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CAMERA DEPUTAȚILOR**

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**Cabinet Vicepreședinte
VICTOR PONTA**

Parlamentul României
Camera Deputaților

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I N F O R M A R E

**privind participarea delegației parlamentare
la cea de-a 6-a Conferință internațională a democrațiilor noi sau
restaurate
- Doha, 29 octombrie-1 noiembrie 2006 -**

Forumul parlamentar cu ocazia celei de a 6-a Conferințe internaționale a democrațiilor noi sau restaurate, s-a desfășurat la Doha, Qatar în perioada 29 octombrie-1 noiembrie 2006, la invitația Consiliului Consulatativ din Qatar, tema conferinței a fost „Consolidarea democrației, a păcii și dezvoltării sociale”. Conferința a fost organizată de Statul Qatar cu suportul Națiunilor Unite. Țările participante în număr de 142 au fost reprezentate la nivel guvernamental (29 de miniștrii, 50 de ambasadori), parlamentar (185 de delegați din 69 de țări) și la nivelul societății civile (311 participanți reprezentând 100 de organizații). Organizațiile internaționale au fost reprezentate de Națiunile Unite (UNDP, DPA, UNDEF), Uniunea Inter-parlamentară (IPU), Institutul Internațional pentru Democrație și Asistență Electorală (IDEA), Uniunea Interparlamentară Arabă, Consiliul Corporației Golfului (GCC), Organizația Conferinței Islamice și Institutul Euro-Arab pentru cercetarea și cooperarea în zona mediterană (MEDEA).

Forumul parlamentar cu ocazia celei de a 6-a Conferințe internaționale a democrațiilor noi sau restaurate a fost inaugurat, în data de 29 octombrie 2006, în mod oficial de E.S. Sheikh Hamad Bin Jassim Bin Jabr Al-Thani, Președintele celei de a 6-a Conferințe internaționale a democrațiilor noi sau restaurate, Prim Deputat, Prim-ministru și Ministru Afacerilor Externe al Statului Qatar. La ceremonia de deschidere au mai luat cuvântul: E.S. Enkhbold Nzamaa, Ministrul Afacerilor Externe din Mongolia; dl. Kader Sairaan, Președinte al Comitetului Executiv al Grupului Inter-parlamentar al Mongoliei; dl. AmirDossal, directorul

executiv, Fondul Națiunilor Unite pentru relații internaționale; dl. Anders B. Johnsson, Secretarul general al Uniunii Inter-parlamentare; dl. Cyril Ritchie, președintele Societății Internaționale Civile pentru Democrație (ICSFD).

Din delegația parlamentară, condusă de dl. deputat Victor-Viorel Ponta, Vicepreședinte al Biroului Permanent (PSD), a mai făcut parte și dna. consilier Maria-Iulia Comănescu.

Procesul privind democrațiile noi sau restaurate a luat ființă în Asia, la inițiativa Republicii Filipine la sfârșitul anilor '80, iar conferințele sunt organizate o dată la 3 ani.

Organizația Națiunilor Unite s-a implicat în acest proces începând cu anul 1994. Experiența Diviziei ONU privind problemele politice precum și a altor agenții specializate ale organizației au permis conturarea unor noi posibilități de soluționare la nivel practic a unor probleme privind democratizarea. Anual se emit sub egida ONU rapoarte privind democratizarea și o Agendă pentru democratizare.

La reuniunea din acest an motto-ul a fost „Consolidarea democrației, a păcii și dezvoltării sociale”. Deschiderea oficială a conferinței a avut loc în seara zilei de 29 octombrie, întâlnirile la fiecare nivel (guvernamental, parlamentar, societate civilă) au avut loc, separat, concomitent, în zilele de 30 și 31 octombrie 2006, ziua de 1 noiembrie a fost rezervată redactării documentului final (cf. anexă) și sesiunii comune finale.

Forumul parlamentar a fost prezidat de președintele Consiliului Consultativ din Qatar și s-a adresat membrilor de parlamente ale tuturor țărilor membre ONU.

Domnul vicepreședinte Victor Ponta a participat la dezbaterile generală pe tema: Rapoartele naționale privind progresele realizate pe cale spre democrație și trei reuniuni tip masă rotundă privind democrația ca modalitate de a elimina temerile, inegalitățile și sărăcia, democrația în sprijinul păcii și securității, îmbunătățirea capacității naționale și regionale în sprijinul democrației. Fiecare din aceste reuniuni au avut un raport care a asistat în sistematizarea dezbaterilor pe teme stabilite. Documentele ca bază de discuții au fost emise înaintea acestor mese rotunde ele fiind realizate de către consiliul consultativ din Qatar și Uniunea Interparlamentară (cf. cu anexa).

În data de 30 octombrie, în cadrul intervenției din plenului forumului parlamentar dl. vicepreședinte Victor Ponta a reliefat importanța implicării țării noastre în procesul de promovare al democrației, arătând beneficiile democrației din țara noastră. A subliniat totodată importanța organizării celei de a 3-a Conferințe internaționale a democrațiilor noi sau restaurate care s-a desfășurat la București în perioada 2-4 septembrie 1997, prezentând de asemenea, noile perspective pe care le va avea România o dată cu intrarea în Uniunea Europeană începând cu ianuarie 2007. Nu în ultimul rând, dl. vicepreședinte a felicitat și mulțumit, în numele Parlamentului României, Statului Qatar pentru organizarea celei de a VI-a conferințe internaționale.

Dl. vicepreședinte Victor Ponta a arătat că una dintre prioritățile Parlamentului României, inclusiv din perspectiva apropiatei aderări la

Uniunea Europeană, este dezvoltarea dialogului cu cetățenii și societatea civilă și o mai bună informare asupra conținutului procesului legislativ.

În cadrul conferinței s-a pus accent pe problemele legate de democrație, reforma politică, guvernarea propriu-zisă, regulile democrației în dezvoltarea și combaterea sărăciei, la fel ca și libertatea de exprimare și promovarea femeii, recunoașterea drepturilor omului și cele ale minorităților.

Cu ocazia forumului parlamentar, a fost relansată oficial publicația UIP, intitulată **"Parlamentul și democrația în secolul 21"**: un ghid de bune practici, care prezintă rolul central al parlamentului în democrație, sub toate aspectele sale. Lucrarea se bazează pe contribuțiile a 75 de parlamente din lume (inclusiv cel al României). Sunt identificate cinci obiective pe care trebuie să le urmărească parlamentele - reprezentativitate, transparență, accesibilitate, responsabilitate și eficacitate - și sunt prezentate exemple de modalități concrete prin care acestea pot fi realizate.

Pe întreaga durată a Forumul parlamentar cu ocazia celei de a 6-a Conferințe internaționale a democrațiilor noi sau restaurate, delegația parlamentară a beneficiat de sprijin și asistență din partea șefului misiunii diplomatice a României în Statul Qatar, dl. Consul Bogdan Jâglău, precum și din partea celorlalți membri ai Ambasadei.

VICTOR PONTA

VICEPREȘEDINTE





PARLIAMENTARY MEETING ON THE OCCASION OF
THE 6TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF NEW
OR RESTORED DEMOCRACIES

Doha (Qatar), 29 October – 1 November 2006



Workshop two: Towards greater effectiveness of parliaments

Loretta Ann P. Rosales

Member, Philippine Congress
October 2006

In citing the theme of today's Parliamentary Meeting, "Dialogue, Tolerance and Freedom of Expression as Cornerstones of Democracy", Dr. Beetham points out that the theme suggests a set of values and practices that are essential in a given distinctive context: the context of *social diversity* obtaining in each of our societies. This context refers to diversity of social condition, identity, religious belief, a way of life as individuals, as families and as communities. Beyond diversity in ways of living, these diversities include different views on laws and policies to which all are subject, and which can only be decided *collectively*, through a democratic process.

If I may add, the social diversity of individuals, families and communities is not limited simply to a descriptive difference in living condition, religious belief *or* political persuasion. In most societies, the particular social condition of individuals and/or communities within this diverse social context determines their capacity to access resources that can help them develop their potential and make them more capable in contributing to the democratic enhancement of their community.

