

CL/187/SR.1
20 December 2010

SUMMARY RECORDS

OF THE

GOVERNING COUNCIL

(187th SESSION)

4 and 6 October 2010

GENEVA (*Centre international de Conférences de Genève*)

Participation

President: T.-B. Gurirab (Namibia)

Members and substitutes: S.I. Gailaini, M.H. Hotak and Mrs. N. Hussaini (Afghanistan); Mrs. Z. Bitat Drif, B. Boutouiga and A. Cherrar (Algeria); J. Dalleres, Ms. A. Dolsa and J. Serra (Andorra); Mrs. M.A. Bragança, Mrs. B. Henriques Da Silva and M. Victor (Angola); Ms. M. Calchaqui, J.C. Romero and Ms. M. Stolbizer (Argentina); Mrs. H. Bisharyan and M. Vardanyan (Armenia); Ms. T. Crossin, M. Forshaw and Ms. J. Troeth (Australia); S. Abdulrahman, J. Fairouz and Ms. S. Rajab (Bahrain); Ms. M.S. Akther, S. Chowdhury, Ms. S.B. Kabori, F. Rabbi and Md. A. Zahir (Bangladesh); V. Baykov and Ms. N. Mazai (Belarus); F.-X. de Donnea, Mrs. V. Matz and P. Moriau (Belgium); Mrs. C. Adjanohoun, M. Nago and E. Quenum (Benin); P. Maele, Ms. M. Nasha and S. Tsogwane (Botswana); A.D. Dicko, Mrs. M.M.G. Guigma Diasso and S.T. Ouedraogo (Burkina Faso); V. Chheang, Ms. S. Khuon, T. Nhem and Mrs. S. Tioulong (Cambodia); Mrs. S. Carstairs, E. Holder and D.H. Oliver (Canada); Ms. Ma Li, Zha Peixin and B. Zhang (China); C. Ferro and J.M. Galan (Colombia); L. Akoun and T. Boa (Côte d'Ivoire); Ms. M. Lugarić (Croatia); N. Anastasiades and Y. Thoma (Cyprus); P. Guziana, V. Koníček and J. Lobkowitz (Czech Republic); Ms. E. Bazaïba, B. Mbuku Laka and E. Mokolo (Democratic Republic of the Congo); K. Christiansen and J.C. Lund (Denmark); Z. Azmi, Mrs. S. Greiss and A.F. Sorour (Egypt); Mrs. I. Eenmaa, J. Tamm and Mrs. M. Tuus (Estonia); Ms. J. Andersson, K. Kiljunen and Ms. K. Komi (Finland); Mrs. A. Boumediene-Thiery, R. del Picchia and P. Martin-Lalande (France); Mrs. S. Moulengui-Mouélé, A. Mvou Ndzoumba and F. Owono Nguema (Gabon); Ms. K. Gogorishvili and L. Vepkhvadze (Georgia); P. Götz, Ms. A. Krüger-Leissner and N. Movassat (Germany); C.A. Avoka, Mrs. J.A. Bamford-Addo and O. Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu (Ghana); A. Alevras (Greece); J. Horváth and J. Latorcai (Hungary); S.S. Ahluwalia, K.R. Khan and Ms. M. Kumar (India); H. Fauzy (Indonesia); Mrs. Z. Elahian and J. Jahangirzadeh (Iran, Islamic Republic of); Mrs. B. Contini, M. Fugatti and A. Razzi (Italy); T. Ishizeki, K. Kitagami and K. Tashiro (Japan); M. Al-Adwan, Ms. A. El Farhan and A. Majali (Jordan); Mrs. B. Baimagambetova and N. Sarsenov (Kazakhstan); Ms. J. Laboso, F.M. Maalim and N. M'Mithiaru (Kenya); A. Al-Deqbasi, A. Al-Omair and Ms. R. Dashti (Kuwait); K. Akhamounry, Ms. B. Boupha and Mrs. P. Yathotou (Lao People's Democratic Republic); Mrs. I. Druvieta and Ms. K. Petersone (Latvia); T. Mabetha, Ms. M. Makara and Ms. N. Motsamai (Lesotho); J. Beck and Ms. D. Frommelt (Liechtenstein); X. Bettel (Luxembourg); R.A. Chik, Ms. N. Shukri and K.S. Wee (Malaysia); Ms. E. Abdulla, Ms. V. Ali and M. Aslam (Maldives); A. Aya, H. Niangadou and Ms. M. Sylla (Mali); P. Mifsud and J. Mizzi (Malta); A.H. Hossen, Ms. M.A. Navarre Marie and R. Purryag (Mauritius); A. Alonso Díaz-Caneja, Ms. R. Green Macias, Mrs. M.T. Ortuño and E. Rubio (Mexico); C. Cellario, Ms. N. Manzone-Saquet and F. Notari (Monaco); Mrs. L. Bennani Smires, M.C. Biadillah and A. Radi (Morocco); K. Kaura, Mrs. M. Mensah-Williams and Ms. A. Tjongarero (Namibia); D. Clendon, Ms. J. Dean and P. Hodgson (New Zealand); U. Bayero, Ms. G. Bent and A. Usman (Nigeria); Ms. M. Hanekamhaug, G.K. Hansen, Ms. I. Heggø and T. Wickholm (Norway); A. Ali, H. Khan and K.S. Mansoor (Pakistan); Q. Abdelkarim, Ms. R. Diab and Z. Sanduka (Palestine); Ms. Y. Abrego, E. Castillo, M. Cohen Salerno, Ms. C. Prado and Mrs. M. Vallarino (Panama); S. Gorczyca, Ms. B. Mazurek and J. Rzymelka (Poland); Ms. R.M. Albernaz, A. Costa and D. Pacheco (Portugal); M. Al-Kibaisi and I. Al-Missned (Qatar); Y. Chin, C.W. Kim and Ms. S.J. Park (Republic of Korea); S. Alhusseini and S. Fadel (Saudi Arabia); A.N. Lo, Mrs. A. Sall and N. Toure (Senegal); Ms. N. Kolundžija, Ž. Tomić and Ms. J. Trivan (Serbia); Ms. A. Khor, W.K. Lim and H.P. Teo (Singapore); M. Hort, Ms. E. Pfundtner and R. Sulík (Slovakia); Ms. N. Ntwanambi, J. Selfe and M.V. Sisulu (South Africa); N.S. De Silva, Mrs. N. Rajapaksa and M. Samarasinghe (Sri Lanka); E.S. El Siddiq,

M. Ibrahim Mohamed, Ms. B. Suliman Abas and L. Tap Luom (Sudan); M. Bee, R.W. Panka, Mrs. D. Pokie, C. Santokhi and T. Vishnudatt (Suriname); K. Örnfjäder (Sweden); Mrs. B. Gadiant, Mrs. D. Stump and P.-F. Veillon (Switzerland); S. Haddad (Syrian Arab Republic); Ms. T. Boontong, Mrs. P. Krairiksh and P. Tanbanjong (Thailand); R. Belhassine, F. Haouet, S. Karoui and Mrs. A. Salah (Tunisia); J. Kawanga, Mrs. P. Turyahikayo and B. Wacha (Uganda); K. Abu Shehab, Mrs. A.A. Al Qubaisi and Y. Ali Bin Fadil (United Arab Emirates); Mrs. A. Clwyd and N. Evans (United Kingdom); J. Larrañaga, H. Tajam and Mrs. M. Xavier (Uruguay); Ngo Quang Xuan and Nguyen Van Son (Viet Nam); Ms. L. Changwe, J.J. Mwiimbu and Ms. M.W.K. Nalumango (Zambia); A. Chibaya, B. Gaule, W. Madzimore and Ms. V. Muchenje (Zimbabwe)

Special guest: S. Briceño, Director of the Secretariat of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

Secretariat: A.B. Johnsson, Secretary General, and Ms. J. Toedtli, Secretary of the Governing Council

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FIRST SITTING

Monday, 4 October 2010

The meeting was called to order at 9.10 a.m. with the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Dr. T.-B. Gurirab (Namibia), in the Chair.

Item 1 of the agenda

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

(CL/187/A.1)

The agenda was adopted by the Governing Council without amendment.

Item 2 of the agenda

**APPROVAL OF THE SUMMARY RECORDS OF THE 186th SESSION
OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL**

(CL/186/SR.1)

The summary records of the 186th session of the Governing Council were approved.

Item 3 of the agenda

QUESTIONS RELATING TO IPU MEMBERSHIP AND OBSERVER STATUS

(a) Requests for affiliation and reaffiliation to the IPU

The President announced that no formal requests for affiliation or reaffiliation had been received.

(b) Situation of certain Members

The President said that the Executive Committee had examined the situation of certain Members and had been pleased to note that no member parliament was currently liable for suspension for non-payment of financial dues.

The Secretary General said that there were currently only two Members subject to sanctions for arrears. Those Members had duly been deprived of their voting rights, and had been subjected to restrictions on the size of their delegations to the present Assembly. Efforts were being made to encourage all parliaments to join the Union. A number of small island States in the Pacific and the Caribbean were not yet Members. The Parliament of New Zealand had hosted a meeting for small island Pacific States, which had enabled the IPU to hold meetings with representatives of their parliaments and explain the benefits of membership. The Executive Committee had noted that several of those parliaments wished to join the Union, but had limited budgets and therefore faced considerable logistical and financial challenges, in particular to funding their physical participation in IPU Assemblies and other international meetings. The Executive Committee was therefore considering options for assisting those parliaments. A similar meeting would be held in the Caribbean in 2011. He and the President were in regular contact with parliaments that were not Members of the Union, as well as former Members, with a view to encouraging them to join, or rejoin the Organization. He

hoped to be able to report on further positive developments in that regard at the forthcoming meeting of the Governing Council in Panama, in April 2011.

(c) **Observer status**
(CL/187/3(c)-P.1)

The President announced that two applications for observer status had been received from the Member States of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic-speaking Countries. The Executive Committee had examined those requests and recommended that both institutions should be granted observer status.

It was so decided.

The President said that the Executive Committee had been informed of a worrying increase in the size of observer delegations to IPU Assemblies. According to the Rules, observer organizations were entitled to send a maximum of two delegates. The Committee recommended that the Secretary General should take steps to ensure that the rules on the participation of observer organizations were respected in the future. The Committee also recommended that two organizations with which the IPU had a particularly close working relationship, but were not permanent observers to the IPU Assemblies, the Kofi Annan Foundation and the Cluster Munitions Coalition, should be invited to follow the work of the present Assembly.

It was so decided.

Item 4 of the agenda

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

(a) **On his activities since the 186th session of the Governing Council**

The President, reporting on his activities since the 186th session of the Council, said that following the 122nd Assembly in Bangkok the IPU had concentrated its energies on the final preparations for the 3rd World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, which had included considering a large number of amendments to the draft declaration, and incorporating them into the text for consideration at the Conference. The final draft had been further amended during the Conference, and a compromise had been reached. The debate held during the Conference had been a good illustration of the value of multilateral parliamentary dialogue for identifying potential areas of cooperation between the Members of the IPU.

(b) **On the activities of the Executive Committee**

The President, reporting on the activities of the Executive Committee, said that the Executive Committee had held three very full days of discussions. As well as housekeeping issues such as membership applications and financial matters, a discussion had been held on the comprehensive strategy for the future development of the IPU. A draft strategy prepared by the Secretary General had been considered, and distributed among all delegations to the current Assembly. It would be introduced formally under item 9 of the agenda of the Governing Council. The details of the strategy would require further thought and deliberation, and would, ideally, be adopted at the next Assembly, to be held in Panama in April 2011.

The Executive Committee had also discussed the IPU's work on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and had been informed about the IPU contribution to the high level MDG summit, which had taken place recently at United Nations headquarters in New York. The present Assembly offered a good opportunity for the IPU to recommit to promoting the MDGs over the next five years, and for Member Parliaments to urge their governments to meet the 2015 deadline. A text on the subject would be submitted to the Governing Council for adoption. The Executive Committee had also heard a detailed report from the President of the Association of Secretaries General of Parliament on its cooperation with the IPU. The Association met in parallel to IPU Assemblies. The exchange of views on future avenues for cooperation had been particularly interesting.

