



COOPERATION WITH THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

LIST OF ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN BY THE IPU BETWEEN 2 APRIL AND 4 OCTOBER 2010

United Nations

- The 3rd World Conference of Speakers of Parliament was held from 19 to 21 July at the United Nations Office at Geneva. The UN Secretary-General attended the opening and delivered a keynote statement *Parliaments in Time of Crisis: Securing Global Democratic Accountability*, the main theme of the conference. Several other high-ranking officials from the UN system, including the World Bank, were also in attendance and participated in side events of the Conference. The Conference concluded with a Declaration on *Securing global democratic accountability for the common good* which, among other things, takes stock of the growing cooperation between parliaments, the IPU and the United Nations since the first Conference in 2000, and points to the need to further strengthen this relationship. The Declaration and other key reports of the Conference were formally circulated to the UN General Assembly.
- The final results of the IPU survey on how parliaments organize their work vis-à-vis the United Nations, based on some 100 responses, were officially submitted to the United Nations as a report under the General Assembly item on cooperation between the United Nations, parliaments and the IPU. The survey report will help further inform strategic decisions on the relationship between the two organizations, particularly as a new resolution of the General Assembly will have to be adopted later in 2010.
- The IPU provided input to the multi-stakeholder Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) of the UN Economic and Social Council. In June, it sent a parliamentary delegation to the DCF's second preparatory symposium in Helsinki, for an in-depth discussion on policy coherence, gender and other key dimensions of development cooperation. IPU representatives also participated in the main 2010 session of the DCF and related meetings, including a session on mutual accountability that was moderated by the IPU Secretary General. The Summary report of the DCF reflects many of the views expressed by the MPs participating in this two-year process. Throughout the first quarter of the year, the IPU worked with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to support a 70-country survey on mutual accountability. The report of this survey was presented officially at the DCF session.
- Preparations got under way for the 2010 Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations (2-3 December), which will focus on *"The World in Crisis: Rethinking Development, Retooling Global Governance"*. Convened for the third consecutive year as a joint UN-IPU event, in close cooperation with the office of the President of the General Assembly, the 2010 Hearing will seek to review how global economic governance needs to be reformed in order to overcome existing development challenges, uphold the role of the United Nations, and help end the ongoing global crisis.

- On 21 September, the IPU and the UN Millennium Campaign will hold a side event at the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Review Summit (20-22 September). The event, entitled *Mobilizing Parliamentary Support for MDG Policies and Plans*, will be open to MPs attending the UN Summit as part of their national delegations. Among other things, it will serve to launch a joint IPU-Millennium Campaign study on different modalities for parliaments to mainstream the MDGs in their internal decision-making processes and political agendas. The meeting will also help highlight the main messages of the UN Summit's Outcome Document. It is expected that the role of parliaments in supporting further action towards the achievement of the MDGs by 2015 will be recognized in the Summit's Outcome Document.
- The IPU, in collaboration with Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament (PNND), organized a series of activities in the context of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, held at United Nations Headquarters in New York in May. On 5 May, a parliamentary meeting, attended by MPs who had joined their national delegations to the UN conference, examined progress and setbacks in meeting commitments and advancing towards a nuclear-weapons-free world. Several legislators also participated in a panel discussion with the UN Secretary-General held on 6 May.
- On the occasion of the annual Forum of the UN Alliance of Civilizations (UNAoC), held in May in Rio de Janeiro, the IPU organized a half-day parliamentary meeting on *The Role of legislators in promoting intercultural dialogue and cooperation*. The meeting served to follow up on the resolution adopted by the 116th IPU Assembly in Bali in 2007 on peaceful coexistence and mutual respect among religious communities in a globalized world, and was attended by MPs from some 20 countries and three regional parliamentary organizations. The keynote address was given by UNAoC High Representative Jorge Sampaio. The IPU also organized the first thematic session of the Forum, devoted to democracy, good governance and cultural diversity.
- In celebration of the International Day of Democracy on 15 September, proclaimed by the United Nations, the IPU organized a brainstorming session at its Geneva Headquarters with graduate students from the Geneva-based Institute for International Relations. A brochure and other materials on democracy were produced and distributed to all Member Parliaments.
- The IPU continued to support the work of the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) by providing assistance to the parliaments of three countries currently on the docket of the Commission: Burundi, Central African Republic and Sierra Leone. In turn, the PBC field missions and related UN activities include regular consultations and engagement with the national parliament in the respective countries.
- The IPU, together with the United Nations and the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), co-organized the Third Parliamentary Forum on the *Information Society, ICT and the Global Economic Crisis: Current Situation and Future Perspectives*, from 3 to 5 May in Geneva through the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament. The forum series aims to spur parliamentary action in support of the future information society in view of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) implementation, follow-up and future 2015 review.