Where these societies, through their governments, fail to provide the minimum requirements to help the broad range of diverse groups and communities gain access to economic, social, political and cultural resources necessary for self- and collective development, diversity polarizes these differences that oftentimes result in violent and continuing conflict. This situation holds particularly true when the functions and resources of government are diverted to the promotion of specific interests that run counter to the public good; when the coffers of government are used for private rather than public gain; when government is run without transparency and accountability to the people, *precisely because the people are not democratically represented*.

A parliament composed of democratically elected representatives of the people is theoretically conceived to address the problem of non-representation in governance. But to be truly representative of the people so that government and its resources redound to the public good, parliament must not only be *democratically* elected, i.e., the elected body genuinely reflects the votes of the people through a clean electoral process, but that the body must equally be *effective*, once elected into office.

And here we get to the crux of the matter. Parliamentary effectiveness cannot be fully satisfied without addressing the issues of power – the power of parliament to represent the fundamental interests of the people *in their diversity* not only through the making of policy responsive to their basic needs, but to ensure that these policies, once enacted into law, are fully enforced to enhance sustainable human and social development.

Parliamentary power has two aspects that are relevant to its effectiveness: its procedural and substantive aspects. When we speak of procedural requirements, we refer to the *capacity* of parliament to have the relevant legal rights and resources – financial, human and organizational – to carry out its multiple, but necessary tasks. Substantive power, on

the other hand, refers to the autonomy of parliament to genuinely convey the interests of its constituency *in relation* to the powers of executive governance. Where the latter's execution of policy transgresses public interest, parliament's oversight functions are intended to keep abuse of authority in check. Oversight functions are also intended to rectify the limitations of policy and improve on them through regular consultations with the people.

There are four areas of legislative activity that we suggest for workshop discussion in scrutinizing our effectiveness, or lack of it, and possible remedial measures for building capacity in functional democratic legislation:

1. Discussion on the capacity of parliaments to develop resources to be more effective in undertaking their legislative functions.

There is obviously a wide gap in terms of resources and facilities available to parliaments in developed and developing countries. Much of this can be explained in the budgetary priority given to crucial matters such as the rights to food, to health and education denied to an impoverished population which is prevalent in cash-strapped developing economies. Paradoxically, this becomes a matter of serious concern to parliamentarians, whose *raison d'être* is precisely to be able to develop that capacity to effectively address the critical issues of poverty, health and education. Effective capacity means the ability to mobilize sufficient resources to enable legislators to effect long-term policies that address questions of social justice, human development and sustainable growth.

A well-resourced parliament, such as is typical in developed economies, will have, *inter alia*:¹

- Adequate expert staff to provide impartial support to members across parliament's whole range of work;
- A comprehensive library and information service;
- Office facilities for individual members, with their own secretarial and research support; and
- Dedicated facilities for the main opposition party/parties.

In many developing countries where the problems of poverty and development are structural, parliaments cannot function as effectively when there is a dire lack of sufficient facilities, especially with respect to competent staff with the appropriate expertise to help draft legislation that addresses those issues that obstruct social, economic and political development.

Strategies for compensating for these resource constraints have been developed by some parliaments. These include:

- More effective training for members themselves, with encouragement to pursue greater specialization;
- More extensive and systematic use of experts in different fields from civil society and the academic community, to support the work of parliamentary committees and groups;
- The development of internship programmes to supplement scarce parliamentary resources;
- The development of on-line facilities to enhance the research and information capacity of parliaments, including on-line library services .

¹ Parliament and democracy in the twenty-first century, pp. 116-117

In some third world countries such as the Philippines, the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society groups has been tremendous in enabling party list representatives and some district representatives address the major issues of social reform. With a robust social movement of workers, students, peasants and church groups as partners, party list groups are able to draw from their wealth of experience in assisting legislation. As an NGO, the Philippine Legislators Committee for Population and Development (PLCPD) brings together senators and members of the House to work together on common issues related to a sound population policy and sustainable development.

2. Discussion on developing parliamentary autonomy

The handbook entitled *Parliament and Democracy in the 21st Century* quotes from a study of Michel Couderc on "The Principle of Parliamentary Autonomy, *Constitutional and Parliamentary Information*, No. 176, 1998, a Report by the Association of Secretary Generals of Parliament (ASGP) that defines autonomy of parliament as "on the one hand non-dependence and non-subordination of Assemblies in relation to the Executive, and, on the other, the possibility of the Assembly freeing itself at least partially from the rules of ordinary law so as to follow instead its own regulations." It notes that "in almost all States, the principle of the autonomy of Parliament is formally recognized in the constitutional texts ... dealing with the separation of powers." And it concludes that the general trend is to make this principle increasingly effective in practice.²

There are experiences in developing countries that strive to achieve, as exists in more developed ones, procedural independence by parliament from the executive branch, as suggested by the Slovenian Parliament's present study on parliamentary autonomy; i.e.,

- Parliamentary responsibility for its own staffing;
- Control over its own budget; and
- Organization of its own business.

A professional and non-partisan parliamentary service with its own organization and career structure independent of the central bureaucracy is increasingly accepted as a desirable trend for achieving autonomy in legislation. Such expectations, on the other hand, rely heavily on the extent of autonomy parliaments would have over their budget. While budgetary autonomy has been made fully operational in the French Parliament, for instance, in newer parliaments of the developing world, this authority over one's budget still remains "aspirational" as many would still remain under government supervision, specifically from the ministry of finance.

The third aspect of procedural independence – control over its own business – becomes a delicate issue where executive dominance frequently prevails in the relationship with the legislative body, whether under a presidential or parliamentary system. The problem of autonomy over its business is compounded in cases where the legislative body is divided in two Houses and one House tends to uncritically accept executive action and the other finds itself having to contend with this combination for checks and balances. What results is gridlock, not necessarily an executive-legislative impasse, but a failure of both Chambers to assume a consolidated role of checks and balances against possible executive abuse of authority.

In the Philippines, to avoid gridlock, the Legislative-Executive Development Council (LEDAC) was created to coordinate approaches to legislation and to fast-track priority measures. Where there is a modicum of trust and respect between both Houses and in relation to the executive branch, this consultative and advisory council can provide essential help in thrashing out crucial measures and arriving at a consensus in addressing

² Ibid., p. 118

priority bills. But the concept of legislative autonomy is completely lost when one House refuses to assume its responsibility to remain independent of undue executive influence.

3. Discussion on legislative authority to appropriate funds for the budget

Control over the purse strings is a mandate of every parliament in ensuring that government programmes are effectively implemented in accordance with enacted laws and responsive to the basic and diverse needs of society.

While this mandate, often reflected in the constitutional provisions, finds full expression in the more developed societies that are strong on human rights and the rule of law, this does not hold true for the less developed countries, scant in resources and systematically kept indebted to international institutions due to failure to comply with measures imposed by the latter. In some cases, the debt burden has been like a sword of Damocles that has obstructed the newly organized parliaments of the developing world from creatively crafting a budget policy that meaningfully caters to the more basic needs of the people.

In the case of the Philippines, the legacy of fourteen years of one-man-rule has made appropriations for debt service payment automatic, and this presidential decree has remained to the present, eroding House prerogative to have full control over budget appropriation. The consequence has been a historical abdication of responsibility to assert autonomy in programming the appropriation of budgetary funds for immediate and long-term priorities with a view to attaining the more strategic goals of social justice and sustainable human and social development.

By and large, the long-term lament of the developing world is to try and seek a new paradigm to address the debt burden imposed on their economies by financial institutions in order to help their parliaments become more effective in crafting appropriation measures from resources historically drained for debt servicing.

4. Discussion on the oversight functions of parliament

Parliaments have a key function in exercising oversight of the government on behalf of the people. Through oversight, parliament exacts accountability of government to parliament and, through parliament, to the electorate as a whole.

This particular discussion merits more attention in scrutinizing the relations of power between the executive and parliament. Apart from evaluating the effectiveness of law enforcement based on the merits of the law itself and the purpose of remedial reform, oversight functions determine the capacity of parliament to pit a check on possible abuse of discretion by the executive in the implementation of programmes as provided for by law.