Item 5 of the agenda

**INTERIM REPORT BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE UNION
SINCE THE 186th SESSION OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL**

**(a) Oral report of the Secretary General on the activities of the Union
since the 186th session of the Governing Council**

The Secretary General said that since the 122nd Assembly in Bangkok a number of workshops, seminars and conferences had been held, including a regional workshop on combating violence against women in Latin America, which was the region with the longest experience in legislating on that subject. The workshop had been used as an opportunity to identify where legislation should be amended. A meeting on the information society had been held in Geneva in cooperation with the International Telecommunications Union, and meetings had been held in follow up to the adoption at the 120th Assembly of the resolution of the First Standing Committee on International Peace and Security on advancing nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, and securing the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty: the role of parliaments. A regional conference on human trafficking in Western and Central Africa had been held, organized by the Parliament of Benin, in which Members had identified strategies to combat trafficking and exploitation of children.

The IPU had contributed parliamentary input and organized a number of panel discussions at a meeting of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations in Brazil, and had held a parliamentary side event during the XVIII International AIDS Conference in Vienna in July 2010. Efforts had also been made to organize follow up to the meetings of speakers of parliament, and to organize further meetings on ending violence against women. A regional workshop for Arab parliaments had been held in Lebanon, in which members of parliament from the region had discussed the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. A very instructive regional seminar for West Africa on parliamentary oversight of the security sector had been held in Senegal.

While regional seminars and meetings were perhaps the most visible face of IPU, the Union also undertook other activities on a daily basis, in particular action in support of national parliaments. Assistance was provided in many forms, including through the facilitation of dialogue and reconciliation, strengthening of institutions and capacity building, and assistance in addressing specific issues such as gender equality and human rights. Many activities of that nature had been conducted over the past six months. One such activity had been intended to assist parliaments in addressing the issue of female genital mutilation. An interesting exercise had taken place in Mali, in which religious leaders, community leaders and parliamentarians had come together with the IPU to raise awareness of the issue of female genital mutilation and initiate a dialogue on how to bring an end to it.

Work was currently under way to prepare for the launch, on the 2011 International Day of Democracy, a first global report on the state of the world's parliaments. The idea of a global report had been long discussed, but thus far the means to produce one had not been available. The IPU was now working alongside the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to begin the process. The report would take inspiration from the United Nations Human Development Report, and was intended to be an authoritative and groundbreaking description of the current state of the world's parliaments, the challenges they faced and the steps being taken to meet those challenges. An advisory group had been established to advise on the content of the report. The objective of the report was to reflect the thinking of parliamentarians themselves and Member Parliaments would therefore be invited to submit contributions to the report during the coming months. He encouraged all Members to respond as best they could to appeals for information and sharing of experiences. The report had the potential to be a groundbreaking source of information and could do much to enhance the image of the IPU and to place parliaments at the centre of the debate on the future of democracy. That could only be achieved with the input and support of IPU Member Parliaments. The report would also form part of the new communications strategy of the IPU and would be the subject of a continuous dialogue, following its publication.

(b) Annual reporting exercise by IPU Members

(CL/187/5(b)-R.1 and 5(b)-R.1.Add)

The Secretary General presented reports CL/187/5(b)-R.1 and 5(b)-R.1.Add, on the annual reporting exercise by IPU Members. He said that all Members had an obligation, under the Statutes, to provide information on the steps they took to follow up to the work undertaken in the context of the IPU. The reports gave an example of the information received. Around 50 Members had submitted information. Members had been asked to focus on the implementation of two of the three resolutions adopted at the 120th Assembly in Addis Ababa. A variety of responses had been received, some of which had provided considerable detail on actions taken, and others that had taken a more procedural approach. All Members had recognized the value of IPU resolutions, which provided a good catalogue for steps that could be taken to address specific issues. All parliaments had at their disposal a host of other catalogues and debates, and there was therefore very seldom a direct link between the adoption of an IPU resolution and legislative development. He urged the remaining 97 Members that had not yet done so to provide information in future.

(c) International Day of Democracy

(CL/187/5-R.2)

The Secretary General introduced report CL/187/5-R.2 on the activities undertaken on the International Day of Democracy, 15 September. The International Day of Democracy provided an opportunity for parliaments to address issues relating to democracy in a visible manner. The IPU tried to facilitate parliamentary efforts in that regard by providing information and assistance for those wishing to hold events. The theme of the Day for 2010 had been "Political Accountability: Strengthening links between parliaments and citizens", which had aimed to underline the accountability of office-holders as a basic requirement for all public life in a democracy. The IPU had requested information from parliaments on the activities they had intended to conduct in order to provide publicity for them. The Annex to the report contained a list of activities undertaken by a number of Member Parliaments, on and around 15 September. Those activities included debates, events and round tables.

The IPU had also hosted events on the International Day of Democracy in the context of the 3rd World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, and had published articles, including an

editorial piece written by the President of the IPU on clean politics, which had been published in a number of international media publications. The President and the Secretary General had been interviewed in the international media.

The President said that the International Day of Democracy was a particularly important opportunity to ensure that national parliaments engaged citizens at all levels in their activities, thereby guaranteeing that the democratization process included the people.

Item 6 of the agenda

FINANCIAL SITUATION OF THE UNION

(CL/187/6-R.1, 6-R.1.Add and 6-P.1)

The Secretary General introduced document CL/187/6-R.1 documenting the financial situation of the IPU at 30 June 2010 and said that pursuant to IPU standard accounting practice assessed contributions had been invoiced in full at the beginning of the year and had been fully recognized as revenue. Three Members had been reaffiliated to the IPU, Djibouti, Guinea-Bissau and Malawi, and the Parliament of the Seychelles had joined as a new Member. The Transitional Arab Parliament had joined as an Associate Member. The internal assessment of staff salaries had produced a level of revenue that was higher than expected, and a surplus of CHF 7,000 was projected for the end of the year.

As in previous years the IPU had received less voluntary funding than requested. Progress had been made in identifying new sources of funding and the Union was particularly grateful to the Government of Belgium, which had allocated funds to the IPU through the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to undertake activities in the Sahara and Western Sahel. Particular mention should also be made of the support extended by UNAIDS through joint efforts to work on HIV/AIDS issues through parliaments, by, for example, amending legislation that was discriminatory to people living with HIV/AIDS. Interest from revenue had been less than budgeted.

On spending, the Union had spent under budget in several areas. Savings had been made in the organization of the 122nd Assembly in Bangkok, and through the favourable exchange rate with the United States dollar. Savings had also been made in activities to promote democracy and in external relations. Fewer human rights missions had been undertaken, which had also resulted in savings being made. Greater spending than planned had occurred with regard to some activities, and new activities had also been planned for the remainder of the year. Although the report showed that project expenditures were almost CHF 2 million below projections, expenditure was expected to increase in the second half of the year. Outstanding contributions amounted to CHF 3 million. Payments of prior years' arrears had been received.

Turning to the addendum to the report, he drew attention to the fact that Sudan had paid its arrears and should be deleted from the list of outstanding payments. The report contained information on the Union's modest capital expenditure to replace computers, furniture and outdated office equipment. It also contained details of the Legacy Staff Pension Fund, which had resulted from the IPU having joined the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund in 2005. Existing pensioners had not been able to join that Fund, so the Union had been obliged to establish the Legacy Staff Pension Fund, which had commitments to 12 former employees and residual benefits for 10 current staff members. The Fund was under strain owing to the overall financial situation of the Union. It was under constant monitoring, and on two occasions funds from IPU assets had been used to compensate for potential deficits in the Fund. The Fund was currently under control and the equity allocation had recently been lowered.

Document CL/187/6-P.1 explained that the IPU had a number of activities that had either been under-budgeted or found to require further investment in order to be realized in full. Other activities had also been added. The document contained a full list of those activities, which included an extraordinary meeting of the Executive Committee that had taken place in Namibia. That meeting had not been foreseen and had therefore required extra funding. The 3rd World Conference of Speakers of Parliament had been held on United Nations premises, and had incurred unexpected substantial costs. That Conference had therefore required funds of CHF 100,000 more than budgeted. The meeting of small island States in the Pacific region had been hosted by the New Zealand Parliament, with support from several other sources including the Parliament of Australia. The IPU had made a modest financial contribution to that meeting.

Further investment was required in the IPU website, and a comprehensive IT needs assessment at IPU Headquarters was also necessary. At its previous meeting in Bangkok, the Governing Council had approved a decision to hold a side event at the forthcoming United Nations Climate Change Conference in Mexico, which would require funding. Studies had been undertaken to contribute to the Millennium Development Summit and the 3rd World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, to assess ways parliaments in which could contribute to the attainment of the MDGs. The drafting of the global report on the state of the world's parliaments would also require funding. The Executive Committee had considered the proposals and recommended that the Governing Council approve a reallocation of CHF 513,000, including the amount approved at the previous session in Bangkok, from the regular budget, the surplus of which for the end of 2010 was estimated to be CHF 600,000.

The President said that in the absence of any comments or objections he took it that the Governing Council approved the proposal for the reallocation of CHF 513,000 from the regular budget.

It was so decided.

Item 7 of the agenda

DRAFT PROGRAMME AND BUDGET FOR 2011

(CL/187/7-P.1, P.2 and P.3)

The Secretary General introduced the draft programme and budget for 2011, and said that it had been difficult to draft, owing to the financial challenges currently being faced by parliaments, parliamentary assemblies and organizations. The global economic and financial crisis had affected the whole world, and the IPU was aware that parliaments needed to limit their spending and had fewer funds available, including for inter-parliamentary cooperation.

Although a potential annual budget growth of up to 3 per cent was foreseen to offset inflation and other increases, efforts were being made to maintain 0 per cent growth. A number of challenges had arisen, however. One such challenge was linked to the fact that the IPU had joined the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, which carried the condition that the IPU must apply the same rules and regulations as the United Nations with regard to staff benefits. The IPU was therefore tied by contract to pay the benefits set by the United Nations. The staff proportion of the budget was approximately two-thirds. That proportion increased by around 3 per cent annually owing to decisions made by the United Nations. There was thus a budget increase of 2 per cent before any other factors were taken into consideration. Inflation also had to be taken into consideration.

Also, over recent years the IPU had obtained funding support from the donor community in voluntary contributions. The three-year financial support contracts entered into

by the Canadian International Development Cooperation Agency, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and Irish Aid were due to expire by the end of 2010. The IPU was in negotiations with all three donors, and there seemed no doubt that they were willing to renew their commitments. Those commitments could not be renewed, however, until those agencies' budgets had been approved. Funding from those agencies would therefore not be available until the beginning of 2011 at the earliest. Some programmes would therefore have to be discontinued, or stopgap measures would be required in the budget. Efforts had been made to find interim funding from the budget for the gender programme.

A review of the management of the Secretariat had been conducted, and a number of potential improvements ranging from staff training to making better use of information communication technologies which would make the Secretariat more efficient had been identified. Consideration had also been given to streamlining the Office and a minor restructuring of the Secretariat was therefore under way. All programme activities had been brought under the administration of the Democracy Division, which had become the Division of Programmes, and the External Affairs Division had been merged with the Members and Assembly Affairs Division. A Communications Division was required, and a post must be established for a Managing Director to manage the day-to-day activities of the Secretariat. The budget however, included no provision for the creation of that post.

The need for greater efforts to ensure gender mainstreaming had been identified. Gender mainstreaming had therefore been attached to the functions of the Secretary General. Similarly, the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians answered directly to the Secretary General. A separate document had been submitted with the budget, which had also been discussed by the Executive Committee.

