



IJCSL NEWSLETTER

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SPECIAL REPORT: TSUNAMI AND EARTHQUAKE RELIEF

WORLDWIDE RELIEF EFFORT LAUNCHED BY CHARITIES AND INDIVIDUAL DONORS

ICCSL joins other civil society organizations around the world in helping alert both individual and organization donors to the opportunities available for sending contributions to support the relief efforts for victims of the tsunami and earthquake disaster in South and Southeast Asia. The [United States International Grantmaking Project \(USIG\) of the Council on Foundations](#) and [Grantmakers Without Borders \(Gw/oB\)](#), both ICCSL partners, have posted information about support organizations and efforts on their websites. There have been reports of fake “tsunami relief” sites being set up on the Internet, and we recommend that readers of the Newsletter access only the most trusted sources for directing any contributions to the relief efforts.

Recent media reports have noted the incredible outpouring of support from international and local individuals and organizations in the days following the unprecedented year-end disaster. The most difficult issues now are how to coordinate all of the current relief efforts and how to provide aid and development assistance as the immediate needs begin to be met. Local and international NGOs and local philanthropists will be crucial if these programs are to succeed as time goes on.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AND FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

AFRICAN REGION—AU CALLS FOR STRONGER LOCAL NGOS

The deputy head of the African Union (AU) underscored the need for capacity building and additional resources for local NGOs, particularly in post-conflict situations and in troubled regions such as Darfur. According to an [IRIN](#) news article published on 7 December 2004, Patrick Mazimhaka said that African aid organizations are vital to combat crises, as they help to avoid delays in aid reaching local communities. He was speaking at the launch of an international symposium held in Addis Ababa. Other senior officials of the UN Economic Commission for Africa noted that collective efforts on the part of the governments, NGOs, civil society, and international aid organizations can bring a smooth transition from relief to sustainable development.

INDIA—GOVERNMENT INTRODUCES RIGHT TO INFORMATION BILL 2004

The “[Right to Information Bill 2004](#),” sponsored and backed by the Government was introduced in the lower house (Lok Sabha) of the Indian Parliament on 23 December 2004. According to a news report published by the [HINDUSTAN TIMES](#), the bill is designed to ensure maximum disclosure and includes a mechanism to review decisions of the public officials. It also establishes penalties for failure to provide information.



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UNITED KINGDOM—PUBLIC SECTOR UNPREPARED FOR COMPLIANCE WITH NEW FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

As the deadline looms for meeting the compliance requirements of the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act, a report of the [Constitutional Affairs Committee](#) (CAC) of the Parliament warns that many government agencies and public sector bodies are unprepared to process the data requests that will be made. According to the report, the state of preparedness is “patchy,” and it blames the Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA) for its failure to provide early enough guidance to public bodies on the implementation of the new FOI Act.

INTERNATIONAL—DECLARATION ON ACCESS TO INFORMATION BY OAS, OSCE, AND UN

The UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, and the OAS Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression issued a joint declaration on freedom of information on 6 December 2004. In it they ask governments to “adopt access to information laws establishing a presumption of openness based on the principle of maximum disclosure, and to amend their secrecy laws to ensure that they do not undermine access to information,” according to a [FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION](#) (IFEX) press release issued on 7 December 2004.

FISCAL MATTERS

GEORGIA—NEW TAX LAW CONTAINS BENEFITS FOR NGOs AND THEIR DONORS

Vaja Salamadze, the Chairman of the [Civil Society Institute \(CSI\)](#) in Tbilisi, reports that Georgia’s new tax code not only renews the current exemptions for all NGOs in the Republic of Georgia, but also contains special new benefits for charity organizations. These include a deduction for donations to organizations that qualify as charity organizations. For further information, please consult the CSI website.

NICARAGUA—CONGRESS PROPOSES TO ELIMINATE TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR MASS MEDIA ORGANIZATIONS

A proposed constitutional amendment pending in the Congress of Nicaragua is designed to eliminate the tax exemptions for mass media organizations, according to a news article published by [LA PRENSA](#) on 2 December 2004. The current exemptions are guaranteed in article 68 of the Constitution. The proposed constitutional change is considered to be an “attack against the right to the freedom of expression and information of all the Nicaraguans.”

