

Tabled on 12/10/2010
by Dr. Emuji 2387

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KENYA NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

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TENTH PARLIAMENT - FOURTH SESSION (2011)

REPORT OF THE KENYAN DELEGATION TO THE 124TH ASSEMBLY OF THE
INTER - PARLIAMENTARY UNION HELD IN PANAMA, 15TH -20TH APRIL
2011

Approved
Randy ASNA
12/10/2011

Clerk's Chambers
Parliament Buildings
NAIROBI

MAY 2011

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1. FOREWORD

Mr. Speaker Sir,

The IPU Assembly is the principle statutory body that expresses the views of the Inter Parliamentary Union on political issues. It brings together parliamentarians to study international problems and make recommendations for action. The Assembly meets twice a year (in the spring and autumn) and is held each time in a different country, providing participants with an opportunity to see various national realities. It is against this background that Kenya was privileged to host the 114th Assembly in 2006.

Mr. Speaker Sir,

The 124th Assembly was held at the ATLAPA Convention Centre, Panama City, Panama, from the 15th to 20th April 2011. The Kenyan delegation comprised the following Members;

- i. Hon. Farah Maalim , EGH, MP –Deputy Speaker and Leader of the Delegation
- ii. Hon. Thomas Mwadeghu, MP
- iii. Hon. Elias Mbau, MP
- iv. Hon. Peris Simam Chepchumba, MP
- v. Hon.(Dr) David Eseli Simiyu, MP

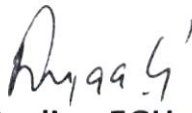
The Members were accompanied by;

- i. Mr. Michael R. Sialai – Principal Clerk Assistant and Secretary to the Delegation
- ii. Ms. Josephine Kusinyi – Third Clerk Assistant and Assistant Secretary to the Delegation

I wish to take this opportunity to thank you on behalf of the delegation for bestowing upon them this important task of representing Kenya in one of the most important forums for parliamentarians' world over. The overall theme of the Assembly was ***Parliamentary accountability: Living up to people's expectations.***

Mr. Speaker Sir, it is therefore my pleasure to submit this report, summarizing the proceedings and resolutions of the 124th Assembly of the Inter Parliamentary Union and related meetings, in accordance with Article 7 of the Statutes of the IPU.

Thank you.

 4/10/11
Hon. Farah Maalim, EGH, MP

Leader of Delegation

2. BACKGROUND

The IPU is the international organization of Parliaments, established in 1889.

The Union is the focal point for world-wide parliamentary dialogue and works for peace and co-operation among peoples and for the firm establishment of representative democracy.

To that end, it:

- ▶ Fosters contacts, co-ordination, and the exchange of experience among parliaments and parliamentarians of all countries;
- ▶ Considers questions of international interest and concern and expresses its views on such issues in order to bring about action by parliaments and parliamentarians;
- ▶ Contributes to the defence and promotion of human rights -- an essential factor of parliamentary democracy and development;
- ▶ Contributes to better knowledge of the working of representative institutions and to the strengthening and development of their means of action.

The IPU supports the efforts of the United Nations, whose objectives it shares, and works in close co-operation with it. The Union also co-operates with regional inter-parliamentary organizations, as well as with international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations which are motivated by the same ideals.

Promoting the concepts of peace and international arbitration, the IPU provided the origins for today's form of institutionalized multilateral co-operation and advocated the establishment of corresponding institutions at the inter-governmental level -- which eventually came into being as the United Nations.

The IPU was also instrumental in setting up what is now the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague. The IPU has transformed itself from an association of individual parliamentarians into the international organization of the Parliaments of sovereign States. It is a centre for dialogue and parliamentary diplomacy among legislators representing every political system and all the main political leanings in the world -- constituting a unique platform for observing political opinions and trends around the world. IPU statutory Assemblies and specialized meetings serve as a testing ground for new ideas and initiatives leading to important breakthroughs in the search for peace and advancing international co-operation.

The IPU is financed primarily by its members out of public funds. The IPU is a public organization funded in a transparent way by Member Parliaments and Associate Members, whose annual fees are assessed in accordance with a scale of contributions approved by the Governing Council.

In addition, a growing volume of financial resources is mobilized through voluntary contributions, most of which are provided by donor governments.

3.0. 124TH ASSEMBLY OF THE INTER – PARLIAMENTARY UNION

3.1. Inaugural Ceremony

The 124th IPU Assembly was inaugurated on 15 April 2011 at a ceremony held at the ATLAPA Convention Centre in Panama City, Panama, in the presence of H.E. Mr. Ricardo Martinelli, President of the Republic of Panama. Inaugural addresses were delivered by Mr. José Muñoz Molina, Speaker of the National Assembly, Mr. Joseph Deiss, President of the United Nations General Assembly, and Dr. Theo-Ben Gurirab, IPU President.

Mr. Jose Munoz Molina welcomed parliamentarians to Panama and stated that those present represented the full diversity of modern political thought better than any other body, and that the presence of the IPU Assembly in Panama showed that democracy was not only alive but vigorous. Parliamentary democracy was a dynamic force and it still had a long way to go. The IPU was represented an opportunity for parliaments to pool best practice in accountability. Democracy guaranteed human rights and the IPU was vital in ensuring not only that guarantee but the quality of human development.

Mr. Joseph Deiss, President of the 65th session of the United Nations General Assembly, thanked the IPU for its invitation to participate in the opening ceremony. He paid tribute to parliamentarians and the role that they played and appreciated the commitment of the IPU to the Millennium Development Goals, which the Secretary General of the IPU had asked parliaments to take into account in their daily work and translate into national programmes and laws. The UN promotes the rights of every man and woman on the planet and ensures that even the smallest voices are heard. However, for it to play its central role in global governance, it needed to be more effective and representative and to reform some of its bodies. This it could not do on its own and it had to build bridges with other actors in the global governance system. Parliamentarians were in a unique position to respect the aspirations of their peoples, to be accountable to them and to convey those aspirations to governments and to the UN.

Dr. Theo – Ben Gurirab, President of the IPU, welcomed all present and thanked the Government and people of Panama for welcoming the IPU to their country. He stated that democracy was a stubborn unpredictable animal which needed nurturing and monitoring. There was nothing exciting about respect for institutions, but it was this respect which would save the world from the problems it faced. All parliaments have provided less than the ideal scrutiny than people wanted, from time to time. The IPU was here to make parliaments more representative, more accessible, more accountable and more effective.

The ceremony concluded with a statement by the President of Panama, Mr. Ricardo Martinelli. In his speech, he stated that although parliaments had a lot in common, there was still a great deal to learn from each other. Democracy in Panama had been achieved at great cost The 124th Assembly of the IPU would provide a fruitful exchange of ideas, opinions and views. Each parliament had different practices and it was important to learn from one another. He then declared the 124th Assembly officially open

3.2. Election of the President and Keynote address

Mr. Jose' Munoz Molina, Speaker of the National Assembly of Panama was elected by acclamation as the President of the Assembly on 16th April 2011. After opening the general debate, he invited Ms. Michelle Bachelet, Executive Director of UN Women, to deliver a keynote address. Ms. Bachelet informed the Assembly that UN Women was currently developing its three year strategic plan. It had identified five thematic priorities for its operational activities;

- Enhancing women's economic empowerment
- Expanding women's voice, leadership and political participation
- Ending violence against women
- Strengthening implementation of the women's peace and security agenda
- Making gender equality priorities central to national, local and sectoral planning and budgeting

Ms. Bachelet described the situation of women in politics, highlighting recent progress in some regions and countries. Much more needed to be done and new challenges had to be considered and researched, such as the role of political parties, the often short career of women in politics, and women's reluctance to enter politics. Parliaments and the IPU were important partners in the achievement of gender equality and the goals set by UN Women. Areas of cooperation with the IPU included: facilitating women's access to parliament, including through legislative and constitutional reform; providing capacity – building support for women in parliament, helping parliaments ensure respect for women's rights; carrying out cutting – edge research in new fields; and working together to combat violence against women. She welcomed the IPU's latest global survey on gender – sensitive parliaments, which would provide new avenues for cooperation and strategies to promote gender equality.

3.3. Participation

Delegations from the parliaments of the following 119 countries took part in the work of the Assembly: Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea Bissau, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland,

Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The following Associate Members also took part in the Assembly:

The Andean Parliament, the Central American Parliament, the East African Legislative Assembly, the Inter-Parliamentary Committee of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) and the Latin American Parliament.