For a number of years, Members had been requesting that the IPU develop a new communications strategy, since the existing strategy had remained virtually unchanged for 25 years, during which time there had been a communication, outreach and information revolution. The IPU must therefore bring its strategy up to date. The document set out the communication policy and mission statement required. The communication strategy should, first and foremost, target parliamentarians. In order to implement that policy the IPU must invest more in modern communications tools, renew its publications policy and strengthen its relations with the media. The budget plan proposed working within existing resources to gradually implement the policy by realigning staff resources.

The draft budget reflected that new structure. In order for Members to be able to compare the new draft budget with the budgets of previous years, the budgets for 2010 and 2009 had been recalculated according to the new structure and presented in the same format as the 2011 draft. Maintaining 0 per cent growth was not possible, and a 1 per cent increase in assessed contributions had therefore been foreseen.

Mr. F.-X. de Donnea (Rapporteur of the Executive Committee) said that for 2011, the Secretary General was requesting a budget of CHF 18.2 million, and proposing a 1 per cent increase in overall assessed contributions, which was substantially lower than the 2.9 per cent average registered over the past 10 years. The promotion of democracy remained at the heart of the IPU agenda and priority would continue to be given to supporting parliaments in countries emerging from conflict, as well as defending human rights, promoting gender equality, working against violence against women and promoting the rights of children. The Executive Committee noted the 21 per cent increase in the Gender Programme core budget, and applauded the Secretary General's efforts to mainstream gender in the Union's programme and activities, as well as in the Secretariat.

Regarding the proposed increase of 1 per cent in assessed contributions, it must be noted that the IPU budget was being presented against the backdrop of many parliaments being asked to reduce their budget. It was therefore clear that even the smallest increase could

represent serious difficulties for IPU Members. While the Executive Committee recognized the efforts made by the Secretary General to curb inflationary costs in his proposal, it requested that the budget be reduced by 1 per cent, to reach zero growth.

Regarding voluntary funding, CHF 4.5 million had been included in the budget. Although the Executive Committee understood that it was not likely that the full amount would be forthcoming in the course of the next year, the Secretary General had included those activities in the budget in order to offer Members an opportunity to have the final say in establishing the Organization's programme of activities. The Executive Committee had also acknowledged the Secretary General's efforts to present more realistic delivery figures, with a 13 per cent reduction since 2010.

The Executive Committee had also noted that there had been a substantive increase between the 2011 and 2012 budgets, in respect of core and voluntary funding alike. It had therefore requested that the Secretariat revise the proposed figures downwards.

On measures to enhance the functioning and management of the Secretariat, he said that the Executive Committee had noted that several of the proposals in that regard could be implemented with immediate effect at no cost. Although the Executive Committee had supported the other proposed measures, particularly regarding the need for the Secretariat to prepare and implement a training programme and the need to establish a communications division, it was concerned that the financial environment was not conducive the implementation of costly measures.

In spite of financial constraints, measures must be taken to ensure positive developments in respect of communications. The Executive Committee therefore encouraged the Secretary General to implement the new communications strategy within the confines of the existing budget. The Executive Committee recommended that the Governing Council adopt the changes proposed in the 2011 consolidated budget and the updated scale of assessment. The Council was also requested to note that the Executive Committee had approved the plan to establish a new communications division, on the understanding that it would operate in the confines of existing resources.

The President reminded the Council that the draft budget would be debated at its next meeting, and in the meantime he encouraged the geopolitical groups to consider their positions.

Item 10 of the agenda

REPORT ON THE 3rd WORLD CONFERENCE OF SPEAKERS OF PARLIAMENT

(CL/187/10-R.1)

The Secretary General, presenting the report on the 3rd World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, contained in document CL/187/10-R.1, said the double event, comprising the sixth Meeting of Women Speakers of Parliament and immediately afterwards, the 3rd World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, had been particularly significant. The report contained the introductory statement made by the President of the IPU, which had drawn attention to the challenges facing parliaments and the measures that could be taken to face those challenges in order to establish greater democracy at the international level for the common good. It also contained the statement made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, which set out an ambitious agenda for parliaments to pursue in support of the agenda of the United Nations.

The report contained the text of the outcome document from the Conference, a declaration entitled "Securing global democratic accountability for the common good", which was a substantive declaration that had been modified during the course of the debate on the

basis of the comments and suggestions of the participants. The text was a progressive document that provided a substantive agenda for parliaments and for the IPU.

The report also contained a presentation of the panel discussions that had taken place at the Conference, on the themes of: (a) Countdown to 2015: Keeping our collective promise on the Millennium Development Goals; and (b) Strengthening trust between parliament and the people. A report from the sixth Meeting of Women Speakers of Parliament on the Berne Initiative for global parliamentary action on maternal and child health had also been included as an annex to the report, which described the role of parliamentarians in efforts to attain the fourth and fifth MDGs on reducing child mortality and improving women's health respectively.

The first World Conference of Speakers of Parliament had led to a clear reference in the Millennium Declaration on the need for greater cooperation between parliaments and the United Nations, and for that cooperation to be developed by the IPU. The second Conference had taken place five years later, when heads of State and Governments had met in New York to take stock of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration, and where they had called for greater parliamentary involvement in international cooperation. The 3rd Conference had taken place in Geneva and had given rise to a real commitment between Speakers. The debate had been particularly rich, and would be given further consideration, with a view to reaching a decision on how the IPU could strengthen parliamentary contributions to international cooperation.

The President said that the Conference had been a departure from the past in every sense, and the frank discussion, along with the commitment of the Speakers and the presence of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, had contributed significantly. The challenge remained to follow up on the work done at the Conference. In that regard, the Executive Committee was considering how to implement the declaration adopted during the Conference, and noted the willingness of the United Nations to partner the IPU.

Item 11 of the agenda

REPORTS ON RECENT IPU SPECIALIZED CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

(CL/187/11(a)-R.1, 11(b)-R.1, 11(c)-R.1, 11(d)-R.1, 11(e)-R.1,
11(f)-R.1, 11(g)-R.1 and 11(h)-R.1)

The Secretary General introduced the report on the regional seminar for Latin American parliaments on violence against women (CL/187/11(a)-R.1) and said that the seminar had recognized the double vulnerability of migrant and minority women. The participants in the seminar had urged those countries with migrants from Latin America to be aware of the plight of migrant women to ensure that they were not subjected to violence. The report on the third parliamentary forum on shaping the information society "ICT and global economic crisis: current situation and future perspectives" contained in document CL/187/11(b)-R.1 set out the main points of the discussion held over two days in May 2010 at the Headquarters of the ITU in Geneva. A similarly brief note was contained in document CL/187/11(c)-R.1 on the parliamentary meeting on the occasion of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Conference, which highlighted the main suggestions made during the course of that summit. Report CL/187/11(d)-R.1 highlighted the outcome of the regional conference towards enhanced parliamentary action to combat the trafficking of children for purposes of labour exploitation in West and Central Africa, in which participants had discussed how parliaments could improve steps to identify trafficking and mitigate its effects. Document CL/187/11(e)-R.1 reported on the parliamentary meeting on the occasion of the 2010 Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations, which had taken place in Brazil. Document CL/187/11(f)-R.1 reported on the parliamentary meeting on the occasion of the XVIII International AIDS Conference, in which criminal justice

concerns and labour concerns had been raised, as well as discussions on the prevention of mother to child transmission. Document CL/187/11(g)-R.1 reported on the regional workshop for Arab parliaments on implementing the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and document CL/187/11(h)-R.1 reported on the regional seminar on parliamentary oversight in the area of security in West Africa. He commended all eight reports for the attention of the Governing Council.

The President announced that there were currently 185 Council Members present. The quorum for any decision-making during the session would therefore be 93 Members.

The meeting rose at 10.55 a.m.

SECOND SITTING

Wednesday, 6 October 2010

(Morning)

The meeting was called to order at 9.15 a.m. with the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Dr. T.-B. Gurirab (Namibia), in the Chair.

Item 4 of the agenda

(continued)

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

(b) On the activities of the Executive Committee

The President announced that the Executive Committee had completed its agenda and had been informed of the names of the six Vice-Presidents who had been appointed by the geopolitical groups for the coming year. They were Mr. R. del Picchia of France, Mr. A. Alonso Díaz-Caneja of Mexico, Mr. M. Vardanyan of Armenia, Mr. Ngo Quang Xuan of Viet Nam, Mr. R. Al-Shariqi of the United Arab Emirates and Mrs. Z. Drif Bitat of Algeria. The Committee had appointed Mrs. Drif Bitat as its Vice-President.

Item 7 of the agenda

(continued)

DRAFT PROGRAMME AND BUDGET FOR 2011

(CL/187/7-P.1, P.2 and P.3)

The President recalled that at the first meeting of the current session of the Governing Council, the Secretary General had given a detailed presentation of the draft programme and budget for 2011, and the Rapporteur of the Executive Committee, Mr. F.-X. de Donnea, had reported on the Committee's discussions on the subject. He invited the representatives of the geopolitical groups to share their views on the draft.

Mr. J. Selfe (South Africa), speaking on behalf of the Africa Group, said that the Secretary General had described the drafting of the budget as a challenging exercise, since it had come at a time when parliaments were introducing austerity measures, as well as facing developmental challenges, natural disasters, conflicts and epidemics in many parts of world. In

that context, parliaments must divert their resources to meet the needs of the people. Africa in particular had pressing domestic issues, and some countries were struggling to pay their assessed contributions. Although they were proud to be Members of the IPU, they must be able to enjoy the benefits of membership, such as participation in meetings. Owing to the high cost of travel, 10 delegations from Africa had been unable to attend the current Assembly. Although there were some regional meetings, the majority of IPU events took place in Geneva or New York, and for many national delegations the cost of participation in those events was too high.

The IPU budget challenge had three dimensions: firstly, to extend the role of the IPU; second, to extend participation in meetings; and third, to maintain or reduce the costs of the Union. In the current economic climate business could not be "as usual", and it was not possible to increase membership fees. In order to balance those competing demands, the Secretary General should take the IPU to parliaments, rather than expecting parliaments to come to the IPU. More small regional conferences should be organized, focussing on the needs of parliamentarians in specific regions. Means of facilitating the participation of delegations with limited budgets should be examined, such as scheduling meetings to enable one delegation to participate in several meetings in one trip to one venue, and negotiating possible discounts on accommodation and travel expenses. Electronic communication, such as the use of teleconferencing and videoconferencing should be encouraged. The IPU should monitor and limit its administrative and travel expenses. Every post in the IPU administration must be justified and staff posts that became vacant should be downsized or kept empty. It was particularly disquieting that in 2010 CHF 60,000 had been spent on security for one meeting.

The IPU must monitor the effectiveness of its spending. The format of the budget had improved remarkably over the years, but to be an effective tool the indicators must be "smart": specific, measured, attainable, relevant and time-bound. If the planned activities did not pass that test, they should not be undertaken. The indicators in the budget were, however, vague in places, which rendered an assessment of the attainment of objectives particularly difficult. The budget of the following year should include an assessment of the extent to which those indicators had been achieved. The IPU should be increasingly project-oriented and partnership-financed, with voluntary funding providing for a larger proportion of IPU revenue. The IPU should become more entrepreneurial in sourcing funding, and must ensure that its activities were relevant to all Members. While those steps might not be popular, they would allow the IPU to reach new levels of efficiency and adapt to new financial realities.

Mr. R. del Picchia (France), speaking on behalf of the Twelve Plus Group, said it was unfortunate that the debate had not taken place immediately after the presentation of the budget by the Secretary General, since several delegations were no longer present. Although parliaments were not unwilling to increase their payments to the IPU, they were simply unable to. Most national parliaments would not be able to afford an increase in their assessed contributions either in 2011 or in 2012. The proposed budget for 2011 included an increase in assessed contributions of 1 per cent. The Executive Committee had pointed out that such an increase was not acceptable, and had recalculated the budget to achieve zero growth. No parliament could accept the 3.7 per cent increase budgeted for 2012, since no parliament had those funds at its disposal. Member Parliaments could not accept increases in the budget of the IPU when their own budgets were decreasing, and parliamentarians could not accept an increase in IPU staff salaries under the United Nations pension scheme when their own salaries were being cut. Further efforts must be made to find a strategy for budgeting over the coming years. The geopolitical groups were ready to assist in those efforts and wished to be included in the development of the budget. Savings must be made. If the salaries of IPU staff continued to increase there would be no funds remaining for activities. Cutbacks must be made. The Twelve Plus Group recommended that vacant staff posts should not be refilled. The proposed website

improvements were commendable, and the efficiency of communication technologies must be improved.

