



UNITED NATIONS



INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION



PARLIAMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



PAN-AFRICAN PARLIAMENT

World e-Parliament Conference 2010

21- 22 October 2010

Pan-African Parliament

Midrand, Johannesburg

South Africa

AIDE MEMOIRE

Background

The World e-Parliament Conference is the annual forum of the community of parliaments addressing, from both the policy and technical perspectives, how the use of information and communication technology can help improve representation, transparency, accountability, openness, and effectiveness in the complex parliamentary environment.

The World e-Parliament Conference 2010, to take place on 21 and 22 October 2010 at the Pan-African Parliament in Midrand, Johannesburg, South Africa, builds on the results of three previous conferences held respectively in Geneva (2007), Brussels (2008) and Washington D.C. (2009), as well as on the findings of the recently released World e-Parliament Report 2010. The 2010 event is co-organized by the United Nations, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Parliament of South Africa, the Pan-African Parliament and the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament¹.

At the Conference, leaders and members of parliaments, secretaries-general, parliamentary staff and officials, experts from international organizations and academics who work and deal with information and communication technologies in legislatures will have the opportunity to analyze good practices, exchange views on latest trends and institutional developments, learn from each other's experiences, network with peers, and build partnerships in an international setting.

Structure and topics of the Conference

The World e-Parliament Conference 2010 will last two days, starting at 9 a.m. on Thursday, 21 October 2010 and ending in the evening of Friday, 22 October 2010.

On Wednesday 20 October, starting at 6:30 p.m., the Parliament of South Africa will host the official Welcoming Reception "Ke Nako – It's Africa Time!" for all participants at the ICC in Sandton.

On Saturday 23 October, a cultural excursion will be offered by the Parliament of South Africa to those participants wishing to take part in it.

Following the official Opening Ceremony, two keynote presentations will guide participants through the overall Conference framework. They will focus on the following topics:

- *An overview of the findings of the World e-Parliament Report 2010*
- *Governing at a time of technological changes*

¹ The Global Centre for ICT in parliament is a partnership initiative launched by the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union on the occasion of the World Summit on the Information Society (www.ictparliament.org).

The plenary of the Conference, which this year emphasizes the relations between parliaments and media in light of the advent of new technologies, will continue with sessions addressing the following issues:

Plenary sessions:

- *Mind the gap: the impact of the digital divide on parliaments and democracy*
- *Parliaments and the media in the information age*
- *Expanding access to information: implications for parliaments, the civil society and the public*
- *Can social media improve political participation?*
- *New options for institutional communication using mobile technologies*
- *How video technologies are changing parliamentary communication*
- *Strengthening trust between parliaments and the people: the role of information and communication technologies*

Presenters will include Speakers and senior members and officials of parliament, high-level representatives of governments and international organizations, and world renowned experts. In each session ample time will be set aside for interventions and open discussions from the floor.

The Conference will also feature seven parallel sessions of a more technical nature. Each session, running in parallel to the plenary, will feature presentations delivered by three to four parliamentary experts followed by open discussions to foster exchanges of good practices and experiences.

Parallel sessions:

- *Advances in XML at the international level*
- *Capturing and reporting parliamentary proceedings*
- *The challenge of archiving parliamentary records in multiple formats*
- *Building an ICT-based parliamentary library*
- *Assessment tools and strategic planning for ICT in Parliament*
- *Supporting the work of MPs through chamber technologies*
- *Website standards for transparency and accountability*

In addition, during the lunch breaks, two special events will provide the opportunity to learn about two specific initiatives. Each special event will last one hour, take place in an informal setting and be open to participants wishing to attend them after a quick lunch break or with a “brown-bag lunch”.

Special events:

- *The benefits of parliamentary networks: the APKN case*
- *Assessing Bungeni for your Parliament*

During the World e-Parliament Conference 2010, some of the results of the work of the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament will be presented, such as guidelines and tools developed to help parliaments assess and improve their technological level. The Conference will also serve as a platform to identify and agree upon future goals and targets for the international community of parliaments and to provide inputs to the next World e-Parliament Report 2012.

The event will be officially opened and closed in plenary by the high-level representatives of the co-organizing institutions.

Documentation

The main background documents for the Conference are the World e-Parliament Report 2010, available in English and French, along with the Reports of the previous meetings. Hard copies will be distributed at the Conference. However, all documentation of the conference will be made available at the Conference website: www.ictparliament.org/wepc2010.

Participants

It is expected that 400 participants will attend the World e-Parliament Conference 2010, representing parliamentary assemblies from around the world. Delegations will include parliamentary leaders and members with decision-making power over the information and communication policies of the legislature, secretaries-general and clerks with management responsibilities over legislative processes and organizational matters, directors of ICT departments and information services, parliamentary IT staff and experts, as well as representatives of international organizations, the donor community, and academia.

To ensure a balanced representation, efforts will be made by the co-organizers to identify funds available for travel and accommodation of parliamentary staff from developing countries.

Languages

The working languages of the conference will be Arabic, English, French, Portuguese and Spanish.

Additional information

Information concerning the venue, hotels, transportation between the hotels and the venue, visa, touristic sites, media, etc. will be available on the conference website at the following address: www.ictparliament.org/wepc2010