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126th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

1. Inaugural ceremony

The 126th IPU Assembly was inaugurated on 31 March 2012 at a ceremony held at the Speke Resort Munyonyo in Kampala with H.E. Gen. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda, in attendance. Inaugural addresses were delivered by Ms. Rebecca Kadaga, Speaker of the Ugandan Parliament, Mr. Zachary Mhuri-Muita, Head of the United Nations Office to the African Union and Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General, and Mr. Abdelwahad Radi, IPU President. The ceremony concluded with a statement by the President of Uganda, who declared the 126th Assembly officially open.

2. Election of the President and keynote addresses

The 126th Assembly¹ opened at the Kampala Serena Conference Centre in the morning of Sunday, 1 April, with the election by acclamation of Ms. R. Kadaga, Speaker of the Parliament of Uganda, as President of the Assembly.

The President said that it was a great honour for her to preside over the Assembly's work. She underscored the relevance of the overall theme for the Kampala Assembly, and invited all participating parliaments to share their experiences and perspectives in the General Debate on *Parliaments and people: Bridging the gap*.

UNICEF and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) presentations

At noon that same day, the Assembly engaged in an open debate with Dr. Anthony Lake, Executive Director of UNICEF, and Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin, Executive Director of the UNFPA. The debate was held at a time when international attention was starting to focus on the next generation of sustainable development goals and the central role of child and maternal health.

Mr. Lake's presentation focused on three main points. He started by presenting the severe form of malnutrition known as stunting, which had a devastating impact on child health and all of society. Stunted children lagged far behind others in

terms of physical growth and neurological and cognitive development. That made them less productive when they reached adulthood, placing a burden on society as a whole.

According to Mr. Lake, the remedy for that disastrous condition was to pay closer attention to the first 1,000 days in every child's life, from the prenatal period to the age of two, during which the brain developed. Good nutrition during that period was crucial. Nutrition therefore had to play a paramount role in development programmes and required investment.

Mr. Lake concluded by presenting the Scaling Up Nutrition initiative a coalition of public and private entities launched in 2010 to eradicate malnutrition by providing governments with support for the development of policies and programmes to combat malnutrition and undernutrition. He advocated the initiative's expansion and asked parliamentarians to relay his appeal to the executive authorities in their countries. Parliamentarians should encourage the initiative by promoting pro-nutrition legislation, increasing budget allocations for nutrition programmes and holding governments and partners to account for implementation of the programmes and policies developed.

Picking up where Mr. Lake had left off, Mr. Osotimehin underscored how vulnerable children were in the first few months of life, during which special attention had to be paid to their nutrition. Through the United Nations Secretary-General's initiative, Every Woman Every Child, which linked maternal to child health, UNFPA and UNICEF were mobilizing in the cause, in respect of which a high-level commission had been established the previous week.

According to Mr. Osotimehin, parliamentarians could further the cause by making sure substantial funds were allocated to maternal and child health, ensuring governments honoured their commitments and promoting gender equality partnerships. He considered it particularly important to ensure the health and education of young people, in particular girls, as those dynamics were a determining factor of progress. To that end, action was required to strengthen reproductive health and promote sex education among young people; those were crucial factors of sustainable development that had already been mentioned in 1994, in the Action Programme adopted by the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development.

¹ The resolutions and reports referred to in this document and general information on the Kampala session are available on the IPU website (www.ipu.org).

Address by the Vice-President of the Republic of Uganda

In the morning of Monday, 2 April, the Vice-President of the Republic of Uganda, Mr. E. Kiwanuka Ssekandi, addressed the Assembly. He was very proud that his country was hosting a major IPU Assembly, the eighth African country to do so in over 120 years of the IPU's existence.

Sir Winston Churchill had once described Uganda as the "Pearl of Africa". Since then the country had achieved independence from Britain in 1962. The first 25 years of Uganda's post-independence existence had been turbulent, including economic decline, social problems and political turmoil. Over the past two decades, however, democratic institutions had been established, and good governance and policies had promoted economic growth. In October 1995, a new constitution had formally established the separation of the powers of the executive, the legislature and the judiciary. The Government was committed to meeting challenges by promoting the interests of young people and women. Women were represented in key areas of government and held important positions in society. Uganda had a woman Speaker of Parliament and had been the first African country to have a woman Vice-President.

Parliament had worked hard to enhance citizens' engagement with its activities. It had achieved that through public meetings, workshops and hearings across the country and in a variety of locations. Uganda was also committed to playing a role on the international stage. The country had not stood by idly during the apartheid era in South Africa. In the 1990s Uganda had worked to end the genocide in Rwanda. Uganda was at the forefront of efforts by the African Union to improve the situation in Somalia. Uganda would always consider its neighbour's problems to be its own. Global challenges required coordinated solutions. Parliaments should work together effectively on the world stage and the IPU had provided a good example of what could be achieved.

3. Participation

Delegations from the parliaments of the following 120 countries took part in the work of the Assembly:² Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso,

Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Luxembourg, Malawi, Maldives, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Rwanda, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The following Associate Members also took part in the Assembly: the East African Legislative Assembly, the Inter-Parliamentary Committee of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), the Parliament of the Economic Community of West African States, the Latin American Parliament and the Transitional Arab Parliament.

Observers comprised representatives of: (i) the United Nations system: United Nations, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UN Millennium Campaign, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), World Health Organization (WHO), World Bank, Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD); (ii) African Union and League of Arab States; (iii) African Parliamentary Union (APU), Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union (AIPU), Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA), Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) Confederation of Parliaments of the Americas (COPA), Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of the Commonwealth of Independent States (IPA CIS), Inter-Parliamentary Union of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IPU-IGAD), Maghreb Consultative Council, Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC), Parliamentary

² For the complete list of IPU Members, see page 25.

Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM), Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Parliamentary Assembly of the Turkic-Speaking Countries (TURKPA), Parliamentary Union of the Organization of the Islamic Conference Members (PUOICM), South African Development Community (SADC) Parliamentary Forum; (iv) Socialist International; and (v) Amnesty International, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, Human Rights Watch, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), International IDEA, Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH), and Penal Reform International.

Of the 1,212 delegates who attended the Assembly, 607 were members of national parliaments. The parliamentarians included 40 presiding officers, 37 deputy presiding officers and 180 women (29.7%).

4. Choice of an emergency item

On 1 April, the President informed the Assembly that seven requests for the inclusion of an emergency item had been initially received. The delegations of Canada, Egypt, France, the United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom had subsequently decided to present a joint proposal entitled "*Inter-parliamentary Union initiative for an immediate halt to the bloodshed and human rights violations in Syria, and the need to ensure access to humanitarian aid for all persons in need and to support implementation of all relevant Arab League and United Nations resolutions and peace efforts*". In view of the importance of the joint proposal, the delegation of Argentina decided to withdraw its proposal before the agenda item was raised in the Assembly. That had left two proposals to be considered by the Assembly: "*The need to support national reconciliation for building democratic institutions in the countries gripped by unrest and turmoil, particularly in Syria and Bahrain*" proposed by the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the above-mentioned joint proposal.

After taking the floor, the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran withdrew its proposal in favour of the joint one presented by Canada, Egypt, France, the United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom, which was adopted by acclamation and added to the agenda as Item 8.

5. Debates and decisions of the Assembly and its Standing Committees

(a) General Debate on the political, economic and social situation in the world (Item 3)

The General Debate on the political, economic and social situation in the world, under the theme of *Parliaments and people: Bridging the gap*, took place in the morning and afternoon of 1 and 2 April and in the morning of 4 April. A total of 113 speakers from 104 delegations took part in the debate, which was chaired by the President of the Assembly. During the sittings, the President invited several Vice-Presidents, members of the delegations of Andorra, Benin, Chile, Finland, France, Lesotho, Malawi and Mozambique to replace her in the chair.

(b) First Standing Committee (Peace and International Security)

(i) *Promoting and practising good governance as a means of advancing peace and security: Drawing lessons from recent events in the Middle East and North Africa* (Item 4)

The First Standing Committee held two sittings, one on 1 April and one on 3 April, with its President, Mr. S.H. Chowdhury (Bangladesh), in the chair. In addition to the report and preliminary draft resolutions prepared by the co-Rapporteurs, Mr. M. Gyöngyösi (Hungary) and Mr. J.J. Mwiimbu (Zambia), the Standing Committee had before it amendments to the draft resolution submitted by the delegations of Argentina, Canada, China, Congo, Egypt, France, Germany, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, the Philippines, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Arab Emirates and Venezuela.

At the start of the first sitting, the two co-Rapporteurs submitted the report and preliminary draft resolution they had drawn up together. Mr. M. Chungong, Director of the IPU Division of Programmes, also made a presentation. In all, 46 speakers from 44 parliaments took the floor. After the debate, the Standing Committee appointed a drafting committee made up of representatives of the following parliaments: Algeria, Argentina, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Chile, Egypt, South Africa, Switzerland and Uganda. The co-Rapporteurs took part in the drafting committee's work in an advisory capacity.

The drafting committee met in the afternoon of 1 April and the morning of 2 April. It appointed Ms. C. Schmidt-Liermann (Argentina) as its president and Mr. L. Ramatlakane (South Africa) as its rapporteur. It examined 95 amendments submitted by 16 delegations and adopted a number of them.

The First Standing Committee considered the summary text in the afternoon of 3 April. Several delegations took the floor to express support for the text and to propose that it be adopted by acclamation. The Standing Committee accepted that proposal and adopted the draft resolution by acclamation. It also endorsed the proposal made by one delegation and its President that the drafting committee rapporteur also report to the Assembly.

The draft resolution was submitted to the Assembly plenary in the afternoon of 5 April and adopted by consensus, reservations having been expressed with regard to the resolution as a whole by one delegation³ (see page 27 for the text of the resolution).

(ii) *Selection of subject item and co-Rapporteurs for the First Standing Committee at the 128th Assembly*

The Bureau met on 3 April with the Committee President in the chair. It examined five proposals submitted by Member Parliaments for the subject item to be debated at the 128th Assembly and heard two delegations wishing to express themselves in greater depth on the subject item proposed.

The Bureau suggested that two subject items be merged and proposed a joint subject item to two delegations. However, one of the delegations having withdrawn, the Standing Committee proposed that the Assembly include on the agenda of the 128th Assembly the subject item initially proposed by the remaining delegation, entitled: *The responsibility to protect: The role of parliaments in safeguarding citizens' lives*. The Assembly subsequently approved that subject item and appointed Mr. L. Ramatlakane (South Africa) as a co-Rapporteur. The President and the IPU Secretary General were invited to pursue negotiations on the appointment of a second co-Rapporteur.

(c) Second Standing Committee (Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade)

(i) *Redistribution of power, not just wealth: Ownership of the international agendas* (Item 5)

The Second Standing Committee held sittings on 2 and 4 April, with its President, Mr. S.E. Alhousseini (Saudi Arabia), in the chair. In addition to reports

and a preliminary draft resolution prepared by the co-Rapporteurs, Lord Judd (United Kingdom) and Mr. O. Benabdallah (Morocco), the Committee had before it amendments to the draft resolution submitted by the delegations of Belgium, Canada, Chile, China, Congo, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Spain, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates, Venezuela and Senator Sonia Escudero of Argentina. In addition, the Committee received three amendments from the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians.

A total of 46 speakers took the floor during the plenary debate, after which the Standing Committee appointed a drafting committee composed of representatives of Australia, Burkina Faso, Chad, Ecuador, India, Italy, Mexico, Oman, Philippines, Sudan, United Kingdom and United Republic of Tanzania.

The drafting committee met on 3 April. It appointed Mr. D. Adams (Australia) as its president and Ms. S. Zubin Irani (India) as its rapporteur. It examined 93 amendments to the preliminary draft resolution, adopting some either in full or in part.

In the afternoon of 4 April, the Second Standing Committee examined the consolidated draft resolution and adopted it as a whole without making further changes.

In the afternoon of 5 April, the draft resolution was submitted to the Assembly, which adopted it unanimously (see page 31 for the text of the resolution).

(ii) *Selection of subject item and co-Rapporteurs for the Second Standing Committee at the 128th Assembly*

The Bureau of the Second Standing Committee met on 4 April with the Committee President in the chair. It examined proposals submitted by IPU Member Parliaments for the item to be debated by the Second Standing Committee at the 128th Assembly. The Bureau approved the subject item *Fair trade and innovative financing mechanisms for sustainable development*, which it subsequently submitted to the Second Standing Committee. The Committee agreed with the proposal, which was subsequently approved by the Assembly for inclusion in the agenda of the 128th Assembly. The Assembly appointed Mr. F.-X. de Donnea (Belgium) and Mr. R.K. Chitotela (Zambia) as co-Rapporteurs.

³ Venezuela.

(d) Third Standing Committee (Democracy and Human Rights)

- (i) *Access to health as a basic right: The role of parliaments in addressing key challenges to securing the health of women and children* (Item 6)

The Third Standing Committee held three sittings on 1, 2 and 4 April. The Committee President, Mr. O. Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu (Ghana), chaired all three sessions. The Committee had before it a report and preliminary draft resolution prepared by the co-Rapporteurs, Ms. S. Atallahjan (Canada), Mr. F. Sardinha (India) and Ms. P. Turyahikayo, along with amendments to the draft preliminary resolution submitted by the delegations of Argentina, Belgium, Canada, Congo, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Netherlands, Philippines, Romania, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and Venezuela, and by the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians. In all, 52 speakers took the floor.

The Committee designated a drafting committee composed of representatives of Australia, Bahrain, Belgium, Chad, Kenya, Uganda, United Kingdom, Sweden, Venezuela and Uruguay. It met on 4 April and began its work by appointing Lord R. Faulkner (United Kingdom) as president and Ms. P. Turyahikayo (Uganda) as rapporteur.

The drafting committee considered the amendments proposed by members and incorporated some of them into the draft resolution. On 4 April, the Third Standing Committee considered the consolidated text of the draft resolution presented by the drafting committee. It adopted the draft resolution by acclamation and without any reservations. The Assembly, meeting in plenary on 5 April, adopted the resolution unanimously (see page 33 for the text of the resolution).

At its sitting on 4 April, the Third Standing Committee elected its new Bureau (see page 23).

- (ii) *Selection of subject item and co-Rapporteurs for the Third Standing Committee at the 128th Assembly*

At its sitting on 4 April, the Third Standing Committee agreed to the subject item *The use of media, including social media, to advance citizen engagement and democracy* suggested by its Bureau for inclusion in the agenda of the 128th Assembly. On 5 April, the Assembly approved the subject item and appointed Ms. C. Charlton (Canada) and Ms. M.T. Kubayi (South Africa) as co-Rapporteurs.

(e) Emergency item

Inter-Parliamentary Union initiative for an immediate halt to the bloodshed and human rights violations in Syria, and the need to ensure access to humanitarian aid for all persons in need and to support implementation of all relevant Arab League and United Nations resolutions and peace efforts (Item 8)

The Assembly referred the emergency item it had adopted on 1 April to a drafting committee composed of representatives of Canada, Egypt, France, India, the United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom. It appointed Mr. N. Evans (United Kingdom) as president and Mr. E. El-Erian (Egypt) as rapporteur. It met on 2 April and drafted a resolution. On 5 April the Assembly adopted the resolution by consensus. The delegations of Chile, Cuba, South Africa, Uganda and Viet Nam expressed reservations on operative paragraph 12, while the Syrian Arab Republic, Islamic Republic of Iran, Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Venezuela rejected the entire resolution, which, in their view, was unbalanced.

(f) Presidential Statement on Mali

At the closing session of the Assembly, the President referred to the crisis in Mali, where a military coup d'état had overthrown the legitimate authorities on 22 March 2012. The crisis had worsened in the course of the Assembly and the Executive Committee had approved the text of a presidential statement on the situation in that country. The President read out the statement to the plenary and it was endorsed by the Assembly (see page 43).

190th Session of the Governing Council

1. Membership of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

At its sitting on 1 April, the Governing Council readmitted the Parliament of Haiti. It also granted Associate Member status to the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC). At its sitting on 5 April, it readmitted the Parliament of Myanmar and admitted the Parliament of South Sudan as a new Member.

The Governing Council approved requests for observer status from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and the World Scout Parliamentary Union (WSPU).

2. Financial results for 2011

The Governing Council considered the annual Financial Report and Audited Financial Statements for 2011. The Financial Statements showed that the IPU had recorded an operating surplus of CHF 723,874 in 2011. After making provisions for the actuarial loss of the legacy Staff Pension Fund, the Council noted that the Working Capital Fund had been increased by CHF 422,874, compared with a decrease of CHF 401,096 in 2010. As a result, the balance of the Working Capital Fund stood at CHF 4,958,468 at the year end.

The Internal Auditors, Mr. D. Pacheco (Portugal) and Mr. H. Tajam (Uruguay), reported that they were satisfied that the IPU had presented positive financial results and had implemented the recommendations of the 188th session of the Governing Council. They noted that the external audit carried out by the Swiss Federal Audit Office had been exceptionally thorough and comprehensive. In their opinion, the financial results faithfully reflected the financial situation of the IPU for 2011.

The Internal Auditors underlined the need for an actuarial study of the IPU legacy Pension Fund. They recommended that the IPU Secretariat take the necessary steps to comply with the latest International Public Service Accounting Standards (IPSAS), in particular with regard to internal staff taxation, valuation of the Headquarters building and presentation of the Pension Fund accounts. They commended the Secretariat for the savings achieved in 2011. They noted several key components of the overall results, including savings achieved in payroll and other costs, lower than budgeted voluntary income, and the actuarial loss on the Pension Fund.

Lastly, the Internal Auditors noted the importance of timely payment of Member contributions and urged all Members to fulfil their responsibilities.

On the recommendation of the Internal Auditors, the Governing Council took note that the Secretary General had written off the arrears totalling CHF 163,984 of the Parliaments of Comoros and Liberia, it approved the use of up to CHF 409,800 of the anticipated surpluses in the Working Capital Fund to balance the 2012 budget and it approved the Secretary General's financial administration of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the financial results for 2011.

3. Financial situation

The Governing Council received an overview of the IPU's financial situation at 29 February 2012. The overall financial position of the IPU was sound. Arrears of contributions for past years had improved compared to the same period the previous year. At 31 March 2012, the total amount of outstanding contributions from previous years stood at CHF 455,000, compared to CHF 607,000 for the same period the year before. The overall level of expenditure had reached 81 per cent of the year-to-date budget.

4. Cooperation with the United Nations system

The Governing Council noted the preparations under way for the debate that would take place in late May in the United Nations General Assembly on interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the IPU. It was informed of developments in recent years (see page 46).

The Council was informed of the content of the draft resolution to be considered by UN Member States for adoption (see page 49). Member Parliaments were encouraged to follow the process closely and consult with their respective foreign ministries to seek their formal sponsorship of a strong resolution.

The Council took note of the activities undertaken in cooperation with the United Nations system since the 125th IPU Assembly (see page 44). It was also informed of the growing interaction between the IPU and the Bretton Woods Institutions (see also page 20).

5. Implementation of the IPU Strategy 2012-2017

The Governing Council heard a report from the Executive Committee on initial work to implement the third strategic direction; to make the IPU a more effective instrument of parliamentary cooperation. It had discussed the format of the second Assembly of the year and the functioning of the Standing Committees and the Committee on United Nations Affairs. The Executive Committee would pursue that discussion at its extraordinary session, to be held later in the year.

The Council was also informed that the new Director of Communications had briefed the Executive Committee on plans under way to implement the new Communications Strategy.

It also noted that the Executive Committee had approved plans to develop a policy for the IPU to mainstream gender throughout the organization. The Gender Partnership Group was spearheading the effort and the 127th IPU Assembly would hold a special session to finalize and adopt the policy.

6. Action by the IPU to strengthen democracy and parliamentary institutions

The Governing Council took note of an oral report by the Director of Programmes, Mr. M. Chungong, on recent IPU activities to strengthen parliaments and democracy in the key areas of capacity-building for parliaments, promoting women's political and other rights, defending and promoting human rights, developing standards for democratic parliaments and promoting peace and security. The IPU's democracy-related work in 2011 focused on forging greater links between parliaments and the people.

In 2011, the IPU provided capacity-building assistance to 16 parliaments mainly in Africa, Asia, Latin America and increasingly in Arab countries. Much of the work involved developing parliaments' information capacity with a view to promoting transparency and accountability. Increasingly, parliaments were also developing strategic plans and codes of conduct. In the Arab countries, the IPU was providing a robust response to the Arab Spring. It was working with the authorities of Egypt and Tunisia to lay a solid foundation for strong legislative institutions in those countries, through the review of the legislative framework and providing advice to staff and members of parliament on the performance of their duties. The IPU planned to field a high-level mission to Libya to assist the new authorities there in identifying the building blocks for a new democratic parliament. Similar missions

were planned for Myanmar and South Sudan. The IPU was also monitoring events in Syria and Yemen and stood ready to provide assistance as required.

The IPU also devoted efforts to continue to promote gender equality in politics. It provided advice to the transitional authorities in Tunisia with a view to drafting an electoral law that guaranteed significant political representation of women. It provided capacity-building assistance to women parliamentarians in Rwanda and Burundi. Recently, it had also organized training sessions for the parliaments of Uganda, Jordan and Burkina Faso on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. In 2011, the IPU published a ground-breaking study on Gender-sensitive Parliaments. The study identified good practices for ensuring that parliaments took into account the interests of both women and men. Other areas included continuation of the project to build capacity in parliaments to deal with violence against women. In that field, inroads had been made in Togo and the Maldives, where the IPU provided assistance with drafting legislation on violence against women. Bills were pending adoption in those parliaments. The IPU and the United Nations had published a new version of the Map on Women in Politics in February 2012.

The IPU's work in defence of human rights included defending the rights of parliamentarians through its Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians. The Committee was examining the individual cases of about 400 parliamentarians in 39 countries. It undertook missions to Rwanda, Burundi, Colombia and the Maldives to gather information on the cases it was addressing. Two important trial observation missions had also been undertaken. The IPU continued to work for children's rights, particularly in cooperation with UNICEF. Highlights in that area included the publication of a Handbook for Parliamentarians on Child Participation. The IPU pursued implementation of its programme on combating child trafficking in Burkina Faso, Gabon and Togo.

The IPU's standards-setting work received a boost in 2011 with preparation of the *Global Parliamentary Report*, the first of its kind. The publication was produced in cooperation with UNDP, and was launched in Kampala on 2 April 2012 (see page 16). The findings of the survey for the *Global Parliamentary Report* were fed into the International Day of Democracy on 15 September 2011. A total of 35 parliaments had organized a host of activities to mark the day, including debates, workshops and exhibitions on the theme of *Citizens' expectations of their parliament*.

The IPU pursued its programme of support to parliaments for their commitment to peace and security as well as the national reconciliation agenda. In Sierra Leone, it continued to promote cross-party cooperation in the conduct of dialogue with constituents on the work of parliament and national reconciliation. Recently, the IPU had fielded good offices missions to the Maldives, in the wake of the resignation of that country's President in order to help the parliament resolve the ensuing crisis.

Other activities of note were the efforts the IPU had deployed to ensure parliaments provided meaningful and substantive inputs to the international development agenda. The IPU thus mobilized parliaments in support of the new Istanbul Programme of Action for LDCs as well as the OECD-led initiative on aid and development effectiveness. The IPU had organized parliamentary forums in Istanbul in May 2011 during the Fourth UN Conference on LDCs and in Busan during the Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in November 2011. Both efforts had resulted in greater recognition of parliaments as key stakeholders in setting the development agenda.

The IPU also continued its work to promote the achievement of MDGs 4 and 5 on reducing child mortality and improving maternal health with key projects being launched in Kenya and Uganda for building relevant parliamentary capacity.

In 2011, the IPU had commissioned an independent evaluation of its technical assistance activities. While finding those activities highly relevant and efficiently implemented, the evaluation had recommended the development of project management tools for more measurable results and monitoring. In response to those recommendations, the IPU had developed an office-wide logframe consistent with results-based management.

The exponential growth in the IPU's democracy work occurred at a time when the Organization's resources from Members' contributions were dwindling. It was therefore necessary for Members to help the Secretariat mobilize additional resources from their development cooperation agencies to enable the Organization to respond swiftly and flexibly to increasing demands from parliaments for assistance.

7. Recent specialized conferences and meetings

The Governing Council took note of the results of the Regional Conference on national and regional defence and security challenges in Latin America - The role of parliaments (see <http://www.ipu.org/splz-e/bogota11.htm>), the Regional Parliamentary Workshop on Parliamentary oversight of the security sector: Disseminating best practices in ECOWAS Member States (see <http://www.ipu.org/splz-e/bamako11.htm>), the Joint IPU-UN Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations (see <http://www.ipu.org/splz-e/unga11.htm>), the Parliamentary Meeting on the occasion of the High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (see <http://www.ipu.org/splz-e/busan11.htm>), the Parliamentary Meeting on the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP17/CMP7) (see <http://www.ipu.org/splz-e/cop17.htm>) and the Parliamentary Meeting on the occasion of the 56th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (see <http://www.ipu.org/splz-e/csw12.htm>).

8. Reports of plenary bodies and specialized committees

At its sitting on 5 April, the Governing Council took note of the reports on the activities of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians, the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians, the Committee on Middle East Questions, the Group of Facilitators for Cyprus, the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law, the Gender Partnership Group and the Advisory Group on HIV/AIDS (see pages 13 to 16).

9. Future inter-parliamentary meetings

The Governing Council endorsed arrangements proposed for the 127th Assembly, to be held in Quebec City from 21 to 26 October 2012 (see pages 55 and 56). It also approved the list of international organizations and other bodies to be invited to follow the work of that Assembly as observers (see pages 57 and 58).

The Council approved the venue of Quito, Ecuador, for the 128th Assembly, which would take place from 22 to 27 March 2013. It approved the list of future meetings and other activities to be funded by the IPU's regular budget as well as by external sources (see pages 53 and 54).

263rd Session of the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee held its 263rd session in Kampala on 29 and 30 March and 4 April 2012. The President of the IPU chaired the session. The following members took part in the session: Mr. A. Alonso Díaz-Caneja (Mexico), Vice-President of the Committee, Ms. A. Kaboré Koala (Burkina Faso), Mr. Nhem Thavy (Cambodia), Mr. D. Oliver (Canada), Ms. S. Moulengui-Mouélé (Gabon), Mr. J. Winkler (Germany), Ms. N. Motsamai (Lesotho), Ms. M. Mensah-Williams (Namibia), replacing Ms. N. Ali Assegaf (Indonesia, President of the Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians), Mr. F. Drilon (Philippines), Mr. K. Örnfjäder (Sweden), Mr. P.-F. Veillon (Switzerland), Ms. R. Kadaga (Uganda) and Ms. I. Passada (Uruguay). Mr. M. Vardanyan (Armenia), Mr. M.A.M. Al-Ghanim (Kuwait) and Mr. F.K. Kundi (Pakistan) were absent.

The Executive Committee considered the situation of several Members. It expressed concern about the situation in Mali following the coup d'état that had taken place on 22 March. It expressed support for the negotiations being carried out by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) aimed at restoring democratic institutions in the country. At its last sitting, the Committee approved the text of a presidential statement, which was endorsed by the Assembly at its closing session.

The Committee welcomed the restoration of elected parliaments in Egypt and Tunisia and expressed support for the democratization process underway in Libya. Meanwhile, it decided to maintain the membership of Libya and to offer assistance to the Libyan authorities in establishing an elected parliament.

The Executive Committee also examined the case of the Parliament of Bolivia, which was defaulting in its payments to the IPU. While partial payment had recently been made, the Parliament remained liable to suspension under Article 5.3 of the Statutes. The Executive Committee expressed the hope that the Parliament would make further payments so that it would not have to recommend the suspension of the Bolivian Parliament at the 127th Assembly in Quebec.

The Executive Committee examined recommendations of the Sub-committee on Finance, which had met the previous day to prepare and facilitate the Committee's consideration of the Financial Results for 2011, the

External Auditor's Report and the Financial Situation of the IPU.

The Committee also considered recommendations from the Sub-committee relating to the preparation of the budget for 2013. It was conscious of the need to maintain Members' contributions at the current level and agreed that that would necessitate reductions in the regular budget financed through Members' contributions, as well as increased voluntary contributions.

The Executive Committee invited the Sub-committee on Finance to take the lead in identifying possible areas for reductions by establishing priorities among IPU's strategic objectives. It decided to invite all geopolitical groups to provide input to that exercise through a survey. The Sub-committee on Finance would meet in May to provide direction to the Secretariat, which would subsequently prepare a draft budget for consideration by the Executive Committee at an extraordinary session in July.

The Committee stressed the need for the active support of Members in seeking additional financial support for the Organization through voluntary contributions. Members were invited to explore funding possibilities with their respective countries' development cooperation agencies. Parliaments that received IPU assistance were equally invited to lobby for increased support to the IPU. Members of the Executive Committee were also encouraged to approach foundations and high net-worth individuals for financial support.

The Committee discussed the division of responsibilities between the IPU and host parliaments of IPU Assemblies. It decided to revert to the matter at its next session following consultations with the geopolitical groups. It decided in principle to resume the practice of holding the second Assembly of the year in Geneva and proposed to take a decision in Quebec on the venues for the 130th and 132nd IPU Assemblies.

The Committee reaffirmed the sovereign right of each parliament to nominate its delegates to IPU Assemblies without external interference.

The Executive Committee was informed of the operational and management tools that were being developed by the Secretariat. They included a code of ethics and an anti-corruption policy for the IPU.

The Committee was informed of staff movements in the Secretariat and was introduced to the new Director of Communications. It also took note of

the appointment of a new Director for the New York Office and a new Human Rights Officer.

Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians

The Seventeenth Meeting of Women Parliamentarians took place on 31 March 2012 and was attended by approximately 90 women from the following 58 parliaments: Afghanistan, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Bahrain, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Ghana, Iceland, India, Iran (Islamic Rep. of), Iraq, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Lesotho, Malawi, Maldives, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, New Zealand, Niger, Oman, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Singapore, South Africa, Sweden, Thailand, Togo, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The Meeting was also attended by the following Associate Members and international organizations: the East African Legislative Assembly, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and UNICEF.

The Meeting was opened by the Second Vice-President of the Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians, Ms. M. Mensah-Williams (Namibia). The first order of business was the election as President of the Meeting of Ms. B. Amongi, member of parliament and President of the Ugandan Women's Parliamentary Association.

Ms. Amongi welcomed the participants and outlined the programme of work. The Speaker of the Ugandan Parliament, Ms. R. Kadaga, and the IPU President, Mr. A. Radi, also welcomed the participants.

Ms. L. Menchaca (Mexico) briefly reported on the deliberations of the Coordinating Committee at its 27th session, held in Bern (October 2011), and its 28th session, held that morning.

Ms. I. Passada (Uruguay) reported on the work of the Gender Partnership Group during its session in Kampala, in particular with regard to ascertaining the level of women's participation in delegations to IPU Assemblies. The Group had also considered the representation of women in IPU bodies and committees and the awareness-heightening measures to be taken to enhance the quantitative

and qualitative representativity of women at the IPU.

The Meeting was informed about recent IPU activities on gender issues, notably the parliamentary meeting organized jointly by the IPU and UN Women on the occasion of the 56th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women and held in New York in February 2012. Reports were also presented on the outcome of the campaign Stop violence against women and on the regional seminar for Asian parliaments on that subject, organized with the Parliament of India in September 2011.

As its contribution to the Assembly, the Meeting considered, from a gender perspective, the subject items debated by the Second and Third Standing Committees:

- Redistribution of power, not just wealth: Ownership of the international agendas (Second Standing Committee)
- Access to health as a basic right: The role of parliaments in addressing key challenges to securing the health of women and children (Third Standing Committee)

The participants divided into two discussion groups, one for each subject item. Ms. A. Mubarak (Bahrain) and Ms. T. Boontong (Thailand) were elected moderator and rapporteur respectively of the first group, and Ms. Z. Bouayad (Morocco) and Ms. S.A. Lyimo (United Republic of Tanzania), moderator and rapporteur of the second. In its report, each group proposed a series of amendments to the resolutions of the Second and Third Standing Committees respectively. Most of the amendments proposed were adopted.

The Meeting held a dialogue session on the subject "Mentorship: Supporting the next generation of women MPs". The session opened with a talk by Ms. R. Blackman-Woods (United Kingdom), who described an innovative programme for mentoring and transmitting know-how to women wishing to become involved in politics. The discussion highlighted the activities carried out by groups of women parliamentarians in various countries to help young women acquire the knowledge and skills needed for political action and to gain self-confidence, in particular thanks to information and communication technologies.

In the afternoon, the 2012 edition of the Map on Women in Politics co-produced by the IPU and UN Women was presented to the participants, who heard a talk on the progress made and setbacks encountered by women in parliaments in 2011. During the ensuing debate, the participants spoke about the attitudes that continued to hamper women's participation in politics and discussed the factors influencing their participation, in particular political parties, special measures such as quotas, electoral systems and networks of women parliamentarians.

On Wednesday, 4 April, the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians convened a special session to hold elections to replace 12 regional representatives whose terms of office had ended, fill three vacant seats and approve the composition of the new Bureau of the Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians (see page 24). The newly elected Coordinating Committee met on Thursday, 5 April. It started to prepare its next meeting, which would take place in Quebec City, and would examine the subject items adopted by the three Standing Committees from a gender perspective.

Subsidiary bodies and Committees of the Governing Council

1. Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians

Mr. P. Mahoux (Belgium), Mr. J.P. Letelier (Chile), Mr. K. Jalali (Islamic Republic of Iran) and Ms. A. Clwyd (United Kingdom) participated in the Committee's 137th session, which took place from 31 March to 4 April 2012. Substitute member Ms. A.J. Kairuki (United Republic of Tanzania) attended in the absence of titular member Mr. K. Tapo (Mali).

The Committee examined the individual situations of 201 sitting or former parliamentarians of 39 countries in all regions of the world. Since its 136th session (January 2012), the Committee studied five new cases and held 13 hearings. The resolutions submitted to the Governing Council for its approval concerned cases in 26 countries. One of them was presented for the first time and one was closed.