UNITED KINGDOM—VOLUNTARY SECTOR VOICES CONCERNS ABOUT NEW LOTTERY BILL

Following the publication of the new Lottery Bill in late November, the voluntary sector has expressed serious concern about some of its clauses, which would reserve



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wide powers for the Culture Secretary. According to a news story published by [THE GUARDIAN](#) on 8 December 2004, “the bill has prompted criticism from charities that fear its measures will allow the government to dictate who and what ‘good causes’ are funded and how.”

UNITED STATES—SPENDING BILL FOR 2005 CUTS FEDERAL PROGRAMS THAT SUPPORT CHARITIES

The not-for-profit sector in the United States is experiencing new anxiety about its financial health. U.S. NPOs have expressed concerns about the Federal appropriations bill for 2005, which envisages a “cut [in] a broad array of federal programs that support charities and the people they serve, including programs in housing, social services, education, and national service.” An article in the 1 December 2004 issue of [The Chronicle of Philanthropy](#) discusses some of the relevant budget cuts.

FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND PEACEFUL ASSEMBLY

BAHRAIN—DRAFT LAW ON RALLIES REJECTED BY PARLIAMENT; ALTERNATIVE DRAFT DEVELOPED BY CIVIL SOCIETY

After the Parliament legislative affairs committee [rejected](#) the government’s proposed law governing rallies, demonstrations and gatherings, stating that it was unconstitutional and restrictive of freedom of citizens’ participation in the political process, a [committee of civil society groups in the country drew together](#) to draft an alternative version of the proposed legislation. According to the [GULF DAILY NEWS](#) of 27 December 2004, the group has now completed its work on an alternative draft law. After the final approval from the heads of all societies and unions, this draft is expected to be presented to the Parliament shortly after 11 January 2005. The government-proposed draft law, which was sent to the Parliament in November (see the **December** 2004 issue of the **IJCSL-N**), provided for jail terms and fines for those participating in unauthorized demonstrations and protests.

EAST TIMOR—HRW CRITICIZES NEW LAW ON FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY AND DEMONSTRATION

The Parliament of East Timor passed a new law on “Freedom, Assembly and Demonstration” in December. [HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH](#) (HRW), in its news release of 29 December 2004, expressed serious concern regarding the new legislation and urged President Xanana Gusmao to veto the law. According to HRW, the new legislation is restrictive of the rights of individuals and groups to freedom of expression and assembly and violates international law as well as the constitution of the country.



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FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

CENTRAL AFRICA—PRESS FREEDOM DETERIORATES IN REGION

Journalistes En Danger (JED) has published a report titled “[The State of Press Freedom in Central Africa](#).” According to an International Freedom of Expression Exchange (IFEX) [press release](#) of 10 December 2004, the report documents the weak and alarming state of the press freedom in the region.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC—PARLIAMENT ABOLISHES PRISON TERMS FOR PRESS OFFENSES

In an effort to reform the press code, the transitional Parliament of the Central African Republic passed a law on 25 November 2004, which ends prison terms for press offenses. A [REPORTERS WITHOUT BORDERS](#) news article of 26 November 2004 discusses with approval the de-criminalization of press offenses in CAR.

GREECE—DRAFT LAW TO CHANGE MEDIA OWNERSHIP RULES

Under a draft law, which was introduced in Parliament in December 2004, companies with shareholders that own more than one percent of media firms are barred from obtaining sizeable government contracts. The prospective law would also give more powers to the country's media watchdog, the National Radio and Television Council (ESR), and would effectively restrict the control of newspaper and television outlets by business tycoons. “The new regulations mean that media enterprises will not be used as battering rams to extract benefits from the state, against the interests of the people,” reported [KATHIMERINI](#) on 4 December 2004, quoting the Minister of State.

PAKISTAN—GOVERNMENT RESTRAINTS ON PRIVATE MEDIA CRITICIZED

A conference entitled “Private media for a free civil society” was held in Islamabad from 6 –7 December 2004 to discuss and highlight challenges being faced by the private media in Pakistan. According to the [DAWN](#) Internet edition of 7 December 2004, the participants criticized current checks on the media and petitioned the government to guarantee access to information and protection of the journalists. The conference also discussed how private media should be supported in order to encourage a free civil society; participants supported the idea of setting up a volunteer association of private broadcasters to observe the progress of media freedoms.

