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COOPERATION WITH THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

This document provides a brief checklist of activities undertaken in cooperation with the United Nations system from 19 October 2009 to 27 March 2010.

United Nations

- Over a dozen statements were delivered by the IPU before the General Assembly and its subsidiary organs. The statements drew from recent IPU resolutions and reported on IPU activities in various fields, including peacebuilding, disarmament and non-proliferation, democratic governance, human rights and gender equality, progress towards meeting the Millennium Development Goals, financing for development, etc.
- The annual joint UN-IPU Parliamentary Hearing entitled *The Way Forward: building political support and implementing effective responses to the global financial crisis*, took place in November 2009. Some 160 MPs from 50 countries engaged in a rich and substantive discussion with UN officials and government representatives (permanent representatives). The final report of the Hearing, which touches on some outstanding issues in the response to the global economic and financial crisis, was circulated at the United Nations as an official document of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council.
- The second meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the 3rd World Conference of Speakers of Parliament was held in New York on 16 and 17 November. Several senior United Nations officials attended to brief Speakers on current global affairs and engage with them on issues of mutual interest.
- The first High-level Symposium of the 2010 Development Cooperation Forum of the United Nations was held in Vienna, Austria, on 12 and 13 November. As the main parliamentary partner of the DCF, the IPU helped develop the agenda of the symposium and assembled a group of legislators to participate and contribute substantively to the deliberations. In the immediate follow-up to the meeting, the IPU participated in the first global survey on mutual accountability of aid by helping design the survey and providing logistical support for the UN organizers to involve parliaments in some 60 countries. Preparations for a second High-level Symposium of the DCF in Helsinki, Finland (June 2010) are under way.

- The IPU worked closely with the Office of the UN High Representative for the Least Developed Countries to engage LDC parliaments in national reviews of progress in the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action. The national reviews are the first step in the lead up to the 4th United Nations-sponsored conference on LDCs in 2011. Parliamentarians also attended two regional consultations for this conference (organized by ESCWA and ECA respectively) at the invitation of the IPU.
- The IPU and the Danish Parliament held a meeting in conjunction with the Conference of the Parties (COP15) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Copenhagen on 16 December. A record 300 MPs were in attendance. The meeting concluded with recommendations on the further engagement of parliamentarians in support of a new international agreement on climate change.
- Together with the Division for the Advancement of Women (UNDAW), the IPU held a one-day meeting for parliamentarians attending the 54th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (2 March 2010). The participants discussed *The role of parliaments in enforcing gender equality and human rights, 15 years after Beijing*. During the same period, the IPU held an event on violence against women, and an updated *Map on Women in Politics in 2010*, providing data on women's participation in parliaments and the executive, was jointly published and launched.
- The Global Centre for Information and Communication Technologies in Parliament, a joint initiative of IPU and the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs, held the third World e-Parliament Conference in Washington from 3 to 5 November 2009. The Conference was held at the United States Congress, which was also one of the official organizers. The debates focused on how ICT can help connect parliaments with citizens and strengthen parliaments in emerging democracies.
- In cooperation with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the IPU organized a seminar in Geneva on 22 October. The event catered to members of parliaments of those States parties to the Convention whose reports were considered by the CEDAW Committee during the course of 2009 and/or will be considered at the beginning of 2010. Part of the discussion was a stock-taking exercise of progress made in the field of gender equality 30 years after the Convention entered into force.
- On the occasion of the World Summit on Food Security held in Rome in November 2009, the Italian Parliament and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, with the support of FAO, held a parliamentary meeting entitled *Parliaments addressing agriculture, hunger and food insecurity in times of global crisis*. The summary statement from the meeting was introduced to the official UN event.
- Preparations were also made during this period for IPU meetings to be held on the occasion of major UN Conferences in 2010: the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (parliamentary event on 5 May 2010), the Third Forum of the UN Alliance of Civilizations (Rio de Janeiro, 27 May 2010), the 7th International Conference of New or Restored Democracies (Caracas, July 2010).

UNDP

- A new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was negotiated in autumn 2009, creating an expanded cooperation framework for IPU and UNDP to work together on activities ranging from democracy to development issues. The new MoU further expands the ways and means in which the two organizations will work together in future years.
- IPU cooperation with the new Capacity Development for Development Effectiveness (CDDE) facility for the Asia-Pacific region, in which UNDP is a key partner, took hold during this period. The IPU and UNDP concluded work on a *Guidance Note for Parliamentarians on Development Effectiveness*, to be used as an online training tool. The IPU also contributed articles to the CDDE newsletter. UNDP's Bangkok Office assisted the IPU in setting up two case studies of parliamentary capacities in aid effectiveness in Cambodia and Viet Nam. A side event on aid issues is being organized with UNDP at the Bangkok Assembly.
- In view of the United Nations MDG Summit in September of this year, the IPU worked with UN Member States to formally acknowledge the type of parliamentary contribution that IPU could bring to the main UN Summit. IPU also initiated discussions on a possible collaboration with the Millennium Campaign (housed at UNDP) which would capitalize on each other's outreach capacities and knowledge base.
- The IPU continued working in partnership with many UNDP country offices on technical assistance projects to build the capacities of parliaments in countries such as: Cambodia, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Jordan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, and Viet Nam, as well as the Palestinian Legislative Council. The IPU also cooperates with UNDP in the field in the Maldives, Pakistan and Sierra Leone.

UNIFEM

- In March, the IPU and UNIFEM negotiated a Memorandum of Understanding, designed to provide a framework of cooperation and facilitate cooperation in several areas, including gender-responsive budgeting, ending all forms of violence against women and girls, governance for gender equality (particularly in conflict and post-conflict contexts), as well as the International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics (iKNOW Politics). Under the auspices of iKNOW Politics, the IPU together with UNIFEM, UNDP and other partners, launched an Arabic version of the iKNOW Politics website at a conference convened in Jordan in October.

UNAIDS

- In cooperation with the National Assembly of Viet Nam and with logistical and technical support from UNAIDS, the IPU Advisory Group on HIV/AIDS held a series of events in Viet Nam from 8 to 12 December 2009. The two-day field visit at the beginning of the week provided an opportunity to learn about Viet Nam's response to HIV/AIDS and share experiences with parliamentarians, medical professionals and people living with HIV. The regional training seminar for the parliaments of the IPU Asia-Pacific Group provided members of parliament from the region with an opportunity to discuss the role of parliaments in dealing with HIV in accordance with ethical norms and human rights standards. The Advisory Group also held its seventh meeting, which was hosted by the UNAIDS Country Office in Viet Nam.

World Health Organization (WHO)

- Cooperation with the World Health Organisation was pursued on the project on maternal and child health. The IPU and WHO convened the Third Parliamentary Conference on maternal and newborn health in Kampala in November 2009. It brought together members of parliament from 15 developed and developing countries. The Conference reviewed and made recommendations on parliaments' role in the achievement of Millennium Development Goals (MDG) 4 (child survival) and 5 (maternal health), paying particular attention to enhancing access to health services for all women and newborns.

World Trade Organization (WTO)

- On 1 December 2009, the IPU hosted an enlarged session of the Steering Committee of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO. The session was organized in conjunction with the Seventh WTO Ministerial Conference - the first of its kind to have taken place after nearly four years of protracted difficulties in the Doha Round of talks. The Steering Committee was briefed on the state of play in the multilateral trade negotiations by Ms. V. Sendanyoye Rugwabiza, WTO Deputy Director-General, and had an exchange of views with Mrs. M. Fischer Boel, European Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development.