



**CONSIDERATION OF POSSIBLE REQUESTS FOR THE
INCLUSION OF AN EMERGENCY ITEM IN THE ASSEMBLY AGENDA**

**Request for the inclusion of an emergency item
in the agenda of the 123rd Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union
submitted by the delegation of the United Arab Emirates**

On 7 September 2010, the Secretary General received from the Secretary General of the Federal National Council of the United Arab Emirates a request for the inclusion in the agenda of the 123rd Assembly of an emergency item entitled:

"The importance of international inter-parliamentary cooperation for natural disaster response, in particular with regard to relief aid to flood-stricken Pakistan".

Delegates to the 123rd Assembly will find attached the text of the communication submitting the request (Annex I). On 3 October 2010, the delegation of the United Arab Emirates submitted a revised version of the explanatory memorandum (Annex II) and of the draft resolution (Annex III) in support thereof.

The 123rd Assembly will be required to take a decision on the request of the delegation of the United Arab Emirates on Monday, 4 October 2010.

Under the terms of Assembly Rule 11.1, any Member of the Union may request the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda. Such a request must be accompanied by a brief explanatory memorandum and a draft resolution which clearly define the scope of the subject covered by the request. The Secretariat shall communicate the request and any such documents immediately to all Members.

Furthermore, Assembly Rule 11.2 stipulates that:

- (a) A request for the inclusion of an emergency item must relate to a major event of international concern on which it appears necessary for the IPU to express its opinion. Such a request must receive a two-thirds majority of the votes cast in order to be accepted;
- (b) The Assembly may place only one emergency item on its agenda. Should several requests obtain the requisite majority, the one having received the largest number of positive votes shall be accepted;
- (c) The authors of two or more requests for the inclusion of an emergency item may combine their proposals to present a joint one, provided that each of the original proposals relates to the same subject;
- (d) The subject of a proposal that has been withdrawn by its authors or rejected by the Assembly cannot be included in the draft resolution submitted on the emergency item, unless it is clearly referred to in the request and title of the subject adopted by the Assembly.

**COMMUNICATION ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL BY
THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE FEDERAL NATIONAL COUNCIL
OF THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**

Abu Dhabi, 7 September 2010

Dear Mr. Secretary General,

In relation to the 123rd IPU Assembly, scheduled to be held in Geneva from 4 to 6 October 2010, I hereby inform you that the Federal National Council wishes to request the inclusion of an emergency item in the agenda of the Assembly entitled:

"The importance of international inter-parliamentary cooperation for natural disaster response, in particular with regard to relief aid to flood-stricken Pakistan".

Please find attached the relevant documents.

Yours sincerely,

(signed)

(Dr.) Mohamed Salem AL-MAZROUI
Secretary General of the Federal National
Council of the United Arab Emirates

**THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERNATIONAL INTER-PARLIAMENTARY COOPERATION FOR
NATURAL DISASTER RESPONSE, IN PARTICULAR WITH REGARD TO RELIEF AID
TO FLOOD-STRICKEN PAKISTAN**

Explanatory memorandum submitted by the delegation of the United Arab Emirates

1. Despite the importance of international inter-parliamentary cooperation, in particular given the growing role played by international and regional inter-parliamentary organizations in areas related to the security, stability and development of the international community, such cooperation still has limited impact in terms of humanitarian assistance provided in the aftermath of natural disasters, whose severity and devastating impact have increased in recent times. These disasters have serious repercussions, resulting in loss of life and the displacement of millions of families in affected countries. This in turn heightens already precarious humanitarian conditions, fosters the spread of epidemics and the destruction of infrastructure and public and private property. According to United Nations estimates, the percentage of the global economy exposed to direct economic damage due to floods and earthquakes has doubled since 1990 and the number of people liable to lose their house and properties rose by 30 per cent.

2. Although parliaments - representing the conscience of the people - expressed the public appeal worldwide to accelerate humanitarian and financial aid to affected countries, governments were tardy in providing necessary assistance to the disaster relief efforts, a fact that has not gone unnoticed. This underscores the paramount importance of international inter-parliamentary cooperation for promoting government efforts in this domain, especially as these disasters have long-term implications for the international political and economic system and the social fabric of affected countries. These in turn jeopardize the security and stability of the world and slow down international economic growth, especially under the current international system where regions and countries impact on each other. Therefore, natural disasters have become a major global challenge put to the test of international solidarity in today's world, all the more so as more than 50 million persons have been affected by them so far in 2010.

3. The floods that struck Pakistan have claimed the lives of thousands of people, displaced 20 million persons, inundated five countries, caused flood-borne diseases among 3.5 million children and left behind more than two million unemployed, not to mention the destruction of millions of hectares of agricultural land and losses to the Pakistani economy to the tune of more than US\$ 43 billion. This would tend to indicate that the massive damage in Pakistan outweighs that caused by the tsunami, the earthquake in Kashmir, Cyclone Nargis, and the earthquake in Haiti.

