

Media Statement

Special Mission of the International Conference of Asian Political Parties (ICAPP) to visit Myanmar – Shane Stone participation

Shane Stone former Minister for Asian Relations & Trade, Chief Minister and Federal President of the Liberal Party will participate in a Special Mission to Myanmar (formerly Burma) next week in his capacity as a Member of the Standing Committee of the International Conference of Asian Political Parties (ICAPP) <http://www.theicapp.org/>.

ICAPP represents over 330 political parties from some 52 countries in the Asia Pacific Region.

ICAPP promotes exchanges and cooperation between political parties from different countries with various ideologies; to enhance mutual understanding and trust among Asian countries; to promote Asia's regional cooperation through the unique role and channel of political parties; and to create an environment for sustained peace and shared prosperity in the region.

The Special Mission of ICAPP, composed of the Members of its Standing Committee will visit Myanmar during September 11-13, 2012 at the invitation of the Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) of Myanmar.

Speaking from Darwin in Australia's Northern Territory after his return this week from the Republican Convention in Tampa Florida USA Mr. Stone said: "Myanmar is now in a historic transition from an old era to a new one and ICAPP welcomes the initiatives taken by the government and the USDP of Myanmar to lay firm political, economic and social foundation for the emergence of a new democratic nation".

Further Mr. Stone said: "My colleagues and I in ICAPP acknowledge the significance of the launch of the multi-party parliament in Myanmar as the result of the general elections held on November 7, 2010 in accordance with the Seven Steps Road Map for peaceful political transition to civilian government to build a new democratic nation, and of the subsequent decision by the National League for Democracy (NLD) to participate".

Mr. Stone confirmed that productive discussions 3 months ago hosted in Baku Azerbaijan between the ICAPP Standing Committee and the USDP resulted in the invitation for the Special Mission to visit Myanmar. Mr Stone said "I was impressed by the very frank discussions we held back in June with the USDP representatives in Baku; Myanmar wants to take its place in the region and they should be encouraged to continue down that path".

Mr. Stone also carries the dual accreditation as the Assistant Chairman of the International Democratic Union (IDU) <http://www.idu.org/default.aspx> a role he shares with the Right Honourable William Hague MP Secretary for State Commonwealth & Foreign Affairs UK. The IDU is a working association of over 80 Conservative, Christian Democrat and like-minded political parties of the centre and centre right Chaired by The Hon John Howard OM AC.

The IDU similarly welcomes a full transition to democracy in Myanmar.

The ICAPP Mission will meet with leaders of the USDP, including the President of Myanmar Thein Sein, Parliamentary Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann and Secretary General U Htay Oo. ICAPP and USDP plan to hold a joint session with the Members of the Central Executive Committee on September 12, 2012.

The Special Mission will also meet with Leaders of the National League for Democracy (NLD), including Noble Peace Laureate the Honourable Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Chairperson of the NLD.

ICAPP has extended an invitation to the major political parties in Myanmar to participate in future ICAPP activities, including the 7th General Assembly of the ICAPP to be held in Baku, Azerbaijan during November 21-24, 2012.

The Special Mission will report back to the General Assembly in November.

The Special Mission comprising ICAPP Standing Committee Members includes:

- Hon. Jose de Venecia, Founding Chairman and Co-Chairman of the Standing Committee and former Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Philippines
- Hon. Chung Eui-yong, Co-Chairman of the Standing Committee and Secretary General of the ICAPP Secretariat, and Former Chairman of Foreign Relations Committee of the Democratic Party of Korea
- Hon. Shane L. Stone AC QC Former Chief Minister NT, Federal President of the Liberal Party of Australia and current Assistant Chairman of the International Democratic Union
- Hon. Asaf Hajiyeve, Head of the International Department of the New Azerbaijan Party
- Hon. Sok An, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister in charge of the Office of the Council of Ministers, and Member of the Standing Committee of the Cambodian People's Party, Kingdom of Cambodia
- Hon. Keo Puth Reasmey, President of the FUNCINPEC Party and Royal government Adviser with rank of Deputy Prime Minister of Cambodia
- Hon Ai Ping, Vice Minister of the International Department, Central Committee of the Communist Party of China
- Hon. Naoto Sakaguchi, Member of the Diet, and Vice Director-General of the International Department of the Democratic Party of Japan
- Hon. General Hwang Jin-ha, President of ICAPP Parliamentarians' Union of the National Assembly, *Saenuri* (New Frontier) Party of the Republic of Korea
- Hon. Dato Seri Shahidan Bin Kassim, Special Advisor to the Prime Minister, United Malay National Organization (UMNO) of Malaysia
- Hon. K.P. Sharma Oli, Former Deputy Prime Minister and Chief of International Department of the Communist Party of Nepal (UML)
- Hon. Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Defence and Defence Production, and Secretary-General, Pakistan Muslim League (Q)

- Hon. Yuksel Ozden, Member of the Parliament and Chairman of the Turkish Delegation to the APA, Justice and Development Party of Turkey
- Hon. Vuong Thua Phong, Vice Chairman of Commission for External Relations of the Communist Party of Vietnam

Special Invitee

- Hon. Abdul Matin Khasru, MP, Former Minister of Law, Justice and Placement Affairs, and Secretary for Legal Affairs of the Central Committee of Bangladesh *Awami* League

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