic and Public Responsibility” on the margins of the Warsaw Dialogue for Democracy in Warsaw. The panel discussion served as a platform for experts to have an open conversation about the opportunities and the challenges that new technologies offer to modern democracies, and how these technologies and social media can be used to promote political participation, increase democratic resilience, and strengthen civic oversight.

Opening remarks were provided by the CoD Secretary General, Thomas E. Garrett, who reaffirmed the CoD's commitment to “the right of every person to freedom of opinion and of expression, including to exchange and receive ideas and information through any media, regardless of frontiers” (Warsaw Declaration, Principle 4).

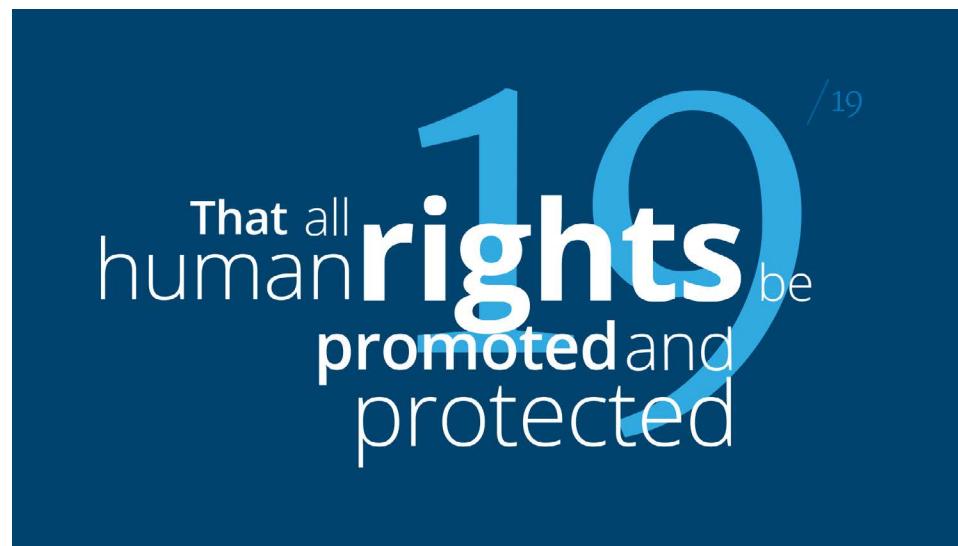
The panel discussion, moderated by Senior Advisor Patricia Galdamez, exposed positive effects, such as how technology has empowered citizens and opened new opportunities to exercise their rights. Speakers identified challenges in the use of technologies such as cybersecurity and increasing threats to the integrity of democracy.

The Value of International & Regional Democratic Instruments for Sustainable Democracies

Side-event held on the margins of the 2018 Global Forum on Latin America and the Caribbean in September 2018

The Permanent Secretariat of the Community of Democracies (PSCD), the Organization of American States and International IDEA held a joint side-event on the role of international and regional instruments for the promotion and protection of democracy, at the **2018 Global Forum on Latin America and the Caribbean** in the Union League Club, organized on the margins of the 73rd United Nations General Assembly.

The panel discussion served as an opportunity to foster a dialogue on the importance of international and regional instruments, specifically the Community's Warsaw Declaration and the Inter-American Democratic Charter of the OAS, both essential elements for the promotion, protection and sustainability of democracies. Additionally, the event explored how the advancement of the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, and more specifically SDG 16, can help address democratic backsliding globally, with the specific case study on the Americas.



Presentations from the Secretaries-General of the Organization of American States Mr. Luis Almagro and the Community of Democracies, Mr. Thomas E. Garrett, were made on the relevance of reinforcing and promoting democratic legal instruments, highlighting the Inter-American Democratic Charter and the Warsaw Declaration. These interventions were followed by a presentation by the Secretary-General of the International IDEA, Mr. Yves Leterme, focusing on the current state of democracy and the publication "The Global State of Democracy".