UNITED STATES—FEDERAL DISTRICT JUDGE DECLARES UNCONSTITUTIONAL RESTRICTIONS ON PUBLIC INTEREST LAW FIRM ACTIONS

A federal judge in Brooklyn has struck down a provision of a 1996 statute that precluded federally funded public interest law firms from using private funds to bring lawsuits on behalf of the poor in certain kinds of civil cases, such as housing, family, consumer, etc. [Dobbins v. Legal Services Corporation](#) was brought by three New York-based public interest law organizations providing free legal services for low-income individuals and families. More details and information about the decision are available on the [Brennan Center](#) website.



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VENEZUELA—NEW MEDIA LAW GOES INTO EFFECT

Following its approval by legislators last month, (see the coverage in the **December** issue of **IJCSL-N**) the Law for Social Responsibility in Radio and Television went into effect on 9 December 2004. The law remained highly controversial and the critics, opposition leaders and journalists, say it threatens press freedoms and is designed to permit the government to censor news reports, impose fines and close down independent stations. Among other provisions, the law prohibits “images or graphic descriptions that show real violence or its consequences.” It also “requires at least 50 percent of a radio station's programming to be Venezuelan music and at least 85 percent of its commercials to be Venezuelan-made,” according to a [CNN](#) report on 10 December 2004.

VENEZUELA—LEADERS OF DEMOCRACY NGO CHARGED WITH TREASON FOR PROMOTING ANTI-CHAVEZ INITIATIVE

According to a report on [NPR's Morning Edition of 30 December 2004](#), Venezuelan prosecutors have charged the leaders of a get-out-the-vote group with trying to topple President Hugo Chavez in 2002. The prosecutors say the group received a grant from the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), a Washington-based organization funded by the U.S. Congress, which permitted them to engage in treasonous conduct. An international coalition of prominent democracy supporters has expressed its concern to President Chavez in a letter posted on the [NED website](#).

ZIMBABWE—ANOTHER SETBACK TO FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION EXPECTED

The Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Bill, due to be passed by the Parliament in January 2005, will deliver another blow to press freedom in Zimbabwe – a country already under severe criticism for its recent legislative steps curbing the freedom of association and expression. “The Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Bill currently before the Parliament imposes up to 20 years’ imprisonment, heavy fines, or both for publishing ‘false’ information deemed prejudicial against the state,” according to an [AFROL NEWS](#) article published on 3 December 2004.

FREEDOM OF RELIGION AND BELIEF

AUSTRALIA—COURT RULES ON RELIGIOUS VILIFICATION CHARGES

In first major test of Victoria’s “[Religious and Racial Tolerance Act](#),” the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) handed down a decision on 17 December 2004 that a church minister violated the law when presenting a seminar and writing articles on Islam. The judge ruled that the minister was guilty of condoning and promoting racist and vilifying remarks against Islam, the Muslim community, and their religious beliefs and practices. According to a news article published by [THE AUSTRALIAN](#) on 18 December 2004, this was the first case heard by VCAT since the Racial and Religious Tolerance Act took effect early 2002, and it is considered to be



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very significant in helping to define the line between legitimate public debate and behavior that incites hatred.

BELARUS—RELIGIOUS FREEDOM SURVEY PUBLISHED BY FORUM 18

In its survey analysis of religious freedom in Belarus, [Forum 18 News Service](#) notes that formal state support for “traditional” religions is at most symbolic, and that militant atheism still influences most state officials. Some officials have attempted to pressure people who have signed registration applications for Protestant churches to withdraw their names. The re-registration of most, but not all, religious communities does not guarantee their religious freedom. Registered activity is restricted by a variety of laws and regulations, such as a bar on registered religious groups working outside their registered areas.

CHINA—GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES NEW RULES ON RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

The Government of China has published the new set of “Religious Affairs Provisions.” The provisions will come into effect on 1 March 2005. According to an article published by [ASIANews](#) on 20 December 2004, the regulations cover a wide range of issues including those relating to the activities, publications, and places of worship of religious groups and the legal responsibilities of government departments when dealing with such groups. The new “Religious Affairs Provisions” will supersede the rules and regulations on the management of sites for religious activities issued in 1994. It is worth noting that the new regulations condemn the abuse of power by local authorities or the Religious Affairs Office, which may reduce arbitrary interference in religious activities by providing for criminal sanctions for such interference.

