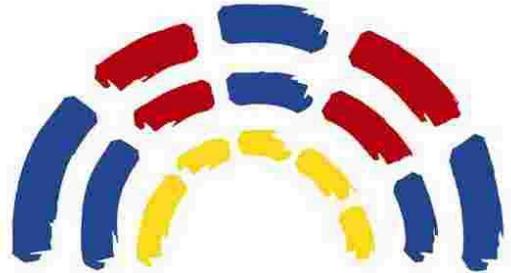


INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF PARLIAMENTARIANS ON TIBET



INPaT Tibetan Election Observation Mission (TEOM) Arrives in India

18 March, 2011

New Delhi/Dharamsala – The International Network of Parliamentarians for Tibet (INPaT), as part of a worldwide initiative will deploy a team of experts to conduct a Tibetan Election Observation Mission in India on 20 March, 2011 when Tibetans in the free-world vote to elect the Kalon Tripa (Chairman of the Tibetan cabinet) and the 44 members of the 15th Tibetan Parliament in Exile (TPiE). TEOM Members composed of parliamentarians will observe polling stations in northern and southern India.

INPaT's Bylakuppe Statement on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the Tibetan Democracy Day on 2 September, 2010, called upon the Tibetan Election Commission to invite international election monitors to observe the 2011 parliamentary and Kalon Tripa elections.

In response, INPaT was formally invited by the Tibetan Parliament in Exile (TPiE) "to initiate a process of observing the final elections on the 20th of March 2011 in different parts of the world where Tibetan exiles vote for their leaders in the Cabinet and the Parliament."

INPaT TEOM Co-Chair Mr. Matteo Mecacci, member of the Italian Parliament, following a preparatory visit to Dharamsala, India formally reached an agreement with the Tibetan Election Commission to get its full co-operation and assistance, including the guarantee of full access to polling stations and counting centres.

"We believe this unique and worldwide Tibetan election process which is an unprecedented achievement for a refugee community needs to be observed and appreciated by the global communities of democracies, in a crucial moment for the future of Tibet, where Chinese authoritarian rule continued unabated." said Mr. Matteo Mecacci.

INPaT TEOM has embarked on this initiative to lend its political support to the democratic institutions initiated by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and established by the Tibetan Refugee Community and to convey its findings and recommendations to the international community and the Tibetan people.

Given that this is the first instance the Tibetan Elections will experience external observers, INPaT TEOM will not be a full fledged election monitoring mission in accordance with the international accepted norms and technical requirements, but still an important democratic exercise.

"We are honoured to observe the Tibetan elections in India, the home to the biggest democracy in the world and remain gratified by the hospitality and respect Tibetans receive from the people of India," said Senator Consiglio Di Nino from Canada. Senator Di Nino, an experienced election monitor, will observe polling stations in Dharamsala, northern India.

According to the Tibetan Election Commission more than 80,000 Tibetans are registered to vote on 20 March.

In this global initiative, INPaT TEOM members have also been deployed to Belgium, Switzerland, Canada and the United States of America where Tibetans will also vote on Sunday.

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NOTE:

-- 133 Members from 33 worldwide Parliaments who took part in the 5th World Parliamentarians Convention on Tibet (18/19 November 2009, Rome) adopted the "Rome Declaration on Tibet" which constituted the International Network for Parliamentarians on Tibet (INPaT).