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APROBAT

În ședința Biroului permanent al
Camerei Deputaților
din data de 16.05.2011



Parlamentul României

Grupul Român al Uniunii Interparlamentare

Parlamentul României
Camera Deputaților
B.P. Nr. 498 din 13.05.2011

INFORMARE

**privind participarea delegației GRUI
la cea de-a 124-a Adunare a Uniunii Interparlamentare
și la reuniunile asociate**

- Panama City, Panama, 14-20 aprilie 2011 -

În perioada 14-20 aprilie 2011, la Panama City, Panama, a avut loc sesiunea de primăvară a UIP (cea de-a 124-a Adunare și reuniunile asociate) organizată de Uniunea Interparlamentară (UIP) și Parlamentul Republicii Panama.

La această sesiune au participat: delegații ale grupurilor naționale din 120 de țări; delegații din partea membrilor asociați (Adunarea Parlamentară Euro - Latino-Americană, Adunarea Parlamentară a Americii Centrale, Adunarea Legislativă Est-Africană, Parlamentul Comunității Economice a Statelor din Africa de Vest; Comitetul Interparlamentar al Uniunii Economice și Monetare Vest-Africane, Adunarea Parlamentară a Americii Latine); observatori din partea ONU și a unor agenții și programe din sistemul Națiunilor Unite (FAO, OIM, UNAIDS, UNICEF, UNCTAD, UNDESA, PNUD, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNIFEM, OMS, s.a.), a unor rețele și adunări interparlamentare (Uniunea Parlamentară Africană, Uniunea Interparlamentară Arabă, Adunarea Parlamentară din Asia, Parlamentarii Europeni pentru Africa AWEPA, Confederația Parlamentară a Americii COPA, Adunarea Interparlamentară a Ortodoxiei IAO, Parlamentul Pan-African s.a.).

Din delegația GRUI, condusă de domnul deputat **Ionel Palăr**, secretar al Biroului Executiv al Grupului, au făcut parte: doamna deputat **Carmen Axenie**, membră a Comitetului Director; domnul deputat **Ioan Stan**, membru al Comitetului Director al GRUI, domnii senatori **Alexandru Mocanu** și **Emilian Valentin Frâncu**, membri ai Comitetului Director. La lucrările ASGP a participat domnul **Gheorghe Barbu**, secretarul general al Camerei Deputaților.

Adunarea UIP a fost deschisă oficial de **domnul Ricardo Martinelli**, președintele Republicii Panama. La **ceremonia inaugurală**, **domnul Ricardo Martinelli, președintele țării gazdă** a urat bun venit celor 1300 de delegații din 120 de țări, reuniți la Atlapa Covention Centre în Panama City. Dezbaterile generale ale celei de-a 124-a Adunări UIP au avut ca temă: „*Responsabilitatea parlamentarilor: cum se poate răspunde așteptărilor electoratului.*” La **ceremonia inaugurală** au rostit alocuțiuni înalți oficiali ai țării gazdă - președintele Adunării Naționale din Panama, domnul José Muñoz Molina, președintele UIP, Dr. Theo-Ben Gurirab și Președintele Adunării Generale a ONU, domnul Joseph Deiss.

Președintele Parlamentului gazdă a declarat că "cetățenii din întreaga lume doresc nu numai să voteze ci și să aleagă pe cei care trebuie să adopte legi ce urmează a fi respectate. De asemenea, ei doresc să știe care sunt reprezentanții lor, ceea ce urmează să se dezbată și să se adopte în parlament ". Domnia sa a

subliniat faptul că în statele democratice, Parlamentele reprezintă cele mai bune garanții de pace și sunt cei mai buni apărători ai drepturilor omului.

Președintele Adunării Generale a ONU, **domnul Joseph Deiss**, a declarat faptul că: "reprezentanți aleși, cu responsabilități politice la nivel național, parlamentari, sunt într-o poziție unică de a respecta aspirațiile popoarelor lor, răspund la ele, și transmit aceste aspirații guvernelor lor și Organizației Națiunilor Unite. având posibilitatea ca prin acestea să se acționeze și să se traga la răspundere pentru deciziile luate".