Observers comprised representatives of:

(i) the United Nations system: United Nations, International Labour Organization (ILO), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UN Women, World Health Organization (WHO), Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO);

(ii) African Union, International Organization for Migration (IOM); League of Arab States and Organization of American States;

(iii) African Parliamentary Union (APU), Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union (AIPU), Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA), Confederation of Parliaments of the Americas (COPA), European Parliamentarians for Africa (AWEPA), Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of the Commonwealth of Independent States (IPA CIS), Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of the Eurasian Economic Community, Inter-Parliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy, Inter-Parliamentary Commission of the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC), Inter-Parliamentary Union of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IPU-IGAD), Pan-African Parliament, Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC), Parliamentary Assembly of the Turkic-Speaking Countries (TURKPA), Parliamentary Assembly of the Union of Belarus and the Russian Federation, Parliamentary Union of the Organization of the Islamic Conference Members (PUOICM); and

(iv) Socialist International, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), and the Cluster Munitions Coalition (CMC).

Of the 1,190 delegates who attended the Assembly, 615 were members of national parliaments. The parliamentarians included 35 Speakers, 44 Deputy Speakers and 182 women (29.6%). This is in comparison to 1,023 delegates who attended the 123rd Assembly among these, 22 Speakers, 39 Deputy Speakers and 148 women (32%).

3.4. Choice of an Emergency Item

Five requests for inclusion of an emergency item had initially been received. However, only three proposals were to be considered by the Assembly.

- The delegations of Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran and New Zealand subsequently decided to present a joint proposal entitled, "Strengthening democratic reform in emerging democracies, including in North Africa and the Middle East"
- Call for urgent global action to assist earthquake and tsunami hit Japan and to prevent the impact of the disaster on the region as a whole, submitted by Pakistan. However, at the request of the Japanese delegation and in a spirit of cooperation, Pakistan was prepared to withdraw its proposal on the understanding that the president would make a declaration on behalf of the Assembly on the disaster in Japan. The President informed the Assembly that he would issue such a declaration.

At the beginning of the closing session, the President of the Assembly read out a declaration, which expressed solidarity with the people of Japan in the face of the earthquake and tsunami that had caused enormous loss of life and devastation. **(See Appendix I for the text of the declaration)**

- Parliamentary action to strengthen the right to self determination of peoples within the framework of international law, submitted by Venezuela. Venezuela explained that its proposal focused on events in North Africa and the Middle East, and the acts of aggression by the US imperialism and its allies against the people of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. It was therefore withdrawing the item, as some of the ideas expressed were included in the joint proposal put forward by Indonesia, New Zealand and Iran.

The Assembly therefore adopted the joint proposal and included it in the Assembly's agenda as an emergency item.

The Assembly then referred this item to a drafting committee composed of representatives of Australia, Belgium, India, Indonesia, Iran, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Oman, Korea, Saudi Arabia, Togo and Venezuela. Mr. H. Jenkins (Australia), the Committee's rapporteur presented a resolution that was adopted by the Assembly unanimously. **(See Appendix II)**

3.5. General Debate under the theme; Parliamentary Accountability: living up to People's Expectations.

This debate took place on 16th, 17th and the morning of 19th April. A total of 104 speakers from 90 delegations took part in the debate, which was chaired by the President of the Assembly.

The Deputy Speaker and leader of the Kenyan Delegation, Hon. Farah Maalim, EGH, MP, was among the Speakers who took the podium to contribute to the debate. He condemned corruption in its totality and informed the Assembly of Kenya's input towards realization of the Millennium Development Goals and especially in the Education Sector. He said that global political, economic and social changes were being witnessed, which followed hot on the heels of the collapse of the Soviet Union. He said that it was futile for Africa to rely on the developed world alone because the developed world was often opportunistic. Africans had undertaken reform themselves but he called for reform of international financial institutions and the global economy: unconditional debt cancellation, fair trade and greater market access.

Owing to subsidies in the developed world, African agricultural produce could not compete with agricultural produce in the developed world. Kenya applauded the work of China for creating development opportunities in Africa, which when fully implemented, would provide a developmental kick to Africa. He concluded by condemning corruption and stating that there should be no hiding place for corrupt persons anywhere.

i. First Standing Committee (Peace and International Security)

Providing a sound legislative framework aimed at preventing electoral Violence, improving election monitoring and ensuring the Smooth transition of power

The Committee held three sittings. In all, 48 Speakers from 42 parliaments and one parliamentary organization took the floor during the debate, after which the Standing Committee appointed a drafting committee composed of representatives of Argentina, Bangladesh, Gabon, India, Iran, Palestine, Korea, South Africa, United Kingdom, Venezuela and Zimbabwe. Mr. T.A Diabacte, Deputy Director of the United Nations Electoral Assistance Division was invited to participate in an advisory capacity.

The drafting committee's rapporteur, Mr. G. Scheeman (South Africa) presented the committee's draft resolutions to the Plenary. The resolutions were adopted by consensus with reservations expressed by 18 delegations on preambular paragraph 6 and by 3 delegations on preambular paragraph 8 **(See Appendix III for the resolutions)**

The Bureau of the First Standing Committee examined seven proposals submitted by IPU member parliaments for the subject to be debated by the standing committee at the 126th Assembly. The subject item: promoting and practicing good governance as a means of advancing peace and security: drawing lessons from recent events in the Middle East and North Africa, was approved by the Assembly which appointed Mr. J.J.Mwiimbu (Zambia) and Mr. M. Gyongyosi (Hungary) as co-rapporteurs.

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

The role of parliaments in ensuring sustainable development through the management of natural resources, agricultural production and demographic change.

A total of 47 Speakers took the floor during the debate, after which the Standing Committee appointed a drafting committee composed of representatives of Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Chile, Gabon, Ghana, India, Namibia, Norway and Peru.

The drafting committee's rapporteur, Mr. T. Wickholm (Norway) presented the committee's draft resolutions to the Plenary. The resolutions were adopted unanimously. **(See Appendix IV for the resolutions)**

The Bureau of the Second Standing Committee examined proposals submitted by IPU member parliaments for the subject to be debated by the standing committee at the 126th Assembly. The subject item: Redistribution of power, not just wealth: ownership of the international agendas was approved by the Assembly which appointed Lord Judd (United Kingdom) and Mr. O. Benaddallah (Morocco) as co-rapporteurs.

iii. **Third Standing Committee (Democracy and Human Rights)**
Transparency and accountability in the funding of political parties and election campaigns

The Committee held three sittings, with 47 Speakers taking the floor. The Committee designated a drafting committee composed of representatives of Bahrain, Canada, Ecuador, Ghana, Indonesia, Malaysia, Monaco, Philippines, Switzerland, Togo and Uruguay.

The drafting Committee's rapporteur Ms. M. Kubayi (South Africa) presented the committee's draft resolutions to the Plenary. The delegations of Algeria and Sudan expressed reservations on operative paragraph 9 and preambular paragraph 17 respectively. The resolutions were adopted by consensus. **(See Appendix V for resolutions)**

The Bureau of the Third Standing Committee examined proposals submitted by IPU member parliaments for the subject to be debated by the standing committee at the 126th Assembly. The subject item: Access to health as a basic right: The role of parliaments in

addressing key challenges to securing the health of women and children was approved by the Assembly which took note of the nomination of Ms. P. Turyahikayo (Uganda) as co-rapporteur.

4.0. 188TH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

4.1. Membership of the Inter – Parliamentary Union

The Governing Council approved requests for affiliation submitted by the parliaments of the Federated States of Micronesia and Trinidad and Tobago. The Council decided to maintain the membership status of Egypt and Tunisia.

The Council expressed particular concern at the situation of the parliaments of Comoros and Liberia which were liable to suspension under Article 5.3 of the Statutes. It decided that it would suspend their membership in October 2011, unless they paid a substantial portion of their outstanding contributions before the Council's next session.

4.2. Financial Results for 2010

The Governing Council considered the annual Financial Report and Audited Financial Statements for 2010. The overall financial position of the IPU remained fairly stable. Arrears of contributions for past years had improved, compared to the same period the previous year.

The Hon. Thomas Mwadeghu , MP, pin pointed an item on the financial statement; tax reimbursement to the Secretariat's staff for further clarification. The Secretary General clarified this issue by stating that Staff from a particular region had been double taxed from their country of origin as well, therefore placing them at a disadvantage, compared to their fellow colleagues, and thus the reimbursement .However this would only be temporary as the matter has now been fully addressed.

4.3. Cooperation with the United Nations System

The Governing Council welcomed the adoption of cooperation between the United Nations, National parliaments and the IPU. Member States welcomed the parliamentary dimension provided by the IPU to the new UN bodies and the growing practice of including legislators as members of national delegations to major UN meetings. The next session of the UN General Assembly would see s stand – alone agenda item on interaction between the United Nations, parliaments and the IPU. The United Nations was hoping for strong participation by legislators in the meeting on HIV/AIDS scheduled to take place in June 2011 at UN Headquarters in New York. The IPU would convene a parliamentary session on that occasion.

