

## A GLOBAL DIALOGUE ON FEDERALISM

*A Global Dialogue on Federalism* is an innovative program of the Forum of Federations and the International Association of Centers for Federal Studies (IACFS). Its goal is to engage participants in a comparative dialogue about core themes on federalism, with the aims of learning from each other and building an international network. The knowledge and ideas generated from the dialogue are captured in publications on each theme, fostering future learning opportunities.

The full program will feature more than a dozen themes on federalism of contemporary relevance for those with an interest in federal governance. Each theme is being examined through a process of country roundtables, an international comparative roundtable, a web-based discussion forum, and the production of a booklet and book. The publications will document and synthesize the insights gained from on-going dialogue and from additional primary research. The first two theme publications are scheduled for release late in 2004.

The first five themes being explored are:

- Constitutional Origins, Structure, and Change in Federal Democracies
- Distribution of Powers and Responsibilities in Federal Countries
- Legislative and Executive Governance in Federal Countries
- Fiscal Federalism
- Foreign Relations in Federal Systems

Each theme will feature the experiences and challenges of eight to twelve federal systems, offering a mix of established and new federal systems. A “Theme Coordinator” is chosen to plan and coordinate one theme process and to serve as the editor of the related book. For each featured country, an expert on the theme is selected to be the “Country Coordinator”. This person organizes the country roundtable and serves as the author of the booklet article and country chapter related to the theme.

Core funding for the program is provided by the Forum of Federations. A coordinated fundraising effort is being undertaken by the Forum, the IACFS, and others involved in the program to obtain additional support.

The Forum and the IACFS bring complementary strengths to the Global Dialogue program. The Forum contributes contacts from its international network and expertise in enhancing political dialogue and producing publications. It also provides core staffing and funding to the program. The IACFS and its member centers contribute their international contacts as well as their expertise on federalism and experience in editing published resources. Both partners are excited about the enormous potential of this program to improve the practice of federalism and availability of current resources on this important subject worldwide.

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