2. Committee on Middle East Questions

The Committee met on 31 March and 4 April. The meeting was attended by Ms. Z. Benarous (Algeria), Mr. F.-X. de Donnea (Belgium), Mr. S. Janquin (France), Mr. J. Winkler (Germany), Ms. M. Green (Sweden) and Lord Judd (United Kingdom). Mr. de Donnea, President of the Committee, chaired the meeting. At its second sitting, the Committee met with delegations from Egypt, Jordan and Palestine.

The Committee reviewed the summary report of a dialogue session it had held in Geneva in January 2012 with delegations from the parliaments of Israel, Palestine and Jordan. On that occasion, the discussion had centred on a number of questions, including the peace process, settlements, detention of Palestinian Legislative Council members, the security wall that extended far

beyond the 1967 borders and the fact that the continued state of security affected the lives of ordinary men, women and children in the West Bank, Gaza and Israel.

The Committee expressed its wish to pursue dialogue with parliamentarians from Israel, Palestine, Jordan and other Arab countries. Every effort would be made to make sure that delegations to future dialogue sessions were as politically inclusive as possible, with representation from all the major political forces of the countries concerned.

The Committee agreed that its main purpose was to facilitate and promote parliamentary diplomacy through dialogue. It should facilitate dialogue with members of parliament from all parties involved in the conflict. That should include parliamentarians from all the political factions represented in the Israeli and Palestinian parliaments and from neighbouring countries. Although the Committee should be objective and impartial in its approach, that did not mean that it should not express opinions or make suggestions.

The Committee members were conscious of the fact that, as for other IPU committees, financial resources were scant. Given the need for impartiality in all its undertakings, the Committee could not depend on external parties for funding. It had been agreed in principle that the travel and hotel costs of Committee members undertaking a mission to the region could be covered by their respective parliaments. The IPU would cover the costs of interpretation, ground transfers and IPU staff travel and hotel expenses.

In line with the Committee's recommendations of October 2010, its membership was now gender-balanced. The Committee noted the need to take a gender-sensitive approach to its work.

The Committee decided to undertake a mission to the region from 19 to 23 May 2012. The mission would include visits to Israel, the West Bank and Gaza. Its main purpose would be to gain an understanding of the situation on the ground. The mission would wish to meet and listen to legislators from all the political factions represented in the Israeli and Palestinian Parliaments, with a view to establishing more regular and inclusive parliamentary dialogue.

3. Group of Facilitators for Cyprus

The Group met on 2 April 2012. The meeting was attended by two of the three Facilitators, Mr. J. Lobkowicz (Czech Republic) and Ms. R. Albernaz (Portugal). Also present were Mr. T. Mitsopoulos, Ms. S.K. Koutra, Ms. A. Kyriakidou and Ms. R. Mavronicola, representing the House of Representatives of the Republic of Cyprus, and Mr. M. Yektaoğlu, Mr. M.A. Tancer, Mr. K. Fellahoğlu, Mr. M. Gökmen, Mr. T. Ertuğruloğlu and Mr. M. Çakici, representing the Turkish Cypriot Political Parties. The third Facilitator, Mr. M. Sheerit (Israel), was absent.

The parties expressed strong support for the ongoing negotiations. They also expressed hope for a long-term and viable solution for the unification of Cyprus based on a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation and political equality in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions and the values and principles of the European Union. They agreed that the Group of Facilitators should continue to meet.

4. Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law

The Committee met on Tuesday, 3 April 2012. Owing to the high number of vacant posts in the Committee, only one titular member was present at the opening of the meeting, Mr. A. Si Afif (Algeria). He therefore chaired the meeting. The Committee addressed recent developments, priorities and issues, and held an open briefing on "Health care in situations of conflict and violence" with representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

International Humanitarian Law - Recent developments, priorities and issues

The Committee was briefed on the outcome of the 31st International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, held in Geneva from 28 November to 1 December 2011. It was also briefed on national implementation of international humanitarian law,

the question of missing persons and cluster munitions.

Refugee protection and statelessness - Recent developments, priorities and issues

On 14 December 2010, UNHCR had celebrated its 60th birthday. In 2011, it had marked the 60th anniversary of the UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (on 28 July) and the 50th anniversary of the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness (on 30 August). It had also held celebrations on 10 October to mark the 150th anniversary of the birth of the Norwegian polar explorer, diplomat and politician Fridtjof Nansen, the first League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. A ministerial-level meeting of all UN Member States had been held in Geneva on 7 and 8 December. It had provided an opportunity for States to formalize their accession to the relevant conventions.

Open briefing session on health care in situations of conflict and violence

The open briefing session brought together experts from the ICRC and UNHCR as well as MPs to discuss ways of protecting health care workers in situations of conflict and violence. They considered the conclusions of a reference case study covering the kidnapping of two health care workers in the Dadaab camps, Kenya, in 2011, which had posed one of the most serious humanitarian challenges. Life-saving services had been provided to nearly 500,000 refugees in the Dadaab complex, near the Kenya-Somalia border.

Through the IPU, the global parliamentary community could adopt resolutions urging all parties to conflicts to allow safe access for health workers. Parliaments might also ensure that national legislation facilitated the provision of health care personnel, supplies and equipment.

5. Gender Partnership Group

The Gender Partnership Group held its 29th session on 30 March and 4 April 2012. In attendance were Mr. F.M. Drilon (Philippines), Ms. R. Kadaga (Uganda), Mr. D. Oliver (Canada) and Ms. I. Passada (Uruguay).

The Group compared the composition of the delegations to the 126th IPU Assembly to that of previous statutory meetings. At 5 April, 180 of the 607 delegates (29.7%) present at the Assembly were women. The Group was concerned that the average representation of women at IPU Assemblies seemed to be stagnating. To address that situation, it felt that

the IPU should do more to sensitize the parliamentary leadership, leaders of delegations and political party whips.

Of the 120 delegations present at the 126th Assembly, 112 were composed of at least two delegates. Fourteen of them were composed exclusively of men (12.5%), compared with 12.8 per cent at the previous Assembly held in Bern. Those delegations were from the following parliaments: Azerbaijan, Brazil, Colombia, Haiti, Hungary, Kuwait, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Mongolia, Myanmar, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Suriname. The delegations of Malta, Papua New Guinea, Qatar and Saudi Arabia were liable to sanctions at the Assembly, having been represented by parliamentarians of the same sex for at least three times in a row. The Group intended to redouble its efforts to promote the inclusion of women in the delegations of those parliaments.

The Group was also concerned by the low level of women's representation in the IPU's Standing Committees. For the past 12 years, women had been virtually absent from the presidency. Only two women had held the post of president of the Second and Third Standing Committees. In the same vein, women had never represented more than 30 per cent of Committee vice-presidents. In qualitative terms, women tended to take part more actively in Standing Committee debates on social issues or gender equality and less so in debates on peace and security.

The Group undertook to address the low level of women's participation through the proposed IPU gender mainstreaming strategy, to be adopted at the next Assembly in Quebec City (Canada). That strategy would apply to all IPU bodies, structures and procedures.

As it did regularly, the Group turned to the situation of parliaments with no women members. Seven in all, those parliaments were concentrated in the Pacific island States and the Gulf Cooperation Council States. The Group focused on appointed chambers, where the absence of women seemed unjustifiable. It intended to meet with delegations of

the parliaments concerned in order to draw their attention to the need to redress that situation and propose its assistance.

At its second sitting held on 4 April, the Group discussed the development of tools to promote gender equality in parliaments, starting with a plan for gender-sensitive parliaments, to be adopted at the 127th IPU Assembly in Quebec City (Canada).

6. Advisory Group on HIV/AIDS

The IPU Advisory Group on HIV/AIDS met during the 126th IPU Assembly in Kampala to discuss how it could continue its work on the impact of the law on the AIDS response. The Group discussed the implementation of its work programme for 2012, focusing on the XIX International AIDS Conference (IAC) to take place in Washington, D.C. in July. The Group agreed to continue working with UNAIDS and spearhead preparations for the parliamentary input to the IAC under the overall theme of stigma and criminalization.

The Advisory Group discussed preparations for its upcoming study visit to the United Republic of Tanzania. The Parliament of Tanzania, through its Standing Committee on HIV/AIDS Affairs and the Tanzania Parliamentarians AIDS Coalition, served as a model for parliamentary leadership and an example for parliaments that were considering strengthening their institutional engagement in the area of HIV/AIDS. The purpose of the Group's visit was to learn from the Tanzanian response to AIDS and share it with the global parliamentary community with a view to promoting stronger parliamentary engagement in the fight against the epidemic.

The Advisory Group also discussed how to integrate other aspects of the IPU's engagement to health in its work. It agreed that it should consider broadening the scope of its mandate to include maternal and child health, and recommended that the IPU Secretariat develop a concept note on how that work could be taken forward.

Other events

1. Launch of the *Global Parliamentary Report: The changing nature of parliamentary representation*

The IPU and UNDP launched a new publication, the *Global Parliamentary Report*, on 2 April, at a special event during the 126th IPU Assembly. In his

opening remarks, IPU President Abdelwahad Radi noted that the *Report* drew extensively on parliamentary contributions: more than 70 written inputs from parliaments, 660 parliamentarians surveyed and another 69 interviewed in-depth. Those inputs formed the backbone of the Report's analysis of the evolving relationship between parliaments and citizens.

President Radi said that parliaments must do more to be closer to citizens and that every parliamentarian had an individual responsibility to nurture and develop that relationship. UNDP Associate Administrator and UN Under-Secretary-General Rebeca Grynspan drew attention to the need for parliaments to include women, minorities and other marginalized groups. She highlighted some of the good practices described in the *Report*, such as the use of radio in Afghanistan to engage citizens in parliamentary work.

IPU Secretary General Mr. A.B. Johnsson gave an overview of the *Report*. He noted that the average parliamentarian, according to data collected, was a 53-year old man. At the current rate of progress, women would make up 30 per cent of parliamentarians only in 2032, and gender parity would not be achieved before 2072. More needed to be done to increase women's representation and ensure that all generations were represented in parliament.

The Secretary General identified three challenges that emerged from the *Report*:

- People expected more transparency and accountability from their representatives. That was manifesting itself in the institutional regulation of the parliamentary mandate (such as recall elections, term limits and codes of conduct). Informal forms of accountability were also expected, such as reporting regularly to constituents via the Internet or traditional media.
- Constituency service took up a large proportion of parliamentarians' time and energy. While the survey for the *Report* indicated that most parliamentarians saw law-making as their most important role, they believed that citizens wanted them to focus on local issues. Those issues varied in different regions of the world, ranging from bringing development projects to the local constituency to solving individual problems and paying constituents' bills. Resources were limited and expectations boundless. Reconciling their local and national roles was a challenge for most parliamentarians. One avenue was to seek strategic solutions to local problems instead of dealing with them on an individual basis, for example by pushing for a national health care strategy rather than securing access to health care for sick constituents only.
- Parliaments were making greater efforts to reach out to citizens than ever before. However, the impact of those efforts was difficult to quantify and rarely demonstrated. Parliaments were providing information through the Internet, radio, open days, etc. They were also seeking to

engage citizens in parliamentary processes. Although those initiatives were often managed by the parliamentary administration, the decision about how citizens' input would be used was a political one. Parliaments had to strike the right balance between institutional and political imperatives and the need to listen and be responsive to citizens.

In conclusion, parliaments must be in a continuous process of evolution. Parliamentary procedure had its roots largely in practices dating back to the 19th century. Parliaments needed to modernize and build a new form of relationship with citizens. The Secretary General encouraged delegates to present the *Report* in their parliaments and discuss its conclusions with citizens.

The *Report* can be downloaded at www.ipu.org/gpr. This web page also provides access to an interactive map to visualize data on parliaments around the world.

2. Panel discussion on *Tackling malnutrition in young children: The role of parliamentarians*

The event, jointly organized by the IPU and UNICEF, was held on Tuesday 3 April 2012. It was moderated by Ms. J. Museveni, First Lady of Uganda. The panellists were Mr. W. Schultink, Chief of Nutrition, UNICEF, Mr. A. Monteiro, former President of Cape Verde and Nutrition Advocate for West Africa, Mr. F. Sardinha, an MP from India, and Mr. S. Baker, Vice-President and Regional Director for Africa of Helen Keller International.

Malnutrition was the cause of over a third of all deaths among children. An estimated 180 million children under five years of age suffered from malnutrition in developing countries, rendering them more vulnerable to disease and less likely to develop normally in terms of their physical and intellectual capacity. That in turn jeopardized their full participation, as adults, in their country's development.

The participants underscored the need for specific action and the crucial role of parliament in tackling that problem. Three action areas were identified as follows:

(a) *Mainstream nutrition into priority development action*

Parliamentarians should:

- Accord due importance to nutrition security in national development plans;
- Increase budget allocations for nutrition policies and programmes, food supplies and training community health workers;

- Monitor the enforcement of laws and the implementation of strategies to promote nutrition;
- Conserve and increase land for diversified farming; and
- Foster the development of school programmes on nutrition.

(b) Promote education and information for mothers

To overcome ignorance and lack of information, parliamentarians should:

- Conduct awareness-raising campaigns about the benefits of breastfeeding during a child's first six months and of introducing food supplements rich in nutrients and vitamins after that age;
- Inform mothers, with the assistance of community nutrition agents, about the different combinations of foods children required depending on their age;
- Promote the consumption of local and traditional products;
- Encourage women to go to health centres to monitor their pregnancy in order to diagnose in time any deficiencies or related problems, in particular anaemia; and
- Educate pregnant women and childminders about good nutritional practices and hygiene.

(c) Foster cooperation between all stakeholders for concerted action

Parliamentarians should:

- Ensure cooperation between donors, whose assistance was indispensable for national development plans;
- Encourage voluntary collaboration with civil society;
- Foster the establishment of a national committee entrusted specifically with promoting nutrition and managing emergency situations related to malnutrition; and
- Encourage countries to participate in nutrition initiatives such as Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN).

3. Panel discussion on *Making the law work for the response to AIDS: Zero new infections, zero discrimination and zero AIDS-related deaths*

The event provided an opportunity for parliamentarians to take stock and share experiences on the benefits, limits and challenges posed by the legal environment to the HIV response.

In her opening remarks, Ms. S. Tlou, Director of the UNAIDS Regional Support Team for Eastern and Southern Africa, highlighted progress made in terms of reduced new HIV infections and increased access to treatment. However, those achievements remained fragile and could only be consolidated if all stakeholders, particularly members of parliament, displayed courage and leadership in addressing the social and legal barriers to gaining access to HIV services for those who needed them most, including sex workers, men who have sex with men and people who use drugs.

The discussion between parliamentarians, human rights experts and a representative of persons living with HIV centred on how the law could be used to challenge HIV-related discrimination and enhance access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support for all.

Ms. B. Lee, a US Congresswoman, shared her experience in challenging and helping to secure the removal of HIV-related travel restrictions in the United States. That was made possible through intense advocacy and lobbying of key members of the US Congress and government departments in a bid to draw attention to the issue. Another experience of parliamentary leadership in challenging punitive laws and practices against sex workers in Zimbabwe was presented by Ms. T. Khumalo. The meeting heard a ground-breaking civil society initiative to engage traditional leaders in Kenya to address inheritance and property dispossession among married women, thus exposing people to the risk of HIV infection and denying property rights to women living with HIV.

The panel discussed the significance of the 2011 Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS for members of parliament. Ms. M. Temmerman (Belgium) hailed the Declaration as a blueprint for guiding all stakeholders engaged in the HIV response with a view to achieving the vision of zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination, zero AIDS-related deaths. The Declaration recognized that in many countries, the law represented a barrier to access to services for members of key populations (i.e. sex workers, men who have sex with men and people who use drugs) who were particularly vulnerable to HIV but underserved in terms of access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support services. Mr. E. Tumwesigye (Uganda) provided insights into how the law affected and/or protected women and children specifically. Ms. N. Dlamini, a woman living with HIV in Swaziland, gave a poignant testimony of her ordeal of being sterilized without her consent to prevent her from transmitting HIV to any of her children.

The examples shared by the panellists illustrated the power of the law and of the parliamentarians who made it to challenge discrimination and help create an environment free of stigma and coercive measures against people who needed HIV services. Those experiences also pointed to the fact that the legal environment could be, and in many countries was, a barrier to access to services because it criminalized those most in need, thus discouraging them from seeking HIV prevention and treatment.

The exchanges between panellists and the audience highlighted the importance for members of parliaments of remaining engaged in the HIV response and ensuring that they helped create a legal environment that enabled people to come forward to gain access to HIV services. Positive examples from China, Namibia and the USA (on removing HIV-related travel restrictions), from Rwanda (on rejecting criminalization of same-sex relations) and from a number of West African countries (on limiting the recourse to the criminal law for HIV transmission) were highlighted as models of protective legal responses that supported the HIV response.

The discussion concluded with a call for continued dialogue and experience-sharing among parliamentarians from all regions to further reflect on HIV and the law and learn from existing protective legal approaches to the epidemic. Participants called on the IPU to continue to facilitate such dialogues and exchanges.

4. Informal panel discussion on *Disaster-risk reduction and sustainable development*

The panel discussion was held on Tuesday, 3 April. Organized in close cooperation with the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), it sought to share views and experiences on linkages between disasters, development and risk reduction, and to explain the Model Act for the Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and the Global Campaign on Resilient Cities. The panellists included parliamentarians from Bangladesh, Japan, Panama, Uganda and the East African Legislative Assembly, and experts from UNISDR and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).

The speakers said that climate change, rapid urbanization and population pressure, in addition to the unsustainable development practices of the past, increased vulnerabilities and accentuated disaster risks. Mainstreaming disaster-risk reduction in development policies, planning and programmes was essential for achieving sustainable

development. Disaster-risk resilience, as one of the pillars of sustainable development, was vital for protecting investments and socio-economic advances, but also for facilitating accelerated growth and development.

The panellists brought to the fore the documented rise in the number and intensity of disasters, including earthquakes, floods, tsunamis, cyclones and droughts. Disasters had led to the loss of hundreds of thousands of lives and further increased communities' vulnerabilities. A culture of prevention had to be promoted at all levels. There was an urgent need for proactive measures, focusing on preparedness for disasters and resilience to hazards, rather than on reactive responses, in the form of relief and rehabilitation after hazards turned to disasters.

The example of Bangladesh was cited, where a staggering US\$ 5.9 billion, or about 3 per cent of GDP, had been lost over a nine-year period (1991-2000) as a result of disasters, along with half a million lives. Recently, however, the use of early warning systems and the building of cyclone shelters had saved many lives in disasters, reducing deaths and displacement by 99 per cent. Japan had borne the brunt of many disasters, including the 1995 Kobe earthquake and the devastating earthquake and tsunami of 2011. Japan had been improving its legislation and policies and strengthening its risk-reduction and disaster-response systems on the basis of lessons learned after each disaster.

Parliamentarians agreed that education and sensitization messages were crucial for building a prevention culture, and that capacity-building of parliaments was also important. The need to address the discrepancy between the rates of marginal wealth creation and the rate of losses on account of disasters was also emphasized. In addition to their roles of legislation and oversight, parliaments and parliamentarians had a particular responsibility for supporting and promoting efforts aimed at disaster-risk reduction. In that regard, several recommendations had emerged from the panel discussion. Inter alia parliaments could and should:

- participate actively in the consultation process in the lead up to the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), and in connection with the post-2015 Development Framework and the post-2015 Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction;
- urge governments to take coherent approaches to climate change adaptation and disaster-risk

- reduction in accordance with the Hyogo Framework for Action (2005-2015);
- champion the scaling up of the use of risk-reduction tools as a core policy element for climate change adaptation, the Millennium Development Goals and sustainable development;
- emphasize disaster-risk reduction as a central issue in all development sector policies and programmes;
- support the World Disaster Reduction Campaign, "Making Cities Resilient", by learning more about disaster-risk reduction, integrating it into development planning and investing prudently in participatory urban development planning and critical infrastructure.

At the closing sitting of the 126th Assembly, on 5 April, Mr. S.H. Chowdhury (Bangladesh) reported on the informal panel discussion. He urged the IPU to anchor the disaster-risk reduction agenda more firmly into its growing relationship with the United Nations.

5. Workshop on *Parliamentary oversight of government external loans and related processes*. Launch of a joint global survey report (IPU, World Bank and IMF)

A workshop was held on Wednesday, 4 April on parliamentary oversight of World Bank and IMF loans with 70 MPs in attendance. A global survey of 100 countries had been conducted that assessed for the first time parliaments' legal authority to ratify such loans as well as current parliamentary practices in the loan approval process.

The vast majority of members of parliament felt that governments had insufficient leverage vis-à-vis the Bretton Woods institutions. Much remained to be done to strengthen parliamentary oversight of related processes, including by getting parliaments involved early in the negotiations of loan agreements between the government and the Bretton Woods institutions. MPs requested that the IPU continue its work as a critical component of the aid effectiveness agenda.

6. Advisory Group of the IPU Committee on United Nations Affairs

The newly appointed Advisory Group of the IPU Committee on United Nations Affairs met on 4 April, presided over by Ms. R. Green (Mexico). The Advisory Group reviewed the mandate and functioning of the Committee, and discussed modalities to improve both its visibility as well as the participation of Members in the Committee's work. Recently, the Committee had become a unique

forum for exchange and interaction with senior UN officials, review of parliamentary action on implementation of international commitments, and a parliamentary input to major UN processes. Members of the Advisory Group expressed the view that the Committee would be better served by a clearer definition of its functions, the development of operational areas of intervention and a regular evaluation system. The members reiterated their proposal that the Committee should be placed on a firm and equal footing with the IPU's existing Standing Committees, and invested with a clear set of rules and regulations.

The Advisory Group discussed the way forward as it related to the forthcoming UN General Assembly debate and draft resolution on *Interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union*. They welcomed the fact that the field visits conducted in previous years by the Advisory Group had helped identify areas where further work was required, and that those were well reflected in the draft General Assembly resolution. Among the proposed recommendations, UN country teams were called upon to develop a more structured and integrated manner of working with national parliaments, inter alia by involving parliaments in consultations on national development strategies and on development aid effectiveness.

Lastly, the Advisory Group discussed its work programme, including setting the agenda for the October meeting of the Committee on United Nations Affairs. The next meeting of the Committee would coincide with UN Day, which would provide a good opportunity for a special high-level segment. The October meeting of the Committee should also set the stage for a comprehensive debate on follow-up of the Rio Summit on Sustainable Development, and the role of parliaments in the elaboration of the next generation of development goals. The importance of conducting field visits was underscored. Members suggested that in addition to missions aimed at examining UN reform and system-wide coherence at the national level, a future field visit could also review operations in areas where significant UN political and peace mediation structures were deployed.

7. Informal meeting of young parliamentarians

On 5 April 2012, an informal meeting of young parliamentarians - the second of its kind - took place with Ms. M.T. Kubayi (South Africa) in the chair. The meeting brought together representatives of 20 delegations, a significantly higher number than at the first meeting, held in Panama City at the 124th IPU Assembly.

The purpose of the meeting was to follow up on the IPU resolution on *Youth participation in the democratic process*, adopted at the 122nd Assembly (Bangkok, 2010). The discussions focused on the main recommendations of the resolution with a view to identifying the way forward. The resolution called inter alia for the IPU to take action to enhance the participation of young MPs and meet their concerns.

The participants proposed that:

- Appropriate steps should be taken to enhance the participation of young MPs through both processes and policies at the IPU;
- A taskforce should be set up to identify ways and means of formalizing the contribution of young MPs;
- Networking should be used, through new information and communication technologies (ICTs);
- Young MPs should attend in large numbers the panel discussion on *Ensuring opportunities for youth in the 21st century, global economy innovation, education, training and quality employment*, to be held at the 127th IPU Assembly; and
- Young MPs should mobilize for a future IPU conference of young parliamentarians.

Other activities

1. Communications

There was strong interest in the Assembly and the issues it covered among the media attending, particularly Syria, Mali, health and the overall theme of *Bridging the gap between parliaments and citizens*. Four press conferences were organized and were very well attended by print, radio and TV journalists, as were the standing committees and panel discussions, particularly the one on child malnutrition.

During the Assembly, the IPU issued four press releases and many interviews and briefings were held with both Ugandan and international media such as the BBC, RFI, Reuters, Channel Africa and Xinhua in person and by phone. The IPU Secretary General, the Director of the Division of Programmes and Speaker Kadaga also took part in radio and television talk shows. Media monitoring showed press coverage of the Assembly in many parts of the world and in several languages.

Teaming up with Early Life, a youth journalist initiative in Uganda, the audio and video proceedings of the Assembly were streamed live.

For the first time, a Twitter event was organized using #IPU126 with MPs encouraged to tweet. There was positive response, particularly among NGOs present and active on specific issues, and the event helped increase IPU outreach on social media and establish communication with those MPs using the micro-blog site. Twitter would feature in future Assemblies.

Flickr had also been used to share photos of the Assembly through the 126th Assembly website of the Ugandan Parliament (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/126thipu/>).

IPU communications also carried out surveys with Members on their communications needs, which would feed into the implementation of the IPU Communications Strategy.

2. Field visits on child-related issues

In keeping with the theme of tackling malnutrition, discussed in the wings of the 126th IPU Assembly, the IPU and UNICEF co-organized field visits on 2 April to three health-care establishments that looked after children suffering from malnutrition. They were located in Kampala, Wakiso and Kisenyi.

Three groups of parliamentarians participated in the visits, which gave them a better idea of the scale of the problem in Uganda. They also obtained information from the health personnel and mothers they met, which informed the related panel discussion on 3 April intended to foster strong parliamentary action to tackle that scourge.

The first group was composed of about 30 persons: 16 MPs, UNICEF Executive Director, Mr. A. Lake, his collaborators and members of the IPU Secretariat. They visited the Mwanamugimu infant nutrition unit at the Mulago Hospital in Kampala. Care was provided in three stages over a 21-day period. The last stage of treatment, rehabilitation, involved teaching mothers about nutritious combinations of food for their children. After the visit, Mr. Lake held a meeting with the MPs and urged them to take action to prevent malnutrition.

The second and third groups, comprising a dozen persons: staff of UNICEF Uganda and IPU staff (group 3), visited the Wakiso health centre, where the highest number of child deaths due to malnutrition were recorded, and the Kisenyi III Centre respectively. They were informed about how those centres operated and what treatment was

provided to sick children. They learned about the difficulties encountered in both centres, notably regarding the monitoring of children suffering from malnutrition for the following reasons:

- Mothers often did not return to the centres with their sick children because of the long distance from their home; and
- The Kenyan and Somali refugees who visited those centres were constantly on the move.

At the closing sitting of the 126th Assembly, on 5 April, Ms. M. André (France) reported on the field visits and a short video was screened.

3. Field visits on prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV

In cooperation with UNAIDS and the Ugandan Ministry of Health, the IPU organized a field visit for members of parliament on Uganda's response in the area of prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV (PMTCT). The elimination of that mode of HIV transmission had been set as a goal by world leaders when they had gathered at the High Level Meeting on AIDS in New York in June 2011. It required a simple and relatively inexpensive intervention and had already been achieved in most high-income countries. Parliamentarians had an important role to play in

ensuring that that goal was achieved in low-income countries by 2015.

The visit included two sites, Makerere University-Johns Hopkins Uganda (MU-JHU) Research Collaboration and the AIDS Support Organization (TASO). At MU-JHU, members of parliament learned about the landmark research efforts in the area of PMTCT that had produced a number of important findings during the 23 years of cooperation between Makerere University and Johns Hopkins Medical University in Baltimore, USA. The visit to TASO, the largest NGO providing HIV services in Uganda and Africa, provided valuable insights into the ways in which grass-roots organizations could support the response to AIDS.

HIV practitioners, researchers and community workers alike emphasized the important roles of parliamentarians in supporting efforts to eliminate HIV transmission from mother to child by 2015. Special emphasis was placed on the need for a supportive legal environment, higher budget allocations and expenditures, and political leadership for programmes to prevent transmission from mother to child. They urged parliamentarians to heighten awareness of programmes to prevent vertical transmission, and to help both men and women recognize their roles and responsibilities in protecting themselves and their families from HIV infection.

Elections and appointments

1. Office of the President of the 126th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Ms. Rebecca Kadaga, Speaker of the Parliament of Uganda, was elected President of the Assembly.

2. Executive Committee

Mr. P.-F. Veillon (Switzerland) was elected to the Executive Committee until October 2013 to replace Ms. D. Stump (Switzerland), who is no longer a member of parliament.

3. Bureaux of the Standing Committees

First Standing Committee (Peace and International Security)

President

Mr. S.H. Chowdhury (Bangladesh)
(*Asia-Pacific Group*)

First Vice-President

Mr. D. Filmus (Argentina)
(*Group of Latin America and the Caribbean*)

Vice-Presidents

African Group

Mr. G. Schneeman (South Africa) - titular

Mr. A. Bougue (Cameroon) - substitute

Arab Group

Mr. N. Lazrek (Morocco) - titular

Ms. N. Rousan (Jordan) - substitute

Asia-Pacific Group

Current President - titular

Mr. S. Danusubroto (Indonesia) - substitute

Eurasia Group

Ms. N. Mazai (Belarus) - titular

Mr. V. Nefedov (Russian Federation) - substitute

Group of Latin America and the Caribbean

Current First Vice-President - titular

Mr. L.E. Sierra Grajales (Colombia) - substitute

Twelve Plus Group

Mr. P. Moriau (Belgium) - titular

Mr. N. Evans (United Kingdom) - substitute

**Second Standing Committee
(Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade)**

President

Mr. S.E. Alhousseini (Saudi Arabia)
(Arab Group)

First Vice-President

Ms. B. Contini (Italy)
(Twelve Plus Group)

Vice-Presidents

African Group

Mr. J.J. Mwiimbu (Zambia) - titular
Mr. H.R. Mohamed (United Rep. of Tanzania)
substitute

Arab Group

Current President - titular
Mr. W. Rawashdeh (Jordan) - substitute

Asia-Pacific Group

Mr. I.A. Bilour (Pakistan) - titular
Mr. D. Adams (Australia) - substitute

Eurasia Group

Mr. B.-Z. Zhambalnimbuyev
(Russian Federation) - titular
Vacancy - substitute member

Group of Latin America and the Caribbean

Mr. R. León (Chile) - titular
Mr. F. Bustamente (Ecuador) - substitute

Twelve Plus Group

Current First Vice-President
Mr. F.-X. de Donnea (Belgium) - substitute

**Third Standing Committee
(Democracy and Human Rights)**

President

Mr. O. Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu (Ghana)
(African Group)

First Vice-President

Mr. S. Gavrillov (Russian Federation)
(Eurasia Group)

Vice-Presidents

African Group

Current President - titular
Ms. P. Fouty-Soungou (Congo) - substitute

Arab Group

Ms. J. Nassif (Bahrain) - titular
Mr. R. Abdul-Jabbar (Iraq) - substitute

Asia-Pacific Group

Mr. S.S. Ahluwalia (India) - titular
Mr. R. Fatyana (Pakistan) - substitute

Eurasia Group

Current First Vice-President - titular
Vacancy - substitute member

Group of Latin America and the Caribbean

Mr. J.M. Galán (Colombia) - titular
Vacancy - substitute member

Twelve Plus Group

Mr. E. Francu (Romania) - titular
Mr. J. Winkler (Germany) - substitute

4. Rapporteurs of the Standing Committees to the 128th Assembly

Standing Committee on Peace and International Security

The responsibility to protect: The role of parliament in safeguarding civilians' lives

co-Rapporteurs

- Mr. L. Ramatlakane (South Africa)
- To be announced

Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade

Fair trade and innovative financing mechanisms for sustainable development

co-Rapporteurs

- Mr. F.-X. de Donnea (Belgium)
- Mr. R.K. Chitotela (Zambia)

Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights

Use of media, including social media, to enhance citizen engagement and democracy

co-Rapporteurs

- Ms. C. Charlton (Canada)
- Ms. M.T. Kubayi (South Africa)

5. Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians

The Governing Council elected Ms. A. Clywd (United Kingdom) and Mr. U. Nilsson (Sweden) as titular members for a five-year term of office ending in April 2017.

The Governing Council elected Ms. C. Giaccone (Argentina) and Ms. M. Kiener Nellen (Switzerland) as substitute members for a five-year term of office of ending in April 2017.

6. Committee on Middle East Questions

The Governing Council elected Mr. T. Wickholm (Norway) as a substitute member of the Committee for a four-year term of office ending in April 2016.

7. Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law

The Governing Council elected Mr. F.-X. de Donnea (Belgium) as a titular member of the Committee for a four-year term of office ending in April 2016.

The Governing Council elected Ms. A. Gómez Franceschi (Costa Rica) and Mr. E. Dombo (Uganda) as substitute members for a four-year term of office ending in April 2016.

8. Advisory Group of the IPU Committee on United Nations Affairs

Chairperson: Ms. R. Green (Mexico)
October 2014

Members:

Mr. A.N. Atanasof (Argentina) - October 2014
Mr. D. Dawson (Canada) - April 2016
Mr. S. Derradji (Algeria) - April 2016
Mr. N.N. Doguwa (Nigeria) - April 2016
Mr. E. El-Erian (Egypt) - April 2016
Mr. J. Fitzgibbon (Australia) - April 2016
Mr. C. Frolick (South Africa) - October 2014
Ms. K. Komi (Finland) - October 2014
Mr. J.C. Mahía (Uruguay) - April 2016
Mr. P. Martin-Lalande (France) - April 2016
Mr. J. Moscoso del Prado (Spain) - April 2016
Mr. F. Naek (Pakistan) - October 2014
Mr. M. Traore (Burkina Faso) - October 2014

9. Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians

Bureau (2012-2014)

President: Dr. N. Assegaf (Indonesia)

First Vice-President: Ms. S. Fernández (Ecuador)

Second Vice-President: Ms. B. Amongi (Uganda)

Regional Representatives

African Group

Ms. F. Mukakalisa (Rwanda)
Regional representative - titular member

Ms. M. Semetta (Mauritania)
Regional representative - substitute member

Arab Group

Ms. M. Al Bahar (United Arab Emirates)
Regional representative - titular

Ms. I. Al Wazir (Palestine)
Regional representative - substitute

Ms. A. Talabani (Iraq)
Regional representative - substitute

Asia-Pacific Group

Ms. E. Abdulla (Maldives)
Regional representative - titular

Ms. D. Aziz (Pakistan)
Regional representative - substitute

Eurasia Group

Ms. E. Semenova (Russian Federation)
Regional representative - titular

Group of Latin America and the Caribbean

Ms. S. Fernández (Ecuador)
Regional representative - titular

Ms. R. González (Cuba)
Regional Representative - substitute

Ms. S.M. Escudero (Argentina)
Regional representative - substitute

Twelve Plus Group

Ms. U. Karlsson (Sweden)
Regional representative - titular

Ms. M. André (France)
Regional representative - substitute

10. Gender Partnership Group

The Executive Committee appointed Ms. R. Kadaga (Uganda), Mr. F. Drilon (Philippines), Mr. D. Oliver (Canada) and Ms. I. Passada (Uruguay).

