



Inter-Parliamentary Union

For democracy. For everyone.

136th IPU Assembly

Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1- 5 April 2017



The role of parliament in respecting the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of States

Resolution adopted by consensus by the 136th IPU Assembly
(Dhaka, 5 April 2017)*

The 136th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Reaffirming that the principle of refraining from the threat or use of force and the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of sovereign States are part of the fundamental pillars of international law and international relations,

Recalling the relevant provisions of the resolution adopted by the 132nd IPU Assembly (Hanoi, 2015) *International law as it relates to national sovereignty, non-intervention in the internal affairs of States and human rights*; the resolution adopted by the 128th IPU Assembly (Quito, 2013) *Enforcing the responsibility to protect: The role of parliament in safeguarding civilians' lives*, including its sections relating to international law, human rights, national sovereignty and non-intervention in the internal affairs of States; and the resolution adopted by the 126th IPU Assembly (Kampala, 2012) *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*,

Affirming that the UN instruments, which stipulate the inadmissibility of external intervention — the Charter of the United Nations, the Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention in the Domestic Affairs of States and the protection of their Independence and Sovereignty (1965), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966), the Friendly Relations Declaration (1970), General Assembly resolution 3314 (XXIX) (1974), the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe "The Helsinki Final Act" (1975), the Declaration on the Deepening and Consolidation of International Detente (1977), the Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention and Interference in the Internal Affairs of States (1981), the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (1993) and the 2005 World Summit Outcome — should be respected,

Stressing the responsibility of parliaments to strengthen democracy, promote, protect and encourage respect for human rights, support dialogue, encourage the peaceful settlement of internal disputes, take all necessary actions to consolidate national unity and peaceful negotiation among different sectors of society, and prevent the forcible overthrow of democratically elected and legitimate governments, in accordance with States' obligations under international law and human rights law, including the responsibility to protect as agreed in the 2005 World Summit Outcome,

Underscoring that the people of each country have the inalienable right to determine their own political future, and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development, in accordance with international law,

* The delegations of Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Latvia, Malta, Norway, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine and the United Kingdom expressed a reservation on the entire resolution.

Underlining, however, that the great challenges which mankind is facing today, such as climate change, terrorism, war and refugees, can no longer be met by one State alone, and that therefore an ever-closer cooperation of parliaments will be necessary,

Expressing its concern about the role of parliaments and their basis in society, in view of numerous arrests of journalists, increasing limitations on civil society's scope for action, and certain tendencies to disempower parliaments by proclaiming over-extended states of emergency or by the unlawful arrest of deputies,

Stressing that parliaments owe their duties to all individuals within a State, and that all human beings without exception bear universal and indivisible human rights,

Aware that the decisions and resolutions of the UN Security Council have universal legitimacy in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, and that any derogations from those decisions that may be binding in nature may run contrary to international law and the stable rules of international relations, in particular when addressing issues relating to aggression and intervention in the internal affairs of sovereign States,

Highlighting both the constructive and preventive nature of parliamentary diplomacy, including its capacity to diffuse or avert tensions and resolve conflicts by peaceful means,

Noting that democracy, good governance and development are inextricably linked and *underscoring* the need to maintain support for democracy in times of economic hardship,

Reaffirming the vital role of women in the prevention and settlement of conflicts, and the importance of women's full and equal participation in all efforts to preserve and promote peace and security, and the need to reinforce the role of women in the decision-making processes associated with conflict prevention and settlement,

Affirming the important role of the equal participation and full involvement of young people in the prevention and settlement of conflicts, and particularly in ensuring the sustainability, inclusiveness and success of peacebuilding and peacekeeping efforts,

Emphasizing the importance of the equal participation and full involvement of national, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and persons with disabilities within the democratic framework of the State as part of an inclusive society, which provides a forum for the peaceful resolution of differences,

Believing that all States and parliaments are taking stock of the main lessons to be drawn from the dramatic events in the Middle East, North Africa, Eastern Europe and elsewhere in the world, and that those institutions acknowledge that it is important to pursue democratic constitutional reforms and adopt new laws that ensure government accountability and equal opportunities for all; and *stressing* the need for parliaments and the IPU to continue their support for these democratization processes,

1. *Reiterates* the need to respect absolutely and adhere fully to the Purposes and Principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, and in particular to respect the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of States, and non-intervention in the internal affairs of States;
2. *Strongly urges* all States to fulfil their obligations under international law, to condemn terrorism in all its forms, as manifested in the invasion and occupation of territories, ethnic cleansing and displacement, the destruction of humanity's archaeological heritage, the establishment of child armies, the abuse of women, and suicide operations; these obligations include refraining from the threat or use of force and respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of other States, while also respecting, promoting and protecting the human rights of everyone within their territory;
3. *Urges* parliaments to promote, protect and respect all human rights without distinction as a fundamental basis for the democratic life of national parliaments, and to defend and promote human rights, the rule of law and democracy;

4. *Affirms* that the only way to conduct inter-State relations is to constantly observe the universally recognized principles and rules of international law; and *urges* all States to work towards denying terrorist organizations resources, whether human, military or financial;
5. *Underlines* the role of parliaments in preventing external intervention that threatens States' sovereignty and independence;
6. *Urges* parliaments to establish national legal bases and mechanisms to prevent or counter external intervention in the internal affairs of independent States;
7. *Calls on* parliaments to work on conflict prevention and implementing peacebuilding strategies as part of their parliamentary relations agenda;
8. *Urges* parliaments to resist, with all available means, the politically motivated withdrawal of the immunity of elected members of parliament;
9. *Also urges* parliaments to help ensure a clear separation of powers through an effective system of checks and balances;
10. *Resolutely condemns* all threats or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State;
11. *Urges* parliaments to contribute to increasing the number of working women and to guarantee the principle of equal opportunities in decision-making forums in subnational, national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms designed to prevent and settle conflicts;
12. *Also urges* parliaments to consider ways to increase the number of young people involved in decision-making processes at all levels of national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms designed to prevent outside intervention in the internal affairs of sovereign States and to respect amicable relations between them,
13. *Further urges* parliaments to put in place mechanisms to ensure the representation in the institutions of government of persons with disabilities, minorities and other marginalized groups,
14. *Calls on* all States, regardless of their political, economic, social and cultural systems, to fulfil their duty and responsibility to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with the provisions of international law governing relations among sovereign States;
15. *Also calls on* States to prioritize guidelines for development cooperation, such as the Sustainable Development Goals, which aim to promote democratic quality and stability indicators;
16. *Welcomes* the contributions of the IPU and parliaments to promoting lasting peace; and *calls for* tensions among peoples to be defused wherever they arise, not only through collective action across political, cultural and religious divides, but also through engaging in a constructive, effective and comprehensive dialogue with all other ethnic, religious and social groups as a means of settling disputes among all States;
17. *Calls on* parliaments to support the State in the fulfilment of its responsibility to protect populations within its borders from incitement to commit, and the commission of, genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing, and only to approve intervention in a foreign State that fails to provide this protection when such intervention is in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations;
18. *Emphasizes* the need to carefully define and assess situations where the responsibility to protect doctrine may potentially be invoked; and *underlines* that military force used under that doctrine shall be deployed as a last resort after exhausting all available diplomatic channels.