DI Deiss a adăugat că este crucial să se asigure că parlamentarii sunt pe deplin informați de activitățile ONU în scopul de a răspunde în timp util la toate problemele ridicate. "De asemenea, a subliniat importanța calitatii de parlamentar în sensibilizarea publicului cu privire la problemele discutate în cadrul Organizației Națiunilor Unite; acest lucru se poate face prin programarea de dezbateri pe aceste teme în parlamentele naționale".

I. CONSILIUL DIRECTOR

Consiliul s-a reunit în zilele de 16, 17, 19 aprilie, pentru a adopta o serie de decizii privind componența, programele și politicile organizației.

Consiliul a examinat **raportul de activitate al președintelui și raportul anual de activitate al secretarului general**.

La propunerea *Comitetului UIP privind drepturile omului ale parlamentarilor*, Consiliul a adoptat un set de **rezoluții privind cazuri de încălcare a drepturilor omului ale unor parlamentari din 39 de țări**.

În acest sens, dl **senator Rosario Green (Mexic)**, președintele Comitetului pentru Drepturile Omului a UIP a prezentat în raportul său situațiile individuale ale celor 374 de parlamentari din 39 de țări printre care cazurile deja cunoscute din: Bangladesh, Belarus, Burundi, Cambodgia, Columbia, Ecuador, Eritreea, Irak, Liban, Madagascar, Malaezia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Palestina, Filipine, Federația Rusă, Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Thailanda, Turcia și Zimbabwe. Printre cazurile deja celebre, domnul senator a menționat câțiva parlamentari columbieni. Cu prilejul Congresului columbian ce a avut loc la Bogota, în octombrie 2010, **dl. Rosario Green** a menționat schimbul de opinii pe care le-a avut cu noile autorități columbiene și cu victimele și familiile lor. Dezbaterile s-au axat pe necesitatea protecției celor expuși riscului și respectarea pe deplin a dreptului la un proces echitabil a celor judecați.

În raportul său, dl **Rosario Green** a amintit cazul fostului senator Piedad Córdoba care a primit o sancțiune disciplinară, fără ca să aibă o condamnare penală, de a fi exclus din funcția publică pe care o deținea de 18 ani, pe motiv că a promovat cel mai mare grup de gherilă din Columbia (FARC). Comitetul a fost consternat de duritatea a ceea ce înseamnă o sancțiune disciplinară și că aceasta a fost impusă când de fapt acțiunea penală era în curs de desfășurare, planând suspiciunea că a fost pedepsit pentru ceea ce de fapt trebuia să fie o problemă politică. Domnia sa, a subliniat faptul că, în acest caz o cale de atac este în curs, iar Comitetul analizează posibilitatea de a trimite un observator la proces.

Consiliul a trecut în revistă activitățile recente realizate de **UIP în cooperare cu Națiunile Unite** - distribuirea documentelor UIP și prezentarea poziției organizației la Adunarea Generală și în organele sale subsidiare; evenimentele organizate în colaborare cu agențiile și programele ONU; proiectele derulate în colaborare cu PNUD, în sprijinul dezvoltării și al promovării proceselor democratice.

Activitățile comune UIP-ONU s-au dezvoltat, la nivel regional și național, îndeosebi în cazul OIM, UNAIDS, UNICEF, UNCTAD, OMS. Au fost semnate noi acorduri de cooperare cu Fondul ONU pentru Democrație și cu PNUD și au fost editate în comun publicații (ghiduri pentru parlamentari) pe teme diverse. UIP s-a asociat principalelor procese de reflecție și negociere ale ONU, în domenii precum democrațiile noi și restaurate, combaterea HIV/SIDA, finanțarea dezvoltării,