On the other hand, this is not just a matter of balance between the legislative and executive branches. It is also a matter of relations between parties and within parties in collective and individual positioning on urgent matters of national policy. It is often said that it is the configuration of party power that can determine the relationship between parliament and the executive. Where the party in power within the executive is not in control of the legislature, for instance, parliamentary oversight can be vibrant and rigorous. However, party competition can also result in sectarian positions that result in obstructionism and gridlock.

When the same party, however, controls both branches of government, oversight can easily be blunted through the way power is exercised by the ruling power and the way this authority is exercised in discouraging internal dissent from being publicly expressed.

Rigorous efforts by the minority party in committee oversight functions can be consistently obstructed by members of a ruling party through a mechanical majority vote on every resolution that questions executive abuse.

Crucial to the effectiveness of committee inquiry is the power to require ministers or cabinet secretaries and civil servants to appear and answer questions before the oversight committee. Access to information is key to effective accountability of government to the people, and this includes access even to classified information. In the experience of some countries like the Philippines, the majority is insufficient to thwart investigations on anomalous practices of the executive, for instance, the issuance of executive orders that cross constitutional lines to prevent cabinet secretaries and their subordinates from being investigated. In this regard, an appeal is filed with the High Court to get a correct interpretation of the constitutional provisions that may seem to have been violated by zealous executive protection of its cabinet.

The accountability of government can likewise be addressed through non-parliamentary independent bodies like the Commission on Human Rights, the Commission on Audit, the Commission on Elections, the Ombudsman and such similar institutions. It is crucial that these bodies be independent of executive influence with their composition assured through the confirmation of legislative bodies such as the Commission on Appointments. While all these look good on paper, when parties exercise control over both the executive and legislative branches, and are consequently influenced by party considerations in the confirmation of appointments to these constitutional bodies, the oversight functions of these democratic instruments can easily be compromised.

The role of parliaments in implementing *effective* checks on possible executive dominance and abuse of discretion can be approached from the perspective of building effective networks with local legislative bodies that are much closer to the people and their communities and can therefore articulate the latter's interests more directly. In this regard, oversight functions through standing committees affecting local governance in its broad range can and must be developed as an infrastructure of support in effecting legislation that is responsive to the needs of the communities on the ground. In the Philippines, apart from Committee work, NGOs like the PLCPD mentioned above has helped establish such linkages for effective translation of national legislation to local policies and ordinances.

5. Discussion on parliament's involvement in international affairs

We live today in an increasingly interdependent world. The actions of a variety of external institutions, geared towards both governments and citizens, impinge on every country in ways that affect the life and well-being of populations in relation to the environment, their physical security, and their right to adequate food, shelter, health and education, to name but a few. The implications of these developments for democracy cannot be made clearer. There are two aspects of this area of parliamentary work we may venture to look into for purposes of studying how we can be more effective as promoters and protectors of democracy within the arena of international relations.

The first aspect deals with existing multilateral organizations to which our governments are party through solely executive negotiation and upon agreement, concurrence in ratification by the legislative body. For instance, as cited earlier, negotiations and agreements on debt service payments by the executive with international financial institutions without parliamentary scrutiny has been a continuing subject of controversy and debate in many developing countries. Multilateral institutions such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) for instance, was conceived and established to make life better for everyone by improving on bilateral trade and introducing immediate and long-term prescriptions for the eventual eradication of tariff walls and quota limits. At the end of the tunnel, it envisioned a free world with the *free flow* of trade beneficial to all nations. Unfortunately, the road has been less than beneficial for most countries of the developing world where such prescriptions are perceived as obstacles to the more desirable vision of *fair trade* among nations, big and small. It would be instructive to share among us experiences of how such multilateral institutions have impinged on our diverse lives

without benefit of consultation from the people through their duly elected representatives in Parliaments.

The second aspect addresses the wealth of international human rights instruments available to all members of the United Nations addressing fundamental human rights of individuals and communities with the objective of restoring the human dignity of each person and realizing the collective humanity of each nation. Again how much access to information regarding these human rights instruments has been made available to the people through their representatives in Parliament and in Congress? It is crucial that members of Parliament are made aware of this wealth of instruments to be able to translate these to domestic policy that covers the range of national legislation to town ordinances.

As a last point of concern, through these international human rights instruments, we may venture to look more closely into three fundamental institutions:

- How political parties in our own constituencies have been developed to reflect the policies, programs and platforms that defend, protect and promote these rights in parliament and governance;
- How the bureaucracy is performing with respect to the delivery of services - economic, political, social, cultural and technical – for the advancement of the public good;
- How much access to information and such services as mentioned above are the citizens given for their individual and collective empowerment in actively and democratically participating in the making of policy that fundamentally affects their lives.

**SIXTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF
NEW OR RESTORED DEMOCRACIES**

Doha, Qatar

29 October – 1 November, 2006

FINAL DRAFT REPORT

A. PLACE AND DATE OF THE CONFERENCE

The Sixth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies (ICNRD-6) was held from 29 October to 1 November 2006 in Doha, Qatar. The theme of the Conference was "Building Capacity for Democracy, Peace and Social Progress." The conference was organized by the Government of Qatar, the host country, with support of the United Nations (UN). Countries were represented in the government, parliament and civil society meetings of the Conference.

B. PARTICIPANTS

1. With regards to the GOVERNMENT MEETINGS the following 100 States were represented at the Conference: **Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Armenia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, Comoros, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Finland, France, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Gambia, Germany, Ghana, Guinea, Haiti, Hungary, India, Iraq, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Venezuela, Romania, Russian Federation, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor Leste, Togo, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, Tanzania, United States of America, Uzbekistan, Yemen, Palestine, and the Holy See.**

2. The Conference registered a high proportion of high-ranking officials among state delegates, with 91 of the Government Meeting participants being at the level of Ministers, Deputy Ministers, Members of Parliament and Ambassadors (29 Ministers, 13 Deputy Ministers and 50 Ambassadors).

3. The following international organizations were represented at the Conference: the United Nations (President of the UN General Assembly, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Department of Political Affairs (DPA), the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF), the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), the Arab League, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the Islamic Conference Organization and the Euro-Arab Institute for Research and Cooperation in the Mediterranean (MEDEA).

4. The Conference maintained its tripartite structure with parliamentarian and civil society forums being held parallel to the governmental meeting.

5. Civil Society delegates totaled 311 participants representing 100 organizations. Parliament Representatives totaled 185 delegates from 69 countries.

C. OPENING CEREMONY

The opening ceremony of the 6th International Conference of New or Restored Democracies (ICNRD-6) was held on 29 October in Doha, Qatar where Mongolia officially handed over the ICNRD-6 chairmanship to the State of Qatar. In his statement, H.E. Mr. Nyamaa Enkhbold, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mongolia thanked the Government of Qatar for hosting ICNRD-6 and noted the importance of the conference themes "Building Capacity for Democracy, Peace and Social Progress" and how they were interdependent, interrelated and mutually reinforcing. H.E. Sheikh Hamad Bin Jassim Jabr Al-Thani, the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar, stated that it is taken for granted that there is no single global model for democratic practices.

In her address to the Conference H.E Ms. Sheika Haya Rashed Al Khalifa, the President of the UN General Assembly noted that member States of the Assembly had lent strong support to ICNRD over the past years. She pointed out that promoting democracy was not only crucial to global security, it was also important in reducing poverty and for enhancing human development. The Assembly President emphasized the significance of the ICNRD as a forum to discuss and exchange challenges and lessons on democracy.

On behalf of the UN Secretary General, Mr. Amir Dossal (Executive Director, UN Fund for International Partnerships) extended his appreciation to the governments of Qatar and Mongolia for hosting the past and present Conferences. The Representative highlighted the importance of ICNRD's tripartite structure of governments, parliaments and civil society. He reiterated that democracy was a universal right that does not belong to any country or region but that participatory governance, based on the will of the people, was the best path to freedom, growth and development.