The Governing Council adopted a Parliamentary message to be delivered on the occasion of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, to be held in Istanbul in May 2011.

4.4. IPU Strategy for 2012 -2017

The Governing Council took note of the draft IPU strategy for 2012 – 2017 and encouraged member parliaments to debate the draft and submit comments or suggestions to the Secretariat by 30th June 2011. The draft strategy would be submitted to the Governing Council for adoption at its 189th session.

The document gave priority to three areas of work; democracy and parliaments, the involvement of parliaments at the international level and the IPU as an instrument of parliamentary cooperation. In essence, the strategy sought to strengthen Member Parliaments' participation in the work of the IPU and their ownership of the organization.

4.5. Reports of Plenary bodies and specialized committees

The Governing Council heard the report of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians and adopted its resolutions on individual cases before the Committee. (See **Appendix VI**) Representatives of the delegations of Israel, Malaysia and Zimbabwe expressed reservations or provided clarification on cases in their respective countries

The Governing Council took note of the reports on the activities of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians and its coordinating Committee, the Group of facilitators for Cyprus, the Committee to promote respect for International Humanitarian Law and the Gender Partnership Group.

4.6. Future Inter-Parliamentary Meetings

The Governing Council welcomed the invitation by the Parliament of Ecuador to host the 128th IPU Assembly in Quito in March 2013. It looked forward to receiving a full report at its next session in order to approve the venue.

The Council approved a proposal to use the funds accumulated from offsetting Carbon dioxide emissions to cover part of the costs of the parliamentary conference on the occasion of the United Nations Climate Change Conference as well as a climate change related meeting for Pacific Island parliaments that would be organized together with the parliaments of Australia and New Zealand.

The Governing Council also approved the following meetings;

- The Conference on maternal health and child survival
- Regional Conference to combat trafficking in children for purposes of labour exploitation
- Parliamentary meeting at the 2011 UN High-level Meeting on AIDS NEW YORK -7 June 2011
- Parliamentary Panel within the framework of the Annual WTO Public Forum GENEVA (WTO Headquarters) 20 September 2011
- 24th session of the Steering Committee of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO (*in camera*)GENEVA (IPU Headquarters)21 September 2011
- Parliamentary Briefing on the occasion of the 66th session of the UN General Assembly NEW YORK 21 September 2011
- 125th Assembly and related meetings BERN (Switzerland) 16-19 October 2011
- Information seminar on the contribution of parliaments to the implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights BERN (Switzerland)20 October 2011
- Information seminar on CEDAW and its optional protocol BERN (Switzerland)20 October 2011
- Joint IPU-ASGP Conference on professional development for parliamentarians BERN (Switzerland) 20 October 2011
- Regional Seminar on combating trafficking of children for labour Ghana October 2011
- Annual Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations NEW YORK November 2011
- Seventh Meeting of Women Speakers of Parliament ISLAMABAD (Pakistan) 15-17 November 2011
- Parliamentary meeting on the occasion of the High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (29 November-1 December)-BUSAN (Republic of Korea)28 November 2011
- Parliamentary Meeting on the occasion of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP17/CMP7)DURBAN (South Africa)5 December 2011
- Regional seminar (West/Central Africa) on parliamentary oversight of the security sector-Venue to be decided Second half of 2011
- 126th Assembly and related meetings KAMPALA (Uganda) 31 March - 5 April 2012
- 127th Assembly and related meetings QUEBEC CITY (Canada)21-26 October 2012
- Invitation received:128th Assembly and related meetings QUITO (Ecuador)

AGENDA OF THE 125th ASSEMBLY
(Bern, 16-19 October 2011)

1. Election of the President and Vice-Presidents of the 125th Assembly
2. Consideration of possible requests for the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda
3. Panel discussions on the subject items chosen for debate during the 126th Assembly (Kampala, 31 March - 5 April 2012):
 - (a) 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)
 - (b) Redistribution of power, not just wealth: Ownership of the international agendas
(Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade)
 - (c) 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)
4. Report of the IPU Committee on United Nations Affairs
5. Amendments to the Statutes and Rules of the IPU

SUBJECT ITEMS FOR THE 126th ASSEMBLY
(Kampala, 31 March - 5 April 2012)
Approved by the 124th IPU Assembly
(Panama City, 20 April 2011)

1. 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)

2. Redistribution of power, not just wealth: Ownership of the international agendas
(Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade)

3. 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)

5. MEETING OF WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS.

The Sixteenth Meeting of Women Parliamentarians took place on 15 April 2011 and brought together approximately 115 women from the following 71 parliaments: Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, France, Gabon, Gambia, Germany, Guinea Bissau, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Rep. of), Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Maldives, Mali, Mexico, Monaco, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Netherlands, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Uganda, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Men from the following delegations also attended: Cameroon, Congo, Czech Republic, Denmark and Togo.

The meeting was also attended by representatives of the following programmes and international organizations: the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and UNICEF.

The Meeting was informed that Ms. S. Greiss (Egypt), President of the Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians, had lost her seat in parliament during the most recent legislative elections in her country. In accordance with the Committee's Rules, the First Vice-President, Ms. N. Ali Assegaf (Indonesia), would assume the Chair until the end of the current term (April 2012).

The First Vice President highlighted the committee's contribution to the preparation of the IPU Draft Strategic Plan, namely a series of recommendations for gender mainstreaming. The participants were briefed of activities under the IPU campaign to combat violence against women, in particular, the regional seminar for parliaments of West and Central Africa co-organized by the IPU and the National Assembly of Burkina Faso in March 2011. Participants held a dialogue session on gender – sensitive parliaments and debated on the progress made and setbacks suffered by women in politics in 2010.

6.0. OTHER EVENTS

1. Panel Discussion on Narrowing the gaps: Achieving Millennium Development Goals with equity for children

The panel discussion co-organized by the IPU and UNICEF took place on Monday, 18 April. Ms. M. Vallarino, President of the Committee on Women, Children, Young People and the Family of the National Assembly of Panama, and the IPU President, Dr. T.-B. Gurirab, opened the meeting. Ms. L.M. Noli, a Panamanian television presenter, moderated the discussions, which were launched by Mr. B. Aasen, UNICEF Regional Director for the Americas and the Caribbean, Ms. S.D. Dejanović, Speaker of the National Assembly of Serbia, **Hon. Farah. M. Maalim, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Kenya** and Ms. M.A. Saa, a member of parliament from Chile.

The panel discussion sought to identify ways of reducing glaring inequalities by paying particular attention to the most underprivileged and vulnerable children. Strategies based on equity that targeted the neediest children were not just a matter of justice, they were effective ways of narrowing the gaps and achieving the MDGs.

The participants discussed their countries' experiences with regard to the rights of the child, highlighting progress made and remaining challenges. Access to education, for example, had improved for boys and girls in most countries, but far too often teaching was inadequate and teachers in short supply. A number of good practices were highlighted, such as support programmes for under privileged women, the introduction of maternity and paternity leave, citizen forums for children and youth, and the work of parliamentary bodies on the rights of the child.

It was noted that children and adolescents were often exposed to multiple forms of violence in their families and communities, in particular when faced with drug problems and gang wars. Along with women, they were the primary victims of armed conflict.

The participants identified the following ways of improving the lives of the poorest children:

- (a) Target the children most exposed to discrimination and living in the poorest communities;
- (b) Ensure that national budget allocations are made in keeping with commitments for the poorest children and analyse the impact of budget allocations on those children; and
- (c) Enact legislation in favour of marginalized groups so as to reduce disparities and transpose the principles enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child into domestic law.

The participants requested the IPU to establish a standing committee on children to ensure that the question featured prominently in the organization's work.

2. Open Forum on *The Global Parliamentary Report: Parliaments and people, a changing relationship*

As part of the research for the first Global Parliamentary Report, a joint IPU-UNDP project, an event was held to discuss the changing relationship between parliaments and citizens. Parliaments currently faced more diverse challenges and greater expectations of their constituents than before. As opportunities for citizen engagement grew, so did voters' expectations of what parliaments should deliver. Parliamentarians from different continents shared their experiences very frankly in the open forum. They underlined a widely-shared degree of wariness among the public towards their elected representatives.

The solution insofar as one could be identified, lied in parliaments creating and maintaining proximity with their constituents. Being physically present, visible and accessible appeared necessary ingredients for building close relations with the citizenry.

3. Round-table discussion on *Parliamentarians taking the lead on maternal, newborn and child health*

The round-table discussion was organized in collaboration with the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH) and the Every Woman Every Child campaign.