schimbările climatice, atenuarea efectelor crizei economice și financiare. S-au făcut progrese în coordonarea agendelor celor două organizații și s-a stabilit un program de activități parlamentare periodice la ONU. La propunerea UIP, în 2007 Adunarea Generală a stabilit ca ziua de 15 septembrie să devină Ziua Internațională a Democrației. În 2008, Adunarea Generală a recunoscut în mod oficial importanța includerii parlamentarilor în delegațiile naționale la evenimentele ONU și a invitat statele membre să recurgă sistematic la această practică. Ca recunoaștere a contribuției parlamentelor la activitatea ONU, tema *Cooperării dintre Națiunile Unite, parlamentele naționale și UIP* va fi inclusă, începând cu 2010, pe agenda sesiunilor anuale ale Adunării Generale.

Cu ocazia dezbaterilor privind **consolidarea reformei UIP** (punct permanent pe agenda Consiliului), membrii Consiliului au fost invitați să reflecteze asupra posibilității de „re-creare” a UIP printr-o convenție internațională în care reprezentarea statelor – semnatare ale convenției – să fie încredințată parlamentelor naționale, astfel încât natura parlamentară a organizației să nu fie afectată.

Consiliul a aprobat **calendarul reuniunilor viitoare** (statutare și specializate) ale organizației. Dintre activitățile propuse pentru 2011, menționăm: *Forumul Parlamentar privind cea de-a IV-a Conferință a Națiunilor Unite pe problematica ultimelor țări dezvoltate* (Istanbul, 8 mai); *Cel de-al IV-lea Forum parlamentar privind Societatea informațională* (Geneva, 18-20 mai); *Seminarul regional privind drepturile copilului* (Yerevan, Armenia 14-16 iunie); *Cea de-a 125-a Adunare și reuniunile asociate* (Bern, Elveția, 16-19 octombrie)

II. ADUNAREA

Cea de-a 124-a Adunare a UIP s-a întrunit în perioada 16-20 aprilie, sub președinția **dlui. José Muñoz Molina**, președintele Adunării Naționale din țara gazdă.

În prima zi de lucrări a celei de-a 124-a Adunare a UIP s-a decis prin vot includerea pe ordinea de zi a unui punct de urgență intitulat: „Consolidarea reformei democratice în democrațiile emergente, inclusiv Africa de Nord și Orientul Mijlociu, care a fost prezentată de către delegații din Indonezia, Iran (Republica Islamică) și Noua Zeelandă.

În dimineața zilei de 16 aprilie a.c., Președintele Parlamentului gazdă, dl José Muñoz Molina, a fost ales președinte al celei de-a 124-a Adunare a UIP. Odată cu afilierea parlamentelor din Trinidad și Tobago și Micronezia în Panama, organizația mondială a parlamentelor are în prezent 157 parlamentele membre.

Peste 1.300 de delegați, inclusiv 38 de președinți de parlamente și aproape 600 de parlamentari din 116 țări s-au reunit la Atlapa Convention Centre, în Panama City, în perioada 16- 20 aprilie a.c.

În plus față de punctul de urgență, parlamentarii au examinat dezbaterile generale cu tema: **„Responsabilitatea parlamentarilor: cum se poate răspunde așteptărilor electoratului”** și cele trei comisii permanente: Comisia pentru pace și securitate cu tema **„Un cadru legislativ în măsură să asigure prevenirea violenței electorale și asigurarea unui transfer pașnic de putere”**, Comisia pentru dezvoltare durabilă, finanțe și comerț cu tema **„Rolul parlamentelor în gestionarea resurselor naturale, a producției agricole și a schimburilor demografice”** și Comisia pentru democrație și drepturile omului cu tema **„Transparență și responsabilitate în finanțarea partidelor politice”**.