11. Management Board of the Legacy Pension Fund

Mr. J. Winkler (Germany) was appointed to the Management Board.

Membership of the Inter-Parliamentary Union*

Members (162)

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Palestine, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe

Associate Members (10)

Andean Parliament, Central American Parliament, East African Legislative Assembly, European Parliament, Inter-Parliamentary Committee of the West African Economic and Monetary Union, Latin American Parliament, Parliament of the Economic Community of West African States, Parliament of the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC), Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and Transitional Arab Parliament

• At the closure of the 126th Assembly

Agenda, Resolutions and other texts of the 126th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

1. Election of the President and Vice-Presidents of the 126th Assembly
2. Consideration of requests for the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda
3. General debate on the overall theme of *Parliaments and people: Bridging the gap*
4. Promoting and practising good governance as a means of advancing peace and security: Drawing lessons from recent events in the Middle East and North Africa
(*Standing Committee on Peace and International Security*)
5. Redistribution of power, not just wealth: Ownership of the international agendas
(*Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade*)
6. Access to health as a basic right: The role of parliaments in addressing key challenges to securing the health of women and children
(*Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights*)
7. Approval of the subject items for the 128th Assembly and appointment of the Rapporteurs
8. Inter-Parliamentary Union initiative for an immediate halt to the bloodshed and human rights violations in Syria, and the need to ensure access to humanitarian aid for all persons in need and to support implementation of all relevant Arab League and United Nations resolutions and peace efforts

**PROMOTING AND PRACTISING GOOD GOVERNANCE AS A MEANS OF ADVANCING PEACE
AND SECURITY: DRAWING LESSONS FROM RECENT EVENTS
IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA**

***Resolution adopted by consensus* by the 126th IPU Assembly
(Kampala, 5 April 2012)***

The 126th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Considering that there is compelling evidence to support the positive correlation between good governance and the level of peace and security in society and the world,

Reaffirming the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, which are the indispensable foundations of a more peaceful, prosperous and just world, and *reiterating* our determination to foster strict respect for them (paragraph 2, 2005 World Summit Outcome, A/RES/60/1),

Supporting all efforts to uphold the sovereign equality of all States and respect their territorial integrity and political independence; refrain in international relations from threatening or using force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes and principles of the United Nations; settle disputes by peaceful means and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law; respect the right to self-determination of peoples remaining under colonial domination and foreign occupation; uphold non-interference in the internal affairs of States; ensure respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; guarantee respect for the equal rights of all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion; seek international cooperation when solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character; and meet in good faith the obligations assumed in accordance with the Charter (paragraph 5, 2005 World Summit Outcome, A/RES/60/1),

Recognizing that good governance is the manner of governing that aims to achieve sustainable economic, social and institutional development, while promoting a healthy balance between the State, civil society and the market economy, and that there is no way of exercising it other than by serving the interests of the people,

Mindful that the role of public authorities in creating an environment for entrepreneurs to function and in determining the distribution of benefits as well as the nature of the relationship between governments and citizens is pivotal in promoting and practising good governance at the national and international levels,

Noting that good governance leads to efficient and accountable institutions, i.e. political, judicial, administrative, economic and corporate rules that promote development and the rule of law, protect human rights and ensure that people are free to participate and be heard in decisions that affect their lives,

Also noting that the catalysts for the uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa were several and included the concentration of wealth in the hands of autocrats in power for decades, a lack of transparency in the redistribution of that wealth, corruption and, in particular, young people's refusal to accept the status quo, while spiralling food prices and famine were also determining factors,

Acknowledging that the disconnect between the demands of civil society and the response of governments, as well as a lack of government reform, might well have contributed to the protests,

Expressing its sorrow for the victims of the political processes in the Middle East and North Africa, and its solidarity with the families of those who died in their quest for freedom and justice,

Noting the undeniably positive influence of education and exposure to issues of good governance;

* The delegation of Venezuela expressed its opposition to the resolution because of the approach it took on good governance.

Recalling the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 1976 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the 1981 African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, which, inter alia, provide that every citizen, regardless of gender, religion or race, has a right to take part in the conduct of public affairs directly or through freely chosen representatives, and that the will of the people should be expressed through free and fair elections based on universal and equal suffrage and secret ballots, in the full exercise of the sovereignty of the people, so as to constitute the basis for the legitimate and credible authority of government,

Also recalling the resolution on *Providing a sound legislative framework aimed at preventing electoral violence, improving election monitoring and ensuring the smooth transition of power*, adopted by the 124th IPU Assembly (Panama City, 2011), which calls upon parliaments, where necessary, "to undertake constitutional and legislative reform, building on international obligations and commitments and taking into account local realities, so as to provide a sound legal framework for free and fair elections that includes the adoption of electoral systems that provide for representative and inclusive outcomes, and for the smooth transfer of power",

Further recalling the above-mentioned IPU resolution, which urges parliaments "to conduct such electoral reform through a comprehensive, inclusive and open debate that fosters the broadest possible involvement of all stakeholders, authorities, political parties, media and civil society organizations in the electoral process",

Noting that the recent events in the Middle East and North Africa have provided all countries with important lessons on democracy and freedom,

Also noting that those events have shown that people everywhere need democratic and legitimate governments based on the will of the people, expressed regularly through free and fair elections,

Further noting that it is always the people who have the right to determine their own political future based on the cultural and historical characteristics of their nation,

Reaffirming that democracy is a universal value based on the freely expressed will of people to determine their own political, economic, social and cultural systems and their full participation in all aspects of their lives and that, while democracies share common features, there is no single model of democracy and it does not belong to any country or region;

Also reaffirming the need for due respect for sovereignty and the right of self-determination (paragraph 135, 2005 World Summit Outcome, A/RES/60/1),

Mindful that people will not view democracy in a positive light if their livelihood is at stake and that democracy and development are inextricably linked,

Acknowledging that the experiences of other regions and of the past year tend to show that the process of democratization in the Middle East and North Africa will take a significant amount of time, given that it is often a lengthy, unpredictable and complex process, which involves changing power relations in society,

Convinced that the attainment of democracy requires extensive changes that are rooted in constitutions, electoral systems, laws and regulations related to political parties, the media, the justice system, an enabling environment for civil society and, not least, a change in attitudes, including a paradigm shift regarding the place of women in political life,

Also convinced that commitment to the principles of good governance in the management of public affairs will guarantee freedoms and the rule of law, reduce corruption, ensure fair elections, help establish systems and institutions that strive to provide the best services to all sectors of society, and be the best guarantor of political stability,

1. *Invites* all States and parliaments to consider the major lessons drawn from the Middle East, North Africa, Europe and the United States, as well as elsewhere in the world, on the need for democratic reform and for governments to provide their people with basic employment and economic opportunities, meet their citizens' demands and guarantee equal opportunities for all;
2. *Recommends* sustained investment in political reform where necessary, possibly to include the creation of independent government watchdogs, the amendment of constitutions, electoral systems, the judicial system, laws, regulations and processes related to political parties and the taking of measures to ensure the functioning of the media, the achievement of gender equality and the involvement of civil society;
3. *Also recommends* that particular attention be paid to security sector reform so that the police, intelligence services and armed forces act within the rule of law, fully respect the fundamental rights of citizens and are held to account for their acts to a democratically elected authority;
4. *Expresses its wish*, with a view to building inclusive societies, that transitional justice and the need to address the past are adequately taken into account in the transition process, in particular through the promotion of the truth, the sentencing of perpetrators, the compensation of victims and the establishment of safeguards to avoid repeating mistakes of the past;
5. *Calls upon* all Member Parliaments that have not done so to ratify and ensure full implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and see to it that freedom of thought, expression and association, as well as other civil and political rights, are guaranteed;
6. *Also calls upon* parliaments to ensure the establishment of governance systems that will lead to the improvement of people's livelihoods so as to help restore faith in democratic institutions and democracy;
7. *Recommends* that leaders in the Middle East and North Africa, as well as elsewhere in the world, strive to implement policies that will help reduce economic inequality and tackle everyday problems, such as corruption, poverty and the lack of access to health services;
8. *Encourages* IPU Member Parliaments to advocate for increased civic education, with a focus on the fundamental principles of democratic governance, while reflecting the diversity of histories and cultures;
9. *Urges* the international community to stand ready to help countries at their request and to support the transition process while complying with the principle of sovereignty as enshrined in the UN Charter, in order to avoid undue influence on the situation in States and the outcome of elections;
10. *Calls upon* the international community to promote comprehensive reform of the United Nations in order to achieve world peace, security and development through respect for the principles enshrined in its Charter as well as the fair representation of nations;
11. *Encourages* States to comply with the Millennium Declaration, which calls for the promotion of peace, security and human rights and the elimination of hunger and poverty, and stipulates the importance of and right to education in the context of sustainable growth;
12. *Invites* political parties, national parliaments and governments to implement policies and mechanisms aimed at ensuring the participation of women and youth in public political and economic life;
13. *Calls upon* all parliaments to enact legislation and take specific action to enhance their transparency, design information and communication technology tools to facilitate citizens' access to relevant information on parliamentary processes, exercise their oversight function over the other branches of the State and establish mechanisms enabling them regularly and vigorously to reach out to civil society and be answerable to it;

14. *Urges* the IPU to lend support to the democratization process under way in the Middle East and North Africa, particularly in areas relating to the process of constitutional reform and the drafting of new electoral laws, as well as the sharing of good practices for open and inclusive electoral processes that are conducive to the establishment of representative and effective parliaments;
15. *Also urges* the IPU to design and implement a programme of technical assistance and capacity-building that supports the newly elected parliaments in the Middle East and North Africa;
16. *Further urges* donor countries and the multilateral financial institutions to honour their aid pledges to the Arab Spring countries in order to rescue their economies, protect them from recession and reduce their levels of unemployment;
17. *Appeals* to the parliaments of the countries where stolen assets have been transferred to urge their governments and banks to recover such assets;
18. *Calls for* an international parliamentary conference on the role of youth in politics in the contemporary world and current technological developments to be held under the auspices of the IPU.

REDISTRIBUTION OF POWER, NOT JUST WEALTH: OWNERSHIP OF THE INTERNATIONAL AGENDAS

***Resolution adopted unanimously by the 126th IPU Assembly
(Kampala, 5 April 2012)***

The 126th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Convinced that the governance structures of international institutions must be democratized so as to ensure that representative voices of all the world's people are heard,

Mindful that it is extremely urgent to respond effectively to acute and increasing global challenges transcending national borders, all of which threaten the future of humanity and include climate change, the sustainability and security of natural resources, the food crisis, lack of respect for human rights, the failure of financial systems and international trade arrangements, international terrorism and organized crime,

Aware that the priorities of existing multilateral institutions and forums are too often dominated by the interests of certain powerful States and their economies, and that the preoccupations of these States frequently marginalize the needs of those nations and peoples most exposed to the consequences of the economic, social, cultural and political crises with which the multilateral institutions endeavour to grapple,

Considering that the great powers disproportionately generate the very challenges that preoccupy them and affect the world as a whole,

Recognizing that lasting stability and security depend on the representative, transparent, accountable and effective nature of political systems and their institutions, and that this holds true at the neighbourhood, local, provincial, national and international levels,

Concerned that there remains a high degree of underrepresentation of women in positions of power, not only in parliaments and government, but also in international institutions such as the United Nations and the World Bank, and that gender mainstreaming is greatly needed to enable women to participate in and contribute to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs),

Mindful that the effective participation of women in all spheres of decision-making and at all levels is crucial for relevant, successful and effective policies, and that the ownership of the agendas of global political institutions must therefore belong to all their constituent members and reflect their different perspectives,

Considering that speedy reform is essential at all levels to provide for inclusive and democratic decision-making and problem-solving and to combat alienation and instability,

Recalling that the preamble and Article 1 of the Charter of the United Nations spell out the objectives: "to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, ... to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principles of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, ... to achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social cultural and humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion",

1. *Expresses its conviction* that it is imperative for international institutions, including the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization, to take immediate steps to ensure that their structures and arrangements for governance - including the preparation of agendas, voting arrangements, decision-making processes, records of proceedings and methods of appointing Chief Executives - are made transparent and genuinely democratic and that all staff appointments are based on merit while seeking to achieve geographical, ethnic and gender balance;

2. *Calls* for the establishment alongside the G20 of an inclusive and fully representative global economic council, whose mission would be to coordinate the action of the United Nations and its Member States in the economic and social spheres, and *notes* that such a global economic council could result from reforms to the current UN Economic and Social Council;
3. *Strongly recommends* that the appointment of the United Nations Secretary-General be an open and transparent process aimed at finding the most competent and qualified person for the task;
4. *Demands* reform of the membership of the UN Security Council in the near future, particularly regarding its permanent members, that is adapted to the new power balances in the world and gives the Security Council the credibility and effectiveness that it needs in the 21st century to promote peace and international security, as distinct from the post-1945 era;
5. *Appeals* for all appointments within the United Nations system to be made transparently and on the basis of merit while striving to ensure geographical, ethnic and gender balance;
6. *Calls* for mandatory registers of lobbyists or accredited observers and bodies to be introduced at the national and international levels of policy- and decision-making wherever applicable and in accordance with the law in order to ensure that their actions are more transparent and citizens are better informed about them;
7. *Believes* that, notwithstanding the current financial and economic concerns, climate change, by far the greatest challenge facing humanity, should be consistently and effectively addressed through a fair, transparent and equitable process, fully engaging all sections of civil society and respecting the principles of the Framework Convention on Climate Change, in particular equity and common but differentiated responsibilities;
8. *Calls* for sustainable development to be given the highest political priority and *welcomes* the proposal of the Global Sustainability Panel in the context of Rio+20 to create a global sustainable development council;
9. *Strongly encourages* compliance with the requirements of equity and renewal of political commitment to sustainable development based on the Rio principles, both of which should be key objectives of Rio+20 and vital components of legitimate global governance;
10. *Calls upon* parliamentarians to advocate strongly these priorities and work for immediate action by their governments to ensure their rapid implementation;
11. *Also calls upon* parliamentarians to advocate special measures and incentives to facilitate the inclusion of women from all walks of life in decision-making and agenda-setting processes at the local, national, regional and international levels;
12. *Further calls upon* parliamentarians to encourage international institutions to revitalize the women's agenda globally and to mainstream gender in their objectives, structures and work;
13. *Appeals* to parliamentarians to strive to generate widespread public understanding of why these priorities are essential and why any delay in implementing them can no longer be tolerated;
14. *Resolves* to ensure that the IPU undertake an annual review of progress worldwide in the areas of integrity, accountability, inclusiveness and fully representative democracy at all levels of power.

ACCESS TO HEALTH AS A BASIC RIGHT: THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENTS IN ADDRESSING KEY CHALLENGES TO SECURING THE HEALTH OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Resolution adopted unanimously by the 126th IPU Assembly (Kampala, 5 April 2012)

The 126th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Recognizing the United Nations Millennium Declaration (2000), which established eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs),

Underscoring that a human-rights approach is fundamental to achieving these MDGs,

Noting that MDG 4 aims to reduce the under-five child mortality rate by two thirds between 1990 and 2015 and that MDG 5 aims to reduce the maternal mortality ratio by three quarters between 1990 and 2015,

Concerned that the funding gap to ensure universal access to reproductive health remains unacceptably high and that donor and developing countries need to step up their commitments to achieve the MDGs, in particular MDG 5,

Drawing attention to the fact that improvements in maternal and child health require progress related to poverty and hunger (MDG 1), access to education (MDG 2), gender equality and the empowerment of women (MDG 3), and the prevalence of HIV/AIDS and malaria (MDG 6),

Underscoring that the international community has committed to achieving the MDGs by 2015,

Concerned that in 2008 an estimated 358,000 women worldwide died from complications related to pregnancy and childbirth, and *underscoring* that 99 per cent of these deaths occurred in developing countries,

Also concerned that in 2010 an estimated 7.6 million children died before reaching their fifth birthday, with 41 per cent dying in their first month, and that over 170 million children under five worldwide are affected by stunting,

Deeply concerned that maternal and child mortality rates remain unacceptably high globally and that many countries are not on track to achieve MDGs 4 and 5,

Recognizing that less than half of all pregnant women in sub-Saharan Africa and only half of all pregnant women in Southern Asia are attended to by skilled health professionals, including midwives, during labour and delivery, which is one of the major factors contributing to maternal and newborn deaths; that midwives are in short supply in many developing countries; and that there is an urgent need, particularly in countries with high maternal mortality rates, to provide assistance in the recruitment, training and support of professional midwives,

Also recognizing that lack of access to quality sexual and reproductive health services and supplies, in particular family planning services, which include contraceptives, is a major contributing factor to maternal mortality,

Noting that ineffective and poorly-resourced health systems, particularly the lack of human resources for health and inaccessible health care facilities, are key impediments to improved health outcomes,

Also noting that the burden on health professionals in many developing countries could be lightened by improvements in health governance, including measures to expand and improve access to skilled birth attendant services,

Reiterating that universal access to reproductive health is one of the targets of MDG 5b,

Concerned that contraceptive prevalence rates are low and the need for family planning and level of unwanted pregnancies are high in many countries with worrisome maternal mortality rates, particularly among adolescents, and that international assistance for family planning has diminished significantly since the year 2000,

Considering that unwanted pregnancies are disproportionately high among young unmarried girls, who also run the highest risk of pregnancy-related morbidity and mortality,

Noting that unsafe abortions account for 13 per cent of maternal deaths,

Also noting that although maternal mortality is the leading cause of death among adolescent girls in most developing countries, adolescent girls are most likely to give birth without skilled birth attendants,

Further noting that young people remain disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS, accounting for 41 per cent of all new infections among 15 to 49 year-olds, and that young women between the ages of 15 and 19 are particularly vulnerable because of gender inequalities, sexual violence, early marriage, intergenerational relationships and more limited access to education,

Aware of the importance of providing information, education and services that are appropriate to people's age and needs throughout the life cycle,

Affirming that comprehensive sex education that is age-appropriate, gender-sensitive and evidence-based is crucial if young people are to be provided with the knowledge and skills they need to make informed decisions about their sexuality and given the means to protect themselves from unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV and AIDS,

Aware that a critical window to improve children's health and secure their prospects for life-long development through adequate nutrition exists between pregnancy and a child's second birthday, so as to guarantee them an appropriate role in the country's long-term development with the capacity to assimilate what they learn through the education system,

Affirming the commitment to uphold the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,

Considering the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995),

Recalling the political declaration adopted by the UN General Assembly in June 2011, which committed to working towards the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS by 2015 and to substantially reducing AIDS-related maternal deaths,

Also recalling Resolution 11/8 on *Preventable maternal mortality and morbidity and human rights* adopted by the UN Human Rights Council on 17 June 2009,

Welcoming the resolution on *Eliminating maternal mortality and morbidity through the empowerment of women*, adopted by consensus at the 54th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women,

Appreciating the commitment made at the G8 Summit held in Canada in June 2010 to allocate US\$ 7.3 billion to carry out initiatives in the least developed countries (LDCs), to contribute to implementing the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health launched by the UN Secretary-General, and the commitment made at the 15th African Union Heads of State Summit (Uganda 2010) to fulfil the pledges taken at the Abuja Summit by allocating 15 per cent of the overall State budget to health,

Mindful of the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the 2008 Accra Agenda for Action, as well as the 2011 Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation,

Considering previous IPU resolutions, in particular those pertaining to the MDGs, women's and children's health, and gender equality and human rights, and the outcome document of the Sixth Annual Meeting of Women Speakers of Parliament held in 2010,

Affirming that enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health is an internationally recognized human right,

Aware that gender is a key determinant of health and that the causes of many of the differences and inequalities between women's and men's health status are social, economic and cultural,

Underscoring that the enhancement of women's and children's health is much more than a policy goal and that States have an obligation to respect, promote, protect and fulfil women's, children's and adolescents' right to health on a non-discriminatory basis,

Committed to realizing the goals of the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health, and the recommendations of the Commission on Information and Accountability for Women's and Children's Health, and *underscoring* the centrality of parliamentary action therein,

Encouraged by the increasing parliamentary attention in the national, regional and international spheres, and resources being devoted to reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health,

Noting, however, that progress in reducing maternal and child mortality has been uneven across regions and within countries, and that this must be addressed as a matter of urgency,

Stressing that special attention must be given to the health needs and rights of women, newborns, children and adolescents who belong to one or multiple vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, including those in the poorest households, living in rural and remote areas, and affected by HIV/AIDS, adolescent girls, indigenous women and children, migrant women and children, refugee and internally displaced women and children as well as those in humanitarian, conflict and post-conflict situations, sex workers, and women and children with disabilities, and *recognizing* the importance of introducing measures to reduce inequalities and of commitment to equality of access and outcome for these disadvantaged groups,

Underscoring that equal access to quality education and sexual and reproductive education for all women, children and adolescents is a key intervention that can reduce health inequities and improve health in cases of communicable and non-communicable diseases,

Also underscoring that efforts need to be focused on young people as young men and women, married or unmarried, need access to sexual and reproductive health information and services,

Further underscoring, in keeping with the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action and key actions for its further implementation, the importance of universal access to post-abortion care and access to safe abortions where they are legal,

Underlining that most maternal and child deaths are preventable and that many are the result of conditions that may be avoided through immunization or treated by well-known and cost-effective interventions,

Convinced that the rationale for prioritizing women's, newborn, children's and adolescent health in development strategies is compelling and that the need to do so is indisputable,

Emphasizing the need for parliamentarians and governments to tackle the problems of ill-health caused by the smoking of tobacco and tobacco products, to coordinate efforts to protect adults and children from the harmful effects of second-hand smoke, to deplore the activities of the tobacco companies in targeting markets in LDCs and developing countries, and the need for all countries to adopt the World Health Organization (WHO) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control,

1. *Calls upon* all parliamentarians, both men and women, and the IPU, to take all possible measures to generate and sustain the political will as well as the appropriate resources needed to achieve the MDGs by 2015, and to put in place the policies and commitments needed for the post-2015 period;
2. *Encourages* parliamentarians to collaborate and build partnerships with relevant stakeholders to achieve the health-related MDGs, working closely with governments, civil society, local communities, health care professionals, academics and research institutions, multilateral organizations, global funds and foundations, the media and the private sector;
3. *Recommends* that national parliaments, regional parliamentary assemblies and the IPU hold regular debates on progress towards the realization of MDGs 3, 4, 5 and 6 and target 1.C;
4. *Calls upon* the parliaments of States that have not yet done so to support ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, as well as the relevant Optional Protocols, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and to commit to the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health;
5. *Urges* parliamentarians to closely monitor the domestic implementation of international, regional and national human rights instruments so as to ensure that all health-related obligations and recommendations, including those under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, CEDAW, the CRC and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, are fully implemented and respected by all levels of government, and *calls upon* parliaments to participate in the deliberations of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Committee on the Rights of the Child, and to seek the support of the IPU Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians;
6. *Recommends* that parliaments request annual updates on the steps taken by their governments to implement international human rights instruments and programmes related to health and gender equality;
7. *Encourages* parliaments to include gender impact assessments with the introduction of all health-related legislation, and *also encourages* the IPU to facilitate exchanges among its Member Parliaments so as to build capacity in this area;
8. *Invites* parliaments to see to it that national health policies and strategies incorporate a gender perspective, and that education of health care workers and research take full account of the existing gender differences in health;
9. *Urges* parliaments to introduce or amend legislation to guarantee equal access to health services for all women and children without discrimination, and to provide free essential health services for all pregnant women and children;
10. *Also urges* parliaments to establish specialized parliamentary committees on women and children, to monitor progress on the implementation and ratification of resolutions and declarations on women and children, and to address women's and children's health issues more comprehensively;
11. *Further urges* parliaments to pass laws explicitly criminalizing all forms of violence against women and girls, including domestic and sexual violence and in situations of armed conflict, and other forms of violence such as forced sterilization, forced and early marriage and female genital mutilation, and *calls upon* parliaments to enact laws to prevent violence and provide support and reparation to survivors;

12. *Calls upon* parliaments to use the oversight and accountability tools at their disposal throughout the budgetary process, as well as innovative financing approaches, to ensure that adequate domestic financial resources are allocated for sexual, reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health, and for achieving MDGs 4, 5 and 6 at the national level;
13. *Requests* parliaments to ensure that the domestic funds and aid allocated to women's and children's health are released and used for the relevant programmes;
14. *Calls upon* parliamentarians to use the oversight and accountability tools at their disposal to work to ensure that all commitments made to the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health are fulfilled, and that all the recommendations of the subsequent Commission on Information and Accountability for Women's and Children's Health are implemented;
15. *Requests* the agencies of the United Nations system, in particular the WHO, the United Nations Population Fund and UNICEF, to provide countries with more of the multifaceted support they need to implement policies and programmes aimed at reducing maternal and infant mortality;
16. *Calls upon* parliaments to further enhance support for education in order to improve long-term health outcomes in general and to promote individuals' contribution to society;
17. *Encourages* parliaments to advocate for lines in the health budget to be earmarked for the provision of essential sexual, reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health services to vulnerable women and children, including those in the poorest households, those living in rural areas, those who are members of indigenous communities or minority groups, those with disabilities, those living with HIV/AIDS, and adolescent girls;
18. *Also encourages* parliaments to support gender-sensitive budgeting as a tool for addressing women's health needs;
19. *Further encourages* parliamentarians to advocate for increasing the number of midwives, assistance with the recruitment, training and support of professional midwives, and the provision of accommodation for mothers, near or in the hospital if necessary, before their delivery, in order to gain access to professional and monitored delivery;
20. *Urges* parliaments to ensure that parliamentary committees entrusted with monitoring issues pertaining to health and gender equality are adequately resourced and operational;
21. *Also urges* parliamentarians in African States to establish a broadly-agreed timetable for their governments to honour their commitments under the 2001 Abuja Declaration;
22. *Invites* the African States that have not yet done so to implement the Maputo Plan of Action for Africa, adopted by the African Union (AU) Summit in 2006, which provides inter alia for the adoption of national roadmaps to reduce maternal, newborn and infant mortality in accordance with the AU roadmap, and *calls for* the Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality in Africa (CARMMA), initiated and launched by the AU in 2009, to be introduced in all countries;
23. *Calls upon* Member Parliaments, in particular those of the G8 countries, to use the oversight and accountability mechanisms at their disposal to monitor the fulfilment of financial commitments made towards health initiatives in the LDCs;
24. *Urges* parliaments and their members to take all necessary measures to enhance women's effective participation and leadership at all levels of health governance;
25. *Calls upon* parliamentarians in countries providing official development assistance (ODA) to work towards increasing their country's ODA for health and to hold their governments to account for honouring their commitments and for reporting – on the basis of common international indicators – on the proportion of ODA being channelled towards reproductive, women's, children's and adolescent health and the promotion of gender equality, and to ensure that these funds are audited in terms of their efficiency and effectiveness;

26. *Also calls upon* parliamentarians in countries that provide ODA to evaluate this spending, including through parliamentary field visits and deliberations in committees on development assistance, to ensure that it prioritizes the recipient countries, sectors, communities and programmes with the greatest demonstrated needs and vulnerabilities, and that these resources are distributed in a more equitable manner;
27. *Encourages* parliamentarians in countries that provide ODA to examine the degree to which their government's ODA is being coordinated with other donors and harmonized and aligned with the health systems, plans and priorities of recipient countries;
28. *Also encourages* parliamentarians in countries that provide ODA to verify that the aid programmes are implemented, in particular in the field of maternal and child health, that they are managed against results-based objectives, and are based on the principle of shared responsibility;
29. *Calls upon* parliamentarians to scrutinize all government health interventions to ensure they are, as far as possible, evidence-based, conform to international human rights standards, and are responsive to regular and transparent performance reviews;
30. *Also calls upon* parliamentarians to promote integrated health services, and to advocate for balanced resources to meet the needs of women and children in the pre-pregnancy, pre-natal, birth, post-natal, infancy and early childhood stages, particularly through the decentralization of health services;
31. *Encourages* parliamentarians to ensure a coordinated approach to all matters pertaining to maternal and child health, such as sanitation, access to safe drinking water, the fight against malnutrition, and gender equality;
32. *Calls upon* parliamentarians to ensure free access to vaccines and medicines to protect women and children from disease;
33. *Urges* parliaments to support the training of health professionals, including midwives and birth attendants, as well as universal access to reproductive health information, services and supplies, including contraceptives;
34. *Appeals to* parliamentarians to promote the establishment and/or enhancement, before 2015, of accurate civil registration systems to register all births and deaths and causes of death, particularly in relation to women, children and adolescents;
35. *Urges* parliaments to encourage the development of national information systems that include a gender perspective and data from all health facilities and administrative sources and surveys, which should subsequently be used to inform parliamentary debates;
36. *Encourages* parliaments to take into consideration, including as part of development cooperation, the WHO recommendations on maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health, such as the Guidelines for preventing early pregnancy and poor reproductive outcomes among adolescents in developing countries, and to support the implementation of the WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel;
37. *Also encourages* parliaments to explore innovative approaches to health service design and delivery, including the use of information and communications technologies such as tele-medicine and mobile phones, in order to reach women, children and adolescents in remote areas, to facilitate emergency responses to births, and to collect and disseminate health information as widely as possible and in accessible formats to women with disabilities, and to ensure sex education;
38. *Calls upon* parliaments to work with governments to consider the establishment of transparent domestic accountability mechanisms for maternal and child health, one form of which could be a multi-stakeholder national commission that reports to parliament;

39. *Requests* the IPU to facilitate collaboration and exchanges among its Member Parliaments so as to build the capacity of parliamentarians to monitor all policy and programme areas, as well as the above-mentioned budgetary and legislative activities;
40. *Encourages* the IPU to enhance cooperation with the specialized UN agencies and parliamentary networks engaged in the promotion of women's and children's health and rights;
41. *Requests* the IPU to develop an accountability mechanism - based on the 2011 report of the Commission on Information and Accountability for Women's and Children's Health, *Keeping Promises, Measuring Results* - to monitor the progress of Member Parliaments in implementing this resolution between the date of its adoption and 2015, and to publish the results of that review annually;
42. *Urges* parliamentarians to work for age-appropriate, gender-sensitive and evidence-based sex education for all young people;
43. *Also urges* parliamentarians, in keeping with the ICPD Programme of Action, to ensure universal access to post-abortion care and to make sure that abortions are safe where they are legal as a means of saving the lives of girls, adolescents and women.

INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION INITIATIVE FOR AN IMMEDIATE HALT TO THE BLOODSHED AND HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN SYRIA, AND THE NEED TO ENSURE ACCESS TO HUMANITARIAN AID FOR ALL PERSONS IN NEED AND TO SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION OF ALL RELEVANT ARAB LEAGUE AND UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTIONS AND PEACE EFFORTS

Resolution adopted by consensus by the 126th IPU Assembly
(Kampala, 5 April 2012)*

The 126th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Recalling the resolution on "Strengthening democratic reform in emerging democracies, including in North Africa and the Middle East", adopted unanimously by the 124th IPU Assembly (Panama City, 2011), which urged all parties to refrain from violence and to ensure in particular that human rights are respected; called on all governments to respect the right to peaceful self-determination of peoples; and expressed concern for the humanitarian impact of the political changes in the region on vulnerable groups, particularly women and children,

Also recalling the resolution entitled "Furthering parliamentary democracy in order to protect human rights and encourage reconciliation among peoples and partnership among nations", adopted by the 110th IPU Assembly (Mexico City, 2004), in which the Assembly "underlines that the holding of truly free and fair elections based on secret balloting and universal suffrage, monitored by independent election authorities, is always of paramount importance in the establishment of parliaments reflecting national diversity and, particularly in countries emerging from violent conflict, is essential in consolidating and advancing the reconciliation process" and "calls on parliaments to respect the political rights of opposition parties and freedom of the press",

Expressing its solidarity and sympathy for the Syrian people, whose democratic freedoms and human rights are being systematically and brutally undermined by their own government,

Noting that sustained and unjustified violence continues to be perpetrated against the Syrian people, including the killing and persecution of protestors, human rights defenders and journalists, denial of access to medical treatment, and the torture of and violence against men, women and children,

Cognizant of the serious humanitarian crisis and *dismayed* by the mounting loss of life and injury being caused by this violence, largely due to armed attacks perpetrated by the Syrian Government against its own population,

Alarmed by these authorities' use of heavy military equipment, including artillery and combat tanks, against towns and other population centres and their resorting to mass murder, arbitrary detentions, forced disappearances, torture and ill-treatment of detained persons, in particular children,

Noting the need to hold to account the perpetrators of human rights violations, including those that may amount to crimes against humanity,

Also noting the League of Arab States plan of 2 November 2011 and their decisions of 22 January and 12 February 2012 respectively, agreed to by the Syrian Government, which called in particular for an immediate end to violence against protestors, the release of political prisoners, the removal of all tanks and armoured vehicles from the streets and the convening of a meeting in Cairo for dialogue with the opposition,

Further noting the declaration of the League of Arab States of 29 March 2012,

* The delegations from Chile, Cuba, South Africa, Uganda and Viet Nam expressed a reservation on operative paragraph 12, while the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Iran (the Islamic Republic of), the Syrian Arab Republic and Venezuela rejected the entire resolution, which, in their view, was unbalanced.

