



INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRAT UNION

IDU UPDATE - 26 June 2008

- 1. IDU Party Leaders' Meeting: John Howard re-elected Chairman**
- 2. No recognition of illegitimate re-election of Mugabe**
- 3. IDU calls for real democracy in Cuba**
- 4. IDU calls upon Nicaragua to respect democracy**
- 5. Stop the oppression in Belarus**
- 6. IDU calls for democracy in Venezuela**
- 7. IDU supports non-violent movement in Sri Lanka**
- 8. Next IDU Executive**

1. IDU Party Leaders' Meeting: John Howard re-elected Chairman

The IDU Party Leaders, at their meeting in Paris on June 26, 2008, unanimously re-elected the Hon John Howard as Chairman, and elected the IDU officers for the coming three years.

On behalf of IDU's Party Leaders' Meeting the Chairman issued statements on a number of important international issues; concerning Zimbabwe, Cuba, Nicaragua, Belarus, Venezuela and Sri Lanka (see points 2 – 7 below).

The IDU Officers for 2008 – 2011:

Chairman

The Hon John HOWARD AC, Liberal Party of Australia

Deputy Chairman

The Honourable Jan PETERSEN MP, EDU Co-Chairman, Conservative Party, Norway

Assistant Chairmen

The Right Honourable William HAGUE MP PC, Conservative Party, United Kingdom

The Honourable Shane L. STONE AC PGDK QC, Liberal Party of Australia

Vice Chairmen

The Honourable Kostas KARAMANLIS MP, EDU Co-Chairman, Prime Minister of Greece, New Democracy Party, Greece

The Honourable Dr. Ivo SANADER MP, Prime Minister, Republic of Croatia, Croatian Democratic Union

The Honourable Bendt BENDTSEN MP, Deputy Prime Minister, Conservative Party, Denmark

The Honourable Dr. Pin-Kung CHIANG, Vice Chairman, Kuomintang (KMT), Taiwan
Chairman Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF)

The Honourable Stockwell DAY MP PC, Conservative Party, Canada, Minister of Public Safety

The Honourable Alexander DOWNER MP, Liberal Party of Australia

The Honourable Lourdes FLORES, Party Leader, Partido Social Cristiano, Peru

The Honourable Leonid GOZMAN, Union of Right Forces, Russia

The Honourable Peter HINTZE MdB, CDU Germany, Parliamentary State Secretary for Industry and Science

The Honourable Erwin HUBER MdL, CSU Germany, Party Chairman, Minister of State for Finance

The Honourable Carlos LARRAIN, Party Leader, National Renovation Party, Chile

The Honourable Peter MACMANU, Chairman DUA, New Patriotic Party, Ghana

The Honourable Etibar MAMMADOV, Party Leader, the National Independence Party of Azerbaijan (NIPA)

The Honourable Wilfried MARTENS, Chairman EPP, Belgium

The Honourable Mariano RAJOY MP, Party Leader, Partido Popular, Spain

The Honourable Marco SOLARES MP, Honorary Chairman UPLA, The Unionista Party, Guatemala

The Honourable Ranil WICKREMESINGHE MP, Chairman APDU, United National Party, Sri Lanka

Treasurer

The Lord ASHCROFT KCMG, Conservative Party, United Kingdom

Political Auditor

Mrs. Eva GUSTAVSSON, Head of International Office, Moderate Party Sweden

Executive Secretary

Mr. Eirik MOEN, the Conservative Party of Norway

2. IDU: No recognition of illegitimate re-election of Mugabe

Having lost both the parliamentary and the first round of the presidential election, Robert Mugabe and ZANU PF have launched a campaign of thuggery, intimidation and indiscriminate killing of their political opponents. They have made it impossible for the opposition to run an effective election campaign and have deliberately set out to terrorize Zimbabwean voters.

We, the members of the IDU, believing in multiparty democracy and in free and fair elections, call on President Mugabe and ZANU PF to cease violence immediately and to respect the outcome of the first round of the presidential election.

We call upon the international community to refuse to recognize the illegitimate re-election of Robert Mugabe. The IDU urges the members of SADCC and the African Union to do all in their power to ensure that the human rights and the democratic choice of the people of Zimbabwe are respected.

3. IDU calls for real democracy in Cuba

Despite the announcement of cosmetic changes in Cuba, the underlying nature of the government remains unchanged, and the Castro regime's repression against Cuban democrats has increased.

The IDU calls on the Cuban government to demonstrate their commitment to democratic change by doing the following:

- 1) Free all political prisoners;
- 2) Grant access to the International Red Cross to Cuba's prisons;
- 3) End the Communist Party monopoly and recognize opposition political parties.

4. IDU calls upon Nicaragua to respect democracy

The International Democrat Union is deeply concerned at moves by the Nicaraguan government to prevent opposition parties from taking part in the upcoming local elections.

We note that the Partido Conservador has met the requirements of Nicaragua's electoral laws. We therefore condemn the decision by the country's electoral commission to bar the party from competing, pending an administrative investigation that will not be completed until the election has taken place.

The IDU Party Leaders Meeting calls upon the authorities in Nicaragua to comply with international standards for free and fair elections, and cease immediately their arbitrary actions against a legitimate political party.

5. IDU: Stop the oppression in Belarus

IDU expresses its concern at the continued persecution of the democratic opposition in Belarus. Political imprisonment, arbitrary arrests and physical assaults on activists, as well as firing from jobs, expulsion from universities, forcible calling into the army, are unacceptable.

The IDU calls on the Belarus authorities to immediately and unconditionally stop the oppression, to allow the democratic opposition to fully participate in the elections and to

allow independent and meaningful monitoring of the elections. Without these conditions elections cannot be recognized as free and fair.

The IDU Party Leaders meeting congratulates the United Democratic Forces of Belarus with their agreement on a unified list of candidates in the upcoming parliamentary elections in September.

6. IDU calls for democracy in Venezuela

The Venezuelan government, led by Hugo Chavez, is using non-democratic means to impede the participation of opposition candidates in the next electoral process in Venezuela.

By preventing 386 candidates from competing in the next election, the Chavez government is trying to hinder the free expression of the opposition in Venezuela and limit the right of the people to elect their representatives freely.

The IDU Party Leaders' meeting demand respect for democracy and free elections in Venezuela, and an immediate end to the persecution of opposition candidates.

7. IDU supports non-violent movement in Sri Lanka

The IDU extends its full support to the non-violent agitation movement launched by the United National Party, to restore the democratic rights of the people of Sri Lanka, and calls on the IDU member parties to raise these issues in their respective parliaments.

8. Next IDU Executive

The next meeting of IDU's Executive Committee will be held Thursday, 4 September 2008, in Minneapolis – St. Paul, in connection with the Republican National Convention

With best wishes,

Eirik Moen
IDU Secretary General

NEWS: You can submit news to be included in the UPDATE and information about events to be included in the calendar by sending it to the IDU secretariat. Documents may be edited. Articles and viewpoints printed in the UPDATE do not necessarily mean the endorsement by the International Democrat Union of a particular policy, unless the Executive or the Party Leaders meeting has already supported it expressly.