

High profile elections are one thing, important as they may be in setting a democratic course, but true democratic reform of key public and security institutions is a much more complex undertaking. This deepening of democracy is a slower, more difficult process to properly measure. This past year saw some progress in efforts to deepen democracy through reform of civilian-military relations and the entrenchment of the rule of law. In some cases, elections have been an excuse not to proceed with broader reforms, acting as a shield against international criticism.

Canada played an important role in supporting the transition in a number of new democracies. The foreign policy statement, issued in February 1995, reaffirmed Canada's long standing commitment to the establishment of democracy and explicitly drew the connection between the development of participatory democracy and global peace and security. Programs were initiated to support the long term development of electoral machinery in a number of new democracies and advisory services were provided to many countries in the run-up to their elections. In addition, Canadian observers participated in 13 elections.

ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

The advancement of democracy and the strengthening of democratic institutions continued in Asia and the Pacific during 1995. Important elections took place in the region, establishing further the principle of electoral accountability and respect for the rule of law as regional standards. Military rule or influence remained strong in a number of countries, but 1995 did see some progress on this front as well.

In South Korea, the entrenchment of democracy, begun in earnest in 1993, continued. In June, the first local elections in nearly 30 years were held. Following the elections, in a bid for national reconciliation, a number of politicians and businessmen received a general amnesty for past charges of corruption. In the fall, in an unprecedented move, ex-president Roh Tae Woo was charged with taking massive bribes while in office. His predecessor, Chun Doo Wan who was arrested for his role in the 1979 coup, faces the prospect of being held to account for his role in the killing of democracy protesters in 1980 in Kwangju.

Mid-term local and Congressional elections in the Philippines were generally peaceful and orderly, although there were reports of vote-buying, harassment and irregularities with the security of the ballot boxes. In Burma, the release of Daw Aung