In view of the foregoing, the UAE Parliamentary Division wishes to submit this emergency item and requests the necessary action to be taken for it to be included in the agenda of the Assembly.

**THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERNATIONAL INTER-PARLIAMENTARY COOPERATION FOR
NATURAL DISASTER RESPONSE, IN PARTICULAR WITH REGARD TO RELIEF AID
TO FLOOD-STRICKEN PAKISTAN**

***Draft resolution submitted by the delegation of the
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES***

The 123rd Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

- (1) *Recalling* the resolution on the emergency item adopted by the 122nd IPU Assembly on the earthquakes in Haiti and Chile,
- (2) *Referring* to United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolutions on enhancing humanitarian aid, in particular Resolution 2816 (XXVI) on assistance in cases of natural disaster and other disaster situations, adopted on 14 December 1971, Resolution 45/100 on humanitarian assistance to victims of natural disasters and similar emergency situations, adopted on 14 December 1990, and Resolution 47/168 on strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance of the United Nations, adopted on 22 December 1992,
- (3) *Noting* the international framework for action provided by the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction,
- (4) *Also noting* the decisions of the 46th Session of the UNGA regarding establishment of the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (UNCERF) as a mechanism for ensuring that funds go to where they are most needed and that there is a rapid and coordinated response by international community to natural disasters,
- (5) *Referring* to the Hyogo Declaration and the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 as the main outcomes of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction,
- (6) *Welcoming* the relevant UN resolution and its relief efforts to flood-stricken Pakistan,
- (7) *Underscoring* the importance of international inter-parliamentary cooperation to natural disaster mitigation given the growing role played by the international and regional inter-parliamentary organizations in related social and humanitarian areas,
- (8) *Deeply concerned* about the suffering endured by the victims of natural disasters - loss of life, flow of refugees, collective displacement of populations, and physical and financial destruction; and *considering* that this should serve to promote international inter-parliamentary cooperation in order to mitigate human suffering and accelerate rehabilitation and reconstruction processes,
- (9) *Noting* the growing number and complexity of human catastrophes and natural disasters, whose impacts exceed the disaster-response capacity of many affected countries, in particular their ability to provide food, medicine, shelter and health care to disaster victims,
- (10) *Expressing its sincere sympathy and solidarity* with the people and communities affected by disasters, in particularly those in flood-stricken Pakistan, in the wake of the moral and physical damage and loss of life and property that they have experienced,

1. *Calls for* the holding of an inter-parliamentary conference to discuss the role of parliaments and international inter-parliamentary cooperation in natural disaster mitigation, develop a medium- and long-term parliamentary programme for rehabilitating flood-affected areas in Pakistan and provide urgent international aid to the flood-stricken population, on the understanding that this programme will be implemented in cooperation with the United Nations, its specialized agencies and other relevant international and regional organizations;
2. *Points to* the need for a rapid and appropriate response by the international community to contribute to the Pakistan Emergency Fund, established by the United Nations, increasing the budget allocated to UN CERF, and *calls upon* donor countries to secure reliable and diverse donations for this Fund;
3. *Calls upon* parliaments to urge their governments to comply with international commitments such as the Kyoto Protocol;
4. *Also calls upon* parliaments to urge their governments - through their legislative and oversight roles - and the United Nations and its specialized agencies and all relevant regional and international organizations to develop disaster mitigation strategies, facilitate the exchange of relevant technology, establish an early warning system to forecast disasters, and develop rapid response mechanisms, in particular under the UN Disaster Management Training Programme, recently launched by the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator, and the UN relief programme;
5. *Calls upon* governments to provide adequate and accessible resources to UN agencies involved in funding and providing disaster assistance; and *calls upon* the IPU to support UN efforts in this area by developing a parliamentary programme on natural disaster mitigation;
6. *Also calls upon* donor countries and financial institutions to take the necessary measures to scale up their contributions to relieve the flood-stricken population in Pakistan, reschedule Pakistan's debts, consider providing new funding for rehabilitation and reconstruction programmes in affected areas and develop policies, plans and programmes on sustainable development and poverty reduction;
7. *Appeals* to international and regional parliamentary organizations, UN agencies and relevant regional and international organizations to redouble their efforts and develop programmes to heighten awareness of the damage caused by and potential risks of the flood in Pakistan and of the need for Pakistan to overcome this disaster;
8. *Calls for* the holding an international conference under the auspices of the United Nations on the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the flood-affected areas in Pakistan, on the understanding that one day of the proceedings will be devoted to an IPU-sponsored parliamentary meeting.