INTERNATIONAL—UN SECRETARY-GENERAL CALLS FOR END TO INTOLERANCE AGAINST ISLAM

UN-Secretary-General Kofi Annan called for Muslims, non-Muslims, governments, the media, and educators to help put an end to growing prejudice against and misunderstanding of Islam and its tenets, which are frequently distorted and taken out of context. “Today, the weight of history and the fallout of recent developments have left many Muslims around the world feeling aggravated and misunderstood, concerned about the erosion of their rights and even fearing for their physical safety,” said the Secretary General, addressing a seminar at the UN headquarters in New York on 7 December 2004. According to a feature article by [RFE/RL](#) on 10 December 2004, the seminar was held to define “Islamophobia” and to find ways to confront its consequences -- in policy-making decisions, social perceptions, and cultural interactions.

UNITED STATES—FEDERAL COURT UPHOLDS INMATES’ RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit unanimously upheld the constitutionality of the [Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act](#) (RLUIPA) requiring state prisons receiving federal funds to refrain from burdening the religious exercise of prisoners. The [opinion](#) concludes that section 3 of RLUIPA does not violate either the Tenth Amendment or the Establishment Clause of the First



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Amendment. The case involved the state prison system's refusal of an inmate who requested the prison authorities to allow him to practice his Jewish faith, by wearing a yarmulke (skull-cap worn by observant Jewish males) and eat only kosher food.

UNITED KINGDOM—PARLIAMENT CONSIDERS BILL TO CRIMINALIZE ACTS THAT STIR UP RELIGIOUS HATRED

The British Parliament is considering legislation that would make it illegal to incite racial hatred, according to a [CNS NEWS](#) article of 8 December 2004. Among other provisions, the [Serious Organised Crime and Police Bill](#), currently before the Parliament, provides measures to prohibit people stirring up hatred against people because of their religious beliefs, and makes it a criminal offence to incite such hatred against any individual or group because of their religious beliefs.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

AFGHANISTAN—NGOs TO ADOPT CODE OF CONDUCT

Following a [ministerial proposal to dissolve nearly 2,000 NGOs](#) and concerns raised in connection with the allegations made, foreign and local NGOs in Afghanistan have vowed to adopt a code of conduct. According to a [THE WASHINGTON TIMES](#) news article published on 25 December 2004, the Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief (ACBAR), an umbrella organization representing many national and international aid agencies in Afghanistan, will make the new code of conduct public on 18 January 2005.

ARAB WORLD—SEMINAR ON LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR ASSOCIATIONS IN ARAB REGION HELD IN BEIRUT

In collaboration with the Henrich Böll Foundation, the Arab NGO Network for Development held a seminar, from 13 – 14 December 2004, on the “Legal framework for associations in the Arab region,” with a special focus on Iraqi associations. More information is available on the [Arab NGO Network for Development](#) web site.

CROATIA—MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT ADOPTS NGO CHARTER

The City Council of Rijeka has adopted an NGO Charter to regulate cooperation between the City and local NGOs emphasizing the transparency of financing NGO activities. The Charter also calls for establishing a “Coordination Committee” to assist NGOs and City departments in procedural matters. For further information see an [ICNL](#) announcement, dated 26 November 2004.

MALTA—NGOs DEMAND THE RELEASE OF WHITE PAPER FOR THE ACT TO REGULATE NGOS

NGOs have launched an appeal to the government to publish a White Paper for an Act to regulate NGOs. This appears to have been gathering dust for months, thus preventing most NGOs from accessing EU funds, according to a news article published in [MALTAMEDIA](#) on 22 December 2004. The NGOs conveyed their



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concern to the government that legal recognition of Maltese NGOs is imperative for their success in the context of EU civil society. The [petition to the government](#) asserts that the lack of legal status for Maltese NGOs seriously inhibits their ability to function. Further coverage of this issue will be found in the January issue of **IJCSL**.

NEW ZEALAND—CHARITIES BILL REPORTED BACK

The Social Services Committee has now finished its consideration of the Charities Bill and presented it back to Parliament, commonly referred to as “reporting to the House.” A copy of the bill with the Committee’s commentary on the Bill and the recommended amendments shown is available from

<http://www.clerk.parliament.govt.nz/Content/SelectCommitteeReports/108bar2.pdf>.