It was co-chaired by Ms. C. Presern, Director of PMNCH and Mr. M. Chungong, Director, Division for the Promotion of Democracy. Panellists included Ms. R. Kadaga, Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Uganda, and Dr. A. de Francisco from the Countdown to 2015.

The participants were briefed by the Countdown representative on country progress in reducing child mortality and improving maternal health. They were informed about the UN Secretary-General's Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health, which had led to the establishment of the Commission on Information and Accountability for Women's and Children's Health.

The meeting examined the role of parliaments in promoting maternal and child health. Parliamentarians highlighted their efforts in the areas of legislative reform, budgeting, monitoring, advocacy and oversight.

Key issues and challenges were identified, namely the need to train parliamentarians, in particular with respect to budgeting, ensure that initiatives undertaken were sustainable, and increase donor support. Sustainability called for stronger partnerships, making inter-sectoral linkages, integration (local, national and global) and ensuring interrelation between the MDGs. The importance of adopting a rights-based approach in the work of maternal and child health was also discussed. In order to further promote the work of parliaments on maternal and child health, the IPU, along with its partners, was requested to:

- Facilitate discussions to raise awareness among parliamentarians on why investing in maternal, newborn and child health was important;
- Undertake activities to endow parliamentarians with the skills to improve their oversight and budgetary functions;
- Create more opportunities for shared learning and exchange of experiences; and
- Establish institutional mechanisms to make the issue of maternal and child health a regular topic at major IPU events.

7. OFFICIAL CLOSING OF THE ASSEMBLY

At the closing sitting of the 124th Assembly, on 20 April, various Speakers representing various groups thanked the Host for its hospitality and for the successful Conference.

Hon. Farah Maalim, Deputy Speaker and Leader of the Kenyan delegation, gave the closing remarks on behalf of the African geo political group. He thanked the Host and the IPU Secretariat for the successful hosting of the conference. He expressed sympathy and solidarity with Japan and New Zealand, on the recent calamities that had affected both countries. He underscored the importance of having a more aggressive IPU to inculcate the principles of parliamentary democracy. He further stated that there was a dire need for African issues and especially debt cancellation and conflicts in countries such as Somalia, Eritrea and Southern Sudan to be given a more central consideration in the activities of the IPU.

Ms. S. Atallahjan (Canada) reported briefly on the field visits carried out in Panama City on Sunday, 17 April. Organized in cooperation with UNICEF, the visits had focused on child-related issues in marginalized areas. Ms. Atallahjan concluded by expressing renewed appreciation for the excellent cooperation between the IPU and UNICEF.

Finally, the President of the Assembly closed the Assembly by reminding parliamentarians that Democracy had no option, it had to be done.

APPENDIX I

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE 124TH ASSEMBLY ON THE NATURAL DISASTERS IN JAPAN

Endorsed by the 124th Assembly (Panama City, 20 April 2011)

On 11 March a tsunami slammed into the north-eastern coast of Japan, following in the wake of one of the most powerful earthquakes ever recorded, unleashing widespread destruction and leaving some 28,000 people either dead or missing.

At this IPU Assembly in Panama, the Parliament of Pakistan submitted a resolution expressing solidarity with Japan. Taking my cue from that resolution, and on behalf of all the parliamentarians assembled here, I wish to express our deepest condolences to the people of Japan as they continue to grapple with the consequences of that terrible disaster. Our foremost concern is the appalling loss of human life.

We also express our solidarity with the people of Japan as they confront the full impact of this tragedy. Japan has always demonstrated generosity in providing human, material and financial assistance whenever countries have experienced disasters on such a scale. The world community owes Japan a similar response in the wake of its own calamity, and we will press our parliaments to be attentive to its needs.

We also wish to express our admiration for the resilience and calm of the people of Japan as they work with patience and determination to attenuate the effects of this disaster. Those grappling with the damage to the nuclear plant have worked selflessly, in many cases demonstrating genuine heroism. While the work goes on, we call for all public commentary on the situation to prefer objective analysis to groundless rumors.

Just as the destruction was swift and lethal, so the recovery will be painstaking and time consuming. I know the Japanese people will face the challenge with courage. The IPU expresses its utmost support to Japan as the country embarks upon the road to recovery.

APPENDIX II

**STRENGTHENING DEMOCRATIC REFORM IN EMERGING
DEMOCRACIES, INCLUDING IN NORTH AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST**
*Resolution adopted unanimously by the 124th IPU Assembly
(Panama City, 20 April 2011)*

The 124th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Noting that the popular uprisings seeking to consolidate democracy that have spread across the Middle East and North Africa are the most prominent social and political development to have taken place in the months leading up to the 124th Assembly,

Affirming the rights of those peoples and countries to determine their own political future, and *recalling* that democracies should reflect a diversity of histories and cultures,

Also affirming that democracies should all be built on recognized norms, standards and principles, including those relating to human rights, equality, including gender equality, transparency and accountability, and respect for plurality of opinion,

Expressing concern for the humanitarian impact of the political changes in the region on vulnerable groups, particularly women and children, and *noting* that 2011 marks the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day,

1. *Affirms* the importance of holding free and fair elections as soon as practicable;
2. *Also affirms* the particular importance of empowering women, including by ensuring their full participation in the democratic process;
3. *Urges* all parties to refrain from violence and ensure in particular that human rights are respected;
4. *Calls on* all governments to respect the right to peaceful self-determination of peoples;
5. *Underscores* the pivotal role the IPU can play in assisting fledgling democracies.

APPENDIX III

PROVIDING A SOUND LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK AIMED AT PREVENTING ELECTORAL VIOLENCE, IMPROVING ELECTION MONITORING AND ENSURING THE SMOOTH TRANSITION OF POWER

Resolution adopted by consensus by the 124th IPU Assembly
(Panama City, 20 April 2011)*

The 124th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Recalling the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 1976 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 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 sovereignty of the people, so as to constitute the basis for legitimate and credible authority of government,

Recognizing that free and fair elections as a prerequisite for the peaceful transfer of power are the cornerstone of democratic practice,

Aware that the smooth transfer of power requires respect for the rule of law, transparent political and electoral institutions, a strong civil society and free and impartial media,

Considering that different countries are at different stages of democratic consolidation, but that all countries need to continue to strive to establish laws that provide optimal conditions for the holding of free and fair elections,

Underscoring that an effective electoral framework should entrench a series of basic elements, including periodic free and fair elections, secret ballots, a competitive and inclusive electoral process, equal and balanced access to the media and to State resources for all political parties, broad-based voting rights, a reliable voter registration process, and an independent and impartial election management body entrusted with organizing free and fair elections,

Expressing deep concern over the increase in electoral violence experienced in several countries in recent years for a variety of reasons: socio-economic disparities; gender inequality; ideological differences; weak governing institutions; inadequate or inappropriate power-sharing mechanisms; electoral systems that create real or perceived inequalities or marginalization; abuses perpetrated by military and/or security forces; unsound statutory and regulatory frameworks; lack of transparency; insufficient civic and voter education; poor transitional mechanisms; absence of sound electoral laws; lack of trust and confidence in election management bodies, of adequate measures to enfranchise eligible voters and of a level playing field; lack of fair, transparent, expeditious, effective and accessible dispute resolution systems; widespread corruption; uncontrolled proliferation of firearms; polarization of community, ethnic or religious identities; international interference in internal electoral processes,

Noting the importance of credible and effective election management bodies that have the confidence of election stakeholders and the wider public, and that operate according to the principles of independence of action, impartiality, integrity, transparency, financial probity, accountability, professionalism, equal access, sustainability and cost-effectiveness,

Underscoring the crucial role played by national and international election observers and monitors in encouraging participation and in providing independent election assessments and a measure of transparency and accountability to the process, with due regard for the principle of sovereignty, national integrity and relevant national legislation,*

Also underscoring the importance of ensuring that electoral management bodies and elections observers include women and have clear gender-equality objectives,

Concerned that women voters and candidates are disproportionately affected by electoral violence and are often vulnerable targets, or are deterred from participating in the political process by a climate of intimidation,

Stressing the need to define gender-based electoral violence, carry out research and develop indicators in order to assess the scope of the problem and monitor the situation,

Underscoring that gender-based electoral violence occurs prior to, during and after elections and includes physical violence and verbal abuse, and that the media's portrayal of women candidates can often be disrespectful and disparaging,

Noting that holding elections in conditions of instability and political fragility, particularly in post-conflict and post-crisis contexts, has often failed to produce credible and legitimate outcomes,

Underscoring that, during the peace-building process, only the national political will, expressed at free and fair elections, can lend full legitimacy to permanent national institutions,