Mr. Anders B. Johnsson, Secretary-General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) welcomed the opportunity offered by this conference to take stock of the efforts made by countries to advance the democracy agenda. He emphasized the significance of including parliaments in the ICNRD as the legislative branch was often overlooked in international efforts to promote democracy. The Secretary-General highlighted the issue of representation and noted that the participation of women in parliament and government was still unacceptably low.

In his address to the Conference, Mr. Cyril Ritchie, Chairman, International Civil Society Forum for Democracy pledged the support of civil society to work with governments and parliaments of ICNRD-6 in order to ensure a long-term vision and mechanism to help countries and peoples along the road to greater democracy, to more in-depth democracy and to more lasting democracy.

The opening ceremony was moderated by Dr. Elham Badr.

D. OPENING SESSION of the GOVERNMENT MEETING

The Conference began its deliberations on 30 October 2006 in Doha, Qatar. The host country was represented at the opening ceremony by H.E., Mr. Ahmad Bin Abdullah Al-Mahmoud, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Member of the Council of

Ministers. The Minister welcomed the delegates on behalf of his Government and introduced the head of the Mongolian delegation, represented by H.E., Mr. Nyamaa Enkhbold, – Minister for Foreign Affairs, and host of the fifth ICNRD, held in September 2003 in Ulaanbaatar. H.E., Mr. Ahmad Bin Abdullah Al-Mahmoud noted in his address the progress that Qatar has experienced under the leadership of the Emir of Qatar. The Minister underlined the political, economic, social and cultural reforms sustaining the democratic process underway in Qatar, together with the concrete progress made in human rights and Qatar's commitment to international human rights treaties.

The head of the Mongolian delegation remarked in his address the deepening of democracy around the world, and expressed Mongolia's commitment to supporting Qatar during its mandate as a leader for the global movement for democracy. He also noted the challenges to democracy, including poverty, violent conflicts, terrorism and inequality, and proposed to further develop the Conference's follow up mechanism to better address these issues.

The address of the Mongolian Minister of Foreign Affairs was followed by speeches Ms. Pippa Norris, Director of the Democratic Governance Group of UNDP, Mr. Magdy Martinez-Soliman, Executive Head of the UN Democracy Fund and Mr. Vidar Helgesen, Secretary-General of International IDEA. There were three main points proposed as a follow-up to ICNRD-6, including a role for the UN in the institutionalization of the Conference, the establishment of a "democracy knowledge network," as well as sharing of democratic comparative experiences focusing on successes in every major region. Mongolia's encouragement to other new or restored democracies to pilot national democracy assessment tools was also supported.

E. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

At the Opening Plenary Session, on 30 October, the Conference elected by acclamation Djibouti, Haiti, Italy and the Maldives as Vice Chairmen. Mongolia was elected Rapporteur.

F. ADOPTION OF THE GOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE AGENDA

The Opening Plenary Session of the Conference adopted, unanimously, the following provisional agenda:

1. Opening Session
2. Election of Vice Chairs and Rapporteur
3. Adoption of the agenda
4. General discussion on Democratization Processes by Government Representatives
5. Roundtable sessions:
 - I. Democracy as a way to eliminate fear, inequality and poverty
 - II. Democracy for peace and security
 - III. Building national and regional capacity for democracy
6. Joint meeting for Representatives of Government, Parliaments and Civil Society: Building Democracy from Manila to Doha and follow-up mechanisms
7. Closing Plenary Session

G. GENERAL DISCUSSION ON DEMOCRATIZATION PROCESS BY GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES

These discussions were conducted on the 30 and 31 of October. 50 government representatives participated actively in the plenary, as follows: Algeria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Burundi, Canada, Chile, Cuba, Czech Republic, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Finland, Haiti, Hungary, India, Iraq, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Mauritania, the Maldives, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Palestine, Panama, Philippines, Peru, Poland, Venezuela, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Samoa, Sao Tome & Principe, Sierra Leone, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Tanzania, Thailand, Timor Leste, Togo, Ukraine, Yemen. The majority of governments reflected and reported on their democratic experience since ICNRD-5 and recent achievements made in their democratization process.

The contributions reflected a large degree of agreement with regard to a number of areas of democratization. Generally, Governments expressed their commitment towards democracy. However, many countries also stressed that democratic processes vary according to cultural, economic and historical traditions. Governments observed that democracy and development are interdependent, whereas other factors were equally relevant and/or interlinked to political democracy, in strengthening democratic processes or consolidating democracies, such as decent living conditions and achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Governments reiterated the link between democracy and development and the way in which the two are connected in particular in the case of developing nations, that are undergoing both increased economic and political shifts since the advent of globalization.

Many Governments stated that democracy could be assisted at the international level. International support could be provided in forms such as the establishment of funds to support democratization, as well as the sharing of best practices. However, governments affirmed the importance of ownership and participatory and inclusive approaches to good governance.

Governments pointed out how some recent security threats and concerns, such as civil wars, internal social strife as well as transnational crime and terrorism had impacted on the democratization process. Governments also highlighted the link between good governance under democratic systems and its impact on improving public policy, ensuring transparency and accountability, reducing corruption, promoting the rule of law and protecting the rights and freedoms of its citizens, in particular women and other marginalized groups.

Many countries reiterated that democracy was a long term process and that there was a need to take into account economic and political factors of the country in question. Furthermore, democracy and human rights also should be seen as interlinked components that were part of sustainable human development.

At the country level, government, civil society and external parties could play a crucial role in assisting democratization or consolidation of democracy. Hence, this called for a holistic approach which would establish a nexus between democracy and development for the newly democratizing countries.

A number of Governments stressed the importance of supporting institutions that would bring democracy to the grass-roots level and the need to create synergies between modern institutions of democracy and traditional institutions. It was further stressed that citizens needed to understand that democracy had dividends and that it

was not only about citizens' rights but responsibilities as well. Governments also reiterated that without extensive civic education programmes it would be difficult to produce a modern democratic process.

It was also stressed that a concrete approach to promoting democracy had to evaluate the mechanisms of supporting and 'nourishing' democratic movements and how this could be achieved, whether at national, regional or international forums.

Several Governments gave recent examples of initiatives towards democratization and shared best practices such as the establishment of the Council on Human Rights, the creation of an Ombudsman office, or specialized institutions to deal with the particular problems faced by women. Many countries shared recent ongoing developments including the drafting of laws, including laws to balance the combating of terrorism with the protection of human rights, as well as recent constitutional amendments.

One Government stressed that institutional aspects of democracy, such as independent judicial systems, were fundamental to the long term sustainability of democracy. It was also noted that education of the citizenry about the civic duties and rights were two complementary aspects of democratic systems in new or restored democracies. One Government stressed that democratic dialogue was impossible without a culture of tolerance.

Other topics included the need for increased coordinated international cooperation towards providing expertise to support nations emerging from conflict in the rebuilding of the democratic governance. Another Government stressed the necessity for long-term and consistent international commitment to supporting post-conflict nations in managing transitions particularly regarding these nations' path towards democratization. One country shared its successful experience regarding linking their overseas development aid to support the self-help efforts of developing countries in good governance. One Government noted that its country still faced tough challenges towards democratization and as a new democracy still required the full support and engagement of the UN and the international community.

The inter-linkages between democracy and peace were also stressed. It was said that ongoing conflicts in the Middle East needed to be resolved to enable democratization to flourish in the region. Otherwise, there could not be peace and stability in the region and the environment would not be conducive for efficient democratization. Another Government stressed that the absence of security in the region was a threat to democracy and reiterated the need for ongoing conflicts to be resolved. It was also stated by one participant that some democratic countries employed war as a mechanism either to undermine the democratic processes of other countries or cause internal strife. One Government highlighted the fundamental democratic idea regarding the link between the realization of a nation's own right and the respect for the right of others. Further the need for encouraging dialogue and co-existence as pre-requisite to peace was expressed.

One Government highlighted that country's lessons learnt in democratization stressing among other issues that particular attention be given to ethnic divisions in order to prevent them from predetermining politics.