Mr. K. Kitagami (Japan), speaking on behalf of the Asia-Pacific Group, said he commended the efforts of the IPU to promote democracy, and especially its efforts to support parliamentary activities in developing countries. The Asia-Pacific Group supported the draft budget for 2011, in particular the minimal increase in assessed contributions. He urged the IPU to continue with the "scrap and build" strategy in the coming years given the serious financial situation in most countries. The fiscal situation in Japan, as in many other countries, was currently very difficult, and the IPU should endeavour to understand the fiscal situation in each Member country. While the reform of the IPU was a worthy cause, if that reform entailed a greater financial burden for each member, the Asia-Pacific Group would not be in a position to support that aspect of the draft budget.

The Secretary General, responding to the comments made by the representative of South Africa, said that the IPU was conscious of the difficult situation faced by national parliaments. He expressed his full commitment to the Members of the Union, and said that maximum efforts would be made to prevent increases in assessed contributions for 2011 and 2012. He thanked the delegation of South Africa for its careful analysis of the budget and the suggestions it had made for meeting financial objectives. The IPU had presented to the Executive Committee the outcome of a management review exercise, including an action plan, which was based on similar recommendations to those made during the present discussion, such as making better use of modern information communication technologies, moving towards the greater use of networking, e-mail, electronic outreach and videoconferencing, as well as the more rigorous use of "smart" objectives in the preparation and implementation of the budget. Conscientious efforts had been made to reduce travel costs, and those efforts would continue. He was committed to bringing the IPU to its Members, to conducting activities in Member parliaments and at the regional level, and to reducing the focus on expensive global meetings. The current situation was not business as usual for the IPU. Efforts were being made to build an organization that was more efficient in responding to the needs of its Members.

Turning to the comments made by the Twelve Plus Group, he said that the budget for 2012 would be dissected and presented to the Executive Committee for a first review in February 2011, in order to discuss where potential cuts could be made, before presenting the final draft to the Governing Council. The debate on the budget had not been held immediately after the presentation of the draft since the decision had been taken to give the geopolitical groups time to study the estimates. Should the members of the Governing Council wish to change that system, simultaneous presentation and debate of the budget could be arranged, if certain changes were made to the schedule to enable geopolitical groups to hold their internal debates. He agreed with the representative of Japan that the IPU did an enormous amount of work in support of parliaments and democracy in many countries and was able to do so thanks to the good partnerships it had established with a number of organizations and the financial support it received from voluntary contributions. The introduction of budget cuts for 2011 had taken account of the importance of those activities and the need to continue to build synergies with the donor community and other international organizations.

The assessed contributions of Member Parliaments were calculated based on the United Nations scale that took account of the payment capacity of different countries. That scale was slightly outdated. The Working Group of the Executive Committee would be reconvened at the next Assembly in April 2011 to reconsider the scale and adjust the payment scale for the IPU budget for 2012 and beyond.

The President said that in the absence of any comments or objections he took it that the Council wished to adopt the budget proposal for 2011, as revised by the Executive Committee.

It was so decided.

Item 8 of the agenda

COOPERATION WITH THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

(CL/187/8-R.1)

**Launch of the Advocacy kit for parliamentarians: disaster risk reduction:
an instrument for achieving the Millennium Development Goals**

The President introduced Dr. Sálvano Briceño, Director of the Secretariat of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction.

Dr. S. Briceño, introducing the advocacy kit for parliamentarians on disaster risk reduction as an instrument for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), said that many international agencies were currently focussing on reviewing the progress made towards the attainment of the MDGs. A recent report issued by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) had stated that over 1.2 million more children under the age of 5 years and 162,000 more infants would die between 2009 and 2015. An estimated 354,000 students might not complete their primary education. The situation was not encouraging and was likely to get worse if governments and the international community did not take urgent action to reduce climate change and mitigate disaster impacts. The impact of the Pakistani floods had reminded world leaders that disaster risk reduction was no longer an option, but rather was essential in order to protect people and development gains. Disasters were the result of a combination of natural hazards and social vulnerability, which was largely due to poverty but also due to unsustainable development planning and practices.

Disasters could derail the development progress of countries and communities if they were not well prepared. The increase in urban population density, the degradation of ecosystems and the effects of climate change were three main factors that would lead to even greater disasters in the future. In 2005 public confidence in all levels of the United States Government had dropped after the perceived inadequacies of the emergency response to Hurricane Katrina, during which the country had witnessed the recovery of 44 dead bodies from an abandoned and damaged hospital. In 2007, the approval ratings of the President of Peru had risen when the public felt that the Government had responded well to the management of the aftermath of the earthquake. Reducing disaster risk was therefore of political importance, since it was a reflection of good governance. Reducing disaster risk among the poor protected progress made towards attaining the MDGs and helped in adapting to climate change. Around 85 per cent of people exposed to earthquakes, cyclones, floods and drought lived in developing countries. Disasters posed significant threats to the attainment of the MDGs, in particular MDG1 on halving global poverty by 2015. The direct damage costs of disasters had multiplied 13-fold since the 1960s.

Disasters also threatened human security, and were expected to increase as urban density increased. The effects of the earthquakes in Haiti, in which 230,000 had perished, and Chile, in which fewer than 500 people had died, illustrated the difference in the impact of disasters in countries that had taken prevention measures, and those that had not. Similarly cyclones had affected Myanmar more seriously than Bangladesh, owing to better preparation measures in place in Bangladesh. Disasters challenged food security, particularly for the poor. The poor suffered the most in disasters. Severe drought in Niger, for example, had led to the

worst hunger crisis in the country's history. The floods in Pakistan were also affecting food security, since 3.6 million hectares of standing crops had been damaged or destroyed.

Making schools safe from disasters would protect children and accelerate the realization of universal education. Although the cost of achieving universal primary education was high, the mass collapse of poorly built schools during disasters increased that cost even further. The World Bank's Education for All programme had committed billions of dollars to the replacement of classrooms that were falling down as a result of poor construction and maintenance. According to early assessments received, 95 per cent of schools in the Port au Prince area of Haiti had been destroyed.

Disaster reduction must be made gender sensitive, in order to protect gender equality in development. Disasters had a different impact on men and women, and reversed progress that women might have made towards greater equality. Women were likely to be more malnourished, poorer, less mobile, less prepared and more likely than men to suffer or even die as a result of natural hazards. Pregnant women and young children were particularly vulnerable to the impacts of hazards of all kinds. The 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami had damaged 61 per cent of health facilities in the north of Aceh province in Indonesia, and killed 7 per cent of health workers. Midwives had either been killed or had lost their practices, which had resulted in a public health crisis in a region where midwives provided 80 to 90 per cent of maternal and neonatal care. The maternal health system's recovery had required intensive investment. The World Health Organization (WHO) had estimated that more than half a million flood-affected women in Pakistan were due to give birth over the coming six months.

Reducing disaster risk was imperative for the protection of the environment and people's living conditions. There was an increasing understanding that disaster risk reduction helped to protect the environment, and that a good environment reduced the risk of disaster. All ecosystems had a risk reduction function, and if they were destroyed the impact of hazards would only increase. Disasters such as landslides, caused by deforestation, served as a reminder that human safety depended on common sense protection of the environment. Maintaining biodiversity, grasslands, forest, coastal wetlands, reefs and dunes was an important element of protecting human settlements from drought, desertification, floods and landslides. It was imperative to promote the synergy between the ecosystem and human development. Investments in disaster risk reduction through global partnerships would accelerate the achievement of the MDGs, as well as adaptation to climate change. The ratio for cost benefit varied according to countries, sectors and locations. According to the United Nations, for every \$ 1 invested in prevention, \$ 37 could be saved in the wake of the disaster. The risks of wasted aid were a disincentive to investment. Disaster risk reduction could also safeguard the development and investments for donor and recipient countries alike. The whole international community must therefore act together. Successful international partnerships frequently benefited from the special expertise and knowledge of developing countries, the solutions proposed by which were often less costly to implement.

Parliamentarians were expected to represent the concerns of the people and were in a position to influence national spending laws and policies. Increased knowledge of parliamentarians could have a far-reaching impact towards the achievement of the MDGs and adapting to climate change. The advocacy kit had benefitted from input from parliamentarians from West African countries.

Although it might be easier to respond decisively when disaster struck, decisive action and leadership of parliamentarians was much more urgent in order to reduce the risk of such disasters occurring again in future.

Mrs. S. Tioulong (Cambodia) welcomed the launch of the advocacy kit, and appealed to her fellow parliamentarians, as representatives of the people, to advocate disaster risk reduction. She asked how many more millions of people would be made homeless, how many

more thousands would lose their lives, and how many more hundreds of thousands of children would be deprived of education as a result of so-called natural disasters. Disasters were not natural. Hazards were natural, but lack of preparedness that led to disaster was not. Parliamentarians could raise the awareness of the public and the government of the risks of devastation and could ensure that hazards did not become disasters. Preventive action was particularly important for poor countries, since any preventive action cost only a tiny proportion of the costs of reconstruction. Loss of life could not be repaired. She therefore urged all parliamentarians to take action.

Mr. J. Horváth (Hungary) said that in recent days Hungary had suffered a disaster that should be of particular interest to lawmakers and those who shaped governance. A container of toxic liquid had broken spilling toxic chemicals into the river Danube, which was flooding villages and killing people, ruining homes, devastating schools and causing untold damage. Parliamentarians must identify the nature of disasters. The disaster in Hungary was manmade and preventable. Parliamentarians, as guardians of the people, must take responsibility and ensure that early action was taken to prevent such disasters.

The President expressed the solidarity and sympathy of the Union to the people of Hungary. The advocacy kit would help parliamentarians to be more alert to natural and manmade disasters alike.

Also under item 8 of the agenda, the Council had before it the customary checklist of activities undertaken in cooperation with the United Nations over the past six months, as well as a draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the IPU, which would be submitted to the United Nations General Assembly for adoption at its current session. That draft had been examined and amended by the Committee on United Nations Affairs and had received the approval of the Executive Committee. He urged all Members to lobby their respective governments to give Ambassadors in New York the necessary instructions to support the draft resolution. The text of the draft resolution had been distributed to all Members of the Council.

The Secretary General introduced the list of activities undertaken by the IPU between 2 April and 4 October 2010 in cooperation with the United Nations (CL/187/8-R.1). The list included a reference to the 3rd World Conference of Speakers that had taken place at the United Nations Office at Geneva in July 2010, and other activities including a survey that had been conducted on how parliaments cooperated with the United Nations, a description of the work conducted in support of the Development Cooperation Forum of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), as well as references to the work done by the IPU in cooperation with the United Nations on the MDGs and nuclear non-proliferation.

Turning to the draft resolution for submission to the United Nations General Assembly, he said that the IPU had been developing closer and more mutually productive cooperation with the United Nations. In 2000, heads of State and Government, through the Millennium Declaration, had called for cooperation between parliaments and the United Nations to be strengthened through the IPU. In 2005 the United Nations had instituted a series of reforms, including the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Human Rights Council, the Development Cooperation Forum and the Democracy Fund. The United Nations had asked the IPU to mobilize parliaments to support all of those new institutions. That request for support was a healthy development, which must be nurtured.

Every two years the United Nations held a debate in its General Assembly on its relationship with the IPU. That debate was among members of government. It was therefore essential that parliamentarians expressed their vision of how they wanted that relationship to develop. The established practice was for the Governing Council to consider the draft of a

possible General Assembly resolution, which would be passed to heads of Government, who would seek support for the text in New York.