Myanmar Constitutional Democracy Project Phase III

The project funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea built on the PSCD's earlier work in Myanmar, which included support for a series of constitutional workshops. In the third phase of the project, the PSCD held two constitutional democracy workshops in Myanmar during the month of February. Both events gathered key stakeholders from Myanmar and leading constitutional scholars from around the world who shared knowledge and experiences related to a number of constitutional democracy aspects.

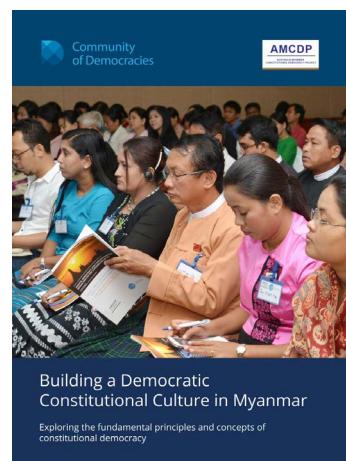
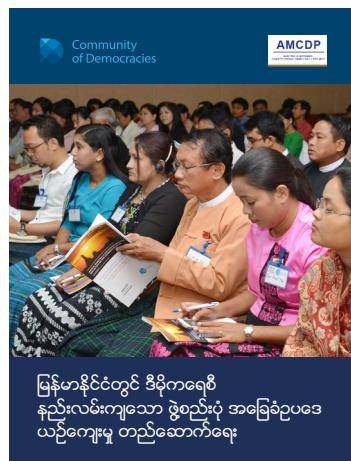
This was followed by a publication of the: "**Building a Democratic Constitutional Culture in Myanmar**" booklet, developed by a consortium of constitutional scholars from Australian universities (University of New South Wales and Australian Catholic University), which contains a summary of fundamental principles and concepts of constitutional democracy with a particular focus on those most relevant to the situation in Myanmar.



On November 23rd, the PSCD launched the publication in Warsaw, inviting Warsaw-based Ambassadors of the GC Member States, representatives of international organizations and academia to the presentation.

Opening remarks were delivered by Mr. Thomas E. Garrett, Secretary General of the CoD and H.E. Mira Sun, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Poland, on the cooperation between the Ministry of the Republic of Korea and the CoD. Professor Martin Krygier, from the University of New South Wales, presented key publication highlights, noting “this booklet, together with constitutional democracy workshops held in Myanmar in February 2018, represent the effort to increase capacity of stakeholders to participate in democratic reforms, as well as to contribute to the development and support of a culture of constitutionalism in Myanmar”.

On November 20th, the launch of the booklet also took place at the Yangon Political Science Association, in Yangon, Myanmar. The event was attended by Burmese government officials, politicians, civil society activists and academics.



Secretary General's first official visit to The Gambia

In the framework of the CoD's new Strategic Objectives, particularly Strategic Objective 2, which states that Governing Council Member States coordinate their support for democratic consolidation in transitioning countries, Secretary General travelled to The Gambia to meet with high-level government officials and representatives of civil society organizations to discuss how the Community of Democracies may support democratic reforms that are underway in The Republic of The Gambia.





Reimagining democracy – Secretary General's article for CIVICUS Alliance

In an article written for the CIVICUS Alliance's series on reimagining democracy, Secretary General Thomas E. Garrett discussed the ongoing need for democracy adjustment, priorities for democratic governments to return to the democratic spirit, and the CoD's role in coordinating concerted effort to advance democratic freedoms worldwide.

“Rather than dwell in despair over democracy’s decline or accept decline as a new normal, democratic countries and their civil societies need to move to a proactive position, to accept there are complex challenges democracies will always face and agree to work together to resolve them, and reimagine democracy”
– SG Thomas E. Garrett

Contact Us

Community of Democracies Permanent Secretariat

Al. Ujazdowskie 41, 00-540 Warsaw, Poland

Tel. +48 22 375 90 00
Fax. +48 22 319 56 28

E-mail: info@community-democracies.org
Website: community-democracies.org

Social networks

facebook.com/CommunityofDemocracies

twitter.com/CommunityofDem

youtube.com/user/CommunityDemocracies

flickr.com/people/communityofdemocracies