The Ministry of Economic Development has invited a number of umbrella organizations to provide written feedback to the Bill on the technical workability of the changes that have been made.

PAKISTAN—LEGISLATION ON NGO REGISTRATION EXPECTED

New legislation for registration of voluntary organizations will soon be introduced in Parliament. According to a news article published by the [PAKTRIBUNE](#) on 29 December 2004, the Federal Minister of Social Welfare told a recent meeting of the National Council for Social Welfare that the Bill has almost been completed. She also has asserted that the bill is designed to support a stronger relationship between the government and the NGO sector.

UGANDA—NGO BILL REVIVED BY GOVERNMENT; ALTERNATIVE DRAFT PROPOSED BY NGOS

A letter from [Zie Gariyo, Executive Director of the Uganda Debt Network](#), asserts that the government’s decision to revive the NGO Bill first discussed in 2001, is meeting with strong opposition. The [Human Rights Network Uganda](#), which is leading the coalition to defeat the government’s bill, has analyzed the bill on its website, where an alternative draft is also included. **IJCSL** will cover these developments in more detail in the January 2005 issue.

UNITED KINGDOM—CHARITIES BILL PUBLISHED

[The Charities Bill](#), introduced into the House of Lords on 20 December 2004, has been published on 21 December 2004. The text of the bill as introduced into the House of Lords is available from the website of the [United Kingdom Parliament](#), along with [Explanatory Notes](#) to the Bill. According to a news article published in [THE GUARDIAN](#) on 22 December 2004, the new bill would require private schools and hospitals to demonstrate that they serve a public benefit. It appears that the bill delegates authority to Charity Commission as to how to define and measure public benefit. (Full coverage of the Charity Bill and developments will be available in the January 2005 issue of **IJCSL**).

ZIMBABWE—NEW NGO LAW GOES INTO EFFECT

On 9 December 2004 the Parliament of Zimbabwe passed the controversial NGO Bill 2004. According to an [AFROL NEWS](#) article of 10 December 2004, the Bill now



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awaits the president's approval before becoming law. The new law will repeal the Private Voluntary Organizations Act and establish new legislation that some analysts have condemned as "patently unconstitutional." The NGO Act targets organizations that "promote and protect human rights" and gives the government wide powers to unnecessarily hinder the operations of NGOs. Under the Act, Zimbabwean NGOs are prohibited from receiving any foreign funding to engage in human rights work. [AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL](#) in a press release on 10 December 2004, called for the immediate repeal of the Act. According to the [VOICE OF AMERICA](#) news of 10 December 2004, the US State Department has also raised concern over the new legislation and urged President Robert Mugabe not to sign the measure. ICCSL's analysis of the bill can be found in the [October 2004 issue of IJCSL](#).

MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

ARAB WORLD—SPECIAL ISSUE ON ARAB MEDIA REFORM PUBLISHED BY CEIP

The December 2004 issue of the [ARAB REFORM BULLETIN](#), published by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, discusses the role and impact of Arab media in the regional political development. It also includes several publication references on the topic, and a summary of recent [trends in media law reform](#) in the region

CHINA—AI EXAMINES RISKS TO HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

Amnesty International has published a report entitled "[People's Republic of China: Human Rights Defenders at Risk](#)" focusing specifically on human rights defenders in China. The report draws attention to the risks facing the growing numbers of human rights activists in China, according to Amnesty International's [press release](#) of 6 December 2004.

INTERNATIONAL—FREEDOM HOUSE RELEASES GLOBAL SURVEY ON FREEDOM OF POLITICAL AND CIVIL LIBERTIES

Freedom House has released a [survey of freedom of political and civil liberties](#) around the world. According to the Freedom House [press release](#) of 20 December 2004, "freedom progressed worldwide in 2004." Notably, the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region has shown positive trends in the area of civic activism, whereas, Russia is ranked as "not free."

INTERNATIONAL—WORLD CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

Governments, officials, and activists around the globe commemorated [International Human Rights Day](#) on 10 December 2004. Each year the day is celebrated to honor the signing of the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1948.