Considering the repeated demands by the United Nations and the League of Arab States for the Syrian Government to honour its commitment to the Arab League plan and to permit the delivery of humanitarian assistance and the evacuation of wounded persons,

Recalling the decisions of the 31st International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, held in Geneva from 28 November to 1 December 2011, on strengthening international humanitarian law and domestic legislation for disaster-risk reduction, addressing regulatory barriers to providing emergency and transitional shelter in a rapid and equitable manner after natural disasters, and humanitarian access and assistance,

Noting the United Nations General Assembly resolution of 16 February 2012, which strongly condemned "the continued widespread and systematic violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms by the Syrian authorities, such as the use of force against civilians, arbitrary executions, the killing and persecution of protestors, human rights defenders and journalists, arbitrary detention, enforced disappearances, interference with access to medical treatment, torture, sexual violence, and ill-treatment, including against children",

Recalling the statement issued by the President of the UN Security Council on 21 March 2012, in which the Security Council expresses its full support for the efforts of Kofi Annan, the Special Joint Envoy of the United Nations and the League of Arab States, and his six-point proposal to commit to appoint an empowered interlocutor to address the aspirations of the Syrian people; a cessation of violence; the provision of humanitarian assistance in affected areas; the release of arbitrarily detained persons; freedom of movement for journalists; and freedom of association and the right to demonstrate peacefully,

Also recalling United Nations Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009) and 1960 (2010) on women and peace and security,

Further recalling the resolutions of 29 April 2011, 23 August 2011, 2 December 2011 and 1 and 23 March 2012 of the UN Human Rights Council on the human rights situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, and *underscoring* that in its resolutions of 2 December 2011 and 1 and 23 March 2012, the Council strongly condemns the systematic and widespread violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms that the Syrian authorities continue to commit,

Underscoring its respect for the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic, and *rejecting* any external military intervention,

Noting that the Syrian Government held discussions with the Joint Special Envoy of the United Nations and the League of Arab States, and that it agreed on 27 March 2012, but has not yet implemented, his six-point proposal, which envisages a UN-supervised ceasefire and the establishment of political dialogue between government and opposition groups,

Concerned by the grave risk to regional stability and security posed by the Syrian Government's use of violence rather than dialogue to address calls for reform,

Frustrated by the continued failure of the Syrian Government to respond to or implement the decisions and resolutions of international and regional bodies,

1. *Calls* for an immediate cessation of the violence and human rights violations and abuses in Syria and *also calls* for full compliance by all parties with international human rights and international humanitarian law obligations;
2. *Supports* the efforts of international and regional organizations to bring about a peaceful end to the crisis in Syria;
3. *Urges* the United Nations and the League of Arab States to redouble their efforts to assist in bringing about an end to armed violence in Syria and to address the current humanitarian crisis;

4. *Supports* the unprecedented leadership and efforts of the Joint Special Envoy of the United Nations and the League of Arab States and his six-point proposal for resolving the situation in Syria;
5. *Calls upon* the Syrian Government to honour its commitment to this proposal and its earlier commitment to the Arab League Plan, including withdrawing military personnel from cities, ending the use of heavy weapons, releasing political prisoners and cooperating fully and immediately with the United Nations and humanitarian organizations to facilitate the unhindered and safe provision of humanitarian assistance and to allow the evacuation of the wounded from affected areas;
6. *Urges* the commencement of an inclusive political process in Syria to address the legitimate democratic aspirations and concerns of the Syrian people;
7. *Underscores* that this political process must be conducted in an environment free of violence, torture, fear, intimidation, discrimination and extremism;
8. *Expresses* the hope that this process can lead to an all-inclusive democratic political system, in which all citizens are equal;
9. *Underscores* the pivotal role the IPU can play in coming to the assistance of emerging democracies, fostering political reconciliation and the peaceful settlement of conflicts, and in upholding and protecting the principles of representative democracy, human rights and gender equality;
10. *Requests* the IPU to dispatch an international parliamentary fact-finding mission to the Syrian territories to examine the reality of the situation arising from the violence and the deliberate hampering of the activities of international and Arab relief organizations, and to issue an urgent report to the IPU membership with a view to taking the necessary measures;
11. *Urges* parliaments to provide all necessary humanitarian assistance to all persons in Syria affected by the violence and to participate in making immediate preparations for extending such assistance, including in neighbouring countries;
12. *Supports* the continuation of diplomatic and economic sanctions on the Syrian Government until such a time as the situation improves significantly;
13. *Requests* the IPU President to report on the implementation of this resolution at the 127th IPU Assembly and at the United Nations.

PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT ON MALI

*Endorsed by the 126th IPU Assembly
(Kampala, 5 April 2012)*

We, the representatives of the national parliaments meeting in Kampala at the 126th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union:

Are profoundly concerned at the military coup d'état that took place in Mali on 22 March 2012 and overthrew the legitimate authorities,

Support the negotiations undertaken by the Heads of State of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and of the African Union with the military junta with a view to an immediate restoration of the Republic's institutions,

Demand that the military junta make a commitment to honour its solemn declaration of 1 April 2012 aimed at effectively restoring the Republic's institutions, and to relinquish power,

Urge all the parties to safeguard the country's cultural heritage,

Ask the IPU to lend its full support to the President of the Republic, the Parliament and people of Mali in their ordeal and in view of the worsening humanitarian crisis,

Call upon the international community to back the decisions made by the Heads of State of ECOWAS aimed at restoring peace, rule of law and democracy in Mali and the integrity of its territory.

Reports, Decisions, Resolutions and other texts of the Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

COOPERATION WITH THE UNITED NATIONS

List of activities undertaken by the IPU between October 2011 and March 2012

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session
(Kampala, 5 April 2012)*

The United Nations

- The official documents of the 125th IPU Assembly were circulated at the UN General Assembly. These included the new IPU Strategy entitled *Better parliaments, stronger democracies*, and the report of the October 2011 session of the IPU Committee on United Nations Affairs.
- The IPU delivered several statements to the UN General Assembly and its subsidiary organs based on recent IPU resolutions and activities relating to democracy, human rights, least developed countries, minorities and indigenous peoples in politics, women and the rights of the child.
- The joint annual IPU-UN Parliamentary Hearing, entitled *Strengthening political accountability for a more peaceful and prosperous world*, was held in New York in late November 2011. The Hearing was attended by over 180 MPs and professional staff, and focused on issues relating to the role of the United Nations in strengthening global accountability, youth participation in the democratic process, enhancing the links between national institutions and civil society, as well as good practices for budget transparency. The summary Report of the Hearing was sent to all IPU Member Parliaments and distributed as an official document in the UN General Assembly.
- The IPU and the Parliament of South Africa held a parliamentary meeting in conjunction with the Conference of the Parties (COP17/CMP7) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Durban on 5 December. Honorary IPU President Theo-Ben Gurirab presented the outcome of the parliamentary meeting to the Conference Chairperson. He underscored that, pending the establishment of a comprehensive framework, parliamentarians expected all major economies to honour their pledges under the Cancún Agreement, including their obligations under the Kyoto Protocol.
- The IPU held a national seminar in Cambodia on parliament's role in overseeing implementation of the outcome of the Fourth UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries - the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPOA). The seminar sought to foster greater involvement of all national stakeholders in the follow-up process, agreement on better implementation strategies in line with national development plans, and the establishment of mechanisms to share information, ensure coordination and track progress.
- The IPU and the Parliament of Burundi held an orientation seminar for Burundian MPs on 12 and 13 December 2011. The event focused on the status of women and gender equality in Burundi and followed up on previous IPU activities in Burundi carried out in cooperation with the UN Democracy Fund and the Peacebuilding Commission. The participants drew up a plan of action, which they intend to implement with IPU support.
- As part of its work in support of the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the IPU held two parliamentary retreats in Kenya and Uganda on the role of parliament in promoting MDGs 4 and 5 on maternal, newborn and child health. Members of parliament and parliamentary staff participated in these retreats and discussed legislative reforms, health budgets, fighting corruption and ensuring accountability of results, as well as guaranteeing better health service delivery. Senior WHO, UNICEF and UNFPA staff briefed the participants.

UN Women

- The IPU, together with UN Women, held a one-day meeting for parliamentarians attending the 56th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women. The participants debated *Empowering rural women: What role for parliaments?* with a focus on strategies to empower rural women and their political participation. The outcome of the parliamentary meeting was presented to the CSW plenary meeting. In the course of the same week, the UN-IPU joint publication *Women in Politics: 2012* was launched at UN Headquarters in New York.

UNDP

- The IPU and UNDP concluded their work on the first-ever *Global Parliamentary Report*, scheduled to be formally launched at the 126th IPU Assembly in Kampala. The result of two years of extensive research with the involvement of many IPU Member Parliaments, the Global Report focuses on the evolving relationship between citizens and parliaments. It seeks to tap into the experience of institutions and politicians to identify challenges and public pressures, and provide examples of good practices to better meet the expectations of citizens.
- The IPU continued to work closely with UNDP country offices, providing technical assistance and capacity-building programmes to national parliaments. This was the case, over the past six months, in Bangladesh (needs assessment of parliamentary library, research and archives), Central African Republic (induction seminar for newly elected parliamentarians and workshop on the needs of committees), Democratic Republic of the Congo (training in recording proceedings and review of parliamentary legal framework), Guinea-Bissau (seminar on parliament's representation function) and Palestine (ICT needs assessment for the Palestine Legislative Council).

Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the UN Human Rights Council

- The IPU continued discussions with the President of the UN Human Rights Council and held informal consultations with a group of UN Member States on modalities for the participation of parliaments and the IPU in the Council, in particular in the Universal Periodic Review of the fulfilment by each State of its human rights obligations and commitments. A side event on this topic was held in Geneva on 9 March, on the occasion of the 19th session of the UN Human Rights Council. The event was organized by the IPU and the President of the Human Rights Council.
- On 27 February, the IPU President addressed the High-level segment of the Human Rights Council (see full statement at: <http://www.ipu.org/un-e/un-docs.htm#speeches>).
- The IPU submitted reports to the 51st session of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee) on the level of parliamentary involvement in the reporting process and on the situation of women in politics in the countries concerned.

World Health Organization (WHO)

- The IPU continued to work with WHO to strengthen expertise among parliaments in maternal, newborn and child health (MDGs 5 and 5).
- At the invitation of WHO, the IPU participated in a series of follow-up meetings on the recommendations of WHO's Commission on Information and Accountability for Women's and Children's Health (Ottawa, November 2011 and Dar es Salaam, February 2012).
- WHO and UNICEF continued to participate in the IPU's reference group for the MDGs 4 and 5 project.
- The IPU pursued its collaboration with the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH) in developing knowledge resources on women's and children's health.
- PMNCH contributed to IPU activities and plans related to women's and children's health and facilitated the IPU's participation in its planning process. The PMNCH has now formally recognized the IPU as a member of the Partnership.

World Trade Organization (WTO)

- On 15 December 2011, a parliamentary message was addressed to the eighth WTO Ministerial Conference in Geneva, reflecting the outcome views of parliamentarians who had taken part in the annual session of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO, held earlier in the year.

INTERACTION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS, NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS AND THE IPU

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session
(Kampala, 5 April 2012)*

At its 66th session in early 2012, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) will be debating an agenda item entitled "interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the IPU". This note provides an overview of this relationship: how it has evolved over the years, where it is today, and how it can further develop. Subsequent to deliberations on the occasion of the IPU Assembly in Kampala, member parliaments will be encouraged to engage with their Foreign Ministries and seek support for a new and forward-looking UNGA Resolution, based on the elements incorporated below.

1. For over two decades now, the Inter-Parliamentary Union has been working to develop a parliamentary dimension to international cooperation. In this process, special attention has been given to cooperation with the United Nations. Today, interaction between the two organizations takes place at both national and global levels, and aims to achieve both operational and political impacts.
2. The 2000 Conference of Presiding Officers, held on the eve of the Millennium Summit, was the first event at which parliamentary leaders from around the world discussed their role in the international sphere. In asserting the need for a strong relationship between parliaments and the United Nations, the Speakers declared that their ambition was to bridge the democracy gap in international relations. In so doing, they resolved to work ever more closely with the IPU, the unique global parliamentary counterpart of the UN. This message was reinforced at the subsequent parliamentary Summits in 2005 and 2010.
3. With this mandate, in 2002 the IPU attained permanent observer status with the UN General Assembly. The General Assembly is the main political and deliberative body of the United Nations, which currently brings together 193 member States and has a broad agenda covering all of the main global issues of our time, including in the areas of peace and security, development, democracy and human rights.
4. As a permanent observer to the UN General Assembly, the IPU regularly addresses this global body and its subsidiaries, bringing forward the political viewpoints and policy prescriptions derived from its resolutions and from activities conducted together with member parliaments. The IPU also circulates official documents in the General Assembly, and works to have parliamentary perspectives reflected in the outcome of UN deliberations and negotiations. As a result, ever more formal UN documents and international commitments include clear references to the role and responsibility of national parliaments. Every fall, the IPU and the Office of the President of the General Assembly jointly convene a Parliamentary Hearing at UN Headquarters in New York, which aims to bring greater transparency and accountability to the work of the United Nations.
5. Building on past experience, the IPU has been making efforts to regularly convene parliamentary meetings in the context of major international events: the annual sessions of the UN General Assembly and select bodies such as the Commission of the Status of Women, global summits (information society, millennium development goals, sustainable development, financing for development, least developed countries, etc) and other international gatherings (such as the annual conferences on climate change). Such parliamentary meetings provide valuable opportunities for legislators to join national delegations, better understand global challenges, and play a greater role in the elaboration and implementation of international decisions.

6. In response to the ever more substantive interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments, and the IPU, the IPU Committee on United Nations Affairs was established in 2007, with a mandate to provide direction and help shape new policies relating to the parliamentary dimension of the United Nations. One of the Committee's first achievements was the elaboration of a policy paper on the nature of the relationship between the United Nations and the world of parliaments, which was endorsed by the IPU's governing bodies and submitted to the United Nations. This and other related documents are available on the IPU webpage dedicated to Cooperation with the United Nations - <http://www.ipu.org/strct-e/un.htm>
7. In recent years, the Committee on UN Affairs has further expanded its work, providing a space where legislators can interact with senior UN officials, debate and draft parliamentary input to major UN processes, and review parliamentary action towards the implementation of international commitments. The Committee's Advisory Group has been carrying out a series of field missions (Tanzania, Vietnam, Ghana and Sierra Leone), in an effort to examine the impact of UN reform and system-wide coherence at the national level, and to encourage greater parliamentary involvement therein.
8. Substantive cooperation with UN specialized agencies has also been developing at a fast pace, particularly in the cases of UNDP, UNICEF, ILO, UNHCR, UNCTAD, UNAIDS, WHO, OHCHR and UN Women. Activities include seminars and workshops, consultations on good practices and model legislation, joint publications, and technical assistance to parliaments, particularly in countries rebuilding their institutions in post-conflict environments.
9. The IPU has been working with various UN departments and agencies to produce guides and handbooks for parliamentarians. To date, some 16 handbooks have been issued and distributed to parliaments. These cover a wide range of areas: humanitarian law, refugee protection, rights of the child, oversight of the security sector, small arms, elimination of discrimination against women, gender budgeting, rights of persons with disabilities, human trafficking, HIV/AIDS, etc. Many of these publications have already been translated into the languages of UN member States.
10. By working with the UN Treaty Bodies, the IPU has helped parliaments to increase their leverage in the national review of international commitments. Perhaps the most successful to date is in the case of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). The IPU works with the parliaments of the countries under review so that they can take part in the review process, provide input to the national report, attend the session of the CEDAW Committee and receive the UN findings for consideration and action by parliament.
11. As a result of this work, the CEDAW Committee now systematically monitors the level of parliamentary involvement in the reporting process, and receives IPU reports at each of its sessions. It also systematically adopts a recommendation that parliament should receive a copy of the Committee conclusions, and has adopted a statement recommending that "States parties ensure the full participation of Parliament and its members in the reporting process and the full implementation of the Convention and its Protocol". Efforts are under way to develop a similar mechanism for other UN Treaty Bodies, as well as for the UN Human Rights Council and its Universal Periodic Review (UPR) mechanism.
12. With its new status at the United Nations, the IPU has also been able to add its voice and that of its members to UN processes and decisions, particularly in the new UN bodies established after the UN Summit of 2005: the Peacebuilding Commission, the Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) of ECOSOC and the UN Human Rights Council. The UN is now engaging much more closely with the national parliaments in the countries under consideration by the Peacebuilding Commission (particularly Burundi, Sierra Leone and the Central African Republic). Through the multi-stakeholder platform provided by the Development Cooperation Forum, the IPU and its member parliaments have been able to shape the aid effectiveness agenda and its outcomes. As mentioned, the IPU has been working on modalities to best involve parliaments in the work of the Human Rights Council.
13. Cooperation between the United Nations and the IPU is a two-way, mutually beneficial relationship. On the one hand, the IPU provides a parliamentary space where UN officials can meet and interact with legislators from around the world. IPU Assemblies, in particular, provide a unique entry point for many heads of UN agencies to the parliamentary community. The IPU, in turn, benefits greatly from UN expertise and assistance in the organization of many of its activities in support of member Parliaments.

14. The most recent UN General Assembly Resolution (December 2010) takes the relationship to a new level. Through the resolution, the UN and its member States:
 - formally endorse the practice of including legislators as members of national delegations to major UN meeting and events,
 - decide to better engage with the IPU in integrating a parliamentary component to major UN processes, and
 - commit to work more closely with the IPU in enhancing cooperation between the UN and parliaments at the national level, including in terms of strengthening parliamentary capacities, reinforcing the rule of law and helping to align national legislation with international commitments.
15. In the course of 2011, these provisions were acted upon in new and innovative ways. In the process leading up to the Fourth UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC) in Istanbul, the IPU was involved in preparations at national, regional and global levels, in the pursuit of two objectives: to ensure that the new agreement (IPOA) would reflect the concerns of parliaments from both developed and developing countries, and to prepare the ground for a strong implementation plan through parliaments. The UN and host country made provisions to allow for the participation of at least two legislators in the national delegations from LDC parliaments. The parliamentary action plan that emerged from the Istanbul process envisions specific follow-up, including the development of a system of focal points to help parliaments assess their institutional needs with respect to the IPOA, sharing policy findings among parliaments, and helping build bridges to new development actors.
16. The challenge ahead will be to deliver on the opportunities provided by this robust institutional framework of cooperation between the UN and the IPU within the limited resources available. There are three main areas in which this can take place:
 - helping to articulate a more coherent relationship between parliament and the UN system at the national level. As shown in the findings of a 2010 Survey on how parliaments organize their work vis-à-vis the United Nations, this relationship is largely untapped. Where it does exist it is driven primarily by the interest of donors and less by the actual needs and expectations of the parliaments themselves.
 - providing regular information to national parliaments of UN decisions (legally-binding commitments, resolutions, outcome documents of main conferences, etc.) and of related global developments, so as to better enable parliaments to play an active role in translating such global commitments into national realities.
 - establishing partnerships with other parliamentary organizations and tapping into each others' comparative advantages, so as to articulate a strong parliamentary contribution to major international processes.
17. In all of these areas, the IPU is a critical component of the equation. The Millennium Declaration calls for closer co-operation between the United Nations and parliaments, through their world organization, the IPU. The IPU acts as a catalyst. It is a facilitator; not a substitute. It belongs to parliaments, understands them and defends their interests. In the implementation of projects and programmes in support of national parliaments, the IPU holds the unique capacity of being able to tap into the collective expertise and know-how of its members, which is a critical asset in the dissemination of sound democratic practices and showcasing democratic trends.
18. As the IPU and the United Nations move ahead with their strategic partnership, an area of particular focus will be that of improving the interaction between parliaments and UN country teams:
 - making sure that parliaments are more systematically involved in the design and implementation of national strategies;
 - enhancing transparency and accountability in the management of development aid by involving parliaments in development cooperation structures and mechanisms;
 - making sure parliaments are thoroughly consulted by development partners when designing parliamentary support programmes (ultimately, these must be nationally owned and sensitive to the needs and priorities of the respective parliament);
 - consulting closely with national parliaments and the IPU when deciding on the modalities for the implementation of parliamentary support programmes;

- encouraging a greater role by regional parliamentary organizations in disseminating good practices and expertise.
19. In addition, careful consideration will have to be given to practical modalities of how to best implement the General Assembly recommendation for the IPU to organize a parliamentary component to major UN processes.
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**DRAFT RESOLUTION* TO BE ADOPTED BY THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON
COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS, NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS AND
THE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION**

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session
(Kampala, 5 April 2012)*

**66/130. Interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments
and the Inter-Parliamentary Union**

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General of ...,¹ which attests to the broad and substantive cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union over the past two years,

Taking note of the resolutions adopted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and circulated in the General Assembly and the many activities undertaken by the organization in support of the United Nations,

Taking note also of the outcome of the World Conferences of Speakers of Parliament **in 2000, 2005 and 2010**, including the 2010 Declaration on Securing Global Democratic Accountability for the Common Good,² which reaffirms the commitment of national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union to support the work of the United Nations and continue efforts to bridge the democracy gap in international relations,

Taking into consideration the Cooperation Agreement between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union of 1996,³ which laid the foundation for cooperation between the two organizations,

Recalling the United Nations Millennium Declaration,⁴ as well as the 2005 World Summit Outcome,⁵ in which Heads of State and Government resolved to strengthen further cooperation between the United Nations and national parliaments through their world organization, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, in all fields of the work of the United Nations,

Recalling also its resolution 57/32 of 19 November 2002, in which the Inter-Parliamentary Union was invited to participate in the work of the General Assembly in the capacity of observer, as well as resolutions 57/47 of 21 November 2002, 59/19 of 8 November 2004, 61/6 of 20 October 2006 and 63/24 of 18 November 2008,

***Recalling and further endorsing* its resolution 65/123 of 13 December 2010 which, inter alia, it decided that the United Nations should pursue a more systematic engagement with the Inter-Parliamentary Union in organizing and integrating a parliamentary component of and contribution to major United Nations deliberative processes and the review of international commitments,**

* Explanation: New language highlighted in bold (additional to the agreed language of previous GA consensus Resolution 65/123).

1 A/66/770

2 A/65/289, annex I.

3 A/51/402, annex.

4 See resolution 55/2.

5 See resolution 60/1.

Welcoming the annual parliamentary hearings at the United Nations, as well as other specialized parliamentary meetings organized by the IPU in cooperation with the United Nations in the context of major UN conferences and events,

Welcoming the **growing** cooperation between the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the new United Nations bodies, in particular the Peacebuilding Commission, the Development Cooperation Forum and the Human Rights Council, **in support of the shared goals of good governance and national reconciliation, respect and promotion of human rights, and enhanced development effectiveness,**

Recognizing in particular the work of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in the areas of gender equality, the empowerment of women and combating violence against women, and the close cooperation between the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the relevant United Nations bodies, including **UN Women** and the Commission on the Status of Women,

Recognizing further the effective cooperation between the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee), national parliaments and the IPU in the organization of the national review of international commitments,

Acknowledging the role and responsibility of national parliaments in regard to national plans and strategies, as well as in ensuring greater transparency and accountability **at both national and global levels,**

1. *Welcomes* the efforts made by the Inter-Parliamentary Union to provide for a greater parliamentary contribution and enhanced support to the United Nations;
2. *Encourages* the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union to continue to work closely in various fields, in particular peace and security, economic and social development, international law, human rights and democracy and gender issues, bearing in mind the significant benefits of cooperation between the two organizations, to which the report of the Secretary-General attests;
3. *Encourages* the Inter-Parliamentary Union to strengthen further its contribution to the work of the General Assembly, including its revitalization, and in relation to the process of United Nations reform and system-wide coherence;
4. *Also encourages the Inter-Parliamentary Union* to continue its efforts in mobilizing parliamentary action towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals by the target date of 2015, **as well as in bringing a parliamentary contribution to the design of the next generation of global development goals;**
5. ***Encourages Member States to systematically include legislators as members of national delegations to major United Nations meetings and events, as appropriate;***
6. ***Invites Member States to further consider ways to regularly work with the Inter-Parliamentary Union in facilitating a parliamentary component to major international processes, along the lines of the parliamentary track of the 2011 Istanbul Conference on the Least Developed Countries;***
7. ***Calls for the annual Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations to be more closely linked to major UN deliberative and negotiating processes, including the preparation of global conferences, so as to help inform such deliberations from a parliamentary perspective;***
8. *Encourages* the Inter-Parliamentary Union to provide a parliamentary contribution to the United Nations human rights treaty bodies and the Human Rights Council, **along the lines of the cooperation developed in recent years between the IPU, the CEDAW Committee and national parliaments whose countries are under review;**

9. *Invites* UN-Women to work closely with the Inter-Parliamentary Union in such areas as the empowerment of women, institutional gender mainstreaming, support to parliaments in promoting gender-sensitive legislation, combating violence against women and the implementation of relevant United Nations resolutions;
10. *Encourages* the Inter-Parliamentary Union to further assist in developing closer cooperation between the United Nations and parliaments at the national level, including in terms of strengthening parliamentary capacities, reinforcing the rule of law and helping to align national legislation with international commitments;
11. ***Calls upon* United Nations country teams to develop a more structured and integrated manner of working with national parliaments, *inter alia* by involving parliaments in consultations on national development strategies and on development aid effectiveness;**
12. ***Encourages* the United Nations system to more systematically resort to the unique expertise of the IPU and its member parliaments in strengthening parliamentary institutions, particularly in countries emerging from conflict and/or undergoing democratization processes;**
13. ***Calls for*** the regular annual exchange between the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and the senior leadership of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, with a view to building greater coherence in the work of the two organizations, maximizing parliamentary support for the United Nations and helping to forge a strategic partnership between the two organizations;
14. ***Recommends* that a new Cooperation Agreement be drawn up between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, so as to reflect progress and developments over the past years;**
15. *Decides*, in recognition of the unique role of national parliaments in support of the work of the United Nations, to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-eight session an item entitled "Interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union".

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE IPU STRATEGY 2012-2017

ENSURING THAT GENDER IS SYSTEMATICALLY MAINSTREAMED THROUGHOUT THE IPU

Draft gender mainstreaming strategy of the IPU

Definitions

1. Gender mainstreaming is a strategy for promoting gender equality. It is the process of assessing and taking into account the implications for women and men of any planned action – including legislation, policies or programmes – at all levels and in all spheres. Gender mainstreaming puts gender issues at the centre of broad policy and programme decisions, institutional structures and resource allocation.
2. Gender mainstreaming makes political and development agendas more relevant and effective; acknowledging gender inequalities and addressing them will strengthen the effectiveness of any policy, programme and action.

Gender mainstreaming and the IPU

3. The IPU Strategy, adopted in October 2011, attaches great importance to the need to strengthen gender mainstreaming within the IPU. This requirement falls under *Objective 3: The IPU as a more effective instrument of parliamentary cooperation*. Under Objective 3.3.1, the IPU commits to ensuring that gender is systematically mainstreamed throughout the Organization. The Strategy states that this will require the development of a gender mainstreaming policy, which will be applied throughout the Organization.

Why a gender mainstreaming strategy?

4. The purpose of developing a gender mainstreaming strategy for the IPU is to consolidate and strengthen policies and action to achieve gender equality within and by the IPU. It is not possible to achieve as challenging a goal as gender equality without a clear plan that sets out policy and objectives as well as action, timeframes, roles and responsibilities, and resources.

Content of the gender mainstreaming strategy

5. The strategy would take the form of a short document that outlines the IPU's vision for gender mainstreaming, and provides definitions and objectives. It would be supplemented by an implementation plan, which would detail action, timeframes, roles and responsibilities, and resources.
6. In view of the IPU's objectives, actions, structures, working modalities and needs, it is suggested that the gender mainstreaming strategy cover three main areas:
 - (a) Gender mainstreaming within IPU bodies and structures: this would include gender mainstreaming within IPU bodies, texts, policies and procedures;
 - (b) Gender mainstreaming within the IPU: this would include IPU staff, internal processes and rules; and
 - (c) Gender mainstreaming in the IPU's programme work: this would include engendering programmes and projects.

Process of developing the gender mainstreaming strategy

7. The process will be an inclusive and participatory one, involving both the IPU membership and the IPU Secretariat.
8. It is suggested that the Gender Partnership Group coordinate the development of the gender mainstreaming strategy. It will work in close consultation with the Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians (with regard to gender mainstreaming within IPU bodies and structures) and the IPU Secretariat (with regard to gender mainstreaming within the IPU and in the IPU's programme work). The draft strategy will be submitted to the Executive Committee and the Governing Council at the 127th IPU Assembly in Quebec.

Future meetings and other activities

***Approved by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session
(Kampala, 5 April 2012)***

25 th session of the Steering Committee of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO (<i>in camera</i>)	BRUSSELS (Belgium) (European Parliament premises) 7-8 May 2012
Information seminar on the structure and functioning of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (for French-speaking participants)	GENEVA 8-11 May 2012
IPU sponsorship of the African Conference on MDGs organized by the UN Millennium Campaign	ADDIS ABABA (Ethiopia) 22-24 May 2012
Regional seminar on violence against women	Venue to be announced June 2012
Regional seminar on combating trafficking of children and child labour	Venue to be announced June 2012
Subregional seminar on gender-sensitive parliaments	LATIN AMERICA June/July 2012
138 th session of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians (<i>in camera</i>)	GENEVA (IPU Headquarters) 2-5 July 2012
IPU sponsorship of the Tenth Workshop of Parliamentary Scholars and Parliamentarians	OXFORDSHIRE (United Kingdom) 28-29 July 2012
Parliamentary meeting on the occasion of the XIX International AIDS Conference	WASHINGTON, D.C. July 2012
Workshop for Pacific Island Parliaments	SAMOA 6-7 August 2012
Parliamentary Briefing on the occasion of the 67 th session of the UN General Assembly	NEW YORK September 2012
26 th session of the Steering Committee of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO (<i>in camera</i>)	GENEVA (IPU Headquarters) September 2012
127 th Assembly and related meetings	QUEBEC CITY (Canada) 21-26 October 2012
Information seminar on CEDAW and its Optional Protocol	Venue to be announced October 2012
Eighth Meeting of Women Speakers of Parliament	NEW DELHI (India) October 2012
Annual 2012 session of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO	GENEVA 15-16 November 2012

Regional child rights seminar	Venue to be announced November 2012
Annual Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations	NEW YORK November/December 2012
Parliamentary Meeting on the occasion of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP18/CMP8)	DOHA (Qatar) 3 December 2012
Meeting on the contribution of parliaments from small island developing States to the promotion and protection of human rights	GENEVA Second half of 2012
128 th Assembly and related meetings	QUITO (Ecuador) 22-27 March 2013

AGENDA OF THE 127th ASSEMBLY
(Quebec City, 21 - 26 October 2012)

1. Election of the President and Vice-Presidents of the 127th Assembly
2. Consideration of possible requests for the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda
3. Plenary debate on *Citizenship, identity and linguistic and cultural diversity in a globalized world*
4. Panel discussions on the subject items chosen for debate during the 128th Assembly (Quito, 22-27 March 2013)
 - (a) Enforcing the responsibility to protect: The role of parliament in safeguarding civilians' lives
(*Standing Committee on Peace and International Security*)
 - (b) Fair trade and innovative financing mechanisms for sustainable development
(*Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade*)
 - (c) The use of media, including social media, to enhance citizen engagement and democracy
(*Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights*)
5. Outcome of:
 - (a) Plenary debate on *Citizenship, identity and linguistic and cultural diversity in a globalized world*
 - (b) Special gender partnership session on gender-sensitive parliaments
 - (c) IPU Committee on United Nations Affairs

PROPOSED MODALITIES FOR THE 127th IPU ASSEMBLY

(Quebec City, Canada, 21-26 October 2012)

***Endorsed by the 190th session of the IPU Governing Council
(Kampala, 5 April 2012)***

1. At its 185th session (Geneva, October 2009), the Governing Council accepted an invitation from the Parliament of Canada to hold the 127th IPU Assembly in Quebec City.
2. In March 2010, the Governing Council further decided that the Quebec Assembly would follow the normal format of the second Assembly of the year, to which two extra days of meetings would be added. The composition of delegations to the Assembly would follow the normal statutory provisions for the second Assembly of the year.
3. Following extensive consultations with the host Parliament, the following timetable is proposed for the 127th IPU Assembly. The first sitting of the Executive Committee will take place on 19 October, preceded by a meeting of the Sub-Committee on Finance on 18 October. The Assembly will take place from 21-26 October. The last sitting of the Governing Council, with its operational and budget-related decisions, will be held on the third day of the Assembly (24 October). This will allow delegates who may only be able to attend the usual three days to take part in the Council decisions.
4. It is proposed to hold a plenary debate throughout the Assembly on the theme of *Challenges of citizenship, identity and linguistic and cultural diversity in a globalized world*. It is further proposed to appoint two co-rapporteurs for this debate and invite them to prepare a draft resolution. A drafting committee appointed during the Assembly would then be entrusted with the finalization of the draft.
5. In addition to the annual session of the Committee on United Nations Affairs and the panel discussions on the issues covered by the three Standing Committees, it is proposed that five additional panels be held on topics relating to youth participation, post-conflict reconstruction, parliamentary immunity, multilateralism and parliamentary diplomacy, and peak oil and energy security. It is also proposed that a special gender partnership session be held, focusing on gender-sensitive parliaments, with a view to developing a plan of action in this area. Efforts are under way to attract prominent personalities as speakers in the various sessions.
6. The closing sitting of the Assembly, with the adoption of the emergency item resolution and the outcome of the plenary debate, would, however, be held in the afternoon of the fifth day (26 October).
7. In order to allow for members of parliament who may have a special interest in the panel discussions on the fourth and fifth days to join their delegation, it is proposed to modify the decision taken in 2010 and apply for the Assembly in Quebec, on an exceptional basis, the rule pertaining to participation in the first Assembly of the year.
8. As agreed with the host parliament, it will cover all costs relating to the additional two days of the 127th IPU Assembly.