Dna. Michelle Bachelet, directorul executiv al ONU, responsabil pe problematica statutului femeilor, s-a adresat celor peste 600 de parlamentari care s-au reunit la Atlapa Convention Centre, în Panama City cu prilejul lucrărilor celei de-a 124-a Adunări a UIP și a subliniat faptul că „participarea femeilor în politică este o

condiție esențială pentru emanciparea lor și pentru o democrație reală". În acest sens, domnia sa, aprecia ca marele progres se face prin intermediul bugetului luând în considerare diferențele de gen și noile strategii, cum ar fi rapoartele privind impactul de gen al legilor care sunt puse în aplicare în multe țări, dar a admis că, deși s-au făcut progrese semnificative în ultimele decenii, progresul este foarte lent.

Dna Bachelet s-a referit la diferite evenimente din anumite țări din Africa de Nord. Aceste mișcări au fost caracterizate în principal prin protestele populare, privind participarea vizibilă a femeilor prin utilizarea de noi tehnologii și rețele sociale de organizare și sprijin a acestora. Aceste situații au făcut obiectul Tunisiei și Egiptului, rezultând în guvernările de tranziție.

De asemenea, domnia sa a subliniat faptul că, Înalțul Comisariat pentru realizarea obiectivelor Revoluției din Tunisia, a aprobat Codul electoral pentru alegerile privind Adunarea Constituantă de la 24 iulie, bazate pe principiile de paritate și alternanță, adică 50% femei și 50% bărbați. Aceasta este o realizare majoră pentru care trebuie să adresăm felicitări poporului tunisian.

Președintele celei de-a 124-a Adunare a UIP, **domnul José Muñoz Molina**, care este, de asemenea, Președintele Adunării Naționale din Panama, a adresat în 20 aprilie a.c. în numele a peste 600 de parlamentari reuniți în Panama City, condoleanțe poporului japonez.

Președintele Parlamentului din Panama și-a exprimat admirația "pentru răbdarea și calmitatea ce caracterizează poporul japonez, pentru a atenua efectele acestui dezastru". De asemenea, domnia sa a făcut apel la mass-media să aibă ca obiectiv principal, în desfășurarea activității lor, prezentarea situației din Japonia.

În concluzie, **domnul Muñoz** a subliniat că, "așa cum a fost distrugerea rapidă și letală, așa va fi recuperarea în timp". Domnia sa este încrezător că poporul japonez se va confrunta cu o provocare de curaj și a reiterat sprijinul UIP pentru ca Japonia să pornească pe drumul spre recuperare.

Lucrările celei de-a 124-a Adunări a UIP din Panama City s-au încheiat prin adoptarea a **4 mari rezoluții** privind cele trei teme examinate în comisiile permanente - prima se referă *la legi de prevenire a violenței electorale și pentru a asigura o tranziție pașnică a puterii, trimite un mesaj pentru parlamente să adopte o legislație care să confere puteri de reglementare și autorităților independente și impartiiale de investigare și gestionare a alegerilor*. De asemenea, se face apel la organizațiile societății civile, grupurile media, experților, instituțiilor academice, agențiilor pentru drepturile omului și organizațiilor internaționale pentru a sensibiliza cetățenii cu privire la drepturile lor constituționale și obligațiile privind alegerile.

Cea de-a doua se referă *la transparența și responsabilitatea partidelor politice și a campaniilor electorale*. Acesta invită guvernele să pună în aplicare măsuri menite să asigure independența partidelor politice astfel încât să le ferească de dol și să contribuie la combaterea corupției și reducerea cheltuielilor excesive pentru campaniile electorale. Aceasta include stabilirea de limite de cheltuieli în timpul campaniilor electorale. De asemenea, rezoluția recomandă parlamentelor membre ale UIP să ia în considerare măsuri pentru a limita, a interzice sau a reglementa situația finanțării de către ONG-uri, organismele de administrare și surse externe, astfel încât să se asigure că acestea nu exercită o influență nejustificată asupra rezultatelor politice.