The draft resolution currently before the Council was a development of the text that had been submitted to the General Assembly two years previously. It had been discussed in the Committee on United Nations Affairs, as well as the Advisory Group and the Executive Committee. The new developments in the text had been drafted on the basis of suggestions made during debates within the IPU, and suggestions issuing from the Office of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who had issued a report on cooperation between the United Nations and the IPU, which highlighted the positive aspects of cooperation and suggested how to strengthen it in future.

The draft resolution called for strong cooperation between the IPU and the recently established United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women). A list of activities for that cooperation had been included, which was based on the IPU gender equality programme and the priorities expressed by the first Executive Director of UN Women. The IPU expected and hoped that Members would support that call. The draft also contained a specific reference to the IPU assisting in building a true partnership between the United Nations and parliaments in a variety of fields. The draft resolution emphasized the need for a discussion on the relationship between the United Nations, national parliaments and the IPU. The Millennium Declaration made a clear reference to that relationship, and it would be useful to take stock of the current status of the relationship and plan for its development. In that regard, the draft suggested that in 2011 the General Assembly should hold a separate debate on interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the IPU.

He hoped that the Governing Council would support the draft and that all Members would encourage their governments to co-sponsor the resolution when it came before the General Assembly.

The President recalled that the Executive Committee had proposed that the IPU should issue a statement pledging the commitment of parliaments to the achievement of the MDGs. Such a statement had been drafted and discussed by the Committee on United Nations Affairs. The Statement read as follows:

"We parliamentarians, meeting at the 123rd Assembly of the Inter-parliamentary Union (IPU) in Geneva in October 2010, welcome the declaration Keeping the promise: United to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, adopted at the 2010 high-level meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The IPU recognizes the widely held view that progress towards achieving the MDGs has been uneven. Despite significant achievements, considerable challenges lie ahead. The IPU therefore welcomes the commitment by the United Nations and its Member States to give top priority to the MDGs over the next five years so as to ensure their speedy implementation.

The IPU has endorsed the need for greater accountability in international development cooperation. Governments must also be accountable for the MDGs in their own countries. It is therefore imperative that the MDG national reports are tabled and discussed in parliament, not only to guarantee accountability, but also to make the pursuit of the Goals an inclusive national exercise. Without good governance, both on the national and international levels, the MDGs will not succeed. We urge all parliaments to do everything in their power to place the MDGs high on their agenda, to identify modalities to further support MDG-related efforts, and to ensure that their governments honour the promise of meeting the MDGs.

The IPU has worked energetically towards achieving the MDGs, in particular those relating to gender equality and the empowerment of women, child and maternal health, HIV and AIDS, and environmental sustainability. It has also undertaken valuable work in the area of parliamentary scrutiny of development aid. As a vital partner in the global effort to halve world

poverty by 2015, we pledge to continue working to mobilize parliaments in these efforts as the deadline approaches."

The President said that in the absence of any comments or objections, he took it that the Governing Council would approve that statement.

It was so decided.

Item 9 of the agenda

CONSOLIDATION OF THE REFORM OF THE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION

The President recalled that the Executive Committee had discussed a draft strategic plan for the IPU for the period 2010-2015, which had been distributed among all Members of the Governing Council.

The Secretary General said that the future development of the IPU had been the subject of a healthy debate in the Organization over the past year. In the course of that debate, it had become clear that agreement was needed among all Members as to what they expected from the Organization and the direction they wanted its activities to take.

The IPU had begun as an organization that aimed to facilitate parliamentary cooperation. The document therefore asked some fundamental questions about how the IPU fulfilled that role today, and about the nature of the relationship between the Union and its Members. It also raised questions as to how Members participated in the work of the IPU as an institution, and how they participated as different political factions in parliament. It asked what could be done to ensure coherence in inter-parliamentary cooperation, since there were a large number of inter-parliamentary organizations of all kinds, and parliaments were finding it increasingly difficult to follow the activities of all of them. Consideration was given in the document to the potential role of the IPU in increasing coherence among those organizations. The draft strategy also considered how to increase parliamentary cooperation with the United Nations.

In continuation, the document addressed the five traditional functions of the IPU: peace, development, democracy, human rights and gender equality. Each of those chapters contained a description of IPU activities. Members should examine those five elements and consider what the priority areas for action should be in each case. The final chapter of the draft strategic plan addressed the modernization of the Union. The Organization must be brought into the twenty-first century. In order to do so, structures and working methods must be improved, and better use must be made of information communications technologies. Once Members had mapped out their strategy for the IPU's future development, they might wish to return to the subject of the possible need for an international convention on the IPU and for a new cooperation agreement with the United Nations.

The draft was not a plan in itself, but rather a starting point for discussions for the development of a plan. He encouraged all Members to provide feedback on the draft, and urged the six geopolitical groups to consider the document and submit their views. Some of the geopolitical groups had established working groups to consider the strategic plan, which was a commendable approach. The Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians and the Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians would meet in January 2011 to discuss respectively the human rights and the gender aspects of the plan. All suggestions and input would contribute to the discussion of the Executive Committee when it met to discuss the strategy in February 2011. It was hoped that during that meeting the document would be transformed from a series of questions into a series of answers, starting with a vision and a

mission statement from the IPU, and continuing with a series of fundamental strategic objectives for the Organization, and recommendations for how to achieve them. It was hoped that the strategy could be submitted for approval by the 124th Assembly in Panama. The plan would be of considerable assistance in determining future budgets, as well as the possible drafting of an international convention and a new agreement with the United Nations.

Mr. R. del Picchia (France), speaking on behalf of the Twelve Plus Group, welcomed the debate on the draft strategic plan. The Twelve Plus Group had established a working group for the consideration of the plan, with Mr. de Donnea of Belgium as its Moderator. Since the plan would not be finalized before 2011, the implementation dates of 2010-2015 seemed premature. He therefore suggested that the plan should be implemented over the period 2012-2017, in order to ensure that there was sufficient time to implement it fully.

Mr. H.P. Teo (Singapore) said that all organizations required continuous reorganization, and the drafting of the draft strategic plan was particularly timely. While change was good and essential, the reform process would take some time, particularly since the views of the 155 Member Parliaments must be taken into consideration. The aim of the reform should be to streamline existing programmes and activities, rather than to create new ones. Many countries were currently emerging from the global economic and financial crisis and were struggling to sustain economic growth. There was therefore a need to remain prudent when budgeting, and the consolidation of activities must be a priority. The idea of an international convention on the IPU should be reconsidered, since in many countries the separation of powers meant that all treaty-making powers were vested in the Executive, not in parliament. While change and transformation should not be held back, more time was required to examine all aspects of the IPU reform, and in particular the drafting of an international convention on the IPU.

Mr. H. Fauzy (Indonesia) said that the reform of the IPU should be a continuous process. Indonesia believed that the time had come to revise the procedure for the election of the President of the IPU to take account of a rotation between the geopolitical groups. Drafting Committees should be granted more time to draft resolutions. Current voting procedures minimized the sense of ownership and collective participation with regard to formulating decisions or adopting resolutions. Consideration should be given to the Union's methods of observing the implementation of its resolutions, and to the possibility of granting the Executive Committee an oversight function in that regard. Over the past 10 years there had been a considerable increase in humanitarian challenges, in particular natural disasters, to which the IPU paid particular attention. The IPU had become increasingly aware of and involved in the global response to humanitarian issues. It should therefore adopt more appropriate measures to tackle those challenges in a more action-oriented and institutionalized manner. The Union should have a tangible impact on every individual it represented, must become more relevant on the international scene, and should increase its commitment to multilateral issues.

Mr. J. Horváth (Hungary) welcomed the presentation of the draft strategic plan and drew attention to the role of the IPU as a facilitator of parliamentary diplomacy, fostering relationships between parliaments, in order to promote exchanges of views and experiences. The cost of that cooperation would be marginal and the return would be considerable.

Ms. M. Lugarič (Croatia) noted with satisfaction that the draft strategic plan was a good starting point for the discussion of the reform of the IPU. She pointed out, however, that elements of the role of the IPU, which had been defined in resolutions, such as the resolution of the Third Standing Committee, on youth participation in democratic processes, which had

called on the IPU to establish a youth programme, had not been included in the plan. She cautioned that the IPU must be seen to be implementing its own resolutions.

Mr. A.F. Sorour (Egypt) welcomed the draft document. The work of the IPU should be situated in the context of parliamentary diplomacy. He expressed concern regarding the concept of an international convention on the IPU, since States were not represented by parliaments. There was no reference to the President of the Organization. He asked what consideration would be given to parliaments that were entitled to be full Members of the Union, but were not States, such as Palestine. He asked what would happen to the membership of any parliaments whose Executives chose not to ratify the convention. He also wished to know what privileges the parliaments of States that ratified the convention would have.

Mr. A. Costa (Portugal) said that his delegation supported the draft strategic plan, except for the section on the possibility of drafting an international convention on the IPU, since only governments had treaty-making power. The idea of establishing a treaty on the IPU would not be conducive to the principle of the separation of powers. It was not the time to give the Organization a new dimension, owing to the effects of the global economic and financial crisis. There was a clear difference between the concerns of those elected to parliament, those not elected, and public servants. Those elected to parliament must remember their electors at all times. The work of the IPU should be targeted at the effects of the global economic and financial crisis. Parliamentarians must speak on behalf of the electorate and must be heard by the electorate.

The President thanked the participants for their comments, which had been duly noted.

Item 12 of the agenda

ACTIVITIES OF COMMITTEES AND OTHER BODIES

(b) Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians (CL/187/12(b)-P.1, R.1, R.2 and R.3)

The President announced that the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians had a vacancy for a substitute member from the Latin American Group. The Governing Council had before it the candidature of Mr. J.P. Letelier of Chile. In the absence of any comments or objections, he took it that the Governing Council approved that candidature.

It was so decided.

Ms. R. Green, Chairperson of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians, introduced the reports of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians (CL/187/12(b)-R.1 to R.3). During its session, the Committee had examined the individual situations of 306 parliamentarians in 35 countries. It had held 7 meetings with official delegations. It had also met with the parliamentarians concerned, or their representatives, in 4 of the cases. The resolutions submitted for the approval of the Governing Council concerned cases in 21 countries around the world, one of which was being presented for the first time.

Afghanistan

The Committee proposed the closure of the case of Ms. Joya, not because her situation had been resolved, but because there was no remedy remaining. With a newly elected parliament in place in Afghanistan, the question of the reinstatement of Ms. Joya, who had not stood in those elections, was no longer applicable. The Committee was very disappointed in the situation and deplored the fact that Ms. Joya had been prevented, without any legal basis, from exercising her parliamentary mandate for more than three years, and that consequently her electors had not been represented in Parliament. The Committee hoped that the new Parliament would treat its members differently and ensure respect for their parliamentary and human rights.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Ms. Malalai Joya, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

Bangladesh

Investigations into the grenade attacks in January 2005 on Mr. Shah Ams Kibria, a former Finance Minister of Bangladesh, which killed him, and in August 2004 on Ms. Sheikh Hasina, the opposition leader at the time, continued to make headway. Those arrested included not only those who were suspected of carrying out the crime but also the alleged masterminds, and the Committee was hopeful that the truth would soon be fully revealed.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the two draft resolutions relating to the case of Mr. Shah Ams Kibria and to the case of Ms. Sheikh Hasina, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

Belarus

Mr. Victor Gonchar and Mr. Anatoly Krasovsky had disappeared in 1999. The investigation into the disappearance was shrouded in secrecy, and the victims' families did not know what the status of the case was. It was therefore difficult to believe that the authorities were seriously investigating the disappearances. In such high-profile cases, it was in the authorities' interest to show that they were doing their utmost to reveal the truth. The Belarusian Parliament must not stand on the sidelines and should make sure that an effective investigation was initiated.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Mr. Victor Gonchar, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

Burundi

In the cases the Committee was examining in Burundi there were serious allegations that justice was not following its course, both where former parliamentarians were the alleged offenders or, in the case of Mr. Radjabu, the convicted offenders, and where they were the direct victims, as had been the case of the grenade attacks targeting eight former opposition parliamentarians.