**LIST OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND OTHER BODIES INVITED
TO FOLLOW THE WORK OF THE 127th ASSEMBLY AS OBSERVERS**

*Approved by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session
(Kampala, 5 April 2012)*

United Nations
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
International Labour Organization (ILO)
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
World Health Organization (WHO)
World Bank
International Monetary Fund (IMF)
International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)
Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO)
World Trade Organization (WTO)

African Union (AU)
Council of Europe
International Organization for Migration (IOM)
Latin American Economic System (LAES)
League of Arab States
Organization of American States (OAS)

ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly
African Parliamentary Union (APU)
AMANI Forum - The Great Lakes Parliamentary Forum on Peace
Amazonian Parliament
Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union
ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA)
Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA)
Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie
Association of European Parliamentarians with Africa (AWEPA)
Association of Senates, Shooras and Equivalent Councils in Africa and the Arab World (ASSECAA)
Baltic Assembly
Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)
Indigenous Parliament of the Americas
Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of the Commonwealth of Independent States
Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of the Eurasian Economic Community (EURASEC)
Interparliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy (IAO)
Inter-Parliamentary Council against Antisemitism
Inter-Parliamentary Union of the Member States of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IPU-IGAD)
Maghreb Consultative Council
Nordic Council
Pan-African Parliament (PAP)
Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Co-operation (PABSEC)
Parliamentary Assembly of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (AP-CPLP)
Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM)
Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization of the Collective Security Treaty (OCST)
Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)
Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic-speaking Countries (TURKPA)

Parliamentary Assembly of the Union of Belarus and the Russian Federation
Parliamentary Association for Euro-Arab Co-operation (PAEAC)
Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas (COPA)
Parliamentary Union of the Organization of the Islamic Conference Member States (PUOICM)
Southern African Development Community (SADC) Parliamentary Forum

Centrist Democrat International (CDI)
International Socialist

Amnesty International
Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF)
Human Rights Watch
International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA)
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)
Partnership for maternal, newborn, and child health (PMNCH)
Penal Reform International
The Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria
World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA)
World Scout Parliamentary Union (WSPU)

SUBJECT ITEMS FOR THE 128th ASSEMBLY

(Quito, Ecuador, 22-27 March 2013)

***Approved by the 126th IPU Assembly
(Kampala, 5 April 2012)***

1. Enforcing the responsibility to protect: The role of parliament in safeguarding civilians' lives
(Standing Committee on Peace and International Security)
2. Fair trade and innovative financing mechanisms for sustainable development
(Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade)
3. The use of media, including social media, to enhance citizen engagement and democracy
(Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights)

Resolutions Concerning the Human Rights of Parliamentarians

CASE No. BGL/14 - SHAH AMS KIBRIA - BANGLADESH

Resolution adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session (Kampala, 5 April 2012)

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Referring to the case of Mr. Shah Ams Kibria, a member of the Parliament of Bangladesh who was assassinated in a grenade attack in January 2005, and to the resolution adopted at its 189th session (October 2011),

Recalling the following: the initial inquiry in this case proved to be an attempt by the investigating officers to divert the course of justice; since the investigation was reopened in March 2007, Islamist militants belonging to the Horkatul Jihad al Islami (Huji), including its leader Mufti Hannan Munshi, have been implicated; according to the Home Ministry's report of March 2010, several persons have been arrested, including the two (Mizanur Rahman Mithu and Md Badrul Alam Mizan) who detonated the grenades; in addition, the former State Minister for Home Affairs, Mr. Lutfozzaman Babar, stands accused of harbouring and protecting the individuals who threw the grenades; *noting* that he has not admitted to ordering the attack,

Recalling that, in a communication submitted by members of the Bangladeshi delegation to the 125th IPU Assembly (October 2011), the crime is depicted as follows: further investigation has established that a Kashmir-based Islamic militant organization led by Abdul Mazid Butt helped Mufti Abdul Hannan and Moulana Tajuddin, Huji leader in Bangladesh, transport Arges grenades from Pakistan to Bangladesh with the intent to commit assassinations in different parts of the country; further investigation has also revealed that the accused Badrul Alam Mizan, Mizanur Rahman Mithu and Badrul and Mohammed Ali were present when the grenades were thrown at Mr. Kibria,

Recalling that, on 20 June 2011, the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) submitted a supplementary charge sheet against 14 other persons with the request that the court rule on their status; that Mr. Kibria's wife objected to the supplementary charge sheet, which she regarded as incomplete, and therefore filed a no-confidence motion; *considering* that the judge granted her motion in early January 2012 and ordered that further investigations be carried out; according to information provided by members of the Bangladeshi delegation to the 126th IPU Assembly (April 2012), this investigation is now well under way; according to information provided by the source on 22 March 2012, the recently assigned Investigating Officer had visited Mrs. Kibria and indicated that she would remain in contact with the family as the third investigation proceeded,

Recalling the striking similarities between the grenade attack on Mr. Kibria and that on Sheikh Hasina and others five months earlier (both attacks targeted key members of the opposition at the time, the same type of grenade was used in both, in both cases the investigation has revealed an alleged conspiracy between members of the then ruling party and Islamist extremists and, in this respect, several persons stand accused in both cases),

Considering that, according to the information provided by members of the Bangladeshi delegation to the 126th IPU Assembly, Parliament's Standing Committee on the Ministry of Home Affairs continues to monitor the case,

1. *Is pleased* that the no-confidence motion was granted; *trusts* that the authorities are therefore genuinely pursuing the investigation in depth and comprehensively, so as to miss no opportunity to shed full light on this crime and hence to identify its instigators; *points out* once more in this respect that the many similarities between the grenade attack that killed Mr. Kibria and the one targeting Sheikh Hasina, and the fact that efforts to identify the instigators have made

substantive progress in the latter case should enable the authorities to make similar progress in investigating the murder of Mr. Kibria; *observes* in this respect that it has emerged in Sheikh Hasina's case that the members of the then ruling party accused in the previous charge sheet had allegedly acted at the behest of high-ranking party officials and in complicity with the authorities in charge of law and order in Bangladesh;

2. *Remains convinced* that international assistance would help to advance the investigation by promoting new evidence-taking and re-analysis of existing evidence; *wishes to receive* the observations of the authorities on this point;
3. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this resolution to the parliamentary authorities with the request that they keep the Committee informed of progress in the investigation and of the monitoring efforts of Parliament's Standing Committee; *also requests* the Secretary General to convey the resolution to the sources;
4. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report to it at its next session, to be held during the 127th IPU Assembly (October 2012).

CASE No. BGL/15 - SHEIKH HASINA - BANGLADESH

Resolution adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session (Kampala, 5 April 2012)

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Referring to the case of Sheikh Hasina, leader of the Opposition at the time the communication was submitted, and to the resolution adopted at its 189th session (October 2011),

Recalling that, according to the Home Ministry's report of March 2010, the investigation into the grenade attack of August 2004 against Sheikh Hasina and other Awami League members, which left scores of people dead and wounded, revealed the following: the attack was decided on at a meeting in the government quarters of then Deputy Minister Abdus Salam Pinto, whose brother, Mr. Moulana Mohammad Tajuddin, supplied the grenades; former State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfozzaman Babar and Mr. Salam Pinto provided administrative and financial support, and the government of the time arranged for Mr. Tajuddin to leave Bangladesh; the attack was carried out with the help of Islamist militants belonging to the Horkatul Jihad al Islami (Huji), several of whom, including its leader, Mufti Hannan Munshi, were arrested in connection with the case,

Recalling that, according to the information provided by members of the Bangladeshi delegation to the 125th IPU Assembly (October 2011), after the deadline for submitting the final investigation report had been extended many times, on 2 July 2011 the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) submitted a supplementary charge sheet against 30 more persons, including Mr. Babar, Mr. Ali Ahsan Mohammed Mujahid, Secretary General of Jamaat E Islami Bangladesh, Mr. Tarek Rahman, Senior Vice-President of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and the son of former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, and Mr. Harris Chowdhury, Political Adviser to Begum Zia, who were charged under sections 120(b), 324, 326, 307, 302, 201, 118, 119, 212, 217, 218, 330, 109 and 34 of the Penal Code and sections 3, 4 and 6 of the Explosive Substances Act; that the case is now being tried by the Court of Metropolitan Session Judge Speedy Trial Court; according to the source, Begum Zia's nephew, Mr. Saiful Islam Duke, two former directors general of National Security Intelligence and two former heads of police are mentioned in the charge sheet as well,

Considering that the court formally indicted the 30 individuals mentioned in the supplementary charge sheet on 18 March 2012; *recalling* that, when the supplementary charge sheet was brought on 2 July 2011, several of those mentioned in it were at large, including Mr. Rahman and Mr. Chowdhury, who are said to be in the United Kingdom,

Considering that, according to the information provided by members of the Bangladeshi delegation to the 126th IPU Assembly (April 2012), the Parliament's Standing Committee on the Ministry of Home Affairs continues to monitor the case,

1. *Is pleased* that the case is making steady progress; *is concerned*, however, that there is no indication that those at large have been apprehended or that international warrants have been issued for the two suspects who are reportedly abroad; *would appreciate* receiving information on this point, in particular from Parliament, and being kept informed of further developments in the proceedings in the case before the Speedy Trial Tribunal;
2. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this resolution to the competent authorities and to the source;
3. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report to it at its next session, to be held during the 127th IPU Assembly (October 2012).

CASE No. BLS/05 - VICTOR GONCHAR - BELARUS

Resolution adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session (Kampala, 5 April 2012)

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Referring to the case of Mr. Victor Gonchar, a member of the Thirteenth Supreme Soviet of Belarus, who disappeared, together with his friend, Mr. Anatoly Krasovsky, on 16 September 1999, and to the resolution adopted at its 189th session (October 2011),

Recalling among the extensive case file data the following:

- A report, published in 2004, of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe into disappearances for allegedly political reasons in Belarus (Pourgourides report) gives ground to believe that "steps were taken at the highest level of the State actively to cover up the true background of the disappearances, and to suspect that senior State officials may themselves be involved in these disappearances";
- In an interview President Lukashenko gave on 10 June 2009 to the Russian newspaper *Zavtra*, he stated that the cases of Mr. Gonchar and Mr. Krasovsky "were murders for business reasons; they had to buy or sell something and failed to stick to their promises, so they were killed, as is usual in 'half-bandit' circles; traces of a murderer have recently been found in Germany"; the German authorities have nevertheless denied this; moreover, Mrs. Krasovsky has denied that her husband had any business problems;
- In July and August 2010, a documentary entitled "The Nation's Godfather" was aired on a Russian TV channel and was also available in Belarus; the film dealt inter alia with the involvement of State authorities in the disappearance of politicians, including Mr. Gonchar; on 7 July 2010, the President of the opposition United Civil Party, Mr. Anatoly Lebedko, made an application to the Prosecutor General to investigate the evidence presented in the documentary and to initiate criminal proceedings against the persons referred to in the film as the masterminds and perpetrators of abductions and killings; although under Belarusian law, the Prosecutor General's Office should have responded to Mr. Lebedko's application within one month, he has to date received no information on this point,

Taking into consideration the letter from the Chairman of the Committee on National Security, dated 5 January 2012,

Noting that, apart from the fact that the investigation has been extended to 24 March 2012, the letter contains no new information, in particular no response or observation on the specific questions and considerations raised in previous resolutions, most recently in that of October 2011, and only reiterates that various lines of investigation are being pursued, that no details regarding the investigation may be disclosed before the investigation is closed, and that the House of Representatives lacks supervisory authority over the Prosecutor General's Office, which precludes any possibility of studying the case material under investigation by that Office,

Noting that Mrs. Krasovsky and her daughter have filed an application with the Human Rights Committee established under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and are awaiting a decision as to its admissibility,

1. *Thanks* the Chairman of the Standing Committee on National Security for his letter; *regrets*, however, that it is merely a formal reply that in no way responds to the specific questions and concerns it has constantly raised in this case;
2. *Sincerely hopes* that the National Assembly of Belarus will finally take serious account of its considerations and requests for information so as to facilitate a more substantive dialogue;
3. *Believes* that the National Assembly can only do so if it takes a more critical stance regarding the absence of any results in the investigation, 12 years after Mr. Gonchar and Mr. Krasovsky disappeared, and the continued secrecy surrounding it; *calls on* the National Assembly to do everything possible to help ensure that an effective investigation is carried out, in particular by insisting on obtaining specific information on how the different leads and concerns which have thus far emerged are being addressed;
4. *Remains convinced* that the work of the United Nations Human Rights Committee in Mr. Krasovsky's case will be crucial to helping elucidate the fate of Mr. Gonchar, and *requests* the IPU Committee to keep abreast of its work and decisions on this case;
5. *Requests* the Secretary General to bring this resolution to the attention of the parliamentary authorities, the Prosecutor General and the source;
6. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report to it at its next session, to be held during the 127th IPU Assembly (October 2012).

BURUNDI

CASE No. BDI/01 - S. MFAYOKURERA

CASE No. BDI/05 - I. NDIKUMANA

CASE No. BDI/06 - G. GAHUNGU

CASE No. BDI/07 - L. NTAMUTUMBA

CASE No. BDI/29 - P. SIRAHENDA

CASE No. BDI/35 - G. GISABWAMANA

CASE No. BDI/02 - NORBERT NDIHOKUBWAYO

CASE No. BDI/26 - NEPHTALI NDIKUMANA

CASE No. BDI/36 - MATHIAS BASABOSE

CASE No. BDI/37 - LÉONARD NYANGOMA

CASE No. BDI/40 - FRÉDÉRIQUE GAHIGI

CASE No. BDI/42 - PASTEUR MPAWENAYO

CASE No. BDI/43 - JEAN MARIE NDUWABIKE

CASE No. BDI/45 - ALICE NZOMUKUNDA

CASE No. BDI/46 - ZAITUNI RADJABU

CASE No. BDI/42 - PASTEUR MPAWENAYO

CASE No. BDI/44 - HUSSEIN RADJABU

CASE No. BDI/53 - THÉOPHILE MINYURANO

CASE No. BDI/57 - GÉRARD NKURUNZIZA

CASE No. BDI/59 - DEO NSHIRIMANA

CASE No. BDI/60 - JEAN BOSCO RUTAGENGWA

Resolution adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session (Kampala, 5 April 2012)

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Referring to its long-standing examination of the cases of Burundian parliamentarians that concern:

- The murders of six members of the National Assembly between 1994 and 1999, namely Mr. Sylvestre Mfayokurera (September 1994), Mr. Innocent Ndikumana (January 1996), Mr. Gérard Gahungu (July 1996), Mr. Paul Sirahenda (September 1997), Mr. Gabriel Gisabwamana (January 2000) and Ms. Liliane Ntamutumba (July 1996), and two assassination attempts (September 1994 and December 1995) targeting Mr. Norbert Ndishokubwayo, all of which have remained unpunished to date;

- The grenade attacks of 19 August 2007 and 6 March 2008 on eight members of the previous legislature (Mr. Nephtali Ndikumana, Mr. Pasteur Mpawenayo, Mr. Jean-Marie Nduwabike, Ms. Frédérique Cahigi, Mr. Mathias Basabose, Mr. Léonard Nyangoma, Ms. Zaituni Radjabu and Ms. Alice Nzomukunda) belonging to a dissident wing of the National Council for the Defence of Democracy - Forces for the Defence of Democracy (CNDD-FDD), which caused material damage but did not injure anyone and which have likewise gone unpunished;
- Criminal proceedings brought against Mr. Hussein Radjabu, Mr. Pasteur Mpawenayo, Mr. Gérard Nkurunziza and Mr. Théophile Minyurano, all belonging to the dissident wing of the CNDD-FDD led by Mr. Radjabu, who was ousted on 7 February 2007 from the CNDD-FDD party leadership; all four lost their seats in parliament following the 5 June 2007 judgment of the Constitutional Court declaring them to be sitting unconstitutionally; Mr. Radjabu is currently serving a 13-year prison sentence and Mr. Mpawenayo and Mr. Nkurunziza are in detention, chiefly on security-related charges; Mr. Minyurano is at liberty and the subject of judicial proceedings for having insulted a magistrate over a private rental dispute,

Having before it the report of the on-site mission that took place from 25 to 28 September 2011 (CL/190/12(b)-R.1), which includes the new cases of Mr. Deo Nshirimana, who has been held since October 2010 on two criminal charges, and Mr. Jean Bosco Rutagengwa, who was assassinated in 2002,

Also having before it a letter of 13 January 2012 containing observations on the mission report from the Speaker of the National Assembly, in which he expresses his disagreement with some of the report's conclusions, stressing in this respect that "any conclusion in this report not based on actual examination of a court case file could be brought into question and considered hypothetical, baseless, partial or incomplete"; the Speaker also states that the fact that the parliamentary working group entrusted with monitoring cases of alleged violations of the human rights of parliamentarians was not able to function properly for some time and that the culprits of the two grenade attacks have not been found and punished should not necessarily be seen as reflecting a lack of willingness on the part of the authorities,

Taking into account the following information provided by the Burundian delegation at the hearing held during the 126th IPU Assembly (April 2012):

- The parliamentary working group continues to follow closely all the cases which are being examined by the IPU Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians; it has met with the authorities and tried to meet with the former parliamentarians concerned; those in detention were very appreciative of its interest and requested the working group to see them again; however, the victims of the grenade attacks refused to meet the working group because they did not believe it was useful;
- In July 2009 a tripartite committee (composed of representatives of the Government, the United Nations and civil society) began grass-roots consultations on outstanding questions regarding the creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission; its report was officially presented to the President of Burundi in November 2010 and contains a draft legislative proposal and a timetable for the Commission's establishment; the authorities consider that the Commission is an important, but very delicate, mechanism and believes that it is crucial for the population to be fully supportive of it and to understand how it functions and its objectives; they therefore decided to hold further grass-roots consultations, thus allowing ordinary citizens to acquaint themselves with the current proposal and to express themselves as to whether or not it took account of their needs and concerns; the government will subsequently submit a draft proposal to the National Assembly, probably before the end of April 2012;
- The investigations into the two grenade attacks have not been closed and have not yet produced a final result; the parliamentary working group has been in contact with the authorities, in particular the prosecutor, and believes that it will take time to make progress in these cases, as with other outstanding investigations into grenade attacks in which ordinary citizens are the victims; as regards the second attack, for which several suspects had been detained but subsequently released, the working group is trying to re-activate the case before the Appeals Court of Bujumbura;

- The court has reserved judgement in the case of Mr. Mpawenayo; a court hearing in the case of Mr. Nkurunziza is scheduled to take place on 11 April 2012,
- 1. *Thanks* the authorities for hosting and cooperating with the mission, enabling it to comply fully with its terms of reference; *takes note with great interest* of the observations by the Speaker of the National Assembly and the Burundian delegation to the 126th IPU Assembly;
- 2. *Also thanks* the mission for its work and *endorses* its overall conclusions;
- 3. *Appreciates* the authorities' stated commitment to help bring about a satisfactory settlement of each of the pending cases; *is pleased* to hear of the extensive action taken by the parliamentary working group to encourage progress and monitor the state of affairs in each of them; *believes* that its vigilance is particularly important with regard to those cases that will not fall within the remit of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission;
- 4. *Regrets* that, for the very reason invoked by the Speaker, and despite the undertaking of the Attorney General, the mission did not have access to the case files of the former parliamentarians in detention who have yet to be tried, namely Mr. Mpawenayo, Mr. Nkurunziza and Mr. Nshirimana, or receive copies of the indictments against them; *further regrets* that, since the mission took place, these documents have still not been made available and *sincerely hopes* that the authorities will do so forthwith;
- 5. *Notes* the mission's concerns regarding the recourse to pre-trial detention and the slowness of the proceedings against those former parliamentarians; *trusts* that a judgement is imminent in the case of Mr. Mpawenayo and *wishes* to receive a copy thereof as soon as it becomes available; *is hopeful* that the authorities will give serious consideration to the possibility of granting provisional release to Mr. Nkurunziza and Mr. Nshirimana and will do everything in their power to accelerate the proceedings or otherwise dismiss them without delay; *wishes* to receive their observations on these points;
- 6. *Understands* that the creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is a complex matter; *is surprised*, however, given that the tripartite committee submitted its detailed report more than a year ago and that extensive grass-roots consultations have already been held, that the authorities have not yet been able to set up the Commission; *trusts*, as the Burundian delegation indicated, that within weeks the National Assembly will be in a position to discuss and, hopefully soon thereafter, adopt the framework and legal provisions needed for the Commission to discharge its mandate effectively;
- 7. *Concurs* with the Speaker that the absence of results in an investigation do not necessarily reflect lack of will on the part of the authorities; *recalls*, however, that, with regard to the grenade attacks, the authorities for a long time followed a line of enquiry built on the assumption that the victims themselves had organized those attacks, an assumption that is difficult to justify as the starting point for any serious investigation; *calls on* the authorities to do everything possible, as is their duty, to ensure that the presumed culprits are identified and brought to justice; *strongly believes* that, with regard to the attack for which suspects were arrested and evidence was available, it should be possible to make at least some progress in the investigation; *notes with interest* the intention of the parliamentary group to help re-activate this file and *wishes* to be kept informed of the results of its efforts;
- 8. *Notes* the contradictory views of the authorities and Mr. Minyurano regarding the proceedings brought against him for having allegedly insulted a magistrate over a rental dispute; *decides* to end its consideration thereof in the hope that it will be promptly settled;
- 9. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this resolution to the parliamentary authorities and to the sources;
- 10. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining these cases and to report to it at its next session, to be held during the 127th IPU Assembly (October 2012).

CASE No. CMBD/01 - SAM RAINSY - CAMBODIA

***Resolution adopted by consensus by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session
(Kampala, 5 April 2012) ****

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Referring to the case of Mr. Sam Rainsy, leader of the Opposition and a member of parliament at the time of the submission of the communication, and to the resolution adopted at its 189th session (October 2011),

Taking into account the information that members of the Cambodian delegation provided to the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians at the hearing held during the 126th IPU Assembly (April 2012) and of the communication from the Speaker of the National Assembly dated 5 January 2012,

Recalling the following information on file:

- Having had his parliamentary immunity lifted in a closed session by a show of hands and without being afforded the opportunity to defend himself, Mr. Sam Rainsy was prosecuted and, in judgments handed down in January and September 2010, sentenced to 12 years in prison and a heavy fine for: (a) having pulled out border post #185 marking the Cambodian/Vietnamese border in a village in Svay Rieng province and inciting racial hatred; and (b) divulging false information by having published a map reportedly showing a false border with Viet Nam; on 20 September 2011, the Appeal Court reduced the prison sentence for the second charge from ten to seven years;
- The verdict whereby Mr. Sam Rainsy was found guilty of destroying public property was upheld in March 2011 by the Supreme Court, and the National Assembly stripped Mr. Sam Rainsy of his parliamentary mandate on 15 March 2011 by virtue of Article 34 of the Law on the Election of Members of the National Assembly, which stipulates that members convicted at final instance of a crime and sentenced to imprisonment forfeit their membership in the National Assembly,

Recalling that no one disputes the fact that the border between Viet Nam and Cambodia is currently being demarcated, that border post #185 was a temporary wooden post and that the Government recognized it was not a legal border marker, which the Prime Minister himself confirmed in his response to a question from Sam Rainsy Party (SRP) parliamentarians on this matter, stating inter alia that "because the joint technical group from the two countries has not planted border post #185 yet, the border demarcation work, which is the work of the joint technical group after the planting of that post, has not started either"; *recalling* further that there is at present no map recognized by Viet Nam and Cambodia as being official and binding,

Considering that, according to the members of the Cambodian delegation heard during the 126th IPU Assembly, Mr. Sam Rainsy should have raised his concerns regarding the border between Viet Nam and Cambodia in the National Assembly; *recalling* in this regard that, when opposition parliamentarians asked for a public parliamentary debate on the issue, the Government reportedly refused to take part, arguing that it had already provided all necessary explanations in the past,

Recalling that, in his report of August 2011 to the United Nations Human Rights Council (A/HRC/18/46), the Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Cambodia expressed concern at the restrictions imposed on freedom of expression in Cambodia and the use of the judiciary for political ends and had the following to say regarding the Sam Rainsy case in particular: "The allegation made by the Government was that Mr. Sam Rainsy had manipulated a map to show that Viet Nam had encroached on the territory of Cambodia. In any properly functioning democracy, such political matters should be debated in the parliament and become a matter of public debate rather than the subject of a criminal case before courts. Scrutinizing the activities of the Government and requiring the Government to respond to any criticisms of its policy decisions is one of the basic functions of the leaders of opposition parties and they should not be subjected to criminal proceedings for discharging their responsibilities in a peaceful manner"; *noting* that the Special Rapporteur recommends inter alia that "Parliament should safeguard the right to freedom of expression of its own members and protect their parliamentary immunity",

* The delegation of Cambodia expressed its reservation regarding the resolution.

1. *Thanks* the Speaker of the National Assembly and the members of the Cambodian delegation for their cooperation;
2. *Considers*, however, that they did not provide any new information to dispel its concerns that Mr. Sam Rainsy's removal of temporary border markers was a political gesture, and that, consequently, the courts should never have been seized of the matter in the first place;
3. *Reaffirms* that, given the official acknowledgment, including by the Prime Minister, that there is no legal border post #185 and the absence of any official map since the border demarcation process is still under way, Mr. Sam Rainsy cannot possibly have committed a crime by pulling out temporarily planted wooden posts, and that the accusation that he divulged false information cannot be substantiated;
4. *Deeply regrets* that the Prime Minister's clear statement on the question of border post #185 has not as yet led to any initiatives with a view to settling this case, which may well impair the democratic process in Cambodia and further weaken the opposition;
5. *Remains hopeful* that Mr. Sam Rainsy will soon be rehabilitated, enabling him to resume his rightful place as a member of the National Assembly and to stand as a candidate in the next parliamentary elections;
6. *Again invites* the National Assembly to debate the Special Rapporteur's most recent report on the human rights situation in Cambodia, which deals extensively with parliament, and to ensure implementation of his recommendations;
7. *Requests* the Secretary General to inform the Prime Minister of Cambodia of the IPU's considerations and concerns in this case and to convey this resolution to the parliamentary authorities and to the sources;
8. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report to it at its next session, to be held during the 127th IPU Assembly (October 2012).

CASE No. CMBD/47 - MU SOCHUA - CAMBODIA

Resolution adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session (Kampala, 5 April 2012)

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Referring to the case of Ms. Mu Sochua, an opposition member of the National Assembly of Cambodia, and to the resolution adopted at its 189th session (October 2011),

Taking into account the information that members of the Cambodian delegation provided to the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians at the hearing held during the 126th IPU Assembly (April 2012) and of the communication from the Speaker of the National Assembly dated 5 January 2012,

Recalling the following information on file:

- Ms. Mu Sochua's public announcement that she would file a defamation lawsuit against Prime Minister Hun Sen prompted the latter to file a lawsuit against her, citing as evidence inter alia her complaint to the IPU; while her lawsuit was quickly dismissed, the Prime Minister's lawsuit proceeded once her parliamentary immunity had been lifted by the National Assembly in a closed session, without hearing her arguments and voting by show of hands; in June 2010, the Supreme Court upheld the verdict of the Phnom Penh Municipal Court, which had found her guilty and ordered her to pay a heavy fine; as Ms. Mu Sochua refused to pay the fine, it was deducted from her salary as a member of parliament, although in such cases the law provides for the serving of a prison term;
- The fine had been paid off in full by November 2010, but Ms. Mu Sochua's parliamentary immunity had not been restored; by virtue of Article 535 of the Penal Code, Ms. Mu Sochua has to wait one year before submitting an application for rehabilitation to the Appeal Court;

should no application be submitted, her immunity will be restored automatically after five years; the leader of the Cambodian delegation to the 124th IPU Assembly (April 2011) stated that rehabilitation is governed by the Penal Code, including for members of parliament, and during the period in question Ms. Mu Sochua must not commit any other crime if she wishes to be rehabilitated; according to the source, the Appeal Court is not obliged to render a decision before the expiry of the five-year term, whereupon rehabilitation is automatic; Ms. Mu Sochua needs to be rehabilitated in order to be able to stand in the 2013 parliamentary elections,

Considering that, according to the members of the Cambodian delegation to the 126th IPU Assembly, Ms. Mu Sochua filed an application with the Appeal Court some months ago and that the National Assembly would take a decision on restoring her immunity only once she had been rehabilitated by the Court,

Considering that, according to information provided by the source in January 2012, it appears that a criminal complaint was filed against Ms. Mu Sochua one month after 18 women and children escaped from the Prey Speu Social Affairs Centre; according to the source, the women and children were brought in after they had protested against their eviction in the Borei Keila area of Phnom Penh; they were reportedly held in the Centre for a week without charge; on 18 January 2012, Ms. Mu Sochua visited the centre to appeal for their release; the source affirms that, while she sought to negotiate the release, the detainees escaped by climbing over the wall of the Centre,

Recalling that United Nations human rights bodies and mechanisms have expressed concern about the independence of the judiciary in Cambodia and that the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Cambodia, in his report to the United Nations Human Rights Council of 16 September 2010 (A/HRC/15/46), identified freedom of expression as a major cause for concern, along with the numerous challenges faced by the judiciary, expressed concern about the narrowing of the political space for the opposition and recommended that defamation and disinformation be decriminalized altogether; *considering* that, in his report of August 2011 (A/HRC/18/46), the Special Rapporteur reiterated his concerns regarding respect for freedom of expression in Cambodia and, with regard to parliament in particular, recommended that the National Assembly should review the new Penal Code with a view to ensuring its compliance with the permissible limitation on freedom of expression under international human rights law, and should safeguard the right to freedom of expression of its own members and protect their parliamentary immunity,

1. *Thanks* the Speaker of the National Assembly and the members of the Cambodian delegation for their cooperation;
2. *Considers*, however, that they did not provide any new information to dispel its repeated concerns at the application of the provisions of the Penal Code regarding restoration of parliamentary immunity, which has resulted in an additional punishment for Ms. Mu Sochua; *is concerned* that such application of the Penal Code denies Ms. Mu Sochua the protection that parliamentary immunity would afford against the instigation of further criminal proceedings that had no basis in law, as may be the case of the criminal complaint reportedly recently filed against her;
3. *Trusts* that the Appeal Court will rule without delay on Ms. Mu Sochua's petition for rehabilitation, so as to ensure that she can stand in the 2013 elections, as is her right;
4. *Calls on* the National Assembly once again to review the legislation regarding both the restoration and the lifting of parliamentary immunity, so as to ensure that such immunity becomes an effective tool for protecting members of parliament against proceedings that may be unfounded and politically motivated; *suggests* that the IPU, as part of its ongoing programme of assistance to the National Assembly, explore with the parliamentary authorities the possibility of sharing its expertise on that subject;
5. *Reaffirms* the grave concerns it has consistently expressed at the defamation proceedings brought against Ms. Mu Sochua by the Prime Minister, which it continues to regard as an instance of exploiting the judiciary for political ends; *expresses the earnest hope* that the

National Assembly will give serious consideration to and follow up on the recommendations made by the United Nations Special Rapporteur regarding defamation, in particular those relating to parliament itself;

6. *Wishes* to receive official information on whether or not a new criminal case has been opened against Ms. Mu Sochua and, if so, on the precise accusations and the facts adduced to make them;
7. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this resolution to the parliamentary authorities, inviting them to provide the requested information;
8. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and report to it at its next session, to be held during the 127th IPU Assembly (October 2012).