Welcoming the IPU Declaration on Criteria for Free and Fair Elections and the Universal Declaration on Democracy, which underscore the need to ensure transparency of the electoral process and thus promote good governance and the rule of law,

Acknowledging the 2005 Declaration and Code of Conduct for International Election Observation endorsed by a host of organizations, including the United Nations and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), in addition to the IPU, *Underscoring* the role and responsibility of parliaments and parliamentarians in shaping a sound and comprehensive legislative framework aimed at preventing electoral violence and ensuring a smooth transition of power once elections are over,

1. *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;

2. *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;
3. *Encourages* national election management bodies to make greater efforts to ensure sustainability and cost-effectiveness, as well as the use of appropriate cutting-edge technologies, in particular information and communication technology, so as to make the electoral process people-friendly, efficient and safe from malpractice, while ensuring transparency and public confidence;
4. *Also encourages* electoral management bodies and election observers to pay specific attention to women's participation in the electoral process, as voters and as candidates, and invites electoral management bodies to develop gender guidelines and tools for their members;
5. *Urges* parliaments to enact legislation giving strong regulatory, investigative and prosecutorial powers to independent and impartial election management bodies so that they can safeguard the integrity and transparency of the electoral process by preventing instances of electoral fraud, intimidation and other improprieties and reporting them to the competent authorities;
6. *Encourages* parliaments, election management bodies, election monitors, civil society groups and international agencies, while respecting the sovereignty of each country, to work together between elections to plan for future elections, evaluate the outcomes and experiences of past elections, identify weaknesses in a given country's electoral apparatus and election legislation, and to take steps to redress such weaknesses, train election officials, update and strengthen voter registries, and educate voters;
7. *Calls upon* parliaments to enact legislation to ensure that political parties and candidates conduct their election campaigns according to prescribed norms, and that the election machinery functions in a non-partisan and professional manner to encourage a level playing field as well as a violence-free electoral and political environment, including through the application of harsh sanctions against perpetrators of such violence;
8. *Also calls upon* parliaments to consider formulating a legislative framework for the funding of political parties and electoral campaigns, and for the conduct of the campaigns themselves, in order to ensure that conditions of safety, order and transparency prevail and that the maximum number of citizens participate in the vote;

9. *Urges* all governments to redouble their efforts to ensure active and wider citizen participation in elections through an inclusive voter registration process that effectively accommodates both women and men, the disabled, national minorities, indigenous peoples, citizens living abroad, internally displaced persons, the homeless and other vulnerable groups;
10. *Encourages* parliaments to consider good practices and modalities in order to ensure the participation of citizens living abroad in the political process of their home countries;
11. *Urges* parliaments and governments to put in place legislation and independent, fair, transparent, expeditious and accessible electoral dispute settlement mechanisms that have the confidence of election stakeholders and the wider public;
12. *Invites* parliaments to organize study, awareness and discussion days on political rights and violence-free politics, in particular during election periods;
13. *Also urges* parliaments to develop legislation that, as appropriate, can regulate and guide the implementation of election results and the peaceful transition to a new government;
14. *Further urges* all the parties concerned in situations where countries are emerging from a crisis, or from violent community, ethnic or religious tensions, to conclude an inclusive political accord to allow the peaceful conduct of free and fair elections in the framework of institutions that are respectful of minority interests;
15. *Calls upon* parliaments and governments to ensure access by election observers and monitors, both national and international, taking into account local needs and the provisions of the law, to observe national elections, in keeping with international obligations, commitments and principles;
16. *Also urges* parliaments to draw up regulations establishing equal access to the mass media – both public and private - during election campaigns;
17. *Encourages* the deployment of election observation and monitoring missions from national, regional and international organizations well in advance of elections and for as long as possible after election results are announced;
18. *Also encourages* enhanced cooperation among election monitoring and observation missions from different national, regional and international organizations, taking into account local legislation;
19. *Invites* the United Nations and other relevant international organizations and partners to incorporate into their peace-building strategies, from the outset, human and financial

assistance measures aimed at strengthening or establishing a set of democratic institutions, in particular a parliament elected through free and fair elections;

20. *Urges* parliaments in countries with a history of electoral violence to enact specific legislation restricting the use of firearms and live ammunition, and guaranteeing that military and security institutions and agents remain neutral and are not subject to manipulation for electoral purposes;

21. *Invites* parliaments and governments to enact strict and stringent laws prohibiting any attempt to destabilize the electoral process and providing for the prosecution of the perpetrators of acts of violence;

22. *Appeals* to civil society organizations, media groups, experts, academic institutions, human rights agencies and international organizations to sensitize citizens to their constitutional rights and obligations regarding elections, including through comprehensive civic and voter education programmes;

23. *Urges* parliaments and governments to promote among citizens, in particular youth, a culture of respect for the rule of law and a sense of political tolerance for diverse and opposing views;

24. *Calls upon* parliaments to enact appropriate legislation to guarantee the fundamental rights of citizens in the political process, including the right of individuals to cast secret ballots, the right to open information and freedom of expression, and the right to peaceful public demonstration;

25. *Urges* parliaments to amend election laws so as to incorporate genuine mechanisms for free and fair elections that conform to international democratic obligations and principles;

26. *Calls upon* parliaments to ensure that, until political violence against women is eliminated and women are empowered both economically and politically, women's representation accounts for at least 30 per cent of parliamentary seats;

27. *Urges* parliaments and governments to ensure that electoral laws are stable and predictable by codifying them or enacting them in statute law and by entrenching the basic principles of electoral democracy and the right to vote and to run for office in the national constitution so as to prevent manipulation of election rules;

28. *Further urges* governments to ensure that constituencies are drawn up in a way that is predictable, transparent and not subject to change close to elections, so as to avoid manipulation of electoral systems;

29. *Appeals* to the United Nations, other relevant international organizations and development

partners to provide the support and sustainable, cost-effective technical assistance needed to build the capacity of national election management bodies, including improved working conditions for their staff, thereby encouraging appropriate electoral reforms, and to promote better voter and civic education, particularly in emerging democracies;

30. *Calls for greater cooperation between the United Nations and the IPU on the prevention of electoral violence, the smooth and peaceful transition of political power, and the implementation throughout the electoral cycle of relevant recommendations made by election observation missions, wherever they are deployed.*

* The following delegations expressed a reservation on the following words of preambular paragraph 6, "international interference in internal electoral processes": Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Cambodia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Iceland, Jordan, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

The following delegations expressed a reservation on the following words of preambular paragraph 8, "with due regard for the principle of sovereignty, national integrity and relevant national legislation": Belgium, Canada and Sweden.

APPENDIX IV

THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENTS IN ENSURING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE

*Resolution adopted unanimously by the 124th IPU Assembly
(Panama City, 20 April 2011)*

The 124th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,
Noting that:

- (a) Following a steady drop in poverty levels between 1990 and 2007, hunger rose sharply in 2009 according to the United Nations, and that 925 million persons will go hungry in 2011 according to the latest estimates of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations;
- (b) The food crisis of 2007-2008 revealed the international community's vulnerability with regard to food security;
- (c) Arable land is being expanded to the detriment of forested areas and fragile ecosystems;
- (d) Desertification is being caused in many places by long droughts and poor land use;
- (e) The United Nations has indicated that the world has lost 13 million hectares of forest every year for the past 10 years, thereby rendering the environment more vulnerable, without counting the 60,000 km² lost each year to desertification;
- (f) Deforestation accounts for 14 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions and consequent climatic change;
- (g) Many regions in the world, notably the Middle East and North Africa, find themselves in a difficult situation regarding water supply, with the Sahel countries suffering from constant water shortages;
- (h) This situation heightens the risk of conflict over access to and the use of water resources;
- (i) Many countries, in particular developing countries, are hard hit by collapsing exports, capital flight and rising unemployment;
- (j) Over the past decades, agriculture has too often been neglected in both national and international policies, thereby contributing to conflict and instability,

Also noting that:

- (a) Governments are obliged by the growing needs of a burgeoning urban population and intensive agriculture - both thirsty for water - to build new dams on rivers and streams and to increase the number of high-speed pumps extracting water from the water table, but are unable to take the measures required to ensure a more sustainable use of water;
- (b) Seventy per cent of the fresh water used worldwide is for agricultural production, while competing claims on water for other purposes are increasing;
- (c) The quality of fresh water is being lowered due to the intensive use of fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides in agriculture, industrial effluents from the growing number of industrial units and untreated domestic sewage from a burgeoning population;
- (d)) For some years now, certain regions have been experiencing an unusual overabundance of water, while others find themselves suffering increasingly from water shortages,

Further noting that:

