



centre for **democratic** institutions

CDI SPECIAL LECTURE

Can Afghanistan be a Democracy? The Problem of Political Parties

Dr Norm Kelly

Where: Crawford Lecture Theatre, *Sir Roland Wilson Building, McCoy Circuit, Australian National University, Canberra

When: 1 -2 pm, Wednesday 1 April 2009

Political parties are essential components of democracy, and a consolidated party system is particularly important in transitional states such as Afghanistan. But there are currently more than 100 registered political parties in Afghanistan, and at the 2005 national election only 15% of candidates declared a party affiliation. CDI Associate Dr Norm Kelly has recently visited Afghanistan to assess the current state of political parties in the lead-up to elections due to be held later this year and in 2010. In his talk, Dr Kelly provides an overview of the country's electoral system, the ethnic make-up of Afghanistan that has such an influence on Afghan politics, and the current party system. He discusses the prospects for achieving a strong party system in the country, and this year's presidential election and the national assembly elections due to be held in 2010.

Dr Norm Kelly recently completed his PhD on the topic of Australian electoral system reforms through the Political Science Program at the ANU. In 2006 Norm developed and presented CDI's inaugural Political Party Development Course, and in 2009 will convene this annual training course for the fourth year.

Norm was a Member of the Legislative Council of Western Australia, representing the Australian Democrats from 1997 to 2001. During this term, Norm and his Democrats colleague held the balance of power in Western Australia's upper house. After leaving Parliament, Norm was elected to the National Executive of the Democrats from 2001 to 2003, including one term as National Deputy President. Norm was also the Democrats' Western Australian Campaign Director for the 2001 Federal election, in which Senator Andrew Murray was re-elected.

* The Sir Roland Wilson Building is building no. 120 on McCoy Circuit (See square D1, on the ANU campus map @ <http://campusmap.anu.edu.au/largemap.asp>)

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