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## **New President for the Premier Election Assistance NGO**

*IFES appoints William “Bill” Sweeney*

Washington, DC – June 2, 2009 – The world’s leading election-assistance non-governmental organization, the International Foundation for Electoral Systems, announced today the appointment of former EDS Vice-President William “Bill” Sweeney as its new President and CEO. Mr. Sweeney will succeed Jean-Pierre Kingsley, who oversaw major growth at IFES and advanced the organization’s cutting-edge practical thinking about election-assistance and democracy support.

Today’s appointment is a reunion: Mr. Sweeney served on the board of Directors at IFES from 1993 to 2001 and was chairman of IFES from 1999 to 2000. He has a lifelong background in democracy-promotion and public policy with considerable experience in both the public and private sectors. From 1981 to 1985, Mr. Sweeney was deputy chairman of the Democratic National Committee, and he was executive director of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee from 1977 to 1981. At Electronic Data Systems (EDS), an HP company, he was Vice-President of Global Government Affairs and managed relations with governments and policy organizations around the world.

Headquartered in Washington DC, IFES is the premiere election-assistance non-profit and since 1987 it has worked in more than 100 countries—including post-Communist countries and ones struggling to transition from conflict to peace. IFES provides technical advice and tools to run democratic elections. Currently, IFES has large missions in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Sudan and also runs programs across Africa, Central Asia, South East Asia, and Latin America.

Before joining EDS in 1991, Mr. Sweeney, a graduate of the American University, founded Washington Resources and Strategy, a public affairs management company that provided counsel to associations and corporations in the U.S., Asia and Europe. Mr. Sweeney has been an official elections observer in the Philippines, Russia, Jamaica and Nicaragua.

Jean-Pierre Kingsley, who became IFES’ President and CEO in June 2007 after a 17-year career as Canada’s Chief Electoral Officer, informed the IFES board earlier this year of his decision to step down from his executive leadership role. His decision to resign his IFES office was prompted by the difficulty in balancing his personal commitments in Canada with his full-time role in Washington DC.

“I am gratified that I was able to make a contribution to this great organization,” said Mr. Kingsley, who will remain closely associated with IFES. In this respect, he emphasized the further professionalization of the organization, as well as the efforts to be recognized as an international one.

Peter Kelly, the chairman of the IFES board, said: “Mr. Kingsley was the perfect professional to take IFES toward new and higher goals. One of the most highly regarded election officials in the world, Mr. Kingsley brought a great deal to IFES—internationalization of IFES Board of Directors, diversification of donor organizations, creation of a high-powered international executive advisory board, and taking on the task of election preparation and guidance in such difficult places as Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Palestinian Territory, Lebanon and Sudan—and lifted IFES to new heights of professionalism. We deeply regret Mr. Kingsley’s personal decision to return to Canada and we will miss him.

“At the outset of a recruitment effort, we encountered Mr. Sweeney at a crossroads in his professional life. The five characteristics we determined were necessary for our next President/CEO were covered by Mr. Sweeney’s long record of engagement in our national and international community. A proven administrator; a person of extensive experience in the world of international business and public life; a person capable of standing peer to peer with counterparts at home and in the world; one with an intimate knowledge of our political and governmental system from many years and many different angles of observation; and an ability to work with staff, board and constituents organizations with competence and ease.”

IFES Vice-chairman Bill Hybl added: “We are pleased that Mr. Sweeney took on the task of succeeding Mr. Kingsley and did so with immense respect for what has gone before as a place from which to jump forward with new challenges and programs.”

Mr. Sweeney said: “I sincerely appreciate Jean-Pierre’s enhancement of IFES professionalism and reputation as well as his immense contribution to democratic processes around the world.”

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*The International Foundation for Electoral Systems is an independent, non-governmental organization providing professional support to electoral democracy. Through field work, applied research and advocacy, we strive to promote citizen participation, transparency, and accountability in political life and civil society.*