- (a) Population figures have undergone significant change marked by:
 - lower birth rates and an ageing population in countries of the North;
 - a high birth rate in Africa, the level of which depends on the country;
 - exponential urbanization compounded by higher levels of migration to coastal areas; and
 - more significant migratory flows - forced or voluntary - as a result of armed conflicts or for economic reasons;
- (b) According to certain projections, in the next 50 years, the population of almost all developed countries will be smaller and older as a result of lower fertility rates and longer life expectancy;
- (c) All countries and regions of the North need immigration to prevent their population from declining, but that the level of immigration, based on past experience, varies greatly owing to the immigration policies adopted by each country;
- (d) Africa is experiencing an unprecedented baby boom and its population will be almost 2 billion by 2050;
- (e) There are about 200 million migrants in the world today, representing 3 per cent of the global population;
- (f) Expatriation of highly educated human resources impoverishes developing countries and causes them to lag further behind in terms of science and technology,

Aware that:

- (a) There is a direct link between the use of land, soil, water, biodiversity, other natural resources and food production, on the one hand, and between food production and poverty on the other;
- (b) Poverty is more pronounced in rural areas in developing countries, where many farmers are finding it difficult to sustain agricultural production and make a living;
- (c) Overcoming hunger requires an increase in both small-scale and large-scale agriculture and effective policies that focus on both categories and are based on sustainable production and environmental protection;
- (d) The private sector on the national and international levels has a key role to play in sustainable agriculture and food security, food production, processing and marketing, and in the development and application of new technologies, including eco-efficient and responsible investments;
- (e) The allotment of more and more arable and forested land for the production of bio fuels compounds the growing imbalance between the supply of and demand for foodstuffs;
- (f) The growing demand at the global level for bio fuels, compounded by the heightened need for land, may put pressure on marginal lands that are used for subsistence farming by the poor in rural areas;
- (g) Sustainable development in rural areas should focus on the construction of social networks, such as cooperatives and knowledge centres, where people can acquire knowledge and qualifications, combine them and hand them down to the next generation,

Mindful that agriculture, food security, population growth and climate change are closely linked,

Considering that management of the world's natural resources (soil, land, forests, wildlife, marine and freshwater products, water, energy and air) has to become more sustainable, focusing on renewal (sustainable use) and conservation instead of depletion and spending, while pursuing the goals of sustainable economic and social development,

Aware that the multiple challenges facing the world in terms of climate change, ecosystem degradation, food insecurity, and the financial and economic crises require an integrated response ensuring that short-term emergencies are addressed while for long-term strategies for sustainable development, i.e. strategies that meet the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs,

Underscoring the importance of achieving sustainable fisheries in order to prevent overfishing of the world's oceans, thereby safeguarding fragile ecosystems,

Also underscoring that an integrated and sustainable approach has to be adopted for the management of natural resources, agricultural production and demographic change,

Acknowledging that in order to implement an integrated approach, research, education and the proper application of research results are vital, and that traditional and indigenous knowledge needs to be linked with modern technologies and the latest scientific knowledge about sustainable agricultural production, in particular food production and the sustainable use of natural resources, including poverty reduction in rural areas,

Underscoring that the growth of the world population (approx. 9 billion by 2050) will require higher food production, and that increasing water and energy shortages hamper food production, which inter alia drives migration flows,

Also underscoring that growth in the agriculture sector, particularly in food production, remains fundamental for poverty alleviation, economic growth and environmental sustainability,

Highlighting that it is equally crucial to improve agricultural productivity (including water usage, integrated land and water management, and sustainable agricultural intensification - more with less) without expanding areas under cultivation, and to halt environmental degradation (including biodiversity loss and curbing and reversing land degradation and desertification),

Also highlighting that, in order to avoid large-scale migration and the high risks it poses for stability, peace and security in many regions of the world, it is crucial to provide farmers and other people living in rural areas with the conditions, opportunities and resources they need to increase their food production or incomes, send their children to school, and enjoy rising living standards and fulfilling lives,

Considering the need to devise innovative sources of financing with a view to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), supplement official development assistance, guarantee stable flows of funds in the face of long-term needs and facilitate the concerted management of development aid between countries of the North and countries of the South,

Acknowledging that it is critical for countries to share experiences and innovative technologies and cooperate in training and developing human and technical capacities,

Convinced that development policies should focus on providing water-access and transfer systems in and to areas that suffer from water shortage,

Aware that many technologies and much of the knowledge needed are already available, but that their wider dissemination and uptake are key challenges that must be addressed,

Considering that developing countries, with their growing populations and rising living standards, should be at the centre of agricultural and rural revival and that for many of them, halting and reversing land degradation and desertification is a high priority,

Cognizant of the fact that many developing countries need to urgently boost agricultural productivity in a sustainable manner,

Aware that intensifying agriculture for food security must include a vigorous response to major environmental changes such as climate change, desertification, land degradation and drought,

Considering that Africa and Asia, above all, should benefit from a sustainable green revolution, that is, an agricultural productivity revolution that is economically viable, socially equitable and environmentally sustainable,

Also considering that a green revolution, particularly in Africa, should be tailored to the needs of diverse local agro-ecological conditions and cropping systems,

Underscoring the major role of the agricultural sector in feeding a world population of 9 billion in the coming decades,

Also underscoring that the rise in commodity prices affects first and foremost the poorest importers of agricultural products and that the extreme volatility of commodity prices threatens food security,

Further underscoring that a radically different outlook is needed and that agriculture should no longer be seen as a cause of environmental degradation but as part of the solution to improve environmental sustainability,

Aware that agriculture is at the heart of poverty eradication, sustainable development and, increasingly, climate change,

Also aware that achieving gender equality in agriculture and rural labour markets would generate significant gains for agricultural and rural development, food security and society as a whole,

Underscoring that measures to provide an enabling environment for investment in sustainable agriculture and rural development and for tackling the structural causes of food insecurity are needed by both small-scale and large-scale farmers,

Also underscoring that inclusive and secure access to finance, in particular for millions of small scale farmers, has to be promoted, with due regard for gender equality and the important role of women in agriculture,

Convinced that it is critical to put in place appropriate land tenure systems for private and

communal land, so as to promote sustainable agriculture and improve access to land, in particular for small scale farmers,

Also convinced that the active engagement of all actors, including local government, civil society and private sector partners, should be mobilized in the planning and implementation of policies and practices,

Underscoring the important role efficient food distribution systems and well-functioning markets, at the national, regional and international levels, can play in ensuring global food security and promoting sustainable development,

Also underscoring that it is important to generate opportunities for higher incomes by adding value to the production and supply chain,

Acknowledging that the private sector must play a central role in expanding agriculture through production, building agricultural value chains and assessing the potential of new technologies, *Considering* that, in order to promote sustainability, cisgenetic modifications are preferable to transgenetic ones,

Acknowledging that investment in revitalizing developing country agriculture and promoting sustainable rural development will need to be supported by new and additional resources from all quarters, including private, public, domestic and international sources,

Aware that while the increase in large-scale land acquisitions in developing nations by foreign investors might bring opportunities to local people, including guaranteed outlets, employment, investment in infrastructure, and higher agricultural productivity, local people might also lose access to land, water, and other resources, particularly if they are not included in the land allocation decision-making process and their land rights are not protected,

Underscoring that an enabling environment is needed to support investments and domestic, regional and international partnerships, North-South and South-South partnerships, and public-private partnerships among relevant stakeholders,

Convinced that it is crucial that women be given the same access as men to land, technology, financial services, education and markets,

Also convinced that parliamentarians and their constituencies worldwide, together with governments, private stakeholders, and national and international agencies, have a role to play in heightening awareness of the close relationship between climate change, food security and agriculture,

Considering that land for agriculture and other natural resources should be exploited in a sustainable manner,

Also considering that the green revolution can only succeed if it goes hand in hand with a comprehensive and coherent set of political decisions, including financial incentives for small-scale farmers, communication and education policies and land management reform,

Noting the MDGs, the related Action Plan and the commitments contained therein concerning the fight against poverty and hunger,

Aware of the importance of fisheries for food security, including as a source of income,

Knowing that forests are very important for many people's livelihoods and employment, including sustainable forestry management,

1. *Invites* the IPU, parliamentarians and parliaments to act as agents of change in identifying an integrated and sustainable approach to the management of natural resources, agricultural production and demographic change;

2. *Encourages* parliamentarians and parliaments to engage all actors, including local and regional governments, civil society and private sector partners, in the planning and implementation of policies;

3. *Calls upon* parliamentarians to acknowledge the crucial role of women in sustainable agricultural development by adopting legislation and supporting policies and measures aimed inter alia at eliminating discrimination against women and at increasing women's access to agricultural resources, education and training, family planning and maternity health services, labour markets, technologies, micro credits, finance and other facilities, since women's empowerment is key to poverty eradication and sustainable development;

