

SPECIAL SECTION

Unity in Diversity

INDIA 2007



Introduction

The special section of this issue of *Federations* magazine tackles two classic themes of federal governance, diversity and inter-governmental relations, and how they shape the internal politics of several federal countries.

These eight articles address themes of central interest to practitioners of federalism. They were chosen to also appeal to the appetites of the less initiated.

The selection includes pieces on unity and diversity in Ethiopia, India, Nigeria and Switzerland, four countries who value their respective forms of diversity and have found unique ways of promoting it in order to strengthen the unity of their nations.

The common thread is that laws have been adopted to protect certain rights of minorities.

Two of the four articles on intergovernmental relations focus on how Spain and Italy continue gradually shifting power to their constituent units, demonstrating how a certain level of conflict between the central authority and the constituent units is inevitable and no doubt necessary.

The other two pieces examine politics in India through the prism of India's fascinating multi-party system and the realignment of power sharing within the country.

These topics, diversity and intergovernmental relations form two of the four core themes of the Fourth International Conference on Federalism in new Delhi from Nov. 5-7, the other two being local governments and federal systems; and

fiscal federalism, the subject of a recent special section of *Federations Magazine*.

This is the year of India's Diamond Jubilee, 60 years of independence. It is thus most fitting that the International Conference, whose theme Unity in Diversity: Learning from Each Other, be held in a country whose enduring unity has been maintained through its considerable diversity. There is much to learn from the Indian experience.

We trust these articles will inform and resonate both with you our regular reader and you, the conference participant who is reading us for the first time. 

- **Rod Macdonell**, Senior Editor