



INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION
120th Assembly and related meetings
Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), 5 - 10 April 2009



C-III/120/C
28 January 2008

CONVOCATION

THIRD STANDING COMMITTEE DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS Addis Ababa 7, 8 and 9 April 2009

1. In conformity with the decision taken by the 119th Assembly, the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights will meet during the 120th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union to debate item 6 of the Assembly agenda.

Dates and place of meetings

2. The Committee will meet in the United Nations Conference Center (UNCC), the venue of the 120th Assembly and all other related meetings.

3. The Committee will meet on Monday, 6 April, from 4.30 p.m. to 6.30 p.m. and, subject to confirmation, on Tuesday, 7 April, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. to debate the report and the preliminary draft resolution prepared by the co-Rapporteurs and appoint a drafting committee, which will meet on Wednesday, 8 April from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 2.30 to 5.30 p.m. to prepare a final version of the draft resolution. The Bureau of the Standing Committee will meet on Wednesday, 8 April, from 5.30 p.m. to 6.30 p.m. The full Standing Committee will meet again on Thursday, 9 April, from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m. to adopt the draft resolution.

Agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Approval of the summary records of the Committee's session held in Cape Town on 14, 15 and 17 April 2008
3. Freedom of expression and the right to information
 - (a) Presentation of the report and the preliminary draft resolution prepared by the co-Rapporteurs, followed by debate
 - (b) Preparation and adoption of a draft resolution
 - (c) Appointment of a Rapporteur to the 120th Assembly
4. Preparation of the 122nd Assembly
 - (a) Proposals for a subject item to be considered by the Committee
 - (b) Proposals for two co-Rapporteurs

5. Election of the Bureau of the Third Standing Committee
6. Any other business

Representation and voting rights

4. In conformity with Rule 2 of the Rules of the Standing Committees, the Members of the Union shall be represented on each Standing Committee by one member and one substitute.
5. The substitute shall have the same speaking rights as the titular member, but shall only vote in the latter's absence (cf. Rule 29.1).

Organisation of the debate

6. The Union's governing bodies have decided to make a determined effort to ensure an interactive debate in the Standing Committees. The reading of prepared speeches is therefore discouraged. There will be no pre-registration of speakers. Instead, the President of the Standing Committee will recognise speakers requesting the floor once the debate has begun.
7. A panel discussion on the subject of *Freedom of expression and the right to information* already took place at 119th IPU Assembly (Geneva, October 2008) and dealt with general aspects of the subject. The summary records of that panel discussion are available on the IPU website at <http://www.ipu.org/conf-e/119agnd.htm>. At the 120th Assembly the Third Standing Committee will be called upon to pursue the debate in a more detailed fashion, identifying issues and proposing appropriate solutions.

Speaking time

8. The delegates may take the floor several times but no statement should exceed a maximum of four minutes. According to the provisions of Standing Committee Rule 24, the President may review this question and take the necessary measures to ensure the smooth running of the debates. Particularly he may have to restrict the speaking time in view of the number of speakers and length of the session.

Documents

9. The preparation of the report and the preliminary draft resolution on the subject item placed on the Standing Committee's agenda is the responsibility of the co-Rapporteurs appointed by the 118th Assembly.
10. Arrangements and deadlines for the preparation and finalisation of the report and the draft resolution are contained in section 9 of the Convocation of the 120th Assembly (document A/120/C.1). Please note that, in accordance with Rule 17.1 of the Rules of the Assembly and Rule 12.2 of the Rules of the Standing Committees, amendments to the draft resolution must be deposited with the Secretariat of the Assembly no later than 15 days before the opening of the Assembly, i.e. Saturday, 21 March 2009. Sub-amendments may be submitted up until the Standing Committee adopts the draft resolution intended for the Assembly (Assembly Rule 17.2).

Election of the Bureau

11. It is to be recalled that each Standing Committee has a Bureau composed of a President and five Vice-Presidents - one from each of the six geopolitical groups. For each titular member of the Bureau there is also a substitute member representing the same geopolitical group.

12. The role of the Bureau is vitally important for the normal functioning of the Standing Committee. The Bureau meets at every Assembly and fulfils a number of statutory tasks, including the consideration of proposals submitted by the Members of the Union for the subject items and of candidatures for the co-Rapporteurs for future Assemblies. It is therefore imperative that members of the Bureau be knowledgeable about specific issues falling within the field of competence of the respective Standing Committee and that every effort be made to ensure that members of the Bureau participate in all statutory Assemblies during their terms of office so that each geopolitical group is represented at every session of the Bureau, through either its titular or substitute member.

13. In conformity with Rule 7.2 of the Rules of the Standing Committees, officers of the Committee shall be elected or re-elected at the first annual session of the Assembly by an absolute majority of the votes cast.

14. All present members of the Bureau of the Third Standing Committee (both titular and substitute) are eligible for re-election (cf. Rule 8.1).

President	Mr. D. Cánepa (Uruguay)	<i>Latin American Group</i>
First Vice-President	Mr. Y. Zhumabayev (Kazakhstan)	<i>Eurasia Group</i>
Vice-Presidents:	T I T U L A R	S U B S T I T U T E
<i>African Group</i>	Mr. A.K. Bagbin (Ghana)	Ms. M.G. Chetima (Niger)
<i>Arab Group</i>	Mr. Z. Azmy (Egypt)	Mr. J. Fairouz (Bahrain)
<i>Asia-Pacific Group</i>	Mr. C.S. Atwal (India)	Mr. T.J. Wan Junaidi (Malaysia)
<i>Eurasia Group</i>	<i>Current First Vice-President</i>	Mr. A. Felaliev (Tajikistan)
<i>Latin American Group</i>	<i>Current President</i>	Mr. D. Cortez (Panama)
<i>Twelve Plus Group</i>	Ms. R.M. Albernaz (Portugal)	Mr. J. Carter (New Zealand)

15. The statutory election of Committee officers will take place at the last sitting of the Committee on Thursday, 9 April.

Proposals for the subject item and the co-Rapporteurs for the 122nd Assembly

16. The Members of the Union are invited to submit to the IPU Secretariat their proposals for the subject item to be discussed by the Third Standing Committee at the 122nd Assembly.

17. As far as possible, each proposal should be accompanied by the names of two prospective co-Rapporteurs who should be knowledgeable about the proposed subject and ready to assume the responsibility for drafting the corresponding report and draft resolution. When nominating the candidatures of co-Rapporteurs, it is important to keep in mind that, in order to facilitate the work of the IPU Secretariat and ensure timely distribution of the drafts to the Members of the Union, all texts should be transmitted to the Secretariat by the co-Rapporteurs in either English or French, the two official written languages of the IPU.

18. From the start of the Assembly, the Bureau of Third Standing Committee will be expected to carry out consultations with geopolitical groups and the Bureaux of the other Standing Committees concerning the choice of subject items for the 122nd Assembly. At its meeting on Wednesday, 8 April, the Bureau of the Third Standing Committee will consider relevant proposals taking into account the opinions of the geopolitical groups, and will decide upon a consolidated proposal, which it will then submit for approval to the full Committee at its final sitting the following morning. The Committee's proposal for the subject item and the candidatures of co-Rapporteurs for the 122nd Assembly will then be submitted for approval by the 120th Assembly at its last sitting in the afternoon of Friday, 10 April.