4. *Urges* parliamentarians to ensure that discussions about land use and land acquisition remain on the national and international political agendas;

5. *Encourages* parliamentarians to help draw up or propose plans for regional development and land use that are predicated on the imperative need to save agricultural land;

6. *Calls upon* national parliaments and parliamentarians to encourage their governments to take all necessary measures to restore degraded land;

7. *Invites* parliamentarians to support policies and measures at the national, regional and international levels in order to improve water efficiency in agriculture and promote integrated land and water management and the development of innovative water efficiency technologies;

8. *Calls upon* parliaments and parliamentarians to develop and harmonize legislation for strict and adequate standards on the manufacture and use of fertilizers, pesticides and biotechnology products;

9. *Urges* parliaments and parliamentarians to initiate or strengthen legislative mechanisms for

sustainable forest management and prohibit any form of exploitation that does not conform to terms of reference that impose reforestation and the reconstitution of forested areas;

10. *Calls upon* parliamentarians to include, as part of their action, measures aimed at halting biodiversity loss and promoting plant and animal genetic diversity;

11. *Invites* parliamentarians to give broad backing to the premise that a transition to sustainable agriculture should be part of the sustainable development solution;

12. *Calls upon* parliamentarians, in particular those in developing countries, to support and encourage rural development policies;

13. *Encourages* parliamentarians in developed countries to call for transparent decision-making processes, including the setting of clear targets for stepped up official development assistance for agriculture;

14. *Calls upon* parliamentarians to support sustainable growth strategies incorporating policies on agricultural development, food production, rural development and the sustainable use of natural resources;

15. *Urges* parliamentarians and governments to create the requisite conditions and provide opportunities and resources for the most vulnerable farmers to have access to land, increase their food production, participate in knowledge-sharing, have access to education and enjoy rising living standards;

16. *Also urges* parliamentarians to support initiatives aimed at enhancing the way global agricultural commodity markets function, in particular by making these markets more transparent, regulating the corresponding derivatives markets, strengthening the coordination of national and regional agricultural policies and establishing new international mechanisms to support developing country importers;

17. *Encourages* governments and parliaments to advocate environmental awareness and educate the public about food waste-reduction measures and coordinated action against environmental degradation;

18. *Calls upon* parliamentarians, in close cooperation with national, regional and international scientific institutions and agricultural organizations, to organize conferences, seminars and workshops to discuss, develop and support action to improve the sustainable development of agriculture, in particular food production, the sustainable use of natural resources and demographic development;

19. *Invites* the IPU to consider annual reports on global developments in these fields at IPU Assemblies.

APPENDIX V

TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE FUNDING OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

Resolution adopted by consensus by the 124th IPU Assembly
(Panama City, 20 April 2011)*

The 124th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Considering that representative and participatory democracies function largely within the political party system as essential expressions of the political will of the people,

Recognizing that political parties require appropriate funding to fulfil their core functions, both during and between elections,

Mindful that it is to the benefit of the public, and to democracy as a whole, that political parties are adequately funded within an agreed framework of accountability and mechanisms for transparency,

Acknowledging that, in modern democracies, significant resources are required to conduct competitive election campaigns enabling political parties to communicate their policy proposals as broadly as possible,

Also recognizing that political party funding may be both public and private, direct and indirect (free broadcasting time on television and radio, tax remissions, use of public buildings and public election billboards, etc.), and that, in order to mitigate the risks associated with political party funding, measures have been put in place in many countries to regulate spending on elections and ensure transparency and accountability in the funding of political parties generally,

Noting that in systems where there is limited public funding of political parties, the importance of private funding increases, and vice versa,

Also noting that the concerns surrounding the private funding of political parties, which are often viewed as a question of political equality, relate to three main points: inadequate resources that result in political parties and candidates pursuing relationships with donors who expect certain gains should those parties come into power; some political parties being better resourced than others; and cases where campaign finances come from compromised sources that expect a legislative or other benefit,

Recognizing that the aspects of private funding that need to be addressed concern the admissibility of anonymous donations, cash donations, donations by foreign natural and legal entities, foreign international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), State-owned enterprises and enterprises responding to calls to tender,

Noting that while codes of conduct for members of parliament and the executive have addressed accountability issues as they apply to elected representatives individually, there has been growing concern over the funding of political parties and the associated accountability of political parties, as a whole, to the people,

Further noting that consideration should be given to clear guidelines to regulate party and campaign finance (reasonable limitations on campaign finance, campaign finance reporting requirements, political finance reporting requirements, measures to prevent the misuse of State resources, the establishment of an independent regulatory body to monitor the funding of political parties and electoral campaigns, and appropriate sanctions for violations), in order to ensure that political parties remain accountable to citizens,

Recalling that Article 7.3 of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, which entered into force on 14 December 2005, provides that "Each State Party shall also consider taking appropriate legislative and administrative measures, consistent with the objectives of the Convention and in accordance with the fundamental principles of its domestic law, to enhance transparency in the funding of candidatures for elected public office and, where applicable, the funding of political parties",

Convinced that corruption represents a serious threat to the rule of law, democracy, human rights, equity and social justice,

Considering that political parties and election campaigns in all countries should aim to prevent and fight corruption,

Recognizing that the State should provide reasonable and impartial support to political parties, in accordance with a set of agreed criteria promoting equal access to resources under the principle of political pluralism and acting as a counterweight to corruption by eliminating the need for undue reliance on private donors,

Noting that public funding does not necessarily reduce the need for private funding, but should be used to mitigate the negative effects of excessive reliance on the latter and to support smaller political parties that may not have access to private sources of financing for their political campaigns, but whose contributions to political debate are essential to a healthy democracy,

Also noting that, even though women's presence in national parliaments has increased, lack of economic resources in the electoral process is a bigger challenge for women than for men,

Underscoring that temporary special measures, as outlined in Article 4 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, aimed at promoting gender equality should not be considered discriminatory and that the allocation of funds based on party support for women candidates could be seen as an incentive for achieving gender equity in parliaments and for increasing women's political participation,

Reiterating that gender equality and the empowerment of women are crucial components of any democratic system and that access to public and private funding can help promote gender equality in politics,

Noting that political parties are key for the achievement of balanced participation by women and men in political life,

Recognizing that many countries have adopted measures such as bans or limits on private political contributions, spending limits for election campaigns, increased public funding of political parties and controls over political expenditure,

Noting that some States have enacted legislation ranging from requiring political parties to put in place financial controls, public disclosure of funding sources and an array of criminal, administrative and financial sanctions to ensure compliance with the law,

Recognizing that public confidence in the democratic process could be undermined by political funding mechanisms that are not accountable and transparent, and that this should not only be a cause for concern for governments and parliaments, but also for international organizations working to enhance world democracy, and for political parties,

Noting that the reasons for regulating political party funding include the need to promote the democratic principles of transparency and accountability, prevent corruption, enhance competition among a broad range of political parties, accommodate a wide spectrum of political viewpoints, platforms and policies, and strengthen political parties and empower citizens to make informed decisions,

Recognizing that while mandatory disclosure of political party funding contributes to greater transparency and gives the public an opportunity to understand what factors might inform the actions of a political party, it might also discourage donors from funding political parties,

Mindful that disclosure laws, regulations and guidelines on campaign and political party funding seek to limit the negative impact of anonymous, foreign or corporate sources of funds to political parties and to ensure that all parties have an equal opportunity to compete, and that, although these measures may prove difficult to enforce in some countries, they are nevertheless important for ensuring that citizens are able to hold their political parties and elected representatives to account,

1. *Invites* States to consider putting in place measures aimed at ensuring the independence of political parties so as to shield them from undue influence, and at avoiding corruption and excessive spending on election campaigns, including by capping spending during election campaigns;

2. *Recommends* that the call to reduce election spending must take into account gender equality, low levels of income, literacy, access to information and technology, and the vast distances between urban and rural areas in some countries;

3. *Considers* that political party funding should aim to give people a voice in the political and democratic process by encouraging a diversity of opinions and political perspectives, promoting a level playing field between large, well-funded political parties and those less endowed with financial means and generally encouraging meaningful participation in the political process by all actors - men and women - irrespective of their financial means and access to resources;
- iv. *Is convinced* that raising public awareness of political party funding enhances the functioning of democratic institutions and limits corruption;
5. *Recognizes* that the existence of different democratic and constitutional systems and political parties makes it difficult to set up universal accountability mechanisms for political party funding; *encourages* parliaments, through the IPU, nevertheless to continue to ensure accountability and transparency in keeping with the realities prevailing in different countries while drawing upon the basic principles enshrined in international instruments such as the United Nations Convention against Corruption, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;
6. *Recommends* that parliaments, as institutions tasked with overseeing government action, civil society organizations and the media serve as watchdogs, educate citizens about the funding of political parties and continuously monitor the exercise of power in order to build a culture of transparency and responsibility in political life;
7. *Encourages* political parties to be part of the solution and become agents of change in a transparent and accountable manner;
8. *Recommends* the use of self-regulatory mechanisms, including internal codes of conduct and integrity for political parties;
9. *Invites* parliaments to consider putting in place measures to limit, prohibit or regulate funding inter alia by NGOs, corporate bodies and foreign sources, so as to ensure that they do not exert an undue influence on political outcomes;
10. *Recommends* that parliaments, governments and political parties ensure that legislation and mechanisms are put in place that require political parties and candidates to establish internal and financial controls with a view to greater financial accountability;
11. *Encourages* parliaments to adopt, in their legislative frameworks, anti-corruption regulations regarding the funding of political parties and election campaigns, in cases where specific laws, procedures or systems that provide for the regulation of such funding do not already exist;
12. *Calls upon* the IPU to develop a technical assistance and training programme on financial accounting systems and codes of conduct for political parties.