Presidential and parliamentary elections had taken place in Burundi in June and July 2010. The Committee earnestly hoped that the stated commitment of the President of the National Assembly to continued dialogue, together with the President of Burundi's public pledge to promote justice and prevent impunity, would also bear fruit in both of the cases before the Committee. The Committee believed that an on-site mission would contribute to progress towards a settlement of both cases and hoped that the Burundian authorities would respond favourably to that proposal.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the two draft resolutions relating to the case of eight former opposition parliamentarians and to the case of Mr. Pasteur Mpawenayo, Mr. Hussein Radjabu, Mr. Théophile Minyurano and Mr. Gérard Nkurunziza, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

Cambodia

On the occasion of the 122nd Assembly of the IPU in Bangkok, the Committee had presented to the Governing Council for the first time the case of Ms. Mu Sochua. The Committee had now decided to also present the case of Mr. Sam Rainsy, the leader of the opposition.

Ms. Mu Sochua's case had begun when she had brought a defamation lawsuit against Prime Minister Hun Sen, taking the view that he had insulted her. Not only had her case been quickly dismissed but the Prime Minister had also decided to sue her in return, on grounds that she had tarnished his reputation by announcing publicly her intention to sue him and writing letters to the IPU and the Global Fund for Women. The court had sentenced her to a fine while awarding the Prime Minister compensation, a ruling which had been upheld by the higher courts. There had, however, never been any investigation into whether his reputation had indeed been tarnished, which was necessary in any defamation case. Ms. Sochua had refused to pay the fine, as a result of which the compensation and fine were being deducted from her salary. The Committee was scandalized that her letter to the IPU had been used to convict her, meaning that IPU procedure for the protection of the human rights of parliamentarians had been abused to violate her fundamental right to freedom of expression.

The case of Mr. Sam Rainsy raised similar problems: the use of courts for political purposes. On 23 September 2010, Mr. Rainsy had been sentenced to ten years in prison, thus preventing him from standing in the 2013 elections. In 2009, Mr. Rainsy had removed six wooden temporary border demarcation posts along the Cambodian-Vietnamese border after local peasants had complained to him that the posts encroached on their land. As a result, he had been found guilty of the destruction of public property and sentenced to a two-year prison term. When he had collected evidence to show that the border posts had been on Cambodian territory, a new charge of falsifying public documents and divulging false information had been brought against him. If Mr. Rainsy had lied, the authorities should be able to provide the correct information on the location of the disputed border posts. Instead, they had claimed that information was a State secret. The Committee had been informed that at a recent appeal hearing, the government border committee had acknowledged that the border posts had fact not been in the correct place. The Committee firmly believed that the issue in question was of a purely political nature and should therefore be resolved at the political level. It hoped that the authorities would find ways to resolve the situation, in order for Mr. Rainsy to resume his parliamentary activities as quickly as possible.

The Committee believed that the National Assembly could and should do much more to protect its members from encroachments by the executive authorities. As an essential part of those efforts, it should take the lead in promoting debate on strengthening the independence

of the judiciary. The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Cambodia had outlined a series of recommendations, which, if implemented, would provide important legal protection to all, including parliamentarians.

Mr. T. Nhem (Cambodia) said that the National Assembly of Cambodia had been responsive and cooperative with the Committee regarding the two cases, and had not failed to uphold its responsibility to protect the honour and dignity of its parliamentarians. It conducted its work within the confines of its rules of procedure and law. Despite the Cambodian delegation's sincere attempts to explain the facts of the case, the Committee had painted a different picture in the draft resolution. The two cases concerned were not political cases. The decision of the Committee was one-sided, and Cambodia could not support the draft resolutions.

The Governing Council adopted the two draft resolutions relating to the case of Mr. Sam Rainsy and to the case of Ms. Mu Sochua, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

Colombia

At the invitation of the Colombian Congress, a Committee delegation had travelled to Bogotá in August 2009 in order to raise its concerns regarding the Colombian cases and to gain a better understanding of the political and legal context in Colombia.

A new Congress and President had recently taken office in Colombia. The Committee considers that the new political situation offered a timely and welcome opportunity to make further progress in the many different and complex cases that the Committee continued to examine in Colombia.

The Committee had therefore requested a second mission to Bogotá in the coming days to discuss with the authorities, the victims and their families, progress in the investigations into the murders of members of the Congress, protection for those at risk, and the question of full respect for the right to fair trial for members of Congress. The conclusions of the forthcoming mission would be presented to the Governing Council at the 124th Assembly of the IPU in Panama, in April 2011.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the six draft resolutions relating to the case of seven parliamentarians, as well as the case of Mr. Luis Carlos Galan Sarmiento, to the case of Mr. Jorge Tadeo Lozano Osorio, to the case of Mr. Wilson Borja and to the case of Mr. Alvaro Araujo Castro, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

Ecuador

In the long-standing case in Ecuador concerning Mr. Jaime Ricuarte Hurtado González and Mr. Pablo Vicente Tapia Farinango, who had been shot dead in February 1999, two prime suspects were in custody in the United States of America and in Colombia. The Ecuadorian authorities were keen to have them extradited to Ecuador as soon as possible so that they could stand trial. The masterminds behind the assassinations still remained to be identified. The Colombian authorities had set the extradition procedure in motion and the Committee hoped that the United States judicial authorities would do likewise.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Mr. Jaime Ricuarte Hurtado González and Mr. Pablo Vicente Tapia Farinango, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

Eritrea

The situation of the 11 parliamentarians in Eritrea was an affront to human dignity. Their only "mistake" had been to call for democratic reforms in Eritrea. There had long been fears that some of them had died in prison, where they had been detained in appalling conditions without any contact with the outside world and without ever being brought before a judge. After its meeting the previous day, the Committee's fears had been confirmed when a reliable source had informed it that only two of the 11 parliamentarians were still alive.

The Committee believed that all IPU Member Parliaments should take urgent action to ensure that the Eritrean authorities were held to account for the reported deaths of those parliamentarians, and that they released the two who continued to languish in prison. International or regional agreements to which Eritrea was a party could be an entry point.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of 11 Eritrean parliamentarians, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

Iraq

The Committee had first presented to the Governing Council the case of Mr. Al-Dainy, a member of the previous Iraqi legislature, in April 2009. At that time, there had been fears that he had been the victim of an enforced disappearance, which had later turned out to be groundless. Mr. Al-Dainy had been among those who had revealed the existence of secret detention centres in Iraq, where torture had been routinely practised. As a result, he had been accused of a series of grave crimes, including massacres, bombings and the suicide attack inside the Iraqi Parliament in April 2007. Although he had escaped arrest, many of his family members and guards had been arrested, severely tortured and forced to sign confessions accusing him of the crimes in question. In January 2010, a court had sentenced him, in absentia, to death, which constituted a travesty of justice. The Committee called on the newly elected authorities, in particular the Parliament, to ensure that the iniquitous judgment was quashed and that Mr. Al-Dainy was rehabilitated. The Committee also hoped that the new Parliament would start tackling the huge challenges facing the judicial system in Iraq.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Mr. Mohammed Al-Dainy, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

Lebanon

In March 2009, the Special Tribunal for Lebanon had begun work to dispense justice in the case of the murder of former Prime Minister Hariri. In future one or more of the four cases of murdered parliamentarians before the Committee might come under the jurisdiction of the Tribunal. The Committee therefore trusted that the National Assembly, as the authority empowered to approve the national budget, would continue to endorse the State of Lebanon's agreed financial contribution to the functioning of the Court.

In the past 18 months, however, the Lebanese authorities had been solely responsible for the investigations and proceedings in those cases. The Committee therefore regretted that it

still had no information on the steps taken to identify and prosecute the murderers. It was keen to receive such details, along with confirmation that the National Assembly had associated itself, as it had done in the case of Mr. Tueni, with the court action by the public prosecutor in the other three cases.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Mr. Gibran Tueni, Mr. Walid Eido, Mr. Antoine Ghanem and Mr. Pierre Gemayel, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

Madagascar

A Committee mission had been due to travel to Madagascar to get a better idea of the situation of the members of Parliament who had been arrested, humiliated, brutalized and charged with various public order offences in the aftermath of the coup d'état in 2009.

The Malagasy authorities had decided to postpone the mission in the light of the political process currently under way in Madagascar. The Committee believed that an early on-site mission would in no way hamper that process and therefore hoped that a delegation could soon travel to Madagascar.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of 10 Malagasy parliamentarians, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

Malaysia

At the 122nd Assembly in Bangkok the Governing Council had considered the case of Mr. Anwar Ibrahim of Malaysia, the current leader of the opposition People's Alliance, who was, once again, being prosecuted on a sodomy charge. Once again the investigation and proceedings seemed to be suffering from the same flaws as in the previous sodomy case.

The Committee endorsed the conclusions of its trial observer, that the prosecution was compromised to the point that the case should be discontinued. There were many reasons to believe that political considerations were behind the case: it had been brought at a time when Anwar Ibrahim had been returning to politics and standing in elections. Shortly before filing his sodomy complaint, the complainant had met with the Deputy Prime Minister and the Senior Assistant Commissioner. The Attorney General, who had been the prosecution team leader in the first sodomy case of which Mr. Ibrahim had been acquitted at final instance, had been involved in the present case, and the defence had been given almost no access to prosecution evidence. It had also become known that a member of the prosecution team was in a relationship with the complainant. The trial observer report was annexed to the draft resolution on the case.

Mr. K.S. Wee (Malaysia) said he wished to point out that the Malaysian Parliament had not been able to provide thorough comment in response to the report of the trial observer, which it had received less than one week before the current Assembly. The delegation of Malaysia had been granted five minutes in which to present its preliminary comments to the Committee. While it was grateful for that opportunity, it considered that without a thorough response from the Malaysian Parliament to the report, which contained several factual errors, the Committee could not make an informed, fair and impartial judgement. Five minutes had not been sufficient for the delegation to express its views. The Malaysian delegation was disappointed that the Committee had based its opinions on the report of the trial observer

alone, since that had led the Committee to draw a tainted and one-sided conclusion. His delegation was also disappointed that the report of the observer had been distributed to the Governing Council, which would only serve to perpetuate imbalanced opinions. The Malaysian Parliament would continue to cooperate with the Committee. No individual was above the law in Malaysia, and justice must be brought. The Malaysian delegation therefore expressed its reservation to the draft resolution.

The Governing Council adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Mr. Anwar Ibrahim, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

Mongolia

Mr. Zorig Sanjasuuren had been murdered in October 1998. The Mongolian intelligence agency and the police were continuing their investigation into the murder, and had reliable forensic assistance from Germany and Japan. The Committee was confident that those efforts would ultimately succeed in identifying the assassins and bringing them to justice.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Mr. Zorig Sanjasuuren, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

Myanmar

In a little over a month, the citizens of Myanmar would take part in the first elections in twenty years. Although that should be a reason for joy, it was not. At its previous meeting in Bangkok, the Governing Council called on the Myanmar authorities to do everything possible to ensure inclusive, free and fair elections. Thus far, over 2,100 political prisoners were still awaiting release. That included the twelve parliamentarians whose case was before the Council, and who remained imprisoned for merely having exercised their freedom of expression. They had all been sentenced on the basis of legal proceedings that had blatantly disregarded their right to a fair trial. They are not the only ones, however, to be excluded from the political process. In the past, the Committee had examined many other cases of parliamentarians in Myanmar who had been imprisoned for having spoken their minds. None of them would be able to stand in the elections, since any candidate with a criminal conviction would be automatically disqualified.