A number of countries made concrete **proposals** and suggested new **initiatives**, while others offered concrete support to new or restored democracies, for instance:

the inclusion of migration and development as an important element in the ICNRD ; the inclusion of social justice as a component of democracy; the adoption of mechanisms that promote interfaith dialogue and cooperation for peace; the sharing of experiences and expertise in the areas of institution building, capacity building, awareness creation and leadership development, through the UNDEF platform; the promotion of frameworks for the development of regional partnerships, in particular among developing countries; the employment of information technology more effectively, in order to close the digital gap and assist the process of sharing information in an era of globalization; the formalization of lessons learnt, best practices, norms and standards to capitalize on the progress made during the conferences.

A number of Governments, particularly least developed countries (LDCs) that are pursuing democratic reforms, raised the concern of financial constraints and recommended that LDCs that are actively pursuing democratic reforms should be assisted financially in their efforts to ensure consolidation of their democracies. Suggestions also included the adoption of a debt-for-equity swap initiative.

One Government stressed that ICNRD should have appropriate perspective with regards to the challenge that internal terrorism causes to the success of democracy. It recommended that the final communiqué of the ICNRD-6 make reference to the threat of internal terrorism to democracy and the need for the international community to protect democracies under such threats.

Another Government recommended the need for multi-stakeholder dialogue to address challenges brought on by globalization. It proposed an electoral observation mechanism be set up with universal character, following existing models, with a holistic approach to democratization and offering assistance to nations.

One Government stated that the concept of democracy may be manipulated by certain countries, and highlighted the negative outcomes experienced following what it described as imposed democracy. It further stressed that the multi-party system was not synonymous with democracy.

A number of proposals also concerned the **structure** and **follow-up** of the ICNRD. A number of countries expressed their support for establishing a follow-up mechanism to enhance the efficiency of the ICNRD. Support to the establishment of a permanent secretariat of ICNRD was extended. However, the need for assessing its benefit was noted, especially regarding the extent to which it could meaningfully and specifically contribute to democratic dialogue or its promotion. The establishment of an ICNRD Steering Group comprised of present and past Chairs, which would be responsible for conducting quarterly follow-up meetings and an annual ministerial meeting at the sidelines of the general debate of the UN General Assembly were proposed. Also, one Government recommended that the ICNRD propose to the UN Secretary-General the establishment of a Trust Fund to cover costs of implementing ICNRD's programmes in addition to UNDEF. Some Governments encouraged better links and strengthening of coordination efforts with the Community of Democracies (CoD).

Many Governments extended their support to UNDEF, while others also expressed their support to the CoD, the Community of Democratic Choice and UNDP's proposal of creating a Democracy Knowledge Network.

H. FIRST ROUNDTABLE ON "DEMOCRACY AS A WAY TO ELIMINATE FEAR, INEQUALITY AND POVERTY"

Chair: Mr. Shabbir Cheema (Director, Global Forum on Reinventing Government, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs).

Panelists: Ms. Pippa Norris (Director, Democratic Governance Group, UNDP), Mr. Marcus Brand (independent expert), Mr. Ozias Tungwarara, (Deputy Director, AfriMAP).

Rapporteur: Mr. Joachim Nahem (UNDP)

Ms. Norris addressed the basic question on how democratic governance helps to empower the poor, and how it contributes to reaching the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). She focused on the link between democracy and economic prosperity and observed that it could only be established that wealth helps to sustain and consolidate democracy, but the reverse relationship did not hold. Social equality and developmental welfare policies were critical for a democracy. More persuasive evidence existed that democratic governance leads to human development than growth, but the precise links remained unclear. She further explained that democratic governance did not automatically generate achievement of the MDGs. She concluded that two conditions were necessary to link democratic governance effectively with human development - political will and state capacity.

Mr. Brand argued that the apparent uncontroversial nature of these concepts had led to wide rhetorical use in the global public policy debate despite problems in defining and measuring the rule of law or corruption. He stressed the distinction between seemingly technical approaches to these issues, which reached to the heart of the political order of any society. He gave a brief overview of various international activities in this regard (UN and its agencies, regional organizations, bilateral efforts, NGOs etc.) and commented on the lessons learnt as well as the caveats identified by these agencies, which include the risk of quick-fix approaches and the danger of an anti-democratic instrumentalization of initiatives to combat corruption.

Mr. Tungwarara presented his perspective on the subject within the African context, and supported the argument made by the previous speakers that state capacity and political will are crucial for democratic development. He stated that there was a crisis of implementation, not of standards and raised the question why the fruits of change have not trickled down to the poor in so many instances. Also, in many places, the emergence of a small, politically well connected elite had led to patronage politics. This led him to question how democracies could in fact deal with the inequality of means and power effectively in order to give life and meaning to governance.

The background paper on "Implementation of the MDGs in promoting human dignity" prepared for the Conference outlined crucial concepts related to human dignity, and presented an analytical framework that linked human dignity and its derivatives with the MDGs. The paper further analyzed progress towards the achievement of the MDGs also to identify the remaining gaps. Drawing on that assessment, it suggested how the implementation of the MDGs - both in terms of strategies as well as of process - could enhance human dignity. With appropriate strategies, proper institutions and required processes, the paper argued, MDGs could be implemented and they could be achieved. Once that is done, people would have a dignified life with their rights protected, choices enlarged and security ensured.

During the general discussion there was agreement that there is a crisis resulting

from the international community's push for democracy in many countries, without enabling the resulting institutions to deliver tangible improvements to the people. The question was raised whether the introduction of democracy was an end in itself or whether there was an objective of promoting democracy which included the elimination of poverty and the improvement of well-being.

The meeting also heard that in a number of cases in Africa, the introduction of democracy had dispelled basic fear of oppression, but not the fear of disease or poverty. Inequality persisted or had been exacerbated in large parts of the region. The debt burden, globalization and poverty were described as threats to democracy.

It was argued that a number of countries had shown that economic development was possible without democracy. However, other discussants dismissed the thesis that lasting human security and stability was possible without democratic institutions and democratic culture.

The Chair concluded by emphasizing that while the practice of democracy was very rich, the central purpose of democracy must be seen as creating an enabling development. It was necessary, in this context, to look at democracy as a long term and holistic effort. The poor must be able to organize themselves, and the state must be able to accommodate their demands. He further stated that weak institutions lead to weak policies and inequalities, which stressed the need for strengthening state capacity. The chair made reference to the 2002 Human Development Report, which could not establish a definitive link between poverty eradication and democracy in itself and added that a governance system must be effective, as well as democratic, if it is to deliver the basic requirements for improving human security.

I. SECOND ROUNDTABLE ON "DEMOCRACY FOR PEACE AND SECURITY"

Chair: Mr. Danilo Türk (Professor of Law, University of Ljubljana).

Panelists: Ms. Rama Mani (Fellow, Geneva Centre for Security Policy), Mr. Abdalla Hamdok (Regional Director, International IDEA), Mr. Kennedy Graham (Director, Regional Security & Global Governance Project at the United Nations University), Mr. Istvan Gyarmati (Director, International Center for Democratic Transition).

Rapporteur: Ms. Valerie de Campos Mello (UN Democracy Fund)

In his introductory remarks, the Chair argued that peace and security were two different concepts. Although research had shown that peace- defined as the absence of war- had progressed, the sense of insecurity had actually increased for citizens in many parts of the world. This created new challenges for democratization.

Ms. Mani argued that terrorism presented several threats to democracy. The first one was of a direct nature, in that terrorists opposed democracy and freedom. Indirect threats included the fact that democracy promotion was facing a backlash and the democratic peace theory was being questioned as terrorism took place in both democratic and undemocratic societies. In addition, the forms of democracy being promoted tended to focus excessively on elections and technical aspects at the expense of substance and values. Finally, there was the reality that the fight against terrorism had often led to an erosion of civil liberties. To respond to these threats, it was important to develop a strategy based on three pillars: the reintroduction of the concepts of justice and equality into democracy promotion, moving from procedural approaches to democracy promotion to substance, and ensuring that "democracy

delivers;" the return to a human security approach; and the adoption of a rule of law framework for efforts to combat terrorism.

Mr. Hamdok elaborated on the nexus between democracy, peace and security, arguing that root causes of conflict could not be ignored, that building democracy should be based on local realities and that progress was possible even when national realities limit the immediate achievement of a fully-fledged democratic system. However, he recognized the existence of a growing challenge of delivery, which affected the legitimacy of states.