* The delegation of Sudan expressed a reservation on preambular paragraph 17.
The delegation of Algeria expressed a reservation on operative paragraph 9.

APPENDIX VI

**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 188th session
(Panama City, 20 April 2011)*

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 January 2005, as outlined in the report of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians (CL/188/13(b)-R.1), and to the resolution adopted at its 187th session (October 2010),

Taking into account the information provided at a hearing the Committee held with members of the Bangladeshi delegation to the 124th IPU Assembly on progress in and challenges to the investigation into the grenade attack which led to Mr. Kibria's death,

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, seven persons have been arrested, including the two persons (Mizanur Rahman Mithu and Md Badrul Alam Mizan) who detonated the grenades; in addition, the former State Minister for Home Affairs, Mr. Lutfozzaman Babar, has also been arrested in this case; according to the authorities, substantial evidence continues to be collected and efforts are being made to resolve the case without further delay; the report of the reopened investigation has been deferred many times to enable the investigating officers to "finish the job",

Considering that the Criminal Investigation Department has repeatedly requested additional time to submit its report on the investigation into the attack and that the Court has granted such requests, albeit most recently with a warning not to cause any further delays; on 4 February 2011, media reports quoted the Home Minister as having said that the investigation was nearing completion and that the trial would soon begin,

Considering that, according to the Bangladeshi delegation, the Standing Committee on the Ministry of Home Affairs, which meets once a month, continues to monitor the case; that the Ministry has been directed to report regularly on progress to the Standing Committee's meetings and is indeed doing so,

Considering finally that, according to the Bangladeshi delegation, Mr. Kibria's family is being kept informed of developments in the investigation and proceedings; *recalling* that Mr. Kibria's family stated in October 2010 that they had been contacted by the authorities, which wished to provide them with additional information on the status of the investigation, but which they had still not done,

1. *Thanks* the members of the Bangladeshi delegation for their cooperation and for the information provided;

2. *Acknowledges* that an investigation into a crime of this magnitude and its possible links with other crimes requires both time and thoroughness; *trusts* that the investigatory authorities, besides applying the necessary diligence, are acting as swiftly as possible to complete their report and hence allow justice to be dispensed without undue delay;

3. *Wishes* in this respect to ascertain whether the Criminal Investigation Department has indeed been able to meet the latest deadline set by the Court for the submission of its report and, if so, to learn of its contents inasmuch as it concerns public information;

4. *Would be grateful* to Parliament's Standing Committee on the Ministry of Home Affairs if it could, to the extent possible, share with the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians any official public information submitted to it;

5. *Is gratified* that information on the status of the investigation appears to have been recently provided to Mr. Kibria's family; *trusts* that the Parliament, through its Standing Committee, will ensure that such information continues to be provided to the family in a regular and timely manner; and *would appreciate* information as to whether this is indeed the case;

6. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this resolution to the competent authorities, inviting them to provide the requested information; *also requests* the Secretary General to convey this resolution to the source;

7. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and report to it at its next session, to be held on the occasion of the 125th IPU Assembly (October 2011).

CASE No. BGL/15 - SHEIKH HASINA - BANGLADESH

***Resolution adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 188th session
(Panama City, 20 April 2011)***

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Referring to the case of Sheikh Hasina, opposition leader of the Parliament of Bangladesh at the

time the communication was submitted, as outlined in the report of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians (CL/188/13(b)-R.1), and to the resolution adopted at its 187th session (October 2010),

Taking into account the information provided at a hearing with the Committee by members of the Bangladeshi delegation to the 124th IPU Assembly on progress in and challenges to the investigation into the grenade attack of August 2004 against the then opposition leader Sheikh Hasina and other Awami League members which left scores of people dead and wounded,

Recalling that, according to the Home Ministry's report of March 2010, the investigation into the grenade attack revealed the following: the grenade attack was decided on at a meeting in the government quarters of then Deputy Minister Abdus Salam Pinto; his brother, Mr. Moulana Mohammad Tajuddin, supplied the grenades for the attack; former State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfozzaman Babar and Mr. Salam Pinto provided administrative and financial support; the government of the time arranged for Mr. Tajuddin to leave Bangladesh; according to newspaper reports forwarded by the source, in August 2010 the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) arrested Saiful Islam Duke, the nephew of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) Chairperson Khaleda Zia, who was the Prime Minister at the time of the grenade attack; Duke is accused of having helped Moulana Mohammad Tajuddin flee the country on the instructions of the then Prime Minister's Office,

Considering that media reports have also made reference to the possible implication of the former Prime Minister's Political Secretary, Mr. Harris Chowdhury, convicted in Bangladesh on several corruption cases, and her son, Mr. Tarique Rahman, charged in Bangladesh with corruption in several cases and released on bail, both of whom are said to be in the United Kingdom,

Considering that the Criminal Investigation Department has repeatedly requested additional time to submit its report on the investigation into the attack and that the Court has granted such requests, albeit most recently with a warning not to cause any further delays; that, according to the Bangladeshi delegation, the CID has been given a further 60 days to submit its final report; *noting* also that the delegation insisted that it was essential for the investigation to take all the time needed so as to prevent any questions from being raised later regarding how the investigation was handled,

Considering that, according to the Bangladeshi delegation, the Standing Committee on the Ministry of Home Affairs, which meets at least once a month, continues to monitor the case, and that the Ministry has been directed to report regularly on progress to the Standing Committee's meetings, which it is doing,

1. *Thanks* the members of the Bangladeshi delegation for their cooperation and for the information provided;
2. *Acknowledges* that an investigation into a crime of this magnitude and its ramifications requires both time and thoroughness; *trusts* that the investigatory authorities, besides applying

the necessary diligence, are acting as swiftly as possible to complete their report and hence allow justice to be dispensed without undue delay;

3. *Wishes* in this respect to ascertain whether the Criminal Investigation Department has indeed been able to meet the latest deadline set by the Court for the submission of its report and, if so, to learn of its contents inasmuch as it concerns public information;

4. *Would be grateful* to Parliament's Standing Committee on the Ministry of Home Affairs if it could, to the extent possible, share with the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians any official public information submitted to it;

5. *Reiterates* its wish to ascertain from the authorities whether or not Mr. Chowdhury and Mr. Rahman have been officially linked to the investigation and, if so, whether the Bangladeshi authorities have issued international warrants for their arrest in this case;

6. *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 report to it at its next session, to be held on the occasion of the 125th IPU Assembly (October 2011).

CASE No. BLS/05 - VICTOR GONCHAR - BELARUS

Resolution adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 188th session (Panama City, 20 April 2011)

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, as outlined in the report of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians (CL/188/13(b)-R.1), and to the resolution adopted at its 187th session (October 2010),

Taking into account letters sent by the Chairpersons of the Standing Committees on National Security and on International Affairs and Relations with the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), dated 6 December 2010 and 2 March 2011,

Recalling the following:

- The investigation into the disappearance, on 16 September 1999, of Mr. Victor Gonchar and his friend Mr. Anatoly Krasovsky, after they had been forcibly abducted, has yielded no result and the authorities have consistently refuted the conclusions of a report by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe into disappearances for allegedly political reasons in Belarus (Pourgourides report), which provided evidence linking senior officials to the disappearance of Mr. Gonchar and Mr. Krasovsky; Mr. Pourgourides had gathered evidence to this effect, including a handwritten document from the then police chief, General Lapatik, the authenticity