Într-un domeniu diferit, Adunarea a adoptat, de asemenea, o rezoluție *privind modul în care parlamentele pot asigura dezvoltarea durabilă printr-o mai bună gestionare a resurselor naturale și a producției agricole*. Rezoluția este un răspuns la rata de creștere alarmantă în cifre a populației la nivel mondial. După cum se stipulează în rezoluție, se pune accent pe riscul izbucnirii războaielor și se limitează accesul la terenuri și la utilizarea resurselor de apă.

Răspunzând recentelor lovituri de stat din diferite țări, Adunarea a adoptat o rezoluție de urgență intitulată "Consolidarea reformei democratice în democrațiile emergente, inclusiv Africa de Nord și Orientul Mijlociu". Rezoluția afirmă importanța desfășurării de alegeri libere și corecte, cât mai curând posibil. De asemenea, este reiterată participarea deplină a femeilor la procesul democratic. În acest sens, se recomandă ca toate părțile să se abțină de la violență și să se asigure că drepturile omului sunt respectate.

În plenul Adunării a avut loc *Dezbaterile generale privind Responsabilitatea parlamentelor: cum se poate răspunde așteptărilor electoratului*.

Adunarea a aprobat agenda viitoarei sesiuni de primăvară a UIP (Kampala, Uganda, aprilie 2012).

Pe parcursul procesului de redactare și în cadrul dezbaterilor din comisiile permanente, **reprezentanții GRUI au contribuit cu observații, amendamente și propuneri la două din cele patru rezoluții cu privire la "Asigurarea unui cadru legislativ în măsură să asigure prevenirea violenței electorale și asigurarea unui transfer pașnic de putere" și la "Rolul parlamentelor în gestionarea resurselor naturale, a producției agricole și a schimbărilor demografice"**.

III. COMISIILE PERMANENTE

A. Comisia pentru pace și securitate internațională a examinat tema **"Asigurarea unui cadru legislativ în măsură să asigure prevenirea violenței electorale și asigurarea unui transfer pașnic de putere"**.

În intervenția sa în dezbaterile din plenul Comisiei, **dl. deputat Kerekes Karoly** a subliniat necesitatea unei abordări legislative eficiente, în măsură să prevenină violența electorală prin îmbunătățirea monitorizării alegerilor asigurând astfel o tranziție lină din punct de vedere politic ce nu poate fi limitată doar la legile care guvernează alegerile. Pentru aceasta trebuie să existe garanții constituționale și, în acest context electoral alte legi cum ar fi cele care vizează partidele politice și finanțarea campaniilor electorale, cetățenia, activitatea mass-media și chiar și unele prevederi în codul penal și codul civil.

Domnul **Kerekes Karoly** s-a referit și la rolul important pe care îl are legislația pentru promovarea drepturilor omului și a nediscriminării. În acest sens, domnia sa a subliniat faptul că România acordă o atenție deosebită misiunilor de monitorizare a alegerilor. Ca membru al OSCE, România s-a angajat să invite la alegeri observatori internaționali, inclusiv de la Oficiul pentru Instituții democratice și Drepturile Omului și de a răspunde recomandărilor Consiliului pe această temă. De asemenea, domnia sa a arătat că, în același timp, monitorizarea alegerilor contribuie la promovarea drepturilor omului, inclusiv a drepturilor civile și politice, deoarece participarea la vot este un factor cheie în exercitarea acestor drepturi.

În intervenția sa, **domnul Kerekes Karoly** a subliniat faptul că în România, cadrul juridic internațional stă la baza legislației românești în ceea ce privește alegerile democratice, legislație care include prevederi a mai multor instrumente ale drepturilor omului, adoptate de ONU, Consiliul Europei, Convenția Europeană pentru apărarea Drepturilor Omului și a libertăților fundamentale și Uniunea Europeană.