Links between democracy and peace-building were also important, and it was noted that requirements on democratic transitions existed in all peace agreements, as elections were often seen as the main instrument to validate peace processes. However, democracy depended not only on elections but on building institutions, ensuring reconciliation processes and inclusive participation. The issues of identity and leadership were also seen as key. Regarding elections, their timing and sequencing was important, as was electoral design and issues such as independent electoral commissions, registration and voting formula. Far from being technical, these were highly political matters that had implications for access to power and resources.

Mr. Graham analyzed the relationship between universal norms and standards on democracy and human rights and regional arrangements, including regional organizations. While democracy was on the global agenda, in particular of the United Nations, regional particularities such as culture and religion had to be taken into account. Regional variations to the liberal model, based on pluralistic multi-party political structures existed and should be considered as valid alternatives.

Mr. Gyarmati argued that the perception of democracy had evolved from one based on the conduct of elections to one bringing in the need for institutions and participation. Other challenges to democracy included both a crisis of the existing security structures, which were created to deal with external threats and were presently being adapted. He also saw a crisis of liberal democracies, which was made evident by the lack of confidence in governments and parliaments in many parts of the world.

In the discussion that followed, participants emphasized the need to address the root causes of terrorism and to develop prevention strategies. While it was recognized that variations existed in democratic practices, the existence of an opposition and the right to challenge incumbent governments were considered essential characteristics. While there was disillusion with the performance of some democratic governments, there was no evidence that alternative regimes of an authoritarian nature were to be preferred.

The importance of the linkage between counter-terrorism activities and the conflict in the Middle East was also underlined, as was the diversity of experiences with elections in post-conflict situations. In addition, the fact that human rights and fundamental freedoms formed the core of definitions of democracy made international cooperation for democracy even more necessary.

To conclude, the Chair presented a synthesis of the interface between democracy on the one hand, and peace and security on the other. He stressed the need to think about the legitimacy that democracy could bring, which did not result from the form

of democracy but rather from its quality. It was important to recognize the present frustrations with the inability of governments to deliver social goods and improve the lives of their citizens. To be real, democracy had to be based on equity and on social justice. Much could happen through international cooperation, especially in post-conflict contexts, and the present conference presented a unique opportunity for dialogue and progress.

J. THIRD ROUNDTABLE ON "BUILDING NATIONAL AND REGIONAL CAPACITY FOR DEMOCRACY"

Chair: Mr. Vidar Helgesen (Secretary General, International IDEA)

Panelists: Mr. Todd Landman (Professor, University of Essex), Ms. Amira Sombol (Professor, Georgetown University, Qatar), Mr. Yiping Zhou (UNDP, Director, Special Unit for South-South Cooperation), Mr. Abdel Rahim Nor Eddin (Professor, University of Qatar).

Rapporteur: Ms. Maria Jose Torres Macho (UN DPA)

The Chair opened the session referring to a recurring theme in the Conference: Democracy cannot be imported or exported, but it can be supported.

Dr. Todd Landman presented the IDEA democracy assessment framework that is based on the premise that the citizens of the democracy that is being assessed should carry out the democratic assessment to provide local ownership and the political will for democratic reform. The democratic framework was based on two fundamental principles: popular control over decision-making and decision-makers, and respect and voice between citizens in the exercise of that control. The democracy assessment framework has been applied in more than fifteen countries (a.i, Bangladesh, El Salvador, Italy, Kenya, Malawi, New Zealand, Peru, Republic of Korea). In the case of Mongolia, the framework was applied under the auspices of the ICNRD-5 and was led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He concluded that the framework had proved to be flexible to adapt to contextual specificities and that it had helped to identify agents for democratic reform.

Professor Abdel Rahim Nor Eddin, elaborated on the possible role of media in the promotion of democracy and democratic values. In particular, he referred to the role and functions of the media in disseminating information, promoting tolerance and commitment to individual freedoms, setting the agenda and the forum for discussing essential issues (i.e., corruption). However, he noted that the role of media could be constrained by the decline of freedoms in certain countries, the lack of transparency of the political and legal systems, poverty and illiteracy and the monopoly of media houses. He referred to the cases of Afghanistan and Iraq where abrupt political changes had negatively affected the development of a free press. He ended his presentation by referring to the important steps that Qatar had undertaken in its path to democracy since 1995.

Mr. Yiping Zhou underlined that democracy was a universal value that took different forms. Therefore, the UN did not attempt to impose any particular model of democracy. He stressed the importance of being mindful of country specific forms of democracy. In this regard, he referred to a report of the UN Secretary-General in which he had acknowledged that technical assistance had not always been appropriate and foreign models had been imposed in countries transitioning towards democracy. He then elaborated on the key elements of South-South cooperation namely: the mapping of experiences, the "marketing" of good democratic practices

in the South; and the mobilization of different partners. This approach permitted bringing relevant experiences to a particular country situation.

Ms. Amira Sombol opened her presentation by referring to a background paper produced for this panel by Dr. Amaney Jamal on "Democratic Transformations in the Middle East" and elaborated on whether democracy worked in the Middle East. She argued that in the Middle East the concept of participation was more relevant than the concept of democracy since it was deeply rooted in the culture and the history of the region. In that regard, she considered that there was a need to look into "alternative democracies" and its distinct methods of participation. She provided an analysis of the educational systems in the Middle East (text books and curriculum) and concluded that countries in the region had failed to provide students the basic elements for participation, teaching individuals duties and responsibilities.

The questions and the debate that followed the presentations were centered on the role of media and the educational system in promoting democratic practices and values. Some questions raised the paradox that "undemocratic" practices had emerged in the name "democratization" and that the some Western countries seemed to be biased against certain media of the Middle East region. The extent to which Islam could be compatible with democratic systems of government was also discussed. In regard to the South-South cooperation, the debate outlined the important role played by regional and inter-regional organizations, particularly in the African context, in peace making and conflict resolution in Africa (the NEPAD peer review process, AU, ECOWAS, IGAD).

K. PARLIAMENTARY MEETING

The Parliamentary Meeting brought together 185 parliamentarians from 69 countries to exchange experiences and practices under the theme "Dialogue, Tolerance and Freedom of Speech as the Cornerstones of Democracy." The Meeting was convened in parallel to the governmental and civil society meetings and was chaired by H.E. Mohammed Bin Mubarak Al-Khulaifi, Head of the Advisory Council of the state of Qatar. The Interparliamentary Union (IPU) and Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union (AIPU) were co-conveners and key contributors to the success of this two-day parliamentary event.

The first day of the Parliamentary Meeting was chaired by the speaker of the Advisory Council of Qatar, who gave a welcoming speech followed by the statements of the Parliament of Mongolia, and Mr. Anders Johnson, Secretary-General of the IPU.

The session focused mainly on reviewing the progress and achievements made by the IPU and participating parliaments in implementing the Declaration adopted by the Parliamentary Forum at the INCRD-5 in Ulaanbaatar, more particularly in the following five areas:

1. Parliament's role in the defense and promotion of human rights;
2. Promoting gender equality and women's representation in legislative institutions;
3. Providing support to parliaments through technical cooperation;
4. Developing democracy indicators for parliaments;
5. Strengthening parliament's role in international cooperation.

The opening session was also an opportunity to launch the Arabic version of IPU's "Parliament and Democracy in the 21st Century: A Guide to Good Practice", translated and produced with the support of UNDP.

Subsequent sessions were devoted to presentations made by representatives from over 40 parliaments, who highlighted the gains but also the challenges facing their institutions in the path towards achieving democracy through good governance and strong democratic institutions.

Building on the framework for democratic parliaments, as outlined in the IPU Guide, the second part of the Parliamentary Meeting took place in the form of two parallel workshops, designed to provide a platform for discussing the five key principles of democratic parliaments, which link parliamentary democracy to representation, transparency, accessibility, accountability and effectiveness.