The international community, including most recently the Group of Friends of Myanmar, comprising the United Nations Security Council members and other major States, had called on the Myanmar authorities to do better to ensure meaningful and credible elections. With elections imminent, the Committee called on IPU Member Parliaments to take a clear stance in support of the release of their detained colleagues and of a credible political transition in Myanmar.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of the 21 parliamentarians in Myanmar, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

Palestine

Seven members of the Palestinian Legislative Council, who had been arrested in or around June 2006 following the capture of an Israeli soldier in a cross-border attack on Israeli

military installations, were still in detention. The others who had been arrested with them had been released after having served their sentences, although some of them had later been taken into administrative detention. The Committee was particularly concerned about the situation of three of them, who had been residents of East Jerusalem, where they had been born and had spent their whole lives. In May 2006, the Israeli Interior Minister had revoked their residency permits and argued that, as members of the Palestinian Legislative Council, they were not loyal to Israel. At the time, the decision had no practical effect since they had been arrested one month later. However, on their release, they had been notified that they must leave East Jerusalem. On refusal to do so, Mr. Abu-Teir had been rearrested and the others had sought refuge in the building of the International Committee of the Red Cross in East Jerusalem. They all continued to live with the prospect of being chased from their homes. The Committee considered that over and above the compelling legal grounds that prohibit their deportation it would constitute an inhuman and cruel act against the persons concerned, their families and their community. It called on the Israeli authorities and in particular the Knesset to prevent that from happening.

Mr. Barghouti and Mr. Sa'adat continued to serve their sentences and their situation had not changed. The Committee continued to call for their immediate release.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the three draft resolutions relating to the case of Mr. Marwan Barghouti, to the case of Mr. Ahmad Sa'adat, and to the case of 12 Palestinian parliamentarians, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

Philippines

The Committee's concern in the first case in the Philippines was that criminal cases remained pending against the four parliamentarians concerned, two of whom were no longer parliamentarians as they had not been re-elected. There was reason to believe that those cases were part of an effort to harass them and drive them out of politics. The Committee was particularly scandalized at the charge of obstructing the course of justice brought against Mr. Teodoro Casiño, which had been pending since May 2007 without the prosecution complying with its duty to reach a decision. The Committee was, however, confident that the new administration under President Benigno Aquino would take the necessary measures to ensure due administration of justice.

The second case in the Philippines was that of Senator Trillanes, a Navy Lieutenant who had been elected by more than 12 million Filipinos in May 2007 while he had been in detention. He had been accused of participation in the so-called "Oakwood Siege" of July 2003, when more than 300 soldiers had been to the Oakwood Hotel to make known their grievances over corruption in the Philippine Armed Forces. The Senate of the Philippines had been at the forefront of efforts to defend the rights of Senator Trillanes. As a result of those efforts, an amnesty bill would hopefully soon secure his release and allow him to perform the duty to which he had been elected.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the two draft resolutions relating to the case of Mr. Saturnino Ocampo, Mr. Teodoro Casiño, Ms. Liza Maza and Mr. Rafael Mariano, and to the case of Mr. Antonio. F. Trillanes, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

Russian Federation

Ms. Galina Starovoitova, a prominent Russian human rights advocate, had been shot dead on 20 November 1998 in the stairwell of her apartment in St. Petersburg. The courts had convicted several persons of involvement and concluded that the murder had been politically motivated. While the Russian Parliament had regularly made available reports from the Prosecutor's Office on the status of the investigation, the Committee regretted that it had not been possible, despite several requests, to meet with the Russian delegations to the IPU Assemblies to discuss its main concern in the case, which was that the masterminds of the murder were yet to be identified and held to account. The Committee hoped that such an exchange of views could soon take place. It also hoped that the Russian Parliament would do everything possible to help ensure that fresh impetus was lent to the investigation with a view to finally elucidating the crime.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Ms. Galina Starovoitova, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

Rwanda

Mr. Léonard Hitimana had disappeared on 7 April 2003 and had still not been found. Detailed allegations about the circumstances of his disappearance had thus far drawn no reaction from the Rwandan authorities. That account of what allegedly happened the day of his disappearance and the way in which the Rwandan authorities had handled the investigation led the Committee to conclude that Mr. Hitimana had been the victim of an enforced disappearance. The Committee urged the Parliament of Rwanda to fulfill its oversight role effectively by ensuring that the investigative authorities carried out a serious investigation, starting with an interrogation of Mr. John Karangwa, the Rwandan intelligence officer who was alleged to have tortured and killed Mr. Hitimana.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Mr. Léonard Hitimana, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

Sri Lanka

The civil war in Sri Lanka had ended more than a year ago, which should have made it much easier for the Sri Lankan authorities to identify, locate and apprehend those responsible in the cases of the murdered parliamentarians that was before the Committee. In two of the murder cases, suspects were in police custody and the Committee trusted that the trial in those cases would advance swiftly and shed full light on those crimes. However, in three other cases no progress had been made despite the existence of some important leads. The Committee called on the authorities to do everything possible to ensure that those murders did not go unpunished.

With regard to the cases of threats and other forms of harassment of now former opposition parliamentarians and their families, mainly from the Tamil National Alliance, even though impunity has prevailed in most of those instances, the Committee proposed that the case be closed, since no information from the sources had been forthcoming for some time, and some of the persons concerned were now in exile. With respect to the particular situation

of Dr. Jayawardena, given the overall improved security situation in Sri Lanka, the Committee proposed that the examination of his case be transferred to its confidential procedure.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the six draft resolutions relating to the case of seven Sri Lankan parliamentarians, to the case of Mr. Joseph Pararajasingham, to the case of Mr. Nadarajah Raviraj, to the case of Mr. Thiyagarajah Mashewaran, to the case of Mr. D.M. Dassanayake and to the case of Mr. Kiddinan Sivanesan, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

Turkey

Mr. Mehmet Sinçar had been killed in September 1993 in circumstances suggesting that he had been the victim of an extrajudicial execution. The Turkish Parliament had reported some time ago that the trial of suspects was under way. Mr. Sinçar's family had learned only through the IPU of the existence of that trial and had since joined it as a civil party. On 1 October 2010, two suspects had been found guilty and sentenced to life imprisonment. However, that did not satisfy Mr. Sinçar's family. A retired Turkish admiral had recently stated publicly that the many assassinations that had occurred in Turkey between 1993 and 1997 had been part of a State policy to combat terrorism. The family had therefore lodged an appeal in the hope that the instigators of those murders would be identified. The Committee would therefore continue to follow the court proceedings.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Mr. Mehmet Sinçar, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

Zimbabwe

The Committee remained deeply concerned at the continuing impunity in the case of Mr. Sikhala and Mr. Madzore, who had both been tortured, and Mr. Chamisa, who had been beaten by individuals while the police had stood by and done nothing. The Committee had received an angry letter from the Attorney General of Zimbabwe, accusing it of embroiling itself in matters that were largely internal to Zimbabwe. The draft resolution explained the Committee's mandate, in order to ensure that the authorities understood that the Committee did not instruct any authority to do certain things, but rather served to recall the human rights obligations that States had voluntarily assumed by guaranteeing human rights in their Constitutions and signing international treaties. The Committee sincerely hoped that the Attorney General would take action to ensure that the culprits would be brought to justice, and was confident that the House of Assembly would assist in that regard.

With respect to Mr. Bennett, the Committee hoped that with his acquittal, on 10 May 2010, of the charges of possessing weaponry for the purposes of banditry, the ongoing effort to harass him and keep him out of politics in Zimbabwe had ended and that he could finally take up his post as Deputy Agriculture Minister. It proposes that his case be closed.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Mr. Roy Bennett, Mr. Job Sikhala, Mr. Paul Madzore and Mr. Nelson Chamisa, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

Ms. R. Green, President of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians, reminded all Members that the Committee counted on their support in following up on the

resolutions adopted. In a world where human rights were not always the first concern of governments, parliamentary action to promote and protect them was particularly important.

Mr. F. Rabbi (Bangladesh) thanked the Committee for its efforts in respect of the cases in Bangladesh, and thanked the Governing Council for having endorsed the two resolutions on those cases.

Mr. E. Rubio (Mexico) said that the situation in Myanmar was particularly serious. The whole international community was eager to see what the outcome of the forthcoming elections would be. Support must be offered to Myanmar, and close attention paid to the situation there.

Mr. E. Holder (Canada) pointed out that any of the parliamentarians present could become victims of such human rights abuses. He also expressed his delegation's concern regarding the situation in Myanmar, in particular with regard to the parliamentarians who remained in detention and would be unable to participate in the elections.

Mr. S. Haddad (Syrian Arab Republic) said that human beings were human beings, wherever they were in the world. Double standards must not be applied. He wondered whether the Committee had forgotten the events that were taking place daily in the Gaza strip and the Occupied Syrian Golan Heights. The Committee had only given very modest consideration to a country in which thousands of people were dying. Thousands of Palestinians were suffering and languishing in Israeli prisons. Syrian prisoners should also be taken into consideration. His delegation therefore expressed its reservations with regard to the resolutions adopted.

The President recalled that the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians only addressed matters relating to members of parliament.

Mr. F.M. Maalim (Kenya) wished to draw attention to the fact that five Somali members of parliament had recently been killed in cold blood. Somalia was not a Member of the IPU since it had not had a government for the past 19 years. He hoped the IPU would issue a report on that situation. He wished to pay tribute to the five assassinated Somali parliamentarians.

The President recalled that he, on behalf of the IPU, had issued a statement on that situation. Efforts were being made to monitor the situation in Somalia.

(c) **Committee on Middle East Questions**

(CL/187/12(c)-R.1)

Mrs. A. Clwyd, Chairperson of the Committee on Middle East Questions, introducing the report of the Committee on Middle East Questions (CL/187/12(c)-R.1), said that the Committee had met on 3 October 2010. It had received Ms. E. Mancusi from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA), who had given an informative briefing about the Agency's work to provide relief to Palestinian refugees, in particular women. She had highlighted how the current situation particularly affected Palestinian women, and said that the number of cases of domestic violence against women in Palestine had escalated in recent years. The members of the Committee had expressed support for the work of UNRWA, and urged all countries to provide financial support to the agency to enable it to fulfil its mandate

and offer assistance to women and children. The remainder of the meeting had been dedicated to discussing the Committee's mandate, composition and programme of work.

The Committee had been established in October 1987 as a parliamentary support committee. It reported to the Governing Council, and its original mandate had been to "campaign for the holding of an international conference on peace in the Middle East". That mandate had been broadened following the start of the peace process, to "follow the peace process in the Middle East and promote dialogue between the Arab and Israeli delegations at IPU conferences". The members had suggested that the mandate could usefully be enlarged to enable the Committee to facilitate dialogue with members of parliament from all parties involved in the conflict. That would include parliamentarians from all the political factions represented in the Israeli and Palestinian parliaments, from neighbouring countries and from members of the Quartet. Such dialogue should not be limited to IPU Assemblies, but should also take place during Committee visits to the region. The Committee had also suggested that it could be mandated to express a political position on the situation in the Middle East, which would be submitted to the Governing Council for endorsement.

The Committee currently comprised five members and five substitute members, who were elected in a personal capacity and could not be replaced by other members of their delegations. The members had agreed that there must be continuity in the Committee's work, which could only be achieved if those who had been elected to the Committee took part in its work. It had therefore been agreed in 2008 that members who failed to attend more than two consecutive sessions would be replaced by election. The Committee recommended that its membership be increased to seven members and seven substitutes, and urged the Council to elect members on the basis of their interest and expertise in the subject, and their availability to attend all sessions. Candidates should submit a curriculum vitae detailing their familiarity with the Middle East and their parliaments should be asked to include them in delegations to future Assemblies. The Committee also called for gender parity and equitable geographic distribution in its membership.