În încheierea intervenției sale, **domnul deputat Kerekes Karoly** s-a referit la *prevederile punctului 20 din proiectul de rezoluție cu privire la asigurarea locurilor pentru femei în parlamentele naționale, care conform acestor prevederi locurile trebuiau alocate în exclusivitate femeilor*. În acest context, **domnul deputat Kerekes Karoly** a propus eliminarea din proiectul de rezoluție a acestui punct și a subliniat faptul că, în caz contrar, se impune alocarea anumitor locuri și pentru alte categorii sociale, precum, tinerii, persoanele cu handicap, etc. Numai

astfel, concluziona **domnul Kerekes Karoly** se poate asigura participarea femeilor la alegeri, includerea lor pe listele electorale si implicit garantarea candidaturii lor.

În acest sens, la propunerea domnului deputat **Kerekes Karoly** din delegația României și a delegației din Suedia, prevederile punctului 20 au fost modificate astfel că la punctul 26 aprobat în proiectul de rezoluție se prevede ca reprezentarea femeilor în parlamentele naționale să fie de cel puțin 30% din locurile parlamentare.

B. Comisia pentru dezvoltare durabilă, finanțe și comerț - a examinat tema ***Rolul parlamentelor în gestionarea resurselor naturale, a producției agricole și a schimbărilor demografice***. Din partea GRUI, a participat la dezbateri **dl. deputat Ionel Palăr**, membru al Comitetului Director al GRUI.

În intervenția sa, **domnul deputat Ionel Palăr** a subliniat faptul că, răspunzând obiectivelor europene în contextul proceselor globalizării, România îndeplinește astfel o obligație asumată în calitate de țară membră a Uniunii Europene și se înscrie pe coordonatele dezvoltării moderne. De asemenea, domnia sa s-a referit și la *Strategia Națională de dezvoltare Durabilă*, care se bazează pe elaborarea și aplicarea planurilor strategice naționale, programele tematice sau sectoriale în conformitate cu obiectivele comune stabilite în Strategia pentru Dezvoltare Durabilă a UE și Strategia Lisabona, precum și cu îndrumările metodologice ale Comisiei Europene.

Domnul **Ionel Palăr** a trecut în revistă obiectivele strategice ale României pe termen scurt, mediu și lung:

- *orizont 2013*: incorporarea organică a principiilor și practicilor dezvoltării durabile în ansamblul programelor și politicilor publice ale României ca stat membru al UE;
- *orizont 2020*: atingerea nivelului mediu actual al țărilor UE la principalii indicatori ai dezvoltării durabile;
- *orizont 2030*: Aproximarea semnificativă a României de nivel mediu din acel an al țărilor membre ale UE din punctul de vedere al indicatorilor dezvoltării durabile.

Domnul **Ionel Palăr** a evocat faptul că, strategia stabilește direcțiile principale de acțiune pentru însușirea și aplicarea principiilor dezvoltării durabile în perioada imediat următoare:

- corelarea rațională a obiectivelor de dezvoltare;
- modernizarea accelerată a sistemelor de educație inclusiv a programelor investiționale;
- modernizarea accelerată a sistemelor de educație și formare profesională și de sănătate publică, ținând seama de evoluțiile demografice nefavorabile și de impactul acestora asupra pieței muncii;
- asigurarea securității și siguranței alimentare prin valorificarea avantajelor comparative ale României în privința dezvoltării producției agricole, inclusiv a produselor organice;
- necesitatea identificării unor surse suplimentare de finanțare, în condiții de sustenabilitate.

C. Comisia pentru democrație și drepturile omului a examinat tema ***„Transparență și responsabilitate în finanțarea partidelor politice”***.