Both workshops offered an opportunity for participating MPs and representatives of parliamentary organizations to engage in substantive and open discussions of the main issues facing new and restored democracies in their efforts to meet the requirements of democracy. During the first workshop on the theme of "Representation, Accessibility, Accountability and Transparency to Ensure Inclusive Decision-making", parliamentarians addressed the issue of how parliament could better represent the people, both politically and socially, guarantee freedom of expression along the principles of human rights and security, and ensure more participation of all actors of society in the legislative process.

The second workshop focused on effectiveness as a key feature of democratic parliaments under the theme "Towards greater Effectiveness of Parliaments". This meeting provided a platform for MPs to question the degree of effectiveness of their parliaments, and explore means by which parliaments could become effective in fulfilling their legislative and oversight roles. Discussions pointed to some of the key factors which could have a direct impact on the performance of the parliamentary institution. These include:

- The internal organization and functioning of parliament;
- A coherent and sound legislative process;
- A solid committee system and free access to information to ensure effective oversight of the executive, including scrutiny and monitoring of the budget.

Participants in this workshop also highlighted the important role of parliament at the international level and the need to strengthen its involvement in policy making and international cooperation.

The two days of open exchange and deliberations were concluded with the adoption of a Declaration affirming the position of parliament at the center of democracy, and as an indispensable actor in promoting freedom, participation, human rights and the rule of law. The Declaration restates the parliaments' commitment to engage in improving working conditions (strong constitutional frameworks, sufficient resources, etc.) and work towards achieving a set of goals including:

- More inclusiveness of all sectors and actors of society, including men, women, opposition parties, the youth and disadvantaged groups in the decision-making;
- Stronger role of parliaments as guardians of human rights and vectors of tolerance and dialogue;

- Parliaments as venues and advocates for dialogue in response to military threats and monitoring security sector policies to ensure accountability and protect citizens;
- Parliaments as open and accessible fora for strengthening the links with the constituencies, and fostering partnerships with civil society;
- Information and communication technology as a means to improve service delivery and encourage access by the people to political processes;
- Higher visibility of parliaments on the international scene;
- Securing more support from the donor community to design and implement parliamentary assistance programs.

The Parliamentary Meeting also concluded with the adoption of a Plan of Action which includes a series of measures considered as helpful to achieve progress towards the five principles for democratic parliaments, as outlined and described in the framework developed by IPU. The Plan of Action contains proposals for parliamentary follow-up to implement these measures. The Chair was requested to report in three years on substantial and measurable progress towards achieving the goals affirmed in the Declaration and Plan of Action.

L. THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM FOR DEMOCRACY - ICSFD

The 5th ICNRD devoted a central theme of the conference in Mongolia to the theme "Strengthening Democratic Governance and Cooperation with Civil Society". This spurred Mongolian civil society to organize a separate International Civil Society Forum (ICSF) prior to the conference, attended by more than 200 civil society representatives representing 63 countries, many of who were invited to take part in the ICNRD 5. A steering committee was elected, and in 2004, the initiative was constituted as the International Civil Society Forum for Democracy - ICSFD in preparation for the ICNRD-6 in Qatar, based on 6 meetings between 2004 and 2006 in New York, Montreal and Doha. With the support of the Qatar Government, preparations were made for an integral approach to participate in the conference. The tripartite dimension of ICNRD was enforced by the UN Resolution 58/13 of May 2006. The Government of Qatar generously suggested that ICSFD invited 300 civil society delegates on its expense.

The ICSFD conference was organized parallel to the ICNRD-6, and the chairman of the Steering Committee since 2003, Mr. Cyril Richie, spoke at the opening of the ICNRD as well as the opening of ICSFD conference entitled "Democracy is the Road to Peace". The keynote speech was delivered by Mr. Jakob von Uxkuill of Sweden and director of the Right Livelihood Award, focusing on the obstacles for democracy as a road to peace. These were identified as 1) the cynicism about democracy, 2) poverty, 3) environmental concerns, and 4) participation, new paradigms and cooperation among stakeholders.

The conference split into 6 thematic workshops with approximately 25 participants in each, moderated by members of the ICSFD Steering Committee with the following content: 1) *Freedom to live in dignity* which took up the situation of indigenous peoples, women, minorities and others deprived of means to participate in political processes and having access to media, 2) *Conflict prevention and peace building* which attempted to provide continuity to the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC), and which heard important dilemmas presented by civil society representatives from Palestine, Iraq, Sudan, Uganda and Liberia, 3) *Participatory governance* which focused on transparency, accountability and

participation of women, 4) *Citizenship, responsibility and participation* with emphasis on civic education and the costs of running democratic institutions, 5) *Democracy assessment and promotion tools* with an emphasis on the Middle East which considered tools to measure advancement of democracy and how civil society and media can contribute to monitoring, and 6) *Democratization, international institutions and global governance*, open to all the stakeholders.

In regional groups, the Declaration and Plan of Action as well as suggestions for follow-up mechanisms were debated. The regions Americas, Europe, Middle East, Asia and Africa came together to discuss and adopt amendments to the draft declaration prepared by the Steering Committee and nominate new members of the Steering Committee for the period 2006-2009.

ICSFD is determined to continue its partnership with ICNRD.

M. DRAFTING GROUP

Chair: Government of Qatar

Rapporteurs: Mr. Sulayti and Mr. Adil

1. A draft Declaration had been distributed in advance through the Follow-up Mechanism in New York.
2. The Conference drafting group met on 30 October and 31 October and was open to all country delegations (UN also provided support). A core group of 10-15 countries, representing all global regions, took part in the drafting deliberations.
3. The Draft Declaration was endorsed by the working group.
4. The Final Doha Declaration is annexed to this report.

N. HOST OF THE NEXT CONFERENCE

... formally expressed its generous offer to host the Seventh ICNRD. The participants agreed that the follow-up mechanism provided for in the Declaration should undertake consultations with ... and other interested parties to determine the venue and date of the next Conference.

O. JOINT MEETING FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF GOVERNMENTS, PARLIAMENTS, AND CIVIL SOCIETY: "BUILDING DEMOCRACY FROM MANILA TO DOHA AND FOLLOW-UP MECHANISMS." On November 1, select representatives from the governmental, parliamentary and civil society segments held a joint meeting. Three background papers from government, parliament and civil society were prepared for this meeting.

P. CLOSING CEREMONY

The Closing Session was chaired by H.E., the Speaker of the Advisory Council of (State of Qatar). Three representatives on behalf of governments, parliaments, and civil society provided summary reports on the proceedings and discussions of the Conference. The Chairman of the Joint Meeting also reported on the Conference deliberations. The Conference Rapporteur, Mr. Purevjav Ganshukh, (Mongolian Ministry of Foreign Affairs), presented a comprehensive summary report on ICNRD-6.

The Doha Declaration was adopted by ICNRD-6.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Programme

Annex 2: Background papers prepared for ICNRD-6:

Annex 3: ICNRD-6 Doha Declaration

Annex 4: Parliamentary Declaration and Plan of Action

Annex 5: Civil Society Declaration and Plan of Action\

Annex 6: Joint Statement

JOINT STATEMENT

We, the representatives of governments, parliaments and civil society around the world gathered at this historic sixth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies at Doha, the State of Qatar from 29 October to 1 November 2006, which unites, for the first time, in a joint statement the three significant sectors, dedicated to the democratic ideal, in the common effort to promote democratic values, principles and standards and committed to strengthening a democratic culture around the world.

Reaffirm that democracy is a universal value based on the freely expressed will of the people through elections to determine their own political, economic, social and cultural systems and their full participation in decisions affecting all aspects of their lives,

Reaffirm also our convictions and commitment to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and of international law,

Convinced that the promotion of democracy and the creation of an enabling environment in which it can flourish is not only the individual responsibility of governments, parliaments, civil society, or other stakeholders but is also a responsibility which they share,

Pledge our common commitment to the process of further democratization of our societies,

Reaffirm our shared commitment to the pursuit of core democratic principles and values,

Recognizing the need to cooperate and build effective tripartite partnerships among governments, parliaments and civil society in pursuit of the rule of law, human rights, democratic governance and institution building,

Acknowledge the need for regular and ongoing dialogue among governmental, parliamentary and civil society actors as well as a regular exchange of views and perspectives to promote sustainable development at all levels in recognition of the inter- relationships of democracy, human rights and development,

Commit ourselves to strengthening the tripartite partnership within the framework of ICNRD process through the establishment and enhancement of cooperation and consultation among governments, parliaments and civil society; and, in close cooperation with the United Nations, organize national, regional and global meetings, seminars and conferences on democracy promotion,

Welcome, as an initial important step and in recognition of the need for systematic implementation of ICNRD recommendations, the creation of an Advisory Board and a nucleus secretariat which supports the Chair, as outlined in the Doha Declaration,

Welcome also the decisions of the Parliamentary Forum and the Civil Society Forum to establish a Democracy Advisory Commission (PM-DAC) and an International Steering Committee, respectively.