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LIBYA—GOVERNMENT WITHHOLDS VISAS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH RESEARCH TEAM

The Libyan government has withheld visas for a Human Rights Watch research team scheduled for a three-week fact-finding trip, according to an [HRW](#) news release of 7 December 2004. The team planned to investigate the human rights conditions in Libya - a country where the law bans independent political parties, associations, and the media.

MOROCCO—GOVERNMENT SIGNS ARAB HUMAN RIGHTS CHARTER

Morocco has signed the [Arab Human Rights Charter](#), which was approved by the Arab summit held in Tunis last May, according to a news article published by [MOROCCO TIMES](#) on 28 December 2004. Morocco has joined several other countries that have signed the charter, including [Saudi Arabia](#). The new charter is viewed by most human rights experts as an improvement on the [document adopted in 1994 and never ratified](#), but [criticisms of the new charter remain](#).

UNITED STATES—COURT RULES THAT ISLAMIC CHARITIES MUST PAY DAMAGES

Several Islamic fundraisers with alleged links to the militant Palestinian group Hamas were ordered on December 10 to pay \$156 million in damages to the parents of a teenager killed in a 1996 terrorist attack in Israel in what both sides agreed was a precedent-setting decision in U.S. District Court in Chicago. The decision in [Boim v. Quranic Literary Institute](#) is the first by a jury holding U.S. citizens or organizations liable under a federal anti-terrorism law that allows victims of terrorism to sue for civil damages.

UNITED STATES—ISLAMIC SCHOLAR RESIGNS AFTER HOMELAND SECURITY DEPARTMENT VISA REVOCATION

A renowned Swiss-based Islamic scholar, Tariq Ramadan who was appointed as head of the program in religion, conflict and peace-building at the Joan Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at Notre Dame, has submitted his resignation, according to a University of Notre Dame [press release](#) of 14 December 2004. Ramadan was issued a U.S. visa last May, but it was revoked in August -- days before he was to move to the United States. For previous coverage, see the **September** 2004 issue of the **IJCSL-N**.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BOOK PUBLICATION—CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE ARAB WORLD

“[Civil Society in the Arab World](#)” a forthcoming book authored by Scott C. Davis is due out in October 2006. According to the publisher’s description, the book “explores the unique dynamics of the civil society movement in the specific conditions and sub-regions of the Arab world.”



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BOOK PUBLICATION—DEMOCRACY PROMOTION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

“[Uncharted Journey: Promoting Democracy in the Middle East](#),” a forthcoming book, published by Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and co-edited by Marina Ottaway and Thomas Carothers, is due out in January 2005. The contributors and authors provide a realistic and intelligent study of the prospects and drawbacks of Western democracy promotion in the Middle East.

BOOK PUBLICATION—MEDIA LAWS IN BOTSWANA, SWAZILAND, AND ZAMBIA

“[SADC Media Law: A handbook for Media Practitioners](#)” is the second book in a [series on media law](#) in the Southern African Development Community (SADC), which was released on 10 December 2004 by the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung Media Programme and the Media Institute of Southern Africa. A press release by [KASMEDIA](#) describes the new publication. In addition to including the case law, Volume 2 of the handbook provides a comparative survey of laws affecting freedom of expression and media in the three countries.

BOOK PUBLICATION—LEGAL ISSUES FOR PHILANTHROPY IN SOUTH ASIA

The [Asia Pacific Philanthropy Consortium](#) has published the book “Philanthropy and Law in South Asia (PALISA),” which is edited by Prof. Mark Sidel, of the University of Iowa School of Law, and Iftekhar Zaman, of Transparency International, Bangladesh. Written by local experts, the five country chapters (Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka) provide in-depth analyses of the legal and regulatory support for and impediments to philanthropic giving in the region. The book announcement can be found in the [November issue of APCC Post](#). Further information on the PALISA project and its outcomes can be found in the January issue of **IJCSL**.

JOURNAL PUBLICATION—FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND OPEN GOVERNMENT

“[Open Government: A Journal on Freedom of Information](#)” will begin publication in February 2005, according to a [Managing Information](#) news update on 8 December 2004. This new electronic journal, which is supported by the [Liverpool John Moores University](#) UK, will publish “research and communications related to Freedom of Information (FOI) legislation from the perspective of academics, practitioners and FOI users.” The new journal will be hosted by the website [Scholarly Exchange](#).



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