CASE No. CM/01 - DIEUDONNÉ AMBASSA ZANG - CAMEROON

Resolution adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session (Kampala, 5 April 2012)

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Having before it the case of Mr. Dieudonné Ambassa Zang, a member of the National Assembly of Cameroon, which has been studied and reported on by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians pursuant to the Procedure for the treatment by the Inter-Parliamentary Union of communications concerning violations of the human rights of members of parliament,

Also having before it the Committee's report on its on-site mission of 24 to 27 May 2011, which also includes the observations of the authorities (CL/190/12(b)-R.2), and *taking into account* the information provided by the Cameroonian delegation at the hearing held during the 126th IPU Assembly (April 2012) and in the letter from the Secretary General of the National Assembly, dated 29 March 2012,

Also taking into account the information regularly provided by the source in the case,

Considering the following:

- Mr. Ambassa Zang, Minister of Public Works from August 2002 to December 2004 and known, according to the source, for having fought corruption within that ministry, was elected in 2007 on the ticket of the Cameroon People's Democratic Rally;
- On 14 July 2009, the Bureau of the National Assembly met to examine a request to lift Mr. Ambassa Zang's parliamentary immunity filed by the Minister of Justice; the grounds advanced for the request were misappropriation of public funds managed by Mr. Ambassa Zang when he was Minister of Public Works; the Bureau postponed consideration of the request, its members taking the view that the matter had to be thoroughly examined before they could rule on it; on 7 August 2009, the Bureau, meeting in extraordinary session, lifted Mr. Ambassa Zang's parliamentary immunity; although Mr. Ambassa Zang left Cameroon on 12 July 2009, he had a defence note sent on 3 August 2009 to all members of the Bureau; there is no indication that the note was included in the file before the Bureau;
- The authorities have stated that the accusations against Mr. Ambassa Zang stem from an audit prompted by a complaint by the French Development Agency (AFD), the funding source for the renovation of the Wouri Bridge, for which Mr. Ambassa Zang had been responsible; according to the Prosecutor General, State companies, ministries and other State structures managing public funds are subject to annual audits by the Supreme State Audit Office (CONSUPE), which reviews the State's management; the Minister of Justice has linked the audit of Mr. Ambassa Zang's management with the fight against corruption initiated by the Cameroonian State in 2005;
- According to the Minister Delegate at the Presidency in charge of CONSUPE, the final audit report was submitted to the Head of State, who opted for criminal proceedings on account of the misuse of public funds and the need, highlighted by the international community, to put

public finances on a sound footing; the file had therefore been referred to the Minister of Justice; a new, thorough examination had been carried out of the accounts and, after the lifting of Mr. Ambassa Zang's parliamentary immunity, the file had been handed over to the Prosecutor General of the Court of Appeal; the case was at the preliminary investigation stage;

- The source affirms that the provisions of Article 11 of Law No. 74/18 of 5 December 1974 on control of authorized officials, administrators and managers in charge of overseeing public expenditure and State enterprises, as amended and finalized in 1976, were not respected; it stresses that the accusations should have been dealt with by the Budgetary and Financial Discipline Council and that Law No. 14 was intended to protect the managers of public funds insofar as Articles 10 and 12 thereof set out guarantees relating, inter alia, to procedure, the right to a defence and appeal mechanisms; it highlights in this respect that, in cases handled by the Council, the accused have the possibility to be represented, in their absence, by counsel, unlike in criminal proceedings;
- According to the source, Mr. Ambassa Zang has replied with defence memoranda to each of the accusations, which he has rejected as unfounded; the few CONSUPE documents that Mr. Ambassa Zang has been able to obtain point to no wrongdoing or misappropriation in his favour of any sum whatsoever; the source affirms that the acts of which Mr. Ambassa Zang is accused can be seen at worst as mismanagement of public funds and in no way amount to an offence; he was not apprised of the final audit report drawn up; the mission report refers in this respect more extensively to the non-contradictory nature of the audits and inspections; moreover, it is clear that at least one new accusation was apparently introduced into the file submitted to the judicial authorities but not raised in the request for information originally addressed to him;
- The source affirms that Mr. Ambassa Zang cannot at present return to Cameroon because he would be arrested as a fugitive without ever having been sentenced or called to account, and that his safety is no longer guaranteed in Cameroon,

Considering that the authorities have repeatedly stated that Mr. Ambassa Zang is not specifically targeted by the investigation, which concerns many others, all of whom are currently at liberty; the authorities therefore suggest that Mr. Ambassa Zang return to Cameroon to defend himself before the judicial authorities in the case, in which only his testimony is missing; the source has replied that the accusations brought against Mr. Ambassa Zang have to do with objective facts and the relevant documents are available at the Ministry of Public Works, the Office of the Prime Minister, the Tenders Regulation Agency and donors such as the AFD and its German counterpart, KFW,

Considering that Mr. Ambassa Zang's common-law wife was attacked soon after the mission departed; in a message addressed to Mr. Ambassa Zang, the perpetrators vaunted their crime with an explicit reference to the IPU mission, whose action concerning the parliamentarian was known only to a limited circle of senior officials; *noting* that, in his letter of 9 August 2011, the Minister of Justice states that he has ordered an enquiry into the matter,

Considering that, according to an article published on 16 September 2011 in the Cameroonian daily *Le Jour* and in a number of other media, a new investigation has been opened into Mr. Ambassa Zang concerning the manner in which contracts were awarded for laying asphalt on the bridge over the Moungo river in 2004 (the first bridge over this river bordering the coastal and south-west regions having collapsed), that Mr. Ambassa Zang exercised his right of reply, underscoring inter alia that the urgent measures needed in order to find a speedy solution to the problem of the collapsed bridge were decided by an interministerial committee presided over by the Prime Minister on the orders of the President of the Republic and that the contract for maintenance of the detour roads was formalized and signed by the Minister for Economic Affairs, who guaranteed that they would be paid out of his ministry's budget for special State works,

Considering that, according to the source, the prosecution of Mr. Ambassa Zang must be seen in the context of "Opération Épervier" (Operation Casting Net), which has been widely criticized as a campaign originally intended to combat corruption and misappropriation of public funds but instead used to purge critically-minded public figures who, like Mr. Ambassa Zang, expressed views not always in line with those of their party; thus the Vice-President of the National Assembly, in a statement to the press as he left a meeting

of the Assembly's Bureau on 14 July 2009, reportedly expressed surprise at how fast the investigation of Mr. Ambassa Zang's case had been completed and described the lifting of his parliamentary immunity as a settlement of scores; *also recalling* the concerns expressed by human rights agencies, in particular the United Nations Human Rights Committee, on the independence of the judiciary in Cameroon,

Bearing in mind that Cameroon is party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and is thus bound to respect the fundamental rights therein guaranteed, such as the right to freedom of expression, the right to individual freedom and security, and the right to a fair trial ensuring the rights of the defence,

1. *Thanks* the Cameroon parliamentary authorities for the extensive information supplied in the course of the examination of this case, in particular on the occasion of the on-site mission; *appreciates* the measures taken by the parliamentary authorities to reimburse in full Mr. Ambassa Zang's allocations for micro projects for 2010 and to pay his parliamentary allowances; *invites* the authorities nevertheless to inform Mr. Ambassa Zang of what the sums paid actually correspond to;
2. *Has serious misgivings* about the way in which Mr. Ambassa Zang's parliamentary immunity was lifted and he was officially consulted, and about the existence of a genuinely adversarial investigation; *points out* that these concerns are spelt out in the mission report, the conclusions of which it fully endorses;
3. *Is appalled* to learn that Mr. Ambassa Zang's common-law wife was attacked shortly after the mission left in what appears to be an unacceptable act of reprisal and intimidation that only serves to reinforce the mission's overall conclusions; *affirms* that the authorities have a duty to prosecute the perpetrators and prevent any other act of intimidation against Mr. Ambassa Zang's relatives; *wishes* to know what progress has been made in the investigation initiated by the Minister of Justice;
4. *Stresses* that the authorities have chosen to start criminal proceedings, which, unlike the procedure before the Budgetary and Financial Discipline Council, do not allow the accused to be represented by a lawyer in their absence; *fears* that this was done precisely with a view to arguing that the case cannot proceed unless Mr. Ambassa Zang presents himself to the judicial authorities in Cameroon; *notes* in this regard that Mr. Ambassa Zang has provided extensive replies to the accusations known to him and is willing to provide additional information should that be necessary;
5. *Shares* in this respect the observations and fears expressed by the mission in Chapter D, paragraphs 1, 3, 4 and 5 of its report, particularly the provisions concerning the real prospects for the equitable and objective treatment of this case should Mr. Ambassa Zang return to Cameroon; *considers* that the information published in the media about a new investigation would tend to justify those fears;
6. *Urges* the competent authorities to do everything in their power to facilitate a satisfactory settlement of the case either by referring it to the Budgetary and Financial Discipline Council and thereby enabling Mr. Ambassa Zang's representative to defend his client, or by dropping the accusations;
7. *Invites* the Secretary General to convey this resolution to the competent executive, judicial and parliamentary authorities, including the President of Cameroon;
8. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report to it at its next session, to be held during the 127th IPU Assembly (October 2012).

CASE No. CO/01 - PEDRO NEL JIMÉNEZ OBANDO) COLOMBIA
CASE No. CO/02 - LEONARDO POSADA PEDRAZA)
CASE No. CO/03 - OCTAVIO VARGAS CUÉLLAR)
CASE No. CO/04 - PEDRO LUIS VALENCIA GIRALDO)
CASE No. CO/06 - BERNARDO JARAMILLO OSSA)
CASE No. CO/08 - MANUEL CEPEDA VARGAS)
CASE No. CO/09 - HERNÁN MOTTA MOTTA)

***Resolution adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session
(Kampala, 5 April 2012)***

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Referring to the cases of seven congressmen from the *Unión Patriótica* (Patriotic Union) that concern the murders between 1986 and 1994 of Mr. Pedro Nel Jiménez Obando, Mr. Leonardo Posada Pedraza, Mr. Octavio Vargas Cuéllar, Mr. Pedro Luis Valencia Giraldo, Mr. Bernardo Jaramillo Ossa and Mr. Manuel Cepeda Vargas and the death threats that forced Mr. Hernán Motta Motta into exile in October 1997, and to the resolution adopted at its 189th session (October 2011),

Recalling the following information:

- Neither the killers of five of the six murdered congressmen or those issuing death threats against Mr. Motta, who still lives in exile, have been held to account;
- The Inter-American Court of Human Rights, in its binding ruling of 26 May 2010 in the case of Mr. Cepeda, concluded that the Colombian State bore responsibility for his murder and ordered it, first, to conduct an effective investigation to establish the identity of the instigators and the full scale of collaboration between State agents and paramilitary forces in perpetrating the crime, and, second, to make reparation, including through the organization, in consultation with Mr. Cepeda's family, of an official ceremony in the Colombian Congress, or another prominent public venue, during which the State of Colombia, in the presence of members of both houses of Congress and the highest State authorities, would publicly acknowledge its responsibility and offer an apology; on 17 May 2011, the Prosecutor's Office formally accused Mr. José Miguel Narváez, former Assistant Director of the Administrative Department of Security and currently detained and prosecuted in a number of cases in connection with his alleged collaboration with paramilitary groups, of involvement in Mr. Cepeda's assassination and ordered his arrest; on 9 August 2011, the authorities held an event on the premises of the National Congress dedicated to Senator Cepeda's murder and the Colombian State's responsibility in it; the event was attended by high-ranking State officials and congressmen from across the political spectrum;
- A general petition, first submitted in 1997, regarding the persecution of the Patriotic Union and offences committed, directly or indirectly, against its members, including all the aforementioned congressmen except Mr. Cepeda, is pending before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights;
- Since 2008, the Attorney General's Office has paid special attention to the case of Mr. Jaramillo and the Prosecutor's Office has assembled a special team focusing on violations committed against members of the Patriotic Union and reactivated investigations into the assassinations of Mr. Jiménez, Mr. Posada, Mr. Valencia, Mr. Cepeda and Mr. Jaramillo; as part of the efforts with respect to Mr. Jaramillo, the former Director of the Administrative Department of Security, Mr. Alberto Romero, has come under investigation; in the case of Mr. Posada, a suspect, Mr. Baquero Agudelo, has accepted a plea bargain; his case has been sent to court for sentencing along with a request from the Prosecutor's Office that the relevant available documents be examined with a view to identifying other presumed culprits; in the case of Mr. Jaramillo's murder, the Prosecutor's Office stated that on 20 May 2011 Mr. Carlos Arturo Lozano Guillén, director of the daily *Voz*, and Mr. Ricardo Pérez González had been heard as part of the investigation and that Mr. Romero's legal status still had to be determined and further evidence taken,

1. *Trusts* that the authorities are continuing to exercise due diligence in implementing the Inter-American Court's ruling in the case of Mr. Cepeda, in particular so as to establish full accountability for the murder; *wishes* to receive confirmation that trial proceedings against Mr. Narváez have started and to know whether his statements have helped to shed further light on the extent of State responsibility for the crime and on the identity of those possibly involved;
2. *Trusts* that the Prosecutor's Office will soon decide whether or not to bring charges against Mr. Romero in the case of Mr. Jaramillo's murder and will continue to pursue, with the necessary resolve, the other ongoing investigations, in order, to the extent possible, to elucidate the other assassinations and the death threats against Mr. Motta; *wishes* to be informed of any developments in this regard;
3. *Reaffirms* that these cases, which concerns the assassination of members of Congress as part of a large-scale campaign to persecute a political party, is of direct concern to the National Congress of Colombia; *trusts* that, through its oversight function, Congress is doing its utmost to help ensure that ongoing efforts to elucidate the murders of and death threats against congressmen from the Patriotic Union are pursued and that the State of Colombia fully implements the outstanding elements of the Inter-American Court's ruling in the case of Mr. Cepeda;
4. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this resolution to the competent authorities and to the source;
5. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report to it at its next session, to be held during the 127th IPU Assembly (October 2012).

CASE No. COL/07 - LUIS CARLOS GALÁN SARMIENTO - COLOMBIA

Resolution adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session (Kampala, 5 April 2012)

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Referring to the case of Mr. Luis Carlos Galán Sarmiento, a member of the Colombian Senate and the New Liberalism party's candidate in the presidential elections, who was murdered at a political rally on 18 August 1989 in the main square of Soacha municipality, Cundinamarca department, and to the resolution adopted at its 189th session (October 2011),

Recalling the following information on file:

- Lieutenant Carlos Humberto Flores, from Military Intelligence B2, was tried for complicity in the murder and acquitted at first and second instance; a cassation petition filed by the Prosecutor's Office and Senator Galán's family, as the civil party to the proceedings, remains pending before the Supreme Court;
- On 1 September 2011, the Supreme Court upheld the first-instance verdict whereby Mr. Santofimio, a politician from Tolima, was sentenced to a 24-year prison term for having encouraged drug baron Pablo Escobar to have Senator Galán killed in order to prevent the latter, if elected President of Colombia, from implementing his intention to extradite drug traffickers to the United States of America;
- On 18 August 2009, the Prosecutor's Office arrested General Miguel Maza Márquez, a former Director of the Administrative Department of Security (DAS), on accusations of involvement in Senator Galán's murder, and declared the murder a crime against humanity; on 6 April 2010, the then Chief Prosecutor ordered General Maza's provisional release; however, General Maza was called to trial on 25 November 2010 and rearrested on 15 January 2011; on 1 June 2011, the prosecutor in the case confirmed the indictment against General Maza, arguing that there was substantive evidence that he was responsible for the murder; trial proceedings started on 10 October 2011, at which time the judge in the case, the First Specialized Judge of Bogotá, confirmed that Senator Galán's murder was a crime against humanity;

- On 25 November 2009, the Attorney General of Colombia, who had formed a special team to conduct the investigation into the murder, requested the Prosecutor's Office to extend the investigation to retired General Oscar Peláez Carmona, who was the Chief of the Criminal Investigation Department at the time and had allegedly acted in complicity with General Maza in misleading and obstructing the original investigation; in March 2010, the Attorney General's Office also asked the Prosecutor's Office to link to the investigation Mr. Alberto Romero, former DAS intelligence chief, Colonel Manuel Antonio González Enríquez, who served as DAS protection chief, former paramilitary leader Iván Roberto Duque Gaviria, alias "Ernesto Báez", and Captain Luis Felipe Montilla Barbosa, Soacha Police Commander; on 26 August 2011, the source stated that the Prosecutor's Office had not yet formally responded to the Attorney General's requests to link those individuals to the investigation,

Considering that, according to information provided by the source at the very beginning of January 2012, the Prosecutor's Office had officially linked Colonel González Enríquez and police major Luis Felipe Montilla to the investigation,

Considering that the Supreme Court annulled the proceedings against General Maza on 20 January 2012 on the grounds that he was entitled to privilege of jurisdiction and that his case should therefore have been referred directly to Colombia's Chief Prosecutor, that General Maza was released as a result and that the proceedings will start afresh,

1. *Is deeply disturbed* by the latest turn of events regarding General Maza; *fails to understand* how he can be entitled to privilege of jurisdiction in respect of his alleged responsibility for acts unrelated to the proper exercise of his functions when he was DAS Director;
2. *Sincerely hopes* that the evidence collected and the conclusions drawn so far in the original proceedings will likewise guide the fresh proceedings; *trusts* that, because of the latest turn of events and the importance of the case, the Chief Prosecutor will give the matter absolute priority; *wishes* to ascertain her views in this respect;
3. *Takes note with interest* that one of the alleged culprits identified by the Attorney General's Office has now been officially linked to the investigation; *wishes* to ascertain his current status in the overall investigation and to know whether the Prosecutor's Office will also soon take a decision regarding the others who have been identified as presumed culprits by the Attorney General's Office;
4. *Trusts* that the Supreme Court will soon rule on the long-standing cassation petition regarding the alleged role of Lieutenant Flores in the crime; *wishes* to ascertain the prospects for its swift consideration;
5. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this resolution to the competent authorities and to the source;
6. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report to it at its next session, to be held during the 127th IPU Assembly (October 2012).

CASE No. CO/121 - PIEDAD CÓRDOBA - COLOMBIA

Resolution adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session (Kampala, 5 April 2012)

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Referring to the case of Ms. Piedad Córdoba, a former member of the Colombian Senate, and to the resolution adopted at its 189th session (October 2011),

Recalling the following sequence of events:

- In July 2008, the Supreme Court opened a preliminary investigation into allegations that Ms. Córdoba, who was a senator at the time, had illegal ties with Colombia's main guerrilla group, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC); the investigation is still ongoing;

- During the investigation, the Supreme Court provided the Attorney General's Office with a copy of the case file, so that the Attorney General's Office could decide whether or not to institute a disciplinary investigation against her; that decision was taken in June 2009;
- On 27 September 2010, the Attorney General's Office concluded that Ms. Córdoba had promoted and worked with FARC and, as a disciplinary sanction, disbarred her from holding public office for 18 years; on 27 October 2010, the Attorney General ratified the decision of his Office, as a result of which Ms. Córdoba lost her Senate seat;
- Ms. Córdoba has affirmed from the outset that the disbarment amounts to political persecution and that there is no proof to substantiate the decision; she has challenged the disbarment before the Council of State,

Considering that the Council of State agreed on 21 November 2011 to examine Ms. Córdoba's request for annulment of the decision to disbar her but rejected her request that the disbarment be suspended until it had ruled on the request for annulment,

Recalling that Ms. Córdoba was disbarred inter alia on the basis of incriminating material alleged to have been found in the computers of a high-ranking FARC member, Mr. Raúl Reyes, and that, on 19 May 2011, the Supreme Court ruled in a criminal investigation against Mr. Wilson Borja that official protocol requirements to protect the material had not been followed and that, since there was no guarantee that the material had not been tampered with, it could not be relied on in court,

Considering that Article 23(2) of the Inter-American Convention on Human Rights, on respect for the exercise of political rights, stipulates: "The law may regulate the exercise of the rights [...] only on the basis of age, nationality, residence, language, education, civil and mental capacity, or sentencing by a competent court in criminal proceedings",

Recalling that an IPU mission travelled to Bogotá in August 2011 to help strengthen the National Congress of Colombia and, as part of that assignment, formulated recommendations, including that the Attorney General should be divested of the power to revoke the parliamentary mandate as a disciplinary sanction,

1. *Reaffirms* its view that Ms. Córdoba was barred from politics, thus depriving her electorate of its voice in parliament, as a result of a decision and on the basis of a procedure both of which breach basic international standards regarding respect for the parliamentary mandate, the exercise of political rights and the right to a fair trial;
2. *Is concerned* that, 15 months after Ms. Córdoba was disbarred, her appeal has yet to be heard in full by the Council of State; *observes* that the longer this situation lasts, the less meaningful is the remedy she seeks, which is to be allowed to serve out the remainder of her term of office; *considers* the hearing of her appeal to be all the more pressing in the light of the Supreme Court's conclusions regarding an important item of evidence against Ms. Córdoba, which cast doubt on the original justification for disbarring her;
3. *Trusts*, therefore, that the Council of State will rule on Ms. Córdoba's appeal as a matter of urgency and will give due attention to the Supreme Court's conclusions and to the other concerns arising in this case;
4. *Reaffirms* its belief that this case highlights the need to modify existing legislation with respect to disciplinary proceedings against members of Congress with a view to bringing it in line with relevant international and regional standards; *expresses the hope*, therefore, that new legislation will indeed be adopted soon to eliminate the powers of the Attorney General to revoke a parliamentary mandate as a disciplinary sanction; *wishes* to be kept informed of any major developments in this respect;
5. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this resolution to the competent authorities and to the source;
6. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report to it at its next session, to be held during the 127th IPU Assembly (October 2012).

CASE No. CO/140 - WILSON BORJA - COLOMBIA

Resolution adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session (Kampala, 5 April 2012)

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Referring to the case of Mr. Wilson Borja, a former member of the Colombian Congress and a vocal critic of the Colombian Government, and to the resolution adopted at its 189th session (October 2011),

Noting that its long-standing concerns in this case with respect to the recurrent reported deficiencies in Mr. Borja's security detail and the preliminary investigation initiated by the Supreme Court in June 2008 into his alleged links to the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) have been resolved,

Recalling that it remains concerned about the possible release of three military officers who were sentenced to prison sentences of up to 55 years for their responsibility in the attempt on Mr. Borja's life in 2000 and who have opted to benefit under the Justice and Peace Act as demobilized paramilitaries; *considering* that it is for the judicial authorities to determine whether the officers concerned meet the requirements of the Justice and Peace Act, and that Mr. Borja has stated that his lawyer will argue that they do not qualify as beneficiaries under the Act,

Recalling also that the former head of the United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia (AUC), Mr. Salvatore Mancuso, detained in the United States, has reportedly admitted to instigating the attack on Mr. Borja's life and has accused the former Assistant Director of the Administrative Department of Security (DAS), Mr. José Miguel Narváez, at present detained on several charges, of having played a decisive role in it by linking Mr. Borja to the FARC and inciting paramilitary groups to eliminate him,

1. *Trusts* that the judicial authorities will ensure that the three military officers convicted for their participation in the attempt on Mr. Borja's life continue to serve their sentences; *wishes* to be informed of any decision adopted in this respect; *also trusts* that the Prosecutor's Office has launched a full investigation into the alleged implication in the attempt on Mr. Borja's life of the former head of the AUC and the former DAS Assistant Director; *would appreciate* receiving updated information on both matters;
2. *Considers* that, in the light of the developments in the case, its public examination is no longer warranted;
3. *Requests* the Committee, therefore, to continue examining the case under its confidential procedure;
4. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this resolution to the competent authorities and to Mr. Borja.

CASE No. CO/142 - ÁLVARO ARAÚJO CASTRO - COLOMBIA

Resolution adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session (Kampala, 5 April 2012)

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Referring to the case of Mr. Álvaro Araújo Castro, a former member of the Colombian Congress, and to the resolution adopted at its 189th session (October 2011),

Recalling its persistent concern that, as a result of fundamentally flawed proceedings and in the absence of any compelling evidence, the Supreme Court, in a ruling issued on 18 March 2010, found Mr. Araújo guilty of aggravated criminal conspiracy and coercion of voters on the grounds that he had cooperated with paramilitary groups for electoral gain, sentenced him to a prison term of 112 months and ordered him to pay a fine (Mr. Araújo, who had been in detention and under house arrest since 15 February 2007, was released in early February 2011 after having served three fifths of his sentence),

Also recalling that, in the same ruling, the Supreme Court ordered that an investigation be conducted to establish whether or not Mr. Araújo could be considered part of the paramilitary command and therefore to share responsibility for the crimes against humanity they committed; as with the original charges, both the investigation and any subsequent trial on this matter are entrusted to the Supreme Court, whose ruling would not be subject to appeal,

Further recalling that, in March 2010, the Prosecutor’s Office opened an investigation into Mr. Araújo’s alleged responsibility in the 1996 murder, at the hands of paramilitaries, of his employee, Mr. Eusebio de Jesús Castro Visbal; the then acting Public Prosecutor provided information in October 2010 to the effect that the investigation would be discontinued; however, according to the source’s communication of 26 January 2011, the investigation was ongoing,

Considering that a legislative initiative for judicial reform, which is pending in the Colombian Congress, proposes the establishment of an appeal instance in the procedure applicable to members of Congress in criminal cases and clearly separates those in charge of investigating a case from those ruling on it; considering that an IPU mission travelled to Bogotá in August 2011 to help strengthen the National Congress of Colombia and, as part of that assignment, formulated a series of recommendations, including with a view to helping ensure greater respect for fair-trial standards in criminal cases against members of Congress,

1. *Reaffirms its belief that, so long as basic fair-trial concerns are not addressed and compelling evidence to justify the lesser charges on which Mr. Araújo was convicted does not exist, an investigation before the Supreme Court with regard to his potential responsibility for crimes against humanity committed by paramilitary groups is misguided; under the current circumstances, therefore, sincerely hopes that the investigation will be discontinued; would appreciate receiving the observations of the Supreme Court on the prospects for discontinuation of the investigation along with information on the current status thereof;*
2. *Remains convinced that the concerns about the lack of fair-trial standards inherent in the procedure applicable to Colombian members of Congress in criminal matters can only be fully addressed through new legislation; expresses the hope, therefore, that the reform bill to be adopted will indeed provide for a genuine separation between the investigating authorities and the courts and a real possibility for members of Congress to appeal; wishes to be kept informed in this regard, in particular inasmuch as the reform concerns the implementation of recommendations made by the IPU mission;*
3. *Reiterates its wish, in the light of the conflicting information received from the authorities and the source regarding the investigation into Mr. Araújo’s alleged involvement in the murder of one of his employees, to ascertain from the authorities whether an official investigation is indeed ongoing and, if so, on what basis;*
4. *Requests the Secretary General to convey this resolution to the competent authorities and to the source;*
5. *Requests the Committee to continue examining this case and to report to it at its next session, to be held during the 127th IPU Assembly (October 2012).*

CASE No. CO/146 - IVÁN CEPEDA CASTRO) COLOMBIA
CASE No. CO/147- ALEXANDER LÓPEZ)
CASE No. CO/148- JORGE ENRIQUE ROBLEDO)
CASE No. CO/149- GUILLERMO ALFONSO JARAMILLO)
CASE No. CO/150 - WILSON ÁRIAS CASTILLO)

***Resolution adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session
(Kampala, 5 April 2012)***

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

*Referring to the cases of Mr. Iván Cepeda Castro, Mr. Alexander López, Mr. Jorge Enrique Robledo, Mr. Guillermo Alfonso Jaramillo and Mr. Wilson Árias Castillo, members of the Colombian Congress from the opposition party *Polo Democrático Alternativo* (Alternative Democratic Pole), and to the resolution adopted at its 189th session (October 2011),*

Taking into account information provided by the source on 10 February 2012,

Recalling that, in 2010, several local leaders of the Alternative Democratic Pole were murdered and national party leaders, including the five above-mentioned incumbent members of Congress, received death threats:

- On 10 April 2010, a public communiqué issued by an illegal group known as *Los rastros* - *comandos urbanos*, declared Senators López, Robledo and Jaramillo to be enemies and hence permanent military targets;
- In a communiqué dated 4 June 2010, the United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia (AUC), Central Bloc, declared Senator López and Congressman Árias to be permanent military targets;
- In early June 2010, it became known that a group of hitmen linked to paramilitary groups intended to assassinate Mr. Cepeda, a member of the Colombian Congress and son of Senator Manuel Cepeda, who was assassinated in 1994; on 13 August 2010, an illegal group called *Águilas negras* issued a pamphlet threatening Mr. Cepeda and others who were helping to organize a debate in Congress, on 18 August 2010, on the problem of land dispossession that was going to be broadcast live across the country,

Recalling that, in October 2010, the then acting Public Prosecutor stated that all the threats against members of the Alternative Democratic Pole were being investigated with the utmost diligence, but that it was often very difficult to lay hands on those responsible since they were experts at covering up their identity and whereabouts; in its report of 12 January 2011, the Prosecutor's Office affirmed that the threats issued by *Águilas negras* against Mr. Cepeda and by *Los rastros* - *comandos urbanos* against Senators López, Robledo and Jaramillo were both the subject of ongoing criminal investigations; from the report of the Prosecutor's Office of 6 July 2011, it appears that Senator Robledo was provided with security and that the authorities concluded that no criminal organization called *Los rastros* existed and ruled out the possibility that the threat came from a criminal organization,

Considering that, on 2 June 2011 *Los rastros* - *comandos urbanos* issued a statement threatening several human rights organizations and defenders, including Mr. Cepeda and his legislative assistant, Ms. Ana Jimena Bautista Revelo; around that time, *Águilas negras* also mentioned both Mr. Cepeda and Ms. Bautista in a statement giving them 20 days in which to leave Bogotá or face death; both threats were brought to the attention of the Prosecutor's Office; as part of his visits to detention centres, Mr. Cepeda went to the prison in Valledupar on 22 May 2011; on 13 June 2011, he received a letter from an inmate of that prison stating that he had been incited to stab Mr. Cepeda during the latter's visit; the inmate alleges that the two officers entrusted with Mr. Cepeda's security on that occasion gave him a knife and offered him better prison conditions in return for assassinating Mr. Cepeda, which he refused to do; it appears that the inmate was subsequently the victim of an attempt on his life which left him injured; it also appears that, days after Mr. Cepeda's prison visit, the videotape of the visit was erased, the Director of the Valledupar prison reportedly stating that it had been reused,

Considering that, according to the source, Mr. Cepeda's work as a congressman has been increasingly stigmatized since early 2010 in the media; in several instances he has been labelled a friend of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), in particular by former President Uribe and people from within his circle; on 10 September 2011, a fake Twitter account was set up in Mr. Cepeda's name, presenting him as a FARC friend seeking evidence of Mr. Uribe's links to paramilitary groups; according to the latest information provided by the source, Mr. Cepeda, who has been at the forefront in addressing specific cases of forced displacement, is now the subject of a disciplinary complaint to the Attorney General alleging that he brought about the invasion of the hacienda "Las Pavas", in Bolívar department, when in fact he accompanied the peaceful return on 4 April 2011 of over a hundred families to the lands from which they had been forcibly displaced, a matter which he raised the following day in Congress with the request that the competent authorities conduct a proper investigation to identify those responsible for the families' displacement,

1. *Is alarmed* at the growing threats Mr. Cepeda faces in carrying out his work as a member of Congress;

2. *Considers* that the risks Mr. Cepeda has incurred as a long-standing critical voice in Colombia have to be taken extremely seriously, as the failed attempt on his life less than a year ago has once more shown;
3. *Urges* the authorities, therefore, to take immediate steps to ensure that an effective security detail is in place for Mr. Cepeda and those assisting him in his work as a member of Congress; *wishes* to receive confirmation that such steps have indeed been taken;
4. *Also urges* the authorities to establish full accountability for the failed attempt on Mr. Cepeda's life and the attack on the inmate who refused to execute it; *remains particularly eager* to receive confirmation that action has been taken against the two security guards and to know what evidence has been collected to help identify the instigators of these crimes; *reaffirms* in this respect that the alleged involvement in the attempt on Mr. Cepeda's life of two officers, apparently picked by the authorities to ensure his protection, and the allegations that this crime, in common with the subsequent retaliation against the inmate, took place on premises which are run by the competent authorities, cast extremely serious doubts on the authorities' capacity, if not willingness, to protect the basic right to life;
5. *Remains concerned* that the information provided on the investigations of the Prosecutor's Office into previous threats against Mr. Cepeda and his Alternative Democratic Pole colleagues in Congress show that none of the culprits have as yet been identified and held to account;
6. *Calls on* the competent authorities to fulfil their duty to conduct an effective investigation into these threats, in particular those received by Mr. Cepeda and a legislative assistant; *fails to understand* how the Prosecutor's Office can have concluded that the organization calling itself *Los rastros - comandos urbanos*, which has been the source of multiple threats, does not exist; *wishes to receive* clarification on this point along with specific information on progress made in the investigations;
7. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this resolution to the competent authorities and to the source;
8. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report to it at its next session, to be held during the 127th IPU Assembly (October 2012).

ERITREA

CASE No. ERI/01 - OGBE ABRAHA

CASE No. ERI/02 - ASTER FISSEHATSION

CASE No. ERI/03 - BERHANE GEBREGZIABEHER

CASE No. ERI/04 - BERAKI GEBRESELISSIE

CASE No. ERI/05 - HAMAD HAMID HAMAD

CASE No. ERI/06 - SALEH KEKIYA

CASE No. ERI/07 - GERMANO NATI

CASE No. ERI/08 - ESTIFANOS SEYOUM

CASE No. ERI/09 - MAHMOUD AHMED SHERIFFO

CASE No. ERI/10 - PETROS SOLOMON

CASE No. ERI/11 - HAILE WOLDETENSAE

***Resolution adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session
(Kampala, 5 April 2012)***

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Referring to the case of the above-mentioned parliamentarians, former members of Eritrea's National Assembly, and to the resolution adopted at its 189th session (October 2011),

Recalling the following:

- The parliamentarians concerned (often referred to as the "G11") were arrested on 18 September 2001, after publishing an open letter calling for democratic reform, and have been held incommunicado ever since, accused of conspiracy and attempting to overthrow the legitimate government, without ever being formally charged or tried;

- In November 2003, upon examination of a complaint concerning their situation, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights found that the State of Eritrea had violated Articles 2, 6, 7(1) and 9(2) of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, which address the right to liberty and security of person, the right to a fair trial and the right to freedom of expression, and urged the State of Eritrea to order the immediate release of the former parliamentarians and to pay them compensation; the Eritrean authorities have rejected that decision,

Recalling that, according to non-governmental sources, on 3 April 2010, Mr. Eyob Bahta Habtemariam, a former prison guard who fled Eritrea, stated in an interview with Radio Wegahta that only two of the 11 former parliamentarians were still alive, namely Mr. Petros Solomon and Mr. Haile Woldetensae, the others having died since 2001, and that he provided details in this respect,

Recalling that this information is unconfirmed and that, according to one of the sources, no concrete evidence exists to support the prison guard's statements; *recalling also* that the European Commission regularly raises the case of the former parliamentarians concerned with the Eritrean authorities, particularly in the framework of political dialogue, but that the Eritrean side refused to discuss individual cases during the September 2010 session of political dialogue on human rights,

Recalling that the report of 18 September 2009 (A/HRC/WG.6/6/ERI/2) prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for the Universal Periodic Review of the human rights situation in Eritrea summarizes the pertinent information contained in the reports of treaty bodies and special procedures and in other relevant official United Nations documents; that the report paints a gloomy picture of respect for human rights in the country, where human rights violations by members of the security forces are reportedly committed with total impunity,

1. *Denounces* the authorities' continued contempt for the most basic human rights of 11 former parliamentarians by keeping them incommunicado for the last 10 years because they exercised their right to freedom of expression by calling for democratic reform;
2. *Deeply regrets* that for the last seven years the authorities have not only ignored its persistent pleas to end the former parliamentarians' prolonged incommunicado detention, which is in flagrant breach of the Constitution of Eritrea and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, but have also not seen fit to provide any information about their state of health; *considers* that the absence of any information about their fate is an affront not only to the former parliamentarians' human dignity but also to their relatives' right to know what befell them;
3. *Remains deeply concerned* at the allegation that only two of the 11 former parliamentarians may still be alive, and *believes* that this allegation must be taken seriously in the light of the very critical reports on the human rights situation in Eritrea;
4. *Once more urges* the Eritrean authorities to provide information on the fate of the G11 prisoners and to release them forthwith;
5. *Considers* that the international community, including the global parliamentary community, should do much more to help address the former parliamentarians' plight and *requests* the Secretary General to continue making every effort to draw international attention to this case; *invites* in particular those parliaments with significant leverage over Eritrea to exert insistent pressure on its authorities for the release of the persons concerned;
6. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and report to it at its next session, to be held during the 127th IPU Assembly (October 2012).