The participants commend the State of Qatar for the successful convening and final outcomes of the Conference, which is a hallmark of the State of Qatar's wide experience and international posture in world affairs and wish the Chair ICNRD-6 every success in fulfilling the important tasks ahead for the next three years. The participants also express their profound appreciation to the people and government of the State of Qatar for the generosity and hospitality provided to the participants of the conference.



Parliamentary Meeting on the Occasion of the 6th International Conference of New or Restored Democracies

Doha (Qatar), 29 October – 1 November 2006

Declaration

- xi. *Gravely concerned* at the spread of various threats to human security, including terrorism, which subvert democracy worldwide, *undertaking* to contribute actively towards efforts aimed at addressing the root causes of terrorism, and *stressing* that the military response to terrorism is inadequate, and that governments should adopt and implement policies that foster dialogue and encourage the participation of all, especially marginalized groups in mainstream political processes. *Also condemning* all forms of human rights abuses in the name of combating terrorism, and *reaffirming* that freedom of speech must not be used to propagate hate speech and fuel conflict,
- xii. *Emphasizing* that the security sector, including the police and armed forces, should be under civilian control and should operate in a transparent and accountable manner, and *reiterating* the role and duty that parliaments have to oversee the operations of these forces in order to ensure accountability and protect citizens from abuse,
- xiii. *Further emphasizing* that for the institutions of governance to serve the interests of the people, they must devise mechanisms whereby they keep in touch with these people. For parliaments, this means that parliamentarians should devise various ways, including effective constituency outreach and public hearings not only to inform the people on parliament's work but also to encourage their inputs into parliamentary proceedings,
- xiv. *Mindful* that the media and civil society also play a crucial role in ensuring that governance processes are democratic, open and accountable, and *undertaking* to establish and/or strengthen legislative frameworks that allow for effective inputs by civil society in the work of governing institutions, especially parliaments. Adequate space has to be given to the media to inform the national community on public policies and action with a view to greater transparency and accountability. In this respect, *stressing* the need for the adoption of freedom of information legislation in our various countries, and *encouraging* the media to perform their function in a responsible manner and to refrain from serving as a conduit for the spread of values that are contrary to democracy,
- xv. *Recognizing* that information and communication technologies are increasingly contributing to the development of governance processes that are at once open and effective, and *encouraging* the harnessing of the potential offered by these technologies in order to improve service delivery and open access by the people to political processes,
- xvi. *Reaffirming* that parliaments must also play a strong role in bridging the democracy gap in international relations. This means that parliaments should monitor international negotiations, monitor enforcement of decisions adopted by governments at the international level and ensure compliance with international norms and the rule of law. Parliaments must also scrutinize effectively the activities of international organizations and provide inputs into their deliberations,
- xvii. *Recognizing* that for parliaments to play their role effectively, a number of basic conditions have to be met:

- They should be properly empowered through constitutional and other legal frameworks;
 - They should be representatives of all the citizens and include representatives from all sectors of society;
 - Their members should be able to express themselves and act independently and free from arbitrary constraints;
 - They must be sufficiently informed of the issues on which they are called upon to take decisions;
 - They must have sufficient resources, both human and material. In this context, the importance of financial and administrative autonomy for parliaments cannot be overemphasized. They should have an independent budget and staff and should manage these resources according to the strictest standards of integrity and accountability;
1. *Pledge* to abide by the principles enunciated in the present Declaration and, in particular, the principles of dialogue, tolerance and freedom of expression as fundamental cornerstones of democracy.
 2. *Pledge* to work for a more effective contribution of our parliaments to democracy worldwide. In this connection, *cognizant* of the need for our parliaments to be more representative, accessible, accountable and transparent, and the need to devise/strengthen internal procedures and mechanisms that make our parliaments more effective nationally and internationally, *we congratulate* the Inter-Parliamentary Union on action taken to follow-up on the Declaration of the Ulaanbaatar, notably the publication of the guide on *Parliament and democracy in the twentieth century: A guide to good practice*. We undertake to be inspired by the good practice identified in this publication in our bid to make our parliaments evermore effective;
 3. *Noting* that parliaments, especially those in the new and emerging democracies, need assistance in meeting the challenges mentioned above, *encourage* therefore donors to continue to support capacity-building programmes for these parliaments, *stress* the importance of inter-parliamentary cooperation as a means of fostering the exchange of experiences and good practices, and *encourage* the IPU to continue its efforts to strengthen parliaments as pillars of democracy and to take the lead in coordinating information on such assistance in order to encourage synergies and avoid overlapping;
 4. *Pledge* our parliaments' determination to continue to work together and offer mutual assistance in coping with our common challenges, and *undertake* to continue to engage with governments, international organizations and civil society in our common endeavour to promote democracy;
 5. *Express our thanks* to the Government and the Advisory Council of the State of Qatar for organizing this Parliamentary Meeting, and *further thank* the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union for their substantive contribution to the organization and conduct of the Meeting;
 6. *Request* the Speaker of the Advisory Council to convey the present

Declaration to the Sixth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to convey it to the appropriate authorities as part of the official proceedings of the Conference;

7. *Request* that this Declaration be brought to the attention of all Speakers of parliaments and *encourage* them to take steps towards its implementation;
8. *Decide* to follow up on the present Declaration by taking the steps outlined in the Plan of Action.

- i. We, members of parliament, meeting in Doha on the occasion of the Sixth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies, hereby adopt the following Declaration:
- ii. *Having discussed* at length the contribution of parliaments to democracy and reaffirming the central role of dialogue, tolerance and freedom of expression in democracy,
- iii. *Reiterating* our commitment to the Declaration adopted by the Parliamentary Forum on the occasion of the Fifth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies held in Ulaanbaatar in September 2003,
- iv. *Reaffirming* the founding principles and values of democracy, which are freedom, participation, human rights and the rule of law, principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration on Democracy adopted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and *reaffirming* the continued validity of that Declaration,
- v. *Convinced* that while democracy has to take into account the specific context of each society, the above-mentioned principles and values are universal in scope and are therefore non-negotiable,
- vi. *Reiterating* the central role of parliament in the promotion of democracy, since parliament, as the freely-elected body of representatives of the people, expresses their will and articulates their interests in order to guarantee their welfare. In this connection, *reaffirming* that democracy goes hand in hand with human rights and development, and that it must contribute to the eradication of poverty and the achievement of sustainable human development for all,
- vii. *Affirming* that democracy can only thrive in an atmosphere of tolerance and dialogue where there is mutual respect for each other's opinions and values; and that parliament must play its role as the crucible for the mediation of the conflicting interests of society, the resolution of conflicts and the promotion of dialogue and reconciliation,
- viii. *Reiterating* the need to ensure that decision-making processes are inclusive and representative and that all sectors of society, especially women, have a reasonable opportunity to participate and make their opinions known. In this context, *stressing* the particular importance of ensuring genuine participation of both men and women in political processes and the need to involve opposition parties, youth, disadvantaged groups as well as people with disabilities in the governance process,
- ix. *Considering* that parliaments should play their role as guardians of human rights and strive to ensure that public policies are respectful of these rights. For parliaments to be effective in this regard, it is important that the rights of their individual members are protected from arbitrariness,
- x. *Noting* the substantial progress made around the world towards achieving democracy and building of a culture of democracy, *welcoming* these developments, especially in the Arab region, *encouraging* further progress, and *pledging* to work together to foster a culture in which everyone has the right and freedom to participate in the management of the affairs of their society,