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Geneva, 25 May 2011

**PARLIAMENTARY MEETING ON THE OCCASION OF
THE UNITED NATIONS CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE (COP7/CMP7)**
Advance Information Note

Dear Madam President,
Dear Mr. President,

The next full-scale session of the United Nations Climate Change Conference will take place in Durban, South Africa, from 28 November to 9 December 2011. Held under the auspices of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the annual sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention (COP) and the meetings of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP) attract tens of thousands of participants from government, parliament, business, academia, the scientific community and non-governmental organizations. The most recent of such sessions, COP16/CMP6, took place in Cancún, Mexico, in December 2010.

The IPU has taken the lead in mobilizing parliaments to take an active part in this process. Together with the Mexican Congress, the IPU organized a Parliamentary Meeting in Cancún, which was attended by nearly 300 participants. The Meeting adopted by consensus an outcome document that was subsequently conveyed by the IPU President to the Chairperson of COP16/CMP6.

The outcome document of the Parliamentary Meeting in Cancún urged IPU Members to focus their climate-related work on adaptation strategies and intersectoral measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The document stressed that elaboration of national climate-related budgets and implementing legislation should be based on the concept of solidarity across regions and generations and should include gender-focused programmes and incentives. Adequate attention should be devoted to new instruments such as vulnerability and risk mapping, emissions registers, disaster management and early warning systems. IPU Members were also invited to provide examples of best practices in terms of reducing the carbon footprint of parliaments.

At its 118th session (Panama, April 2011), the Governing Council of the IPU endorsed those recommendations and decided to pursue efforts to mobilize the parliamentary community around the issue of climate change. To this end, the Council requested the IPU Secretary General to carry out the necessary consultations with the Parliament of South Africa with a view to holding a Parliamentary Meeting on the occasion of COP17/CMP7.

I am pleased to inform you that the IPU and the Parliament of South Africa have already embarked on the practical preparations for such a Meeting, which will be held in Durban on **5 December 2011**, at a venue to be announced. As on past occasions, the Meeting is intended for parliamentarians who will be present in Durban for the UN Conference as members of official national delegations or in any other capacity, such as observers representing civil society organizations.

In the run-up to the Parliamentary Meeting in Durban, the IPU intends to make the most of its forthcoming 125th Assembly (Bern, 16-19 October 2011) to hold broad consultations on the content of a possible parliamentary message to be addressed to COP17/CMP7. A draft of this document will be discussed at the session of the IPU Committee on United Affairs, which is due to meet during the IPU Assembly in Bern.

The Parliamentary Meeting in Durban will be held with a view to providing parliamentarians with an opportunity to obtain first-hand information on the main issues and orientations of COP17/CMP7, interact with government negotiators directly involved in the Conference decision-making process, gain better knowledge of the recommendations adopted by the IPU with regard to parliamentary action on climate change, and exchange views on parliamentary follow-up to the Climate Change Conference in Durban.

The programme of the Parliamentary Meeting and relevant practical information, including the exact venue of the Meeting will be circulated to all parliaments closer to the date. At this stage, we urge you to ensure that members of your parliament are included in your country's official delegation to COP17/CMP7. We must stress that the **IPU and the Parliament of South Africa are not in a position to facilitate accreditation to the UN Climate Change Conference and cannot provide visa assistance** for entry into South Africa. These matters should be dealt with by each delegation individually, as part of the overall COP17/CMP7 accreditation procedure.

Likewise, hotel accommodation in Durban at the time of the UN Conference will be subject to severe restrictions and will be practically unavailable to persons not accredited to the intergovernmental Conference as delegates or observers. The **organizers of the Parliamentary Meeting cannot provide hotel accommodation in Durban**. All parliamentary delegates are advised to use the official COP17/CMP7 hotel service.

I sincerely hope that members of your parliament will take part in the forthcoming UN Climate Change in Durban and will also attend the Parliamentary Meeting on 5 December.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anders B. Johnsson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Anders B. Johnsson
Secretary General