CASE No. IQ/59 - MOHAMMED AL-DAINY - IRAQ

***Resolution adopted by consensus by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session
(Kampala, 5 April 2012)****

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Referring to the case of Mr. Mohammed Al-Dainy, a member of the Council of Representatives of Iraq at the time of the submission of the communication, and to the resolution adopted at its 189th session (October 2011),

Taking into account the information provided by a member of the Iraqi delegation to the 126th IPU Assembly (April 2012),

Recalling the following:

- Mr. Al-Dainy, a member of the Council of Representatives of Iraq for the legislative period 2006-2010, is known to have investigated conditions of detention in Iraq and the existence of secret detention facilities; on 25 February 2009, parliament lifted his immunity on account of an accusation that he had masterminded the 12 April 2007 suicide bombing in parliament; Mr. Al-Dainy fled abroad for fear of his life;
- Ten members of Mr. Al-Dainy's family and nine members of his staff (mainly escorts) were arrested at various times in February 2009, and detailed information has been provided by the source about the circumstances of their arrest without warrants, their ill-treatment and the ransacking of their homes; when some of them were released later in 2009 and in 2010, ample evidence came to light that they had been tortured in secret detention centres to implicate Mr. Al-Dainy in the commission of crimes, in particular: (a) the bombing of the Council of Representatives in April 2007; (b) the launch of mortar shells into the Green Zone during the visit of the Iranian President in 2008, and the murder of one of the inhabitants of the neighbourhood from which the shells were launched; (c) the killing of 155 people from Al-Tahweela village who were allegedly buried alive; and (d) the murder of Captain Ismail Haqi Al-Shamary;
- On 24 January 2010, Mr. Al-Dainy was sentenced to death in absentia; the verdict runs to a little more than one page (French translation), contains two paragraphs dealing with the suicide bombing in parliament and one on the bombing of the Green Zone, six lines on the storing of weapons and the founding of a terrorist organization linked to the Ba'ath party, and, to prove that Mr. Al-Dainy committed these crimes, relies heavily on the testimony of three members of his security staff (Mr. Riadh Ibrahim, Mr. Alaa Kherallah, Mr. Haydar Abdallah) and a secret informant; it does not refer to any of the other accusations;
- In December 2010, the Court of Cassation quashed the judgment handed down regarding two of Mr. Al-Dainy's escorts who had testified against him,

Recalling the following information on file: acting on letters sent by the IPU Secretary General, the Speaker of the Council of Representatives set up an ad hoc committee of five parliamentarians to examine Mr. Al-Dainy's case; the committee concluded that: (a) the lifting of Mr. Al-Dainy's parliamentary immunity had violated the applicable rules as it had been decided in the absence of a quorum and was therefore unlawful; (b) as regards the allegation that Mr. Al-Dainy had killed more than 100 villagers in Al-Tahweela village, the on-site investigation revealed that no crime had taken place; (c) with regard to the firing of mortar shells into the Green Zone during the visit to Baghdad of the Iranian President, Mr. Al-Dainy was in Amman at the time, a fact borne out by stamps in his passport; (d) as to the allegation concerning Captain Haqi Al-Shamary's murder, the commission found that the Captain was still alive; the ad hoc committee transmitted its report to the Speaker, who now has to decide how to act on it; in the meantime, the report will be submitted to the court of first instance that dealt with Mr. Al-Dainy's case,

Recalling that the Joint study on global practices in relation to secret detention in the context of countering terrorism of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights while countering terrorism, the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, the

* One member of the delegation of Iraq expressed his reservation regarding the resolution.

Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, and the Working Group on Arbitrary or Involuntary Disappearances (A/HRC/13/42), presented to the United Nations Human Rights Council at its thirteenth session, includes a section on secret detention centres in Iraq and explicitly mentions the group of people arrested in connection with accusations against Mr. Al-Dainy and held in secret detention centre in the Green Zone run by the Baghdad Brigade; it describes the torture inflicted on them and states that they were forced to sign and fingerprint pre-prepared confessions,

Considering that, according to the member of the Iraqi delegation heard during the 126th IPU Assembly, the parliamentary human rights committee recently visited a secret detention centre and collected information on the situation of prisoners there; the Council of Representatives should soon be able to announce the establishment of an independent commission on human rights,

Bearing in mind also that Iraq is a party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which it ratified in 1971 and which guarantees the right to life and security, prohibits torture, arbitrary arrest and detention and stipulates fair-trial guarantees; *noting* in this respect the concerns which the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers has voiced on many occasions regarding the observance of those rights in Iraq,

1. *Thanks* the member of the Iraqi delegation for the information she provided;
2. *Reaffirms* its conviction, further supported by the findings of the ad hoc parliamentary committee and the Cassation Court judgment regarding two of Mr. Al-Dainy's escorts, that the charges laid against Mr. Al-Dainy were false, that persons were tortured to obtain testimony against him, and that the trial proceedings are therefore a travesty of justice;
3. *Reaffirms* that it is in the interests of justice and a matter of urgency to invalidate the entire proceedings against Mr. Al-Dainy and to quash the iniquitous verdict against him;
4. *Is confident* that the Council of Representatives will make every effort to rehabilitate a former colleague who was punished on account of having, in the exercise of his parliamentary mandate, revealed the existence of secret detention centres and combated the use of torture;
5. *Takes note* with satisfaction of the recent interest shown and action taken by the Council of Representatives in overseeing detention centres and promoting human rights; *is eager* to know if the parliamentary human rights committee presented any conclusions and recommendations to the Council on its recent visit to a secret detention centre, in particular with a view to the abolition of such centres; *trusts* that the national human rights commission will soon be in place and also play a critical role in this regard; *looks forward* to receiving information about its functioning and work;
6. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this resolution to the parliamentary and other competent authorities;
7. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report to it at its next session, to be held during the 127th IPU Assembly (October 2012).

CASE No. LEB/01 - GIBRAN TUENI) LEBANON
CASE No. LEB/02 - WALID EIDO)
CASE No. LEB/03 - ANTOINE GHANEM)
CASE No. LEB/04 - PIERRE GEMAYEL)

***Resolution adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session
(Kampala, 5 April 2012)***

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Referring to the case of Mr. Gibran Tueni, Mr. Walid Eido, Mr. Antoine Ghanem and Mr. Pierre Gemayel, all members of the National Assembly of Lebanon who were assassinated, and to the resolution adopted at its 189th session (October 2011),

Recalling the following:

- Mr. Tueni, Mr. Eido, Mr. Ghanem and Mr. Gemayel were all outspoken parliamentarians killed between 2005 and 2007 in car-bomb attacks, except for Mr. Gemayel, who was gunned down;
- Following Mr. Tueni's assassination, the National Assembly joined the criminal proceedings engaged by the public prosecutor in the case;
- The Special Tribunal for Lebanon established by the United Nations and the State of Lebanon to try those responsible for the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri, who was murdered in a car-bomb explosion on 25 February 2005, started its work in March 2009,

Recalling that, under certain conditions specified in its Statute, the Special Tribunal may establish jurisdiction in other situations, including in the cases of the four murdered parliamentarians; *recalling* nevertheless that, as stated by the Prosecutor General of Lebanon in his communication of 2 September 2011, the investigations into the four cases remained for the time being in the hands of the Lebanese authorities, had been assigned to different judges and were ongoing,

Bearing in mind that Lebanon is party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and is thus bound to guarantee the right to life,

1. *Remains concerned* at the absence of any indication that the Lebanese authorities have been able to make progress, six years after the first murder, towards holding those responsible to account;
2. *Reaffirms* that, so long as the assassins remain at large, the murder of the four parliamentarians continues to serve as a deterrent to others wishing to speak out on critical issues and can only embolden those bent on silencing such voices, and thus undermines freedom of expression;
3. *Calls on* the authorities, therefore, to fulfil their duty to do everything possible - if necessary, by giving fresh impetus to the investigations - to elucidate these crimes and hold the culprits to account; *eagerly awaits* information on the stage reached in the investigations and on whether any suspects have been identified and apprehended;
4. *Regrets* the continued absence of information from the National Assembly, which has a special responsibility in a case concerning the murder of four of its members, on any action taken to ensure that justice is done; *again calls on* the National Assembly to be guided by initiatives that other parliaments have taken in exercising their oversight responsibility in similar situations, including by entrusting one of their committees with or creating a special mechanism for regularly monitoring the investigation into the murder of a member; *eagerly awaits* the views of the parliamentary authorities on this matter, along with information on any specific steps already taken in this case, including a decision by the National Assembly to join, as in the case of Mr. Tueni, the criminal proceedings engaged by the public prosecutor in the other three cases and the outcome thereof;
5. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this resolution to the competent parliamentary and judicial authorities of Lebanon;
6. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report to it at its next session, to be held during the 127th IPU Assembly (October 2012).

CASE No. MAL/I5 - ANWAR IBRAHIM - MALAYSIA

***Resolution adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session
(Kampala, 5 April 2012)***

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Referring to the case of Dato Seri Anwar Ibrahim, an incumbent member of the Parliament of Malaysia, and to the resolution adopted at its 189th session (October 2011),

Recalling that Mr. Ibrahim was being prosecuted, for the second time, on a charge of sodomy under Section 377B of the Malaysian Penal Code and that the proceedings raised serious questions regarding the fairness of the trial,

Referring also to the first trial observer report submitted by Mr. Mark Trowell QC, in August 2010 (CL/187/12(b)-R.2), to his second report, submitted in March 2011, and to the comments provided thereon by the Malaysian delegation to the 124th IPU Assembly (CL/188/13(b)-R.3); *noting* that Mr. Trowell responded to the comments of the Malaysian delegation in another report and has since provided the Committee with reports on the proceedings in this case, which he observed in June, August and September 2011 and January 2012,

Considering that: in his verdict of 9 January 2012 acquitting Mr. Ibrahim, the judge concluded that, after going through the evidence, the court could not be absolutely certain that the DNA samples had not been compromised and that it was therefore not safe to rely on them as evidence; this left the court with nothing but the alleged victim's uncorroborated testimony and, as this was a sexual crime, it was reluctant to convict on that basis alone; the Attorney General has lodged an appeal, which is pending,

1. *Takes note* with great interest of Mr. Ibrahim's acquittal at first instance;
2. *Recalls* its previous concerns about the proceedings to which Mr. Ibrahim was subjected, in particular regarding their timing, the implication of members of the prosecution team who were involved in the first sodomy trial, the meeting between the alleged victim and then Deputy Prime Minister Najib Razak, the liaison between the alleged victim and a member of the prosecution team and the refusal of the trial judge to admit defence petitions for the disclosure of vital prosecution evidence;
3. *Believes*, therefore, that it is essential to monitor the appeal proceedings closely and *requests* the Committee to pay particularly close attention to observance of respect for the procedure and the rights of the defence, including by exploring the possibility of sending a trial observer;
4. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this resolution to the parliamentary authorities, to Mr. Ibrahim and to his defence team;
5. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report to it at its next session, to be held during the 127th IPU Assembly (October 2012).

CASE No. MON/01 - ZORIG SANJASUUREN - MONGOLIA

Resolution adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session (Kampala, 5 April 2012)

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Referring to the case of Zorig Sanjasuuren, a member of the State Great Hural of Mongolia who was murdered in October 1998, and to the resolution adopted at its 189th session (October 2011),

Recalling the following:

- Zorig Sanjasuuren, a leader of the democracy movement in Mongolia in the 1990s, was assassinated in October 1998; the investigation carried out by the police and the Central Intelligence Agency has been to no avail so far; this failure has been attributed largely to police inexperience in investigating cases of contract killings such as this one, the failure to secure the crime scene and the decision to allow 40 to 50 people to pollute it, together with a certain lack of political will on the part of the authorities in place at the time;
- Technical assistance in forensic matters was provided to the investigators but, owing to the confidentiality of the investigation, no information has been made available as to whether or not the results of the tests carried out are such as to shed more light on the murder and help move the investigation forward;
- The State Great Hural set up a working group on this case which functioned from 1998 to 2000; a new working group established in 2006 continues to function, its terms of reference being to monitor the investigation and to ensure that it receives the necessary assistance and support; however, no information has ever been provided on any results it may have achieved,

Recalling that, according to information provided by Zorig Sanjasuuren’s sister in October 2011, the case has been taken up by the National Security Council (comprising the President, the Prime Minister and the Speaker of the State Great Hural), which discussed it at a meeting in September 2011 attended by the Prosecutor General; that, moreover, the head of the police working group on this case reportedly still believes that the case can be resolved; *recalling further* that the case may be transferred to a special investigation unit in the Prosecutor General’s Office, where it would receive more active attention,

Recalling finally that, some time ago, a member of parliament put a query to the Minister of Justice regarding this case in the hope of initiating a parliamentary debate that nevertheless failed to materialize, the Minister invoking the confidentiality of the investigation,

1. *Regrets* that 13 years of uninterrupted investigation have failed to shed light on Zorig Sanjasuuren’s murder, but *believes*, as examples from around the world show, that cases such as this one can be resolved even after so many years have elapsed, provided the competent authorities show the requisite determination and are given the necessary support;
2. *Considers*, therefore, that the decision to involve the highest State authorities, as represented in the National Security Council, in the elucidation of this crime can be instrumental to this end; *wishes to ascertain* whether the authorities have since taken any measures to give the investigation fresh impetus, such as involving the special unit of the Prosecutor General’s Office;
3. *Believes*, while acknowledging that certain investigation details must remain confidential, that a parliamentary debate on the case and its non-confidential aspects would also help give the investigation fresh impetus; *encourages* the Great State Hural, in particular the working group, to take such an initiative;
4. *Reiterates* its commitment to assisting the Great State Hural, if so requested, in any way it can with a view to lending fresh impetus to the investigation;
5. *Requests* the Secretary to convey this resolution to the President of Mongolia, the Speaker of the Great State Hural and the Prosecutor General;
6. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report to it at its next session, to be held during the 127th IPU Assembly (October 2012).

MYANMAR

The following persons were elected in the parliamentary elections of 1990 and

(i) were reportedly still in detention:

CASE No. MYN/236 - KHUN HTUN OO	CASE No. MYN/261 - U NYI PU
CASE No. MYN/238 - KYAW MIN	CASE No. MYN/262 - TIN MIN HTUT
CASE No. MYN/242 - KYAW KYAW	

(ii) died in custody or soon after their release:

CASE No. MYN/53 - HLA THAN	CASE No. MYN/131 - HLA KHIN
CASE No. MYN/55 - TIN MAUNG WIN	CASE No. MYN/132 - AUN MIN
CASE No. MYN/72 - SAW WIN	CASE No. MYN/245 - MYINT THEIN ¹
CASE No. MYN/83 - KYAW MIN	

(iii) were assassinated:

CASE No. MYN/66 - WIN KO
CASE No. MYN/67 - HLA PE

***Resolution adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session
(Kampala, 5 April 2012)***

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Recalling its long-standing examination of the cases of the former members-elect of the Pyithu Hluttaw (People’s Assembly) of the Union of Myanmar, who were all elected in May 1990, and its earlier

¹ On 2 April 2008, the Members of Parliament Union-Burma affirmed that Myint Thein had died following his release as his health had been badly impaired by his detention.

concerns about respect for their human rights, including the existence of undue restrictions on political activity, detention without charge and imprisonment as a result of summary trials; *recalling also* the resolution it adopted at its 189th session (October 2011),

Considering that, on 13 January 2012, the President of Myanmar amnestied over 600 prisoners, including the last five former members-elect - Khun Htun Oo, Nyi Pu, Kyaw Min, Kyaw Kyaw and Tin Min Htut - still being held under Section 401 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, so as to "enable them to participate in the political process"; *recalling* that, on 11 October 2011, more than 6,000 persons had already been released under a previous amnesty, including three former members-elect,

Considering that these releases should be seen as one of an increasing number of steps taken in the last six months by the civilian authorities to foster political dialogue and reform,

Taking into account the observations of the IPU on-site mission that visited Myanmar from 5 to 9 March 2012 to raise, among other things, outstanding human rights concerns: all the officials encountered expressed the view that the reform process under way in Myanmar was irreversible, and the positive steps that had been or were being taken to promote human rights included many acts of legislative reform (the Labour Organizations Law, which had entered into force, the Peaceful Demonstration and Gathering Law, the amendment adopted to the Political Party Registration Law, the revised Prisons Act, a new media law, a new social security law),

Considering that, on 19 March 2012, when he presented his progress report (A/HRC/19/67) to the United Nations Human Rights Council, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar stated: "I am of the view that a positive impact on the human rights situation has been made. Nevertheless, it is clear that there are ongoing and serious human rights concerns that remain to be addressed; these cannot be ignored in the rush to reform and to move forward. Various positive developments should not be based on the mere discretion of the authorities, but rather on a democratic institutional approach that allows transparency, predictability and continuity to reforms"; he continued, "I am encouraged that the Parliament has been active in the legislative reform process. While I welcome these developments, I note concerns regarding some of the provisions in these legislations and the insufficient attention being paid to ensure their effective implementation. There is also a lack of clarity and progress on reforming the laws that I have previously identified as not in full compliance with international human rights standards, such as the State Protection Act, the Unlawful Association Act, certain sections of the penal code, the Television and Video Law, the Motion Picture Law, the Computer Science and Development Law, and the Printers and Publishers Registration Act. These laws have been systematically applied against those opposed to the Government. I reiterate the need to accelerate this process and identify clear time-bound target dates for the conclusion of the review",

Considering that an IPU needs-assessment mission will go to Myanmar in May 2012 with a view to identifying possible assistance to the People's Assembly of Myanmar,

1. *Takes note* of the political changes in Myanmar and the observations of the recent IPU mission to Myanmar;
2. *Is pleased* that the last former parliamentarians who remained in detention have finally recovered their freedom; *stresses* that these persons were all political prisoners held on the basis of unjust laws and unfair procedures;
3. *Considers* in this regard that it is absolutely essential that the People's Assembly, as the State institution representing the people and their interests and therefore their full enjoyment of civil and political rights, acts decisively to review, and if need be repeal, these laws to ensure compliance with human rights standards; *calls on* the People's Assembly to ensure that these laws are considered a priority in the planned overhaul of Myanmar's general legal framework; *considers* it critical that any capacity-building assistance offered by the IPU to the People's Assembly take account of this;
4. *Recalls* that seven former parliamentarians died in prison or shortly after their release as a result of their conditions of detention and that two were assassinated without their murder having ever been elucidated, a situation that it deplors; *recalls* the importance of principles of truth,

justice and reconciliation and *sincerely hopes* that the Myanmar authorities will seek to address the Committee's concerns and that a new Prison Act will ensure that prisoners are treated in full accordance with international norms; *wishes* to receive a copy of the legislative proposal and to be kept informed of progress towards its adoption;

5. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining the case and to report to it at its next session, to be held during the 127th IPU Assembly (October 2012), on how next to proceed in this case.

CASE No. PAL/02 - MARWAN BARGHOUTI - PALESTINE / ISRAEL

***Resolution adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session
(Kampala, 5 April 2012)***

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Referring to the case of Mr. Marwan Barghouti, an incumbent member of the Palestinian Legislative Council, and to the resolution adopted at its 189th session (October 2011),

Taking into account the letter from the Speaker of the Knesset dated 4 January 2012,

Also referring to Mr. Simon Foreman's expert report on Mr. Barghouti's trial (CL/177/11(a)-R.2) and to the study published in September 2006 by B'Tselem (the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories), entitled Barred from Contact: Violation of the Right to Visit Palestinians Held in Israeli Prisons,

Recalling the following: Mr. Barghouti was arrested on 15 April 2002 in Ramallah by the Israeli Defence Forces and transferred to a detention centre in Israel; on 20 May 2004, Tel Aviv District Court convicted him on one count of murder relating to attacks that killed five Israelis, on one count of attempted murder relating to a planned car bomb attack and on one count of membership in a terrorist organization, and sentenced him to five life sentences and two 20-year prison terms; Mr. Barghouti did not lodge an appeal because he does not recognize Israeli jurisdiction; in his comprehensive report on Mr. Barghouti's trial, Mr. Foreman stated that "the numerous breaches of international law make it impossible to conclude that Mr. Barghouti was given a fair trial"; those breaches include the use of torture,

Recalling that, in its concluding observations on the third periodic report of Israel under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,² the Human Rights Committee recommended that Israel incorporate in its legislation the crime of torture, that it ensure that all alleged cases of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment by law enforcement officials are thoroughly and promptly investigated by an independent authority, that those found guilty be punished with sentences commensurate with the gravity of the offence and that compensation be provided to the victims or their families, and that all persons under Israel's jurisdiction and effective control be afforded full enjoyment of the rights enshrined in the Covenant,

Recalling that, under the terms of the Israel/Hamas-brokered prisoner exchange, Israel released 477 Palestinian prisoners on 18 October 2011 and another 550 Palestinian prisoners during December 2011, and that those released included prisoners convicted of plotting suicide bombings inside buses and restaurants, such as Ahlam Tamimi, who had been sentenced to 16 life sentences, but not Mr. Barghouti; *recalling also* that several members of the Knesset have in the past called for Mr. Barghouti's release, including Amir Peretz in March 2008 and later Guideon Ezra, member of Kadima, and that, following Mr. Barghouti's election in August 2009 to Fatah's Central Committee, the then Israeli Minister for Minority Affairs, Avishai Braverman, expressed support for his release,

Considering that the Speaker, in his letter of 4 January 2012, states that "Israel, like any other democratic state, has an obligation to public order and the security of its citizens and to bring to trial individuals who threaten their lives. The claim that terrorists with blood on their hands should somehow be entitled to impunity due to holding a technical title of a parliamentarian defies international law, Israeli domestic law and common sense; the report mentions the hope for an early release of [...] Mr. Barghouti. Given the details of (his case) and convictions, it is difficult to understand how the IPU would take such a position",

² CCPR/C/ISR/CO/3.

Considering that, reportedly after calling on Palestinians on 26 March 2012 to put an immediate stop to negotiations with Israel, Mr. Barghouti was put into solitary confinement,

1. *Thanks* the Speaker for his communication and cooperation;
2. *Stresses* that its objective is to ensure that parliamentarians subject to judicial proceedings stand trial in a court of law affording all the guarantees of due process and not, contrary to what the Speaker affirms, to shield them from being held to account for any crimes they may have committed;
3. *Reaffirms* its position in this regard that Mr. Barghouti's arrest and transfer to Israeli territory were in violation of international law; *also reaffirms*, in the light of the compelling legal arguments put forward in Mr. Foreman's report, on which the Israeli authorities have not provided observations, that Mr. Barghouti's trial failed to meet the fair-trial standards which Israel, as a party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, is bound to respect, and that as a result Mr. Barghouti's guilt has not been established;
4. *Reiterates*, therefore, its call for his immediate release;
5. *Is concerned* at Mr. Barghouti's recent solitary confinement and the allegations invoked to justify it; *wishes* to receive an official response on the matter and to know how long Mr. Barghouti will remain in solitary confinement; *remains eager* to receive official information regarding the conditions under which Mr. Barghouti is usually held, in particular as regards his family visiting rights and the access to medical care afforded him;
6. *Considers* that the many national and international reports denouncing the conditions of detention of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails should be of concern to the Knesset; *reaffirms* that the Knesset is not only fully entitled to but should exercise its oversight function in respect of the Israeli prison service with regard not only to Israeli but also to Palestinian prisoners and so ensure that all persons under Israel's jurisdiction and effective control are afforded full enjoyment of the rights enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;
7. *Reiterates* its long-standing wish to be granted permission to visit Mr. Barghouti;
8. *Requests* the Secretary General to forward this resolution to the Speaker of the Knesset and to the competent governmental and administrative authorities, and to seek from them the requested information;
9. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report to it at its next session, to be held during the 127th IPU Assembly (October 2012).

CASE No. PAL/05 - AHMAD SA'ADAT - PALESTINE / ISRAEL

Resolution adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session (Kampala, 5 April 2012)

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Referring to the case of Mr. Ahmad Sa'adat, elected in January 2006 to the Palestinian Legislative Council, and to the resolution adopted at its 189th session (October 2011),

Taking into account the letter from the Speaker of the Knesset dated 4 January 2012,

Referring also to the study produced by the Israeli non-governmental organization Yesh Din (Volunteers for Human Rights) on the implementation of due process rights in Israeli military courts in the West Bank, entitled Backyard Proceedings, which reveals the absence of due process rights in those courts, and to the study published in September 2006 by B'Tselem (the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories), entitled Barred from Contact: Violation of the Right to Visit Palestinians Held in Israeli Prisons,

Recalling the following:

- On 14 March 2006, Mr. Sa'adat, whom the Israeli authorities had accused of involvement in the October 2001 murder of Mr. R. Zeevi, the Israeli Minister of Tourism, was abducted by the Israeli Defence Forces from Jericho jail and transferred to Hadarim prison in Israel together with four other prisoners suspected of involvement in the murder; the Israeli authorities concluded one month later that Mr. Sa'adat had not been involved in the killing but charged the other four suspects; 19 other charges were subsequently brought against Mr. Sa'adat, all arising from his leadership of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), which Israel considers a terrorist organization, and none of which allege direct involvement in crimes of violence; on 25 December 2008, Mr. Sa'adat was sentenced to 30 years in prison;
- Mr. Sa'adat suffers from cervical neck pain, high blood pressure and asthma and has reportedly not been examined by a physician and is not receiving the medical treatment he needs; when he was first detained, the Israeli authorities refused to let his wife visit him; for the first seven months, Mr. Sa'adat received no family visits; his children, who have Palestinian identity cards, have not been allowed to visit their father since his arrest, for reasons unknown; in March and June 2009, Mr. Sa'adat was placed in solitary confinement, prompting him to go on a nine-day hunger strike in June 2009;
- On 21 October 2010, Mr. Sa'adat's isolation order, due to expire on 21 April 2011, was confirmed a fourth time for a further six months; it was apparently again extended in October 2011, bringing Mr. Sa'adat's time in isolation to three years,

Noting that, in protest against the abusive use of isolation by the Israeli Prison Service and the announcement in July 2011 by Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu of a new punitive policy further restricting prisoner access to education and family visits and increasing the use of isolation and fines as punishment, prisoners held in different Israeli prisons started a hunger strike in early October 2011, and that, according to one of the sources, prisoners from the PFLP have laid particular emphasis in their actions on showing solidarity with Mr. Sa'adat,

Recalling that, under the terms of the Israel/Hamas-brokered prisoner exchange, Israel released 477 Palestinian prisoners on 18 October 2011 and another 550 Palestinian prisoners during December 2011, and that those released included prisoners convicted of plotting suicide bombings inside buses and restaurants, such as Ahlam Tamimi, who had been sentenced to 16 life sentences, but not Mr. Sa'adat,

Considering that the Speaker of the Knesset, in his letter of 4 January 2012, states that "Israel, like any other democratic state, has an obligation to public order and the security of its citizens and to bring to trial individuals who threaten their lives. The claim that terrorists with blood on their hands should somehow be entitled to impunity due to holding a technical title of a parliamentarian defies international law, Israeli domestic law and common sense; the report mentions the hope for an early release of [...] Mr. Sa'adat. Given the details of (his case) and convictions, it is difficult to understand how the IPU would take such a position",

Recalling that, in its concluding observations on Israel's third periodic report under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,³ the United Nations Human Rights Committee recommended that all persons under Israel's jurisdiction and effective control be afforded full enjoyment of the rights enshrined in the Covenant,

1. *Thanks* the Speaker for his communication and cooperation; *regrets*, however, that the former does not address its concern at what seems to be a systematic renewal of Mr. Sa'adat's isolation order, which will inevitably seriously impair his state of health;
2. *Urges* the authorities once again to refrain from extending Mr. Sa'adat's isolation order, and *recalls* that they are responsible for any irremediable harm to his health while in their custody;
3. *Stresses once again* that, under international human rights law, all persons deprived of their liberty have the right to be treated with humanity and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person, and not to be subjected to torture and to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; *recalls* that international human rights bodies, particularly the United Nations

³ CCPR/C/ISR/CO/3.

Committee against Torture and the United Nations Human Rights Committee, have on several occasions concluded that prolonged periods of isolation are an act of cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment;

4. *Reiterates* its wish to ascertain Mr. Sa'adat's current conditions of detention and to be granted permission to visit him;
5. *Considers* that the many national and international reports denouncing the detention conditions of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails should be of concern to the Knesset; *reaffirms* that the Knesset is not only fully entitled to but should exercise its oversight function in respect of the Israeli prison service with regard not only to Israeli but also to Palestinian prisoners, and so ensure that all persons under Israel's jurisdiction and effective control are afforded full enjoyment of the rights enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;
6. *Stresses* that its objective is to ensure that parliamentarians subject to judicial proceedings stand trial in a court of law affording all the guarantees of due process and not, contrary to what the Speaker affirms, to shield them from being held to account for any crimes they may have committed;
7. *Reaffirms* its position that Mr. Sa'adat's abduction and transfer to Israel were related not to the murder charge but rather to his political activities as PFLP General Secretary, and that the proceedings brought against him were, therefore, based on political considerations; *reiterates*, therefore, its call for his immediate release;
8. *Requests* the Secretary General to forward this resolution to the Speaker of the Knesset and to the competent Israeli governmental and administrative authorities, and to seek from them the requested information;
9. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report to it at its next session, to be held during the 127th IPU Assembly (October 2012).

