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**REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE IPU ON HIS ACTIVITIES
SINCE THE 185th SESSION OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL**

1. In the past six months, the IPU has continued its efforts to address the myriad crises facing the world. In September 2009, I wrote to all Member Parliaments, urging them to respond to the World Summit on Food Security, which was due to take place in Rome in November. The response was encouraging and a good number of parliamentarians attended the parliamentary meeting held in the run-up to the World Summit. I attended the meeting, which was hosted by the Italian Parliament. The parliamentarians discussed how they can protect the right to food and the outcome of their discussions was submitted to the World Summit.
2. The global economic crisis was the overarching theme of the 2009 IPU-UN Parliamentary Hearing, which I chaired in New York on 19 and 20 November. The parliamentarians received briefings from senior UN representatives and discussed their role and responsibility in working to bring about meaningful change.
3. The Preparatory Committee for the 3rd World Conference of Speakers of Parliament held its second meeting in New York, on the eve of the Parliamentary Hearing. We discussed both practical and substantive aspects of the Conference, including elements for a first draft of the outcome document that will be adopted by Speakers of Parliament in July. The draft text has been submitted to all Speakers of Parliament for their input.
4. While in New York, I met with the President of the UN General Assembly, Dr. Ali Abdussalam Treki (Libya). We discussed a number of issues high on the international agenda. I also met the UN Secretary-General and we discussed preparations for the Speakers Conference. Mr. Ban Ki-moon told me he is looking forward to addressing the Speakers of Parliament on that occasion.
5. I also briefed the UN Secretary-General on the parliamentary session that the IPU was planning to hold in the margins of the United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP15. I travelled to Copenhagen to attend this meeting, which brought together several hundred members of parliament from over 60 countries to discuss what the post-Copenhagen agenda should look like and how parliaments can contribute to its implementation. The parliamentarians drew up an ambitious agenda for parliamentary action beyond COP15. I hope that during the Bangkok Assembly we can agree on a concerted programme of action to address climate change. Given the failure of intergovernmental negotiations at COP15, the political attention that parliamentarians can give to this process is all the more important.

6. In early December, I visited the Seychelles in my capacity as IPU President and as Speaker of my country's parliament, for talks with the leadership in parliament and government. This was an opportunity to discuss many issues on the global agenda, as well as the parliament's possible affiliation to the IPU. We have since received a request for IPU membership from the Parliament of Seychelles. In addition to official talks with the leadership, I participated in the opening ceremony of the new Parliament building.

7. In mid-February I convened an enlarged Executive Committee in Windhoek. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss a number of issues that are fundamental for the development of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and relevant to the 3rd World Conference of Speakers of Parliament. In addition to the members of the Executive Committee, I invited a few members of parliament from the Speakers' Preparatory Committee, as well as from one or two other IPU Committees. We had an enriching exchange of views on how to develop a common vision for the IPU's future development, how to improve the IPU's relationship with the United Nations and how the IPU could be converted into a treaty-based organization.

8. The entire world was shocked by the scale of death and destruction caused by the earthquake that struck Haiti in January this year. The people of Haiti continue to need international assistance to help rebuild their lives. Many parliaments responded to my message in which I stressed the need for urgent financial and material assistance to help in the rescue, recovery and reconstruction of the country, and the IPU stands ready to provide all of the assistance at its disposal to help get the Haitian Parliament back on its feet.

9. Similarly, following the devastating earthquake in Chile, I immediately contacted the Parliament to convey the IPU's solidarity with the people of Chile and our commitment to extend support.

10. I have followed developments in a number of countries that have recently experienced coups d'état and the unconstitutional dissolution of parliament, and have urged the authorities concerned to restore constitutional order. I was dismayed to learn of the forceful seizure of power in Niger on 18 February. Whatever difficulties this country's democratic institutions may have undergone in the recent past, the recourse to a military coup is a reprehensible act. I urge this country and its leaders to restore the national institutions as soon as possible, and especially the parliament, the pillar of any democracy.