- The World e-Parliament Report 2010, prepared by the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament, was launched in June as a joint product of the IPU and the United Nations. The report is the second in a series started in 2008 and helps track progress in the ways in which ICTs are being utilized by parliaments around the world.
- In July, the resolutions of the 122nd IPU Assembly held in Bangkok, Thailand, were circulated to the UN General Assembly in the six official languages, as part of the official documentation for the forthcoming 65th UNGA session. The IPU also intervened in several important debates of the UN during this period such as the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) on gender issues, and the MDGs Summit.
- Preparations for the 4th United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LCD-IV) continued during this period. The IPU participated in the UN inter-agency meeting held in June in New York. The final arrangements for the global phase of the parliamentary track leading up to the event (to be held in Istanbul in mid-2011) were finalized in August. These include a parliamentary briefing at the 123rd IPU Assembly as and a Parliamentary Forum to take place a day before the actual UN conference, on 29 May 2011. The briefing in particular will serve to identify the main messages the IPU wishes to see reflected in the future programme of action for the LDCs.
- A parliamentary meeting was held in Vienna on 20 July, in the context of the XVIII International AIDS Conference. Participants from some 50 countries discussed the impact of criminal law on public health activities, with a special focus on testing and HIV virus transmission modes (sexual, intravenous and vertical). A keynote statement was delivered by Manfred Nowak, UN Special Rapporteur on Torture. The meeting endorsed the international community's call to eliminate vertical transmission of the HIV virus by 2015 and pledged to support this as a goal in their countries.
- The IPU intensified its contribution to the United Nations Secretary-General's campaign *UNiTE to End Violence against Women and Girls*, with three seminars to heighten parliamentary awareness of and increase action on this subject. In April, members of parliament from Latin America met in Ecuador to identify mechanisms for the effective enforcement of legislation on violence against women. In June, a national seminar in Mali provided a forum for a constructive debate between parliamentarians and civil society on violence against women, with a specific focus on female genital mutilation. In July, a regional workshop for Arab parliaments on the implementation of CEDAW and ending violence against women was held in Beirut. The Beirut workshop was followed by a day of discussions with Lebanese parliamentarians and civil society representatives on the bill on domestic violence currently before the Lebanese Parliament. All these meetings were organized in close partnership with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women (UNDAW).

UNDP

- A new and more comprehensive Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed on 1 July, providing for a stronger partnership between the IPU and UNDP. The MoU covers virtually all areas of work in which the two organizations are engaged. These include: building the capacities of parliaments to exercise their oversight and legislative role, particularly with respect to aid effectiveness, economic governance and poverty

reduction; developing standards, benchmarks and good practices for democratic parliaments; supporting parliamentary involvement in implementing UN conventions; promoting the empowerment of women, particularly facilitating their integration into politics and elected office; and promoting the role of parliaments in peace and reconciliation processes.

- Parliamentary-strengthening projects in which UNDP is cooperating with the IPU, through national MoUs based on the above-mentioned global one, progressed during the period in the following countries: Cambodia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea Bissau, Pakistan, Palestine, Sierra Leone, Togo, and Viet Nam.
- Work on a joint report on parliaments and democracy, the *Global Parliamentary Report*, advanced with the finalization of a concept note, the selection of a lead author, and the constitution of an Advisory Board. The report will be ambitious in scope and will seek to provide in-depth analysis and information on the major issues affecting parliaments in both developed and developing countries. Publication is expected in September 2011, on the occasion of the International Day of Democracy.
- A number of activities took place under the joint IPU-UNDP project on "Promoting inclusive parliaments: The representation of minorities and indigenous peoples in parliament". On 21 April, during the Ninth Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the IPU and UNDP, together with the Permanent Mission of Mexico, organized a side event on *Promoting inclusive parliaments: The effective participation of indigenous peoples in decision-making*. The panel was composed of three indigenous parliamentarians from Colombia, Mexico and New Zealand, who shared their personal experiences and discussed the main challenges facing indigenous peoples in elected office. Work also began during this period on a joint IPU-UN-UNDP Handbook for parliamentarians on the new Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. Preparations continued for three publications: interviews with minority and indigenous parliamentarians; case studies of the inclusion of minorities and indigenous peoples in selected national parliaments; and an analysis of survey data on the participation of minorities and indigenous peoples in parliaments around the world. These publications will be presented at the International Parliamentary Conference on Parliaments, Minorities and Indigenous Peoples that will take place in Chiapas, Mexico, in November 2011.

Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

- During the first half of 2010, the IPU initiated a survey to assess the extent to which parliaments are aware of and contribute to the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the United Nations Human Rights Council. The results of this survey will be shared with the United Nations and its human rights mechanisms and are intended to help the IPU, in cooperation with OHCHR, in its efforts to identify and spread good parliamentary practices and establish the needs of parliaments with regard to the UPR.

World Trade Organization (WTO)

- The Steering Committee of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO met in June, over two days, at IPU Headquarters in Geneva. The agenda of the session included items such as the WTO Aid-for-Trade campaign, the successful settlement of the WTO banana dispute, and preparations for the WTO Public Forum 2010. The Steering Committee called on WTO Members to show resolve and do their utmost to find the necessary "extra quantum" in the Doha Round negotiations.