PALESTINE / ISRAEL

CASE No. PAL/16 - OMAR MATAR

(alias OMAR ABDEL RAZEQ)

CASE No. PAL/17 - NAYEF AL-ROJOUN

CASE No. PAL/22 - ANWAR ZBOUN

CASE No. PAL/24 - ABDULJABER AL-FUQAHA

CASE No. PAL/25 - KHALIL AL-RABIA

CASE No. PAL/27 - NASER ABDULJAWAD

CASE No. PAL/28 - MUHAMMAD ABU-TEIR

CASE No. PAL/29 - AHMAD ATTOUN

CASE No. PAL/30 - MUHAMMAD TOTAH

CASE No. PAL/34 - MOHAMED MAHER BADER

CASE No. PAL/35 - MOHAMED ISMAIL AL-TAL

CASE No. PAL/36 - FADEL SALEH HAMDAN

CASE No. PAL/38 - SAMEER SAFEH AL-KADI

CASE No. PAL/40 - ABDEL AZIZ DWEIK

CASE No. PAL/43 - M. MOTLAK ABU JHEASHEH

CASE No. PAL/47 - HATEM QFEISHEH

CASE No. PAL/48 - MAHMOUD AL-RAMAHI

CASE No. PAL/49 - ABDERRAHMAN ZAIDAN

CASE No. PAL/52 - NIZAR RAMADAN

CASE No. PAL/53 - AZZAM SALHAB

CASE No. PAL/54 - KHALED TAFISH

CASE No. PAL/55 - MOHAMMED AL-NATSEH

CASE No. PAL/56 - AHMED AL-HAJ ALI

CASE No. PAL/57 - HASAN YOUSEF

CASE No. PAL/58 - AYMAN EL DARGHMAH

***Resolution adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session
(Kampala, 5 April 2012)***

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Referring to the case of the above-mentioned parliamentarians, all of whom were elected to the Palestinian Legislative Council in January 2006, and to the resolution adopted at its 189th session (October 2011),

Taking into account the letter from the Speaker of the Knesset dated 4 January 2012,

Referring to the report (CL/189/11(b)-R.2) on the hearing of 26 July 2011 before the Supreme Court regarding the revocation of the Jerusalem residence permits of Mr. Muhammad Abu-Teir, Mr. Ahmad Attoun and Mr. Mohamed Totah, prepared by the IPU trial observer, Mr. Alex McBride,

Recalling the following: the parliamentarians concerned were elected to the Palestinian Legislative Council in January 2006 on the Electoral Platform for Change and Reform and were arrested following the kidnapping of an Israeli soldier on 25 June 2006; they were prosecuted and found guilty of membership of a terrorist organization (Hamas), of holding a seat in parliament on behalf of that organization, of providing services to it by sitting on parliamentary committees, and of supporting an illegal organization; they were sentenced to prison terms of up to 40 months,

Considering that, while most of the parliamentarians concerned were released after serving their sentences, many were subsequently rearrested, sometimes several times, and placed in administrative detention, and that 23 of them are reportedly currently being held in administrative detention, nine of them for more than a year,

Bearing in mind the following information provided regarding administrative detention:

- According to the Israeli authorities, Hamas members of the Palestinian Legislative Council have had to be held in administrative detention in recent years because "they have frequently abused their positions and immunities as parliamentarians to promote and facilitate the terrorist activities of Hamas, including through the collection of funds in support of Hamas' military operations, and the recruitment of human and other resources in order to improve Hamas' organizational strength";
- The Israeli authorities point out that Military Order 1651, which empowers the commander of the Israeli Defence Forces to hold a person in administrative detention for up to six months and to prolong that detention if the rationale for it is still applicable, is based on the Law of Belligerent Occupation, a regular procedure as prescribed in Article 78 of the Fourth 1949 Geneva Convention and a legal instrument used to maintain public order or security in the area; the Israeli Supreme Court has ruled, that in order to apply the exceptional measure of administrative detention, there must be current and reliable information that a person poses a specific and concrete threat, and all alternative criminal procedures must have been exhausted before recourse is had to administrative detention; there are two avenues of judicial review, namely the independent and impartial military courts, which have the authority to assess the material relevant to the detainee in question in order to determine whether the decision to detain him/her was reasonable given his/her general rights to a fair trial and freedom of movement, and military prosecution, which implements a "cautious and level-headed" policy in the use of administrative detention, an approach reflected in fewer administrative detention orders;
- In his letter of 4 January 2012, the Speaker of the Knesset stresses that those detained have the right to appeal their detentions or other aspects of their handling before a second instance of appeal within the military court and to petition Israel's Supreme Court; the Speaker refers to two examples of Hamas officials who appealed their administrative detention orders (Mr. Omar Matar, a member of the Palestine Legislative Council (PAL/16) and Mr. Anwar Zboun (PAL/22), but whose appeals were subsequently rejected by the Court; the Speaker stresses that "every issuance of an Administrative Detention Order is regularly given serious consideration by both the prosecution and the Court"; he points to the case of Mr. Hamza Julis, who was released on 5 September 2011, and to the fact that the prosecution decided not to request an additional period of administrative detention in his case; in other instances, he continues, "the court has limited the prosecution's ability to request additional detention orders. In the case of Mr. Nazar Abdullah Alguad, the court ruled in the judicial review of his current administrative detention for the period of 28/10/2011 - 28/02/2012, that unless new and serious evidence will be brought before it, it will not approve a new administrative order";
- Human rights organizations in and outside Israel have stressed that military commanders in the West Bank are entitled to impose administrative detention of up to six months if they have "reasonable grounds to presume that the security of the area or public security requires

detention"; the Military Order does not define the terms "security of the area" and "public security" or stipulate a maximum cumulative period of administrative detention; it thus allows indefinite arbitrary detention; charges against prisoners, including the parliamentarians in question, are usually related to a "security threat", but the area and nature of the threat are not specified and evidence not disclosed; although administrative detainees are entitled to appeal, this right is ineffective as the detainees and their lawyers do not have access to the information on which the orders are based and are therefore unable to present a meaningful defence,

Recalling the following regarding the situation of the three parliamentarians whose Jerusalem residence permits were revoked:

- On 28 May 2006, the then Israeli Minister of the Interior revoked the Jerusalem residence permits of Mr. Abu-Teir, Mr. Totah and Mr. Attoun, arguing that they had shown disloyalty to Israel by holding seats in the Palestinian Legislative Council; the order was not implemented owing to their arrest on 26 June 2006; after their release in May-June 2010, they were immediately notified that they had to leave East Jerusalem; Mr. Abu-Teir was ordered to leave by 19 June 2010 and, refusing to do so, was arrested on 30 June 2010 and later deported to the West Bank; the other two parliamentarians were ordered to leave by 3 July 2010 and, likewise refusing to comply with the order, took refuge in the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) building in Jerusalem; according to the sources, on the morning of 26 September 2011, when Mr. Attoun was about to give an interview to Al-Quds television, four Israeli security forces officers dressed as lawyers entered the ICRC compound and violently arrested him; the reason he has been given for his arrest is his continued presence in Jerusalem despite the Ministerial Order for him to be deported; the Speaker of the Knesset, for his part, states in his letter of 4 January 2012: "Mr. Attoun was hiding illegally within the Red Cross complex in Jerusalem (and against the wishes of the organization). In cooperation with the Red Cross, Mr. Attoun was removed from the complex on 26 September";

Considering that Mr. Attoun was convicted by the Jerusalem Magistrates Court, following a plea bargain arrangement on 6 December 2011, of being unlawfully present in Israel and sentenced to time already served and a one-month suspended sentence for a period of two years, to be served should he again violate the Entry into Israel Law, that the Israeli authorities also arrested Mr. Totah in the ICRC compound, on 23 January 2012, and that he is currently in detention awaiting trial,

Considering that, in response to a petition against the revocation of the residence permits and the deportation orders to the Supreme Court, on 23 October 2011 the Court asked the Government to respond within 30 days to the claim that the Minister of the Interior did not have legal authority to revoke a residence permit; *recalling* that the IPU trial observer, who was present at a hearing in the case on 26 July 2011, concluded that it fell short of certain basic principles of fairness; in his view, it was of particular concern that "in circumstances where the very basis of the petitioners' challenge was the secret material that had been used to their great legal detriment, the Supreme Court made no attempt to disclose a redacted version of that material to the petitioners, or to enable them otherwise to understand and challenge the basis on which their legal rights were altered",

Considering that, according to the information provided by the sources, the Israeli authorities arrested Mr. Abdel Aziz Dweik, Speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council, on 19 January 2012 at a military checkpoint near Ramallah, in the West Bank, and that Mr. Dweik is in poor health and reportedly currently being held in Ofer prison under a six-month administrative detention order that runs until July 2012; *considering also* that, on 20 January 2012, another member of the Palestinian Legislative Council, Mr. Khaled Tafish, was reportedly arrested at his home in a village east of Bethlehem and that on, 16 January 2012, the Israeli police reportedly arrested a further member, Mr. Abduljaber Al-Fuqahaa, in his home in Ramallah,

Considering, furthermore, that Mr. Ahmed Al-Haj Ali, a member of the Palestinian Legislative Council who has been in administrative detention since 6 June 2011, is 72 years old and suffers from multiple diseases, started a hunger strike at the beginning of March 2012 to protest his continued administrative detention and that of fellow parliamentarians,

Bearing in mind, lastly, that, in its concluding observations on the third periodic report of Israel under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,⁴ the United Nations Human Rights Committee recommended inter alia that all persons under Israel's jurisdiction and effective control be afforded full enjoyment of the rights enshrined in the Covenant,

1. *Thanks* the Speaker of the Knesset for his communication and cooperation;
2. *Is alarmed* at the recent administrative detention of the Speaker and two members of the Palestinian Legislative Council, thus bringing the total number of Palestinian parliamentarians held in administrative detention to 23; *deplores* this situation, which not only prevents the parliamentarians concerned - close to a fifth of the Council's total membership - from carrying out the mandate for which they were elected, but also greatly impairs the right of the Palestinian people to be represented by persons of their choice and, in the case of Mr. Dweik, constitutes an affront to the Council itself, whose authority the Speaker symbolizes;
3. *Considers* in this regard that the continued practice of administrative detention is bound to impede the proper functioning of the Palestinian Legislative Council, as its members can be arrested at any time and placed in administrative detention for as long as the Israeli military authorities wish;
4. *Expresses serious misgivings* in this respect about the ability of those held in administrative detention to benefit from due process, despite the rules pertaining thereto, Supreme Court case-law and any safeguards they contain to prevent the abusive use of administrative detention;
5. *Notes* that any decision regarding administrative detention must be based on a "specific and concrete threat", documented through "current and reliable information", preceded by a process to "exhaust the possibility of utilizing alternative criminal procedures before resorting to administrative detention", and include "the right to appeal"; *invites* the Israeli authorities to provide further information on these aspects, in particular why it is no longer possible to have recourse to normal criminal procedures and what steps they have taken to ensure an effective and meaningful appeal process;
6. *Calls on* the Israeli authorities, therefore, to abandon this practice and either to release the members of the Palestinian Legislative Council being held in administrative detention forthwith or, should there be criminal involvement, to prosecute them in full accordance with normal criminal procedure;
7. *Invites* the Knesset to review the policy of administrative detention and consider adopting legislation providing for alternative measures in conformity with internationally accepted human rights norms and practices;
8. *Is extremely concerned* about Mr. Attoun's conviction for being unlawfully present in Israel and the circumstances of the recent arrest of Mr. Totah and the fact that he is now being tried as well; *recalls* that, in keeping with Article 45 of the Hague Convention (IV) of October 1907, which is considered to enshrine rules of customary international law, the inhabitants of occupied territory, such as East Jerusalem, may not be compelled to swear allegiance to the occupying power; *wishes* to receive a copy of the response that the Israeli Government was due to submit to the Supreme Court by 23 November 2011 on the matter of the revocation of the residence permits;
9. *Requests* the Secretary General to forward this resolution to the Israeli authorities and the sources, inviting them to provide the requested information, and to communicate it to the ICRC;
10. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report to it at its next session, to be held during the 127th IPU Assembly (October 2012).

⁴ CCPR/C/ISR/CO/3.

CASE No. PHI/02 - SATURNINO OCAMPO) PHILIPPINES
CASE No. PHI/04 - TEODORO CASIÑO)
CASE No. PHI/05 - LIZA MAZA)
CASE No. PHI/06 - RAFAEL MARIANO)

***Resolution adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session
(Kampala, 5 April 2012)***

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Referring to the cases of Mr. Saturnino Ocampo, Mr. Teodoro Casiño, Ms. Liza Maza and Mr. Rafael Mariano (the so-called Batasan Four), incumbent members of the House of Representatives of the Philippines at the time the communication was submitted, and to the resolution adopted at its 189th session (October 2011),

Taking into account the letters from the Executive Director of the Inter-Parliamentary Relations and Special Affairs Bureau of the House of Representatives, dated 10 January and 12 March 2012,

Recalling that the persons concerned were, along with others, prosecuted on a charge of rebellion that was dismissed in June 2007 by the Supreme Court of the Philippines as unfounded and politically motivated; that soon after the case was dismissed, new charges were laid against them and have been pending ever since, as follows:

- Multiple murder charges were brought against the Batasan Four in 2007; one of these charges (of murder with kidnapping) was dismissed on account of inadmissible evidence (extrajudicially obtained confessions); the prosecutor proceeded with the other charges although they are based on the same inadmissible evidence; a challenge brought by the Batasan Four on the grounds of grave abuse of discretion has been pending before the Supreme Court since March 2009;
- A new charge of murder was brought against Mr. Ocampo in 2007, and his petition to have the case dismissed for lack of evidence remains pending before the Supreme Court (Leyte murder case);
- A charge of obstructing justice was brought against Mr. Casiño in May 2007 on the grounds that he had prevented an arrest; Mr. Casiño affirms that he prevented plainclothes armed police from arresting someone without an arrest warrant; the case is still awaiting resolution by the prosecutor;
- A multiple murder charge, concerning cases already dealt with in the context of the rebellion case, was brought against Mr. Ocampo in March 2008; the proceedings have been suspended pending the decision of the Supreme Court in the Leyte murder case;
- The only case which seems to be proceeding concerns a charge of abduction filed against Mr. Ocampo in March 2008, as the trial was set to start in June 2011 with the taking of petitioner's testimony in court; the update on the cases provided by the House of Representatives does not mention whether or not the case is indeed proceeding,

Recalling that the Secretary of Justice of the Philippines, in her earlier letters, has consistently affirmed that, under the administration of President Benigno S. Aquino, due process will be respected and all actions and decisions will be based on the rule of law, and that the Speaker of the House of Representatives, in his letter of 8 August 2011, likewise affirmed that the rule of law and due process would prevail in the resolution of the cases of the Batasan Four,

1. *Thanks* the Executive Director of the Inter-Parliamentary Relations and Special Affairs Bureau for the information provided;
2. *Is nevertheless deeply concerned* that the competent authorities have yet to address the prolonged stalemate affecting the cases in question; *recalls* that the right to be tried without undue delay is an element of the right to fair trial enshrined in the International Covenant on Political and Civil Rights, to which the Philippines is party, and that it is designed to ensure

people are not kept in a state of uncertainty about their fate for too long; *reaffirms* that this is particularly important in the case of members of parliament, for whom a prolonged state of uncertainty inevitably serves to impair the ability freely to exercise their parliamentary mandate;

3. *Remains* particularly concerned about the absence of any developments in the obstruction of justice case against Mr. Casiño, which has now been pending for almost five years and about which the prosecution remains unresolved, and about the failure to dismiss the kidnapping with murder case even though it is reportedly based on evidence declared inadmissible in another case;
4. *Reiterates its wish* to receive official information in this regard, as it is difficult to understand how the prosecution can remain resolved about a case such as the one against Mr. Casiño for almost five years, and how the courts can come to different conclusions regarding the inadmissibility as evidence of extrajudicial confessions;
5. *Sincerely hopes* that the stated commitment of President Aquino's administration to the rule of law and due process will also help bring about a speedy and just resolution of the judicial proceedings in this case; *wishes* in this respect once again to recall the Supreme Court's statement, in its ruling in the rebellion case, emphasizing "the importance of maintaining the integrity of criminal prosecution in general and preliminary investigations in particular" and hence of preventing the justice system from being used for political ends;
6. *Requests* the Secretary General to forward this resolution to the parliamentary authorities, to the Secretary of Justice and to the National Human Rights Commission;
7. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report to it at its next session, to be held during the 127th IPU Assembly (October 2012).

CASE No. RUS/01 - GALINA STAROVOITOVA - RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Resolution adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session (Kampala, 5 April 2012)

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Referring to the case of Ms. Galina Starovoitova, a member of the State Duma of the Russian Federation, who was assassinated on 20 November 1998, and to the resolution adopted at its 189th session (October 2011),

Taking into account the information that Mr. Sergey A. Gavrilov, a member of the Russian delegation, provided to the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians at the hearing held during the 126th IPU Assembly (April 2012),

Recalling the following information on file, as provided over the years, most recently on 9 October 2009, chiefly by the State Duma, regarding the investigation and judicial proceedings:

- In June 2005, two men, Mr. Akishin and Mr. Kolchin, were found guilty of Ms. Starovoitova's murder and sentenced to 20 years in prison by the St. Petersburg City Court, which, in its judgment, concluded that the murder had been politically motivated; in September 2007, two others were found guilty of complicity in the murder and sentenced to 11 and 2 years in prison respectively; four other suspects were acquitted and released; there are open national and international arrest warrants for three other individuals,

Recalling that Ms. Starovoitova was a prominent Russian human rights advocate and had denounced instances of high-profile corruption shortly before her assassination; *recalling also* that, in November 2009, the United Nations Human Rights Committee expressed "its concern at the alarming incidence of threats, violent assaults and murders of journalists and human rights defenders in the Russian Federation, which has created a climate of fear and a chilling effect on the media ...", and urged the Russian Federation "to take immediate action to provide effective protection and ensure the prompt, effective,

thorough, independent, and impartial investigation of threats, violent assaults and murders and, where appropriate, prosecute and initiate proceedings against the perpetrators of such acts"; *recalling further* that many States made similar recommendations during the Universal Periodic Review of the Russian Federation's compliance with its human rights obligations before the United Nations Human Rights Council (February 2009),

Recalling that elections for the State Duma took place in December 2011,

Considering the following information provided by a member of the Russian delegation during the 126th IPU Assembly:

- It has been very difficult to identify the masterminds behind Ms. Starovoitova's murder, which has to be seen in the context of her political activism; after it became possible, as of 2006, to reduce sentences in return for the convict's cooperation in providing essential information about unresolved crimes, Mr. Kolchin cooperated to help advance the investigation, which was recently resumed, into Ms. Starovoitova's murder; as a result, the authorities were able to identify Mr. Mikhael Glushchenko, a former member of parliament and a businessman involved in large-scale criminal activities, as the presumed mastermind; Mr. Glushchenko is now a formal suspect in the investigation into Ms. Starovoitova's murder and was recently found guilty of extortion and sentenced to a long term in prison, which he is currently serving;
 - The State Duma is fully committed to shedding light on and establishing accountability for Ms. Starovoitova's murder and has recently set up an anti-corruption and security committee that is monitoring the case and enquiring of the Prosecutor General's Office about further developments; it should be possible to communicate further information on the investigation and proceedings to the IPU in the coming months,
1. *Thanks* the member of the Russian delegation for the valuable information and cooperation he provided;
 2. *Is pleased* that the pursuit of justice in this case appears to be finally making progress towards identifying the mastermind(s) behind Ms. Starovoitova's murder; *is also pleased* that the current State Duma is taking an active interest in the case; *is convinced* that this show of interest in the case of a former colleague killed for having exercised her right to freedom of speech is critical to helping ensure that full justice is rendered;
 3. *Looks forward* to receiving information about further developments in the investigation, the start of trial proceedings and the continued monitoring of the case by the State Duma, in particular its specialized committee; *is particularly interested* to know if the results obtained thus far in the investigation show whether Mr. Glushchenko masterminded the crime on his own or with the help of accomplices;
 4. *Requests* the Secretary General to bring this resolution to the attention of the parliamentary authorities and to the source;
 5. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report to it at its next session, to be held during the 127th IPU Assembly (October 2012).

CASE No. RW/06 - LÉONARD HITIMANA - RWANDA

Resolution adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session (Kampala, 5 April 2012)

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Referring to the case of Mr. Léonard Hitimana, who disappeared in April 2003 while he was a member of the Transitional National Assembly of Rwanda, which was subsequently dissolved on 22 August 2003, and to the resolution adopted at its 189th session (October 2011); *referring also* to the report of the on-site mission which the Committee carried out in June 2011 (CL/189/11(b)-R.3),

Recalling that the Speakers of both houses of parliament, in their letter of 14 October 2011, reported that they were unaware of any new evidence having emerged since the mission,

Considering that, according to information provided by one of the sources on 29 March 2012, Mr. Hitimana's disappearance had still not been seriously investigated,

1. *Regrets* that, despite the fact that all the authorities with whom the mission met agreed that Mr. Hitimana's disappearance had to be fully elucidated, there has apparently been no progress in this regard in the last nine months;
2. *Recalls* that the information gathered by the mission clearly shows that the assumption that Mr. Hitimana fled abroad cannot stand and that, consequently, any investigation based on that assumption is bound to fail, as is borne out by the inquiries made so far; *stresses* that, as the mission report shows, Mr. Hitimana was not a junior politician but played an important role in his party, particularly at the time of his disappearance;
3. *Once again calls* on the authorities to carry out an effective investigation examining all lines of enquiry; *recalls* in this regard that the Minister of Justice pledged to the mission that he would ensure that the investigation would also cover the possibility that Mr. Hitimana had been assassinated in Rwanda; *sincerely hopes* that, with the new lines of inquiry being followed, new evidence will soon emerge, and *looks forward* to receiving information to this effect;
4. *Remains eager* to ascertain the measures taken by the authorities to address a key obstacle encountered by the mission and affecting the pursuit of justice, namely the impossibility of meeting witnesses; *is eager*, therefore, to know whether the planned witness protection law has indeed been adopted and what practical steps have been taken as a result, and whether other initiatives have been put forward to reassure potential witnesses in Rwanda that their safety will be fully guaranteed if they come forward; *believes* that the investigation may also benefit from hearing any witnesses living abroad in their countries of residence, in particular by means of videoconferencing; *wishes* to know whether the authorities intend to explore this possibility;
5. *Deplores* that, contrary to what the mission was told, the release for humanitarian reasons of Mr. Hitimana's father, who is over 70 years old and in poor health, has not yet taken place;
6. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this resolution to the parliamentary authorities and to the sources;
7. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and report to it at its next session, to be held during the 127th IPU Assembly (October 2012).

CASE No. SRI/49 - JOSEPH PARARAJASINGHAM - SRI LANKA

Resolution adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session (Kampala, 5 April 2012)

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Referring to the case of Mr. Joseph Pararajasingham, a member of the Parliament of Sri Lanka assassinated on 24 December 2005, and to the resolution adopted at its 189th session (October 2011); *referring also* to the report of the on-site mission to Sri Lanka carried out by the Committee in February 2008 (CL/183/12(b)-R.2),

Taking into account the information that Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe, Special Envoy of the President of Sri Lanka for Human Rights, provided to the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians at the hearing held during the 126th IPU Assembly (April 2012),

Recalling the following information on file:

- Mr. Pararajasingham, a member of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA), was shot dead on 24 December 2005 during the Christmas Eve mass at St. Mary's Church in Batticaloa by unidentified gunmen in the presence of some 300 people; his wife and seven other people sustained gunshot injuries; St. Mary's Church is located in a high-security zone between two military checkpoints; at the time of the murder, additional security forces were on duty, which suggests that the culprits could have escaped only with the complicity of the security forces;

- According to the information provided by Minister Samarasinghe in October 2009, one of the main problems was the question of witnesses, as the priest playing the organ had been unable to identify any suspects and witnesses were afraid to come forward,

Recalling that Minister Samarasinghe had reported on a previous occasion that the Witness Protection Bill debated in Parliament in 2008 had not been passed and had subsequently lapsed owing to the dissolution of parliament, so that party leaders would have to discuss the matter anew; *also recalling* that the Bill had been criticized by many, in particular by human rights groups, as providing victims and witnesses with inadequate protection; *considering* that Minister Samarasinghe, on the occasion of the hearing at the 126th IPU Assembly, stated that the Government was ready to present the new Witness Protection Bill but that the opposition had requested more time to study it; once the political party leaders were in agreement the Bill would be tabled for discussion in Parliament,

Considering that Minister Samarasinghe, on the occasion of the hearing at the 126th IPU Assembly, reiterated that the investigation into Mr. Pararajasingham's murder had been laid by and could be reactivated if and when fresh material was received,

1. *Thanks* Minister Samarasinghe for his cooperation;
2. *Remains deeply disturbed* that, in the more than six years since Mr. Pararajasingham's murder, the authorities have made no progress whatsoever in identifying and holding to account the culprits of this high-profile murder, particularly since there is serious reason to believe that, because of where the murder took place, it was perpetrated with the complicity of security and army personnel;
3. *Remains deeply concerned* that the inconclusiveness of the investigation may be due to the absence of eyewitness testimony, which can only mean that, given the circumstances of the crime, witnesses are still afraid to assist with the investigation;
4. *Regrets*, therefore, that an effective witness protection programme, a basic but essential step in the fight against impunity, is still lacking; *reaffirms its belief* that such a programme will only be effective if it offers clear and effective security allowing victims and witnesses to come forward without fear of reprisal; *sincerely hopes* that the Bill establishing such a programme will indeed soon be presented to Parliament; *wishes* to receive a copy thereof as soon as it is available and to be kept informed of any other developments in this regard;
5. *Calls on* the investigative authorities simultaneously and actively to seek fresh evidence, instead of waiting for such evidence to be brought to their attention; *recalls* that Parliament, in the exercise of its oversight function, is entitled to help ensure that an investigation is carried out, especially when it concerns a member; *wishes*, therefore, to ascertain the views of Parliament on taking such an initiative;
6. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this resolution to the competent authorities and the source;
7. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report to it at its next session, to be held during the 127th IPU Assembly (October 2012).

CASE No. SRI/53 - NADARAJAH RAVIRAJ - SRI LANKA

***Resolution adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session
(Kampala, 5 April 2012)***

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Referring to the case of Mr. Nadarajah Raviraj, a member of the Parliament of Sri Lanka who was assassinated on 10 November 2006, and to the resolution adopted at its 189th session (October 2011); *referring also* to the report of the on-site mission to Sri Lanka carried out by the Committee in February 2008 (CL/183/12(b)-R.2),

Taking into account the information that Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe, Special Envoy of the President of Sri Lanka for Human Rights, provided to the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians at the hearing held during the 126th IPU Assembly (April 2012),

Recalling that Mr. Raviraj, a member of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA), was shot dead in the morning of 10 November 2006, along with his security officer, while travelling in his vehicle along a main road in Colombo, the gunman escaping on a motorcycle,

Recalling the following information about the investigation provided in the past by the authorities, which have repeatedly stated their commitment fully to elucidate this crime:

- Investigations revealed that the motorcycle was sold by two brokers named Nalaka Matagaweere and Ravindra to Arul, who at the time was living at the house of S.K.T. Jayasuriya; the latter was taken into custody together with Nalaka; Jayasuriya revealed that Arul was a former Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) member; Nalaka and Jayasuriya were later released on bail as inquiries revealed that they were not in Colombo at the time of Mr. Raviraj's assassination; arrest warrants were issued for Arul and Ravindra, who, according to the police progress report forwarded in April 2009, were strongly suspected of having gone to the areas then controlled by the LTTE;
- A Scotland Yard team arrived in Sri Lanka on 4 January 2007; it conducted investigations and recommended that further tests be carried out; the team commended the Sri Lankan investigators for their work; according to the police report of March 2010, no real breakthrough had been possible, investigations were continuing, and regular reports were being sent to the Chief Magistrate Court Colombo;
- Since the defeat of the LTTE in May 2009, the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) has attempted to trace Arul and Ravindra among the refugees from the north and has even checked 300,000 displaced people, so far to no avail; a report has been sent to the Attorney General seeking advice on further investigation, and reports from non-governmental organizations, including University Teachers for Human Rights, have been read for information about the murder, again to no avail; as regards Scotland Yard, the team took swabs of the bloodstain in the bag in which the firearm used for Mr. Raviraj's assassination was hidden and transported, and which was found at the crime scene; the swabs were profiled by Scotland Yard and preserved for matching if and when the suspects are apprehended,

Considering that, according to the latest information provided by Minister Samarasinghe, the case was to be called next for hearing in court on 11 July 2012,

1. *Thanks* Minister Samarasinghe for his cooperation;
2. *Remains deeply concerned* that, five years after Mr. Raviraj was murdered in broad daylight on a main road in Colombo, those responsible have yet to be identified and held to account;
3. *Urges* the authorities to inject fresh momentum into the investigation and, if need be, to re-examine every possible lead to help advance the course of justice; *reiterates its wish* to ascertain what further steps they intend to take for this purpose and what advice the Attorney General may have given regarding further investigation;
4. *Recalls* that Parliament, in the exercise of its oversight function, is entitled to follow an investigation, especially when it concerns a member; *wishes*, therefore, to ascertain the views of Parliament on taking such an initiative;
5. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this resolution to all the parties concerned;
6. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report to it at its next session, to be held during the 127th IPU Assembly (October 2012).

CASE No. SRI/61 - THIYAGARAJAH MAHESWARAN - SRI LANKA

***Resolution adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session
(Kampala, 5 April 2012)***

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Referring to the case of Mr. Thiyagarajah Maheswaran, a member of the Parliament of Sri Lanka who was assassinated on 1 January 2008, and to the resolution adopted at its 189th session (October 2011); *referring also* to the report of the on-site mission to Sri Lanka carried out by the Committee in February 2008 (CL/183/12(b)-R.2),

Taking into account the information that Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe, Special Envoy of the President of Sri Lanka for Human Rights, provided to the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians at the hearing held during the 126th IPU Assembly (April 2012); *also taking into account* the information which the source provided during a hearing on 31 March 2012,

Recalling the following information on file:

- The source has from the outset emphasized that Mr. Maheswaran voted against the budget on 14 December 2007 and that, soon after the vote, the number of security guards assigned to him was cut from 18 to two; Mr. Maheswaran had openly made several statements to the effect that the reduction of his security detail put his life seriously at risk and had repeatedly requested the Government to enhance his security, but to no avail; on 1 January 2008, he was shot while attending a religious ceremony in a Hindu temple in Colombo and later died in a Colombo hospital; the source has stated that the attack came after Mr. Maheswaran had said in a television interview that, when parliamentary sittings resumed on 8 January 2008, he would describe in detail the terror campaign that the Government was pursuing in Jaffna, particularly how abductions and killings were managed;
- The authorities arrested Johnson Collin Valentino alias "Wasantha", from Jaffna, who had been identified as the gunman on the basis of a DNA analysis; the investigators concluded that the assailant was a Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) activist who had been trained and sent to Colombo to kill Mr. Maheswaran; Mr. Valentino confessed to the crime;
- According to the information provided by Minister Samarasinghe in April 2011, the Attorney General had served an indictment on Mr. Valentino and the case was proceeding before the High Court of Colombo, Court No. 02; further witness and forensic evidence had confirmed the assassin's complicity,

Considering that, according to the information provided by Minister Samarasinghe at the hearing held during the 126th Assembly, a further hearing has been scheduled for 19 April 2012, but that Mrs. Vijayakala Maheswaran, one of the sources, the wife of the murdered parliamentarian and herself a member of parliament, thinks that the authorities are not taking proper action in the case and has complained about this to the Speaker and in the plenary of Parliament,

1. *Thanks* Minister Samarasinghe for his cooperation;
2. *Is concerned* that, four years after the alleged assassin was arrested and confessed, no progress has apparently been made to identify those behind this crime and their motives;
3. *Trusts* that the authorities are doing everything they can fully to elucidate and establish accountability for the murder, and *notes* that earlier concerns that the crime may be related to Mr. Maheswaran's criticism of the Government can only be dispelled once full light has been shed on the murder;
4. *Wishes to ascertain* whether Parliament has taken any action following the concerns raised by Mrs. Maheswaran regarding the investigation into her husband's murder;
5. *Recalls* in this regard that Parliament, in the exercise of its oversight function, is entitled to follow an investigation, especially when it concerns a member; *wishes*, therefore, to ascertain the views of Parliament on taking such an initiative;

6. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this resolution to the Speaker of Parliament and to Minister Samarasinghe, inviting them to provide the requested information and to keep the Committee informed of the proceedings;
 7. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report to it at its next session, to be held during the 127th IPU Assembly (October 2012).
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CASE No. SRI/63 - D.M. DASSANAYAKE - SRI LANKA

***Resolution adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session
(Kampala, 5 April 2012)***

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Referring to the case of Mr. D.M. Dassanayake, Minister of Nation-Building and a member of the Parliament of Sri Lanka, who was assassinated on 8 January 2008, and to the resolution adopted at its 189th session (October 2011); *referring also* to the report of the on-site mission to Sri Lanka carried out by the Committee in February 2008 (CL/183/12(b)-R.2),

Taking into account the information that Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe, Special Envoy of the President of Sri Lanka for Human Rights, provided to the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians at the hearing held during the 126th IPU Assembly (April 2012),

Recalling the following: Mr. D.M. Dassanayake was killed on 8 January 2008, along with a bodyguard, in a roadside Claymore mine attack while on his way to parliament; the subsequent arrest of a key Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) suspect operating in Colombo led to the arrest of other suspects whose revelations resulted in the recovery of the remote-control device used to detonate the explosive that killed Mr. Dassanayake,

Also recalling that, in April 2011, Minister Samarasinghe reported that, with regard to the three suspects, an indictment had been issued for W.D. Hyacinth and sent by the Attorney General on 31 March 2011 to the Negombo High Court, and charges of conspiracy and abetting murder were being finalized against the other two suspects; *considering* that, according to the latest information provided by Minister Samarasinghe, all three suspects have now been indicted; one has confessed and been found guilty, and trial proceedings are pending for the other two, with a hearing scheduled for 27 March 2012,

1. *Thanks* Minister Samarasinghe for his cooperation;
 2. *Takes note with interest* that the court has reached a verdict regarding one of the suspects and *wishes* to receive a copy thereof;
 3. *Trusts* that the court will act diligently on the indictment against the other two suspects and *would appreciate* being kept informed of progress in the proceedings;
 4. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this resolution to the authorities and to the sources;
 5. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report to it at its next session, to be held during the 127th IPU Assembly (October 2012).
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CASE No. TK/55 - MEHMET SINÇAR - TURKEY

***Resolution adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session
(Kampala, 5 April 2012)***

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Referring to the case of Mr. Mehmet Sinçar, a former member of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey of Kurdish origin, who was shot dead at close range in September 1993 in Batman, and to the resolution adopted at its 189th session (October 2011),

Recalling that two individuals, Mr. Rifat Demir and Mr. Cihan Yildiz, were found guilty of the many murders, including that of Mr. Sinçar, perpetrated in the 1990s in south-eastern Turkey; that both were sentenced to life imprisonment; that Mr. Sinçar's family, which was admitted as joint plaintiff in the proceedings, appealed the verdict, which it considered to have failed to establish the identity of the instigators or to take account of reports showing that the many assassinations during the period in question in south-eastern Turkey, which is where Mr. Sinçar was killed, were part of a "State policy" to combat terrorism; *considering* that the appeal proceedings are currently under way,

Considering that the source recently informed the Committee that two books published in the 1990s refer to statements by intelligence agents acknowledging the involvement of the Turkish Intelligence Service in Mr. Sinçar's murder and identifying five agents who were involved in planning and executing the crime and whose names are apparently often mentioned in connection with political assassinations and forced disappearances,

1. *Takes note with interest* of the information provided by the source and *requests* the Turkish parliamentary authorities to indicate whether or not it was examined during the investigation and to what effect;
2. *Remains hopeful* that the ongoing judicial proceedings will open up a real prospect for the full elucidation of Mr. Sinçar's assassination;
3. *Requests* the Secretary General to inform the Turkish parliamentary authorities, the source and Mr. Sinçar's family accordingly;
4. *Requests* the Committee to continue following the proceedings, including, if possible, through the services of a trial observer, and to report to it at its next session, to be held on the occasion of the 127th IPU Assembly (October 2012).

CASE No. ZBW/20 - JOB SIKHALA) ZIMBABWE
CASE No. ZBW/27 - PAUL MADZORE)
CASE No. ZBW/44 - NELSON CHAMISA)

***Resolution adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 190th session
(Kampala, 5 April 2012)***

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Referring to the cases of Mr. Job Sikhala, Mr. Paul Madzore and Mr. Nelson Chamisa, members of the Opposition at the time the complaint was submitted, and to the resolution adopted at its 189th session (October 2011),

Noting the absence of any communication from either the authorities or the sources regarding these cases, which concerns the continuing impunity of State officials reportedly responsible for the torture in January 2003 and March 2007 of Mr. Sikhala and Mr. Madzore and their alleged failure to act when Mr. Chamisa was beaten up at Harare International Airport on 18 March 2007, the culprits having remained unpunished as well,

Recalling that the Speaker of the House of Assembly of Zimbabwe has repeatedly stated in the past that Parliament is firmly committed to protecting the human rights of its members and to taking action to this end, within the limits imposed by the doctrine of the separation of powers,

1. *Requests* the Secretary General to impress once more upon the authorities the need to act decisively on the long-standing serious concerns expressed in its resolution of April 2011 by taking effective steps to identify and punish the culprits of both the torture and the attack and to follow up on the legal complaints filed by Mr. Sikhala and Mr. Madzore; *is particularly anxious* to ascertain that the Parliament of Zimbabwe is indeed exercising, in line with its stated commitment to protect the rights of its members, its duty of oversight to ensure that the competent authorities are acting accordingly;
2. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this resolution to the parliamentary and competent authorities and to invite them once again to provide the long-awaited details of any action taken in this respect; *also requests* him to transmit the resolution to the three persons concerned with the request that they furnish any new relevant information in their possession;
3. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining these cases and to report to it at its next session, to be held during the 127th IPU Assembly (October 2012).