The Committee was unanimous in its view that it must receive the administrative and financial support necessary to fulfil its mandate. It therefore urged the Governing Council to ensure that appropriations were made in the IPU budget to allow it to fulfil a focussed work programme and to be serviced by dedicated IPU staff. The Committee wished to undertake a mission to the region to meet with members of all the political factions in the Israeli and Palestinian parliaments, with a view to establishing more regular parliamentary dialogue. Aware of the financial limitations currently faced by the Union, the Committee realized that not all Member Parliaments would agree to provide assistance for such a mission. Members of the Committee should not be excluded from the mission if their parliaments would or could not provide funding. The Committee members wished to keep in contact with each other between Assemblies and to be updated on progress in the peace process, as well as receiving regular reports from the Secretariat on preparations for political dialogue. The Committee also wished to exchange views with Israeli and Palestinian women about the impact of the conflict on their lives.

Mr. A. Majali (Jordan) said that the case of the conflict in the Middle East was the oldest and most important in the world. The Committee had been established before the peace process had begun. Since that time progress had been made with regard to negotiations. He hoped that the Committee would take due account of the current situation. Negotiations and dialogue had already taken place, and his delegation was surprised that the Committee felt the need to undertake another mission. It was clear that Israel was posing obstacles to the peace process. The Committee should focus on essential matters and take a stand against those who were hindering the peace process.

Mr. Q. Abdelkarim (Palestine) said that over recent weeks there had been a series of important developments with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian struggle. Negotiations had ground to a halt, owing to Israel. A discussion must be held to solve the problem of the settlements. It was strange that the Committee had not heard the parties' views on recent developments at its current session, which would have enabled the IPU and the world's parliaments to play a role in finding a solution to the struggle that had been ongoing for 60 years. His delegation supported the proposals for the Committee to further develop its work, including extending the Committee's membership to seven members and broadening the participation of the different political groups. The Committee should invite all representatives of the Middle East region present at IPU Assemblies to participate as observers in its meetings. Palestine would welcome the Committee if it had sufficient resources to fund a mission to the region. Delegations to IPU Assemblies should comprise representatives of all political parties, and the Committee could make use of the opportunity of that gathering to consult with all those representatives.

The President said he took it that the Council would endorse the proposals made by the Committee, taking account of the statements of Jordan and Palestine.

It was so decided.

(d) Gender Partnership Group
(CL/187/12(d)-R.1)

Mr. R. del Picchia, *President of the Gender Partnership Group*, introduced the report of the work of the Gender Partnership Group (CL/187/12(d)-R.1). The Group had met on 2 and 5 October 2010. It had compared the composition of the delegations present at the 123rd Assembly with that of previous statutory assemblies. The Group had noted with concern that many delegations were far from achieving gender parity and that there was a tendency to include only one woman in delegations. Of the delegations present 108 had at least two delegates, of which 17 did not have any female delegates. There had been no improvement in women's participation in the past four assembly sessions. At the 123rd Assembly four delegations had failed to include women for the third consecutive time, and had been duly sanctioned.

Given those disappointing results, the Group had decided to reopen the debate on the composition of delegations and how to ensure more equal participation in Assemblies. The Group intended to broaden its scope and follow the participation of women in all IPU bodies, including the Standing Committees, and to establish objectives for enhancing women's participation. The Group was also working to establish mechanisms for mainstreaming gender into every aspect of the IPU's work. The Group had decided to take measures to raise awareness among the geopolitical groups of the importance of women's participation, to encourage greater female participation in the bureaux of the Standing Committees, and to encourage gender parity in the appointment of rapporteurs to the Standing Committees. A guide on the integration of the gender perspective into the work of the rapporteurs would be drafted. Those issues must be taken into consideration when discussing the strategic plan for the IPU.

The Group had considered the activities carried out under the IPU Gender Partnership Programme and had welcomed the IPU campaign to end violence against women. It called on parliaments to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on 25 November. Given the importance of that issue, the Group had suggested that the President of the IPU and the President of the Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians should write to parliaments on the subject. The Group had considered a study on gender-

sensitive parliaments, which would be completed in March 2011. It had requested that the results of that study be presented to the forthcoming 124th Assembly in Panama in April 2011.

The President reiterated the importance of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

(e) Group of Facilitators for Cyprus.
(CL/187/12(e)-P.1 and P.2)

The President announced that two facilitators must be elected for the Group of Facilitators for Cyprus. The Council had before it the candidatures of Mr. B. Rae of Canada (CL/187/12(e)-P.1) and Mr. J. Lobkovicz of the Czech Republic (CL/187/12(e)-P.2). In the absence of any comments or objections, he took it that the Council wished to elect those candidates as facilitators.

It was so decided.

(a) Coordinating Committee of the Women Parliamentarians
(CL/187/12(a)-R.1)

Mrs. S. Greiss, Chairperson of the Coordinating Committee of the Women Parliamentarians, introduced the report of the Coordinating Committee of the Women Parliamentarians (CL/187/12(a)-R.1). The Coordinating Committee had met on 3 October 2010. The meeting had followed up on the previous meeting, which had been held in Bangkok in April 2010, and had served to prepare the work of the forthcoming meeting in Panama. The Committee had held a lively debate. It had discussed follow up to the meeting in Bangkok, and many women had reported on action taken at the parliamentary level with regard to debates on trafficking in women and violence against women in detention centres. Many developments and initiatives had been presented, including the revision of legislation, building ties with civil society, sensitizing populations and raising awareness.

The Coordinating Committee had also discussed the gender dimension of each of the three Standing Committee panel discussions. Regarding the first report on providing a sound legislative framework aimed at preventing electoral violence, improving election monitoring and ensuring the smooth transition of power, the Committee had underlined that such a framework was key to ensuring the full and complete participation of women in elections. Many women opted not to run for office in order not to become more vulnerable to violence. A sound legislative framework should serve to fight election violence and abuse and enhance equality between all candidates, as well as enhancing women's access to elections as candidates and voters.

With regard to the second report, on the role of parliaments in ensuring sustainable development through the management of natural resources, agricultural production and demographic change, she said that the Committee had felt that women's participation in the design and implementation of development strategies would hasten the pace of sustainable development in their countries. Efforts to engage women in entrepreneurial activities would serve to increase their presence among the ranks of the employed. Women also played a crucial role, demographically, in the regulation of births.

With regard to the third report on transparency and accountability in the funding of political parties and election campaigns, the Committee had deemed that lack of financial resources was a major obstacle to women's participation in elections. Various strategies could be implemented to remedy the situation, in particular measures encouraging women's participation, such as mandatory quotas in elections and for political parties, public funding of

political parties, limits on campaign spending, transparency in public funding of political parties and training and preparation for women to run for office.

Preparations for the forthcoming meeting of women parliamentarians had been discussed. The Committee had decided to organize a panel discussion on the occasion of the 124th Assembly in Panama, entitled *Narrowing the gaps: achieving the millennium Development Goals with equity for children*. While women were present in numbers in the IPU there was room for more progress, and efforts must be made to build on the momentum. The Committee had therefore spent time discussing the next steps to ensure the increased participation of women in IPU meetings and their access to decision-making positions and make sure that gender was mainstreamed in the work of the IPU. Particular attention had been paid to the work of the Standing Committees, parity among rapporteurs and greater participation of women in the bureaux. The Committee had also discussed how to ensure that gender equality was taken into account from the very beginning of the work of the rapporteurs. The Coordinating Committee recommended that guidelines on how to mainstream gender should be put together to assist them in their work. The Executive Committee should be better gender balanced, and that should be borne in mind when electing members in October 2011. The IPU should continue its efforts to promote gender equality in its structures and programme of work. The drafting of the strategic plan offered a unique opportunity to support change and progress.

Ms. R. Diab (Palestine) said that one of the worst forms of violence against women was occupation. In Palestine, women were being detained and martyred. Women died on their way to hospital when they were held up at checkpoints. Recently images had been shown in the media of a woman detainee being tortured by Israeli forces in detention centres. Women in East Jerusalem, who had been banished from their homes by the Israeli authorities, were living on the pavements in front of their houses in extremely difficult conditions, and were unable to care for their children. In Palestine, quotas had been set for women's participation in parliament and some progress had been made. Palestine sought to ensure full gender equality in all spheres of life. Her delegation requested a special paragraph on Palestinian women and their daily suffering under the occupation to be added to the report of the Coordinating Committee.

Item 13 of the agenda

124th IPU ASSEMBLY (CL/187/13-P.1)

The President announced that the 124th IPU Assembly would take place in Panama in April 2011.

Mr. M. Cohen Salerno (Panama) said that Panama would host the 124th Assembly of the IPU from 15-20 April 2011. The Parliament of Panama was looking forward to the presence of a large number of parliamentarians, in order to continue the IPU's rich exchange of experiences and knowledge. It was particularly important for the National Assembly of Panama to host the Assembly, since it was particularly committed to the IPU. The Panamanian Parliament would make every effort to uphold the principles of the IPU and ensure the success of the meeting.

A video message was broadcast from the Speaker of the National Assembly of Panama, encouraging all Members to attend the 124th Assembly in Panama City.

The President announced that the theme of the 124th Assembly would be "Parliamentary accountability: living up to people's expectations". The agenda of the Assembly had been adopted 6 months previously. The Governing Council was now called on to approve the list of observers to the 124th Assembly, contained in document CL/187/13-P.1.

Mr. A. Costa (Portugal) pointed out that the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of the Forum of Portuguese-Speaking Parliaments had not been included on the list of invitees to the Assembly. He asked for that to be rectified, since that Assembly represented a significant number of parliamentarians.

It was so decided.

The President said that in the absence of any further comments he took it that the list of observers to the 124th Assembly could be adopted.

It was so decided.

Item 14 of the agenda

FUTURE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY MEETINGS

(CL/187/14-P.1)

(a) Statutory meetings

The Secretary General introduced the document that contained details of the future statutory assemblies of the IPU (CL/187/14-P.1) and pointed out a correction to the dates of the Assembly in Quebec.

(b) Specialized meetings and other events

The Secretary General said that section (b) of document CL/187/14-P.1 contained a list of future meetings for the coming six months. He drew particular attention to the meeting in Chiapas, Mexico, where Members of the IPU would conclude two years of work investigating the representation of minorities and indigenous people in parliament, and what mechanisms were in place to ensure that they could participate effectively in political processes and in parliaments. The work achieved would be presented to the parliamentary meeting, in which a plan would be developed for further advancement in that regard. Having approved the budget for 2011, the Council had effectively approved the list of activities.

Item 15 of the agenda

APPOINTMENT OF TWO AUDITORS FOR THE 2011 ACCOUNTS

(CL/187/15-P.1 and P.2)

The President announced that the Governing Council had before it two candidatures for the two auditors' posts: Mr. D. Pacheco of Portugal and Mr. H. Tajam of Uruguay. In the absence of any comments or objections he took it that the Council wished to approve those two candidates.

It was so decided.

Item 16 of the agenda

AMENDMENTS TO THE STATUTES AND RULES

(CL/187/16-P.1)

The President introduced document CL/187/16-P.1, which contained amendments to Rules 8 and 9 of the Rules of the Standing Committees and Rule 3 of the Rules of the Secretariat. Those amendments had been submitted for information to the Council at its previous session in Bangkok, and subsequently distributed to all Members on 6 May 2010. In the absence of any comments or objections he would take it that the Council wished to adopt those amendments.

It was so decided.

Item 17 of the agenda

ELECTIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

(CL/187/17-P.1, P.2 and P.3)

The President announced that the Council had been informed by Mr. J. Coloma of Chile that his obligations as leader of the majority and governing party in Chile had rendered it impossible for him to continue to assume his responsibilities as a member of the Executive Committee. At his suggestion, the Latin American Group (GRULAC) had agreed that Mrs. M.A. Saa of Chile would complete his mandate, which would expire in October 2011.

The Governing Council must also elect two members to replace Ms. J. Fotso of Cameroon and Mr. G. Versnick of Belgium, whose terms of office had expired. The Council had received the candidatures of Mrs. S. Ngouamassana Moulengui-Mouélé of Gabon to fill the African vacancy and Mr. D. Oliver of Canada to fill the Twelve Plus Group vacancy. In the absence of any comments or objections he said he would take it that the Governing Council wished to elect those three candidates to the Executive Committee.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.