Din partea GRUI, a participat la dezbateri **dl. senator Emilian Valentin Frâncu**:

- domnia sa, s-a referit la faptul că România a adoptat o lege specifică în domeniu - „Legea cu privire la finanțarea partidelor politice și a campaniilor electorale”. Aceasta identifică patru surse de finanțare: cotizațiile de membru, donații și moșteniri, venituri din activități proprii, subvenții de la bugetul de stat;

- a precizat faptul că de modalitatea de aplicare a legii este responsabilă Autoritatea Electorală Permanentă, o instituție publică autonomă cu personalitate juridică care este obligată să facă rapoarte anuale privind progresele realizate în parlament;
- a propus să se țină cont de recomandările făcute pentru a asigura o finanțare transparentă și responsabilă din punct de vedere politic;
- a reiterat faptul că, din punct de vedere legislativ beneficiem de un instrument internațional relativ nou - *Convenția Națiunilor Unite împotriva Corupției*, la care participă 150 de state membre și care a intrat în vigoare în urmă cu aproximativ 6 ani. Cu toate acestea, sublinia **domnul senator Emilian Frâncu**, punerea sa în aplicare la nivel național necesită eforturi susținute la nivel legislativ și administrativ;
- a recomandat ca Parlamentul să se implice mai mult în această direcție, inclusiv pentru a asigura buna funcționare a mecanismului de revizuire și de punere în aplicare a Convenției;
- a arătat că în contextul sporirii coerenței parlamentare, mulți dintre colegii noștri parlamentari participă la acțiunile organizate de Rețeaua Globală a Parlamentarilor împotriva Corupției (GOPAC), ceea ce ar putea fi util pentru dezvoltarea unui dialog între UIP și GOPAC pe teme precum, cele dezbătute la această reuniune;
- a subliniat importanța politicii de finanțare ce poate fi folosită pentru a promova egalitatea de șanse între femei și bărbați în viața politică;
- a menționat că au apărut noi forme de propagandă electorală (rețelele de socializare) care nu necesită cheltuieli din partea candidaților și că legislația electorală trebuie adaptată luând în calcul și aceste mijloace moderne.

Printre candidaturile depuse în vederea ocupării unui post vacant de vice-președinte (titular/supleant), delegația României a avut o satisfacție deosebită – ca o recunoaștere a activității GRUI - domnul senator Emilian Frâncu, fiind ales în funcția de vice-președinte titular al Comisiei permanente a UIP pentru democrație și drepturile omului, ca reprezentant al Grupului geo-politic 12 Plus.

IV. CEA DE-A XVI-A REUNIUNE A FEMEILOR PARLAMENTARE

Lucrările celei de-a 16-a Reuniuni a Femeilor Parlamentare au avut loc în zilele de 15 și 17 aprilie a.c. La dezbateri au participat aproximativ 180 de femei parlamentare, din peste 120 de țări (29% din delegați).

Dna. deputat Carmen Axenie, membră a Comitetului Director, a participat la lucrări din partea GRUI.

Lucrările au fost prezidate de **dna. Dana D. Castañeda**, vicepreședintă a Parlamentului gazda. Temele de dezbateri s-au referit la egalitatea de gen și condiția femeii, prin schimburi de opinii și informații privind experiențele naționale relevante și promovarea unor amendamente care au rolul de a integra perspectiva de gen în proiectele de rezoluții. În cadrul acestei reuniuni s-a evaluat modul de implementare, la nivelul UIP a reglementărilor privind reprezentarea echilibrată a ambelor sexe, precum și activitățile UIP cu relevanță pentru problematica parității între femei și bărbați.

Dna Castañeda a subliniat faptul că partidele politice au jucat un rol proeminent în societate, și a fost, prin urmare, important să lupte pentru

participarea egală a femeilor în toate domeniile, campania de finanțare fiind elementul cheie pentru atingerea unui echilibru mai bun între sexe în exercitarea mandatului.

La prezentarea raportului privind problematica de gen, președintele UIP, **Dr. Theo-Ben Gurirab**, s-a referit la faptul că, UIP acordă o atenție deosebită problematicei de gen, facând posibilă transformarea instituțiilor în locuri unde atât bărbații cât și femeile au drepturi egale și pot lucra în parteneriat pentru societățile noastre și pentru viitorul nostru.

V. EVENIMENTE ÎN MARJA ADUNĂRII

1. Panelul cu tema "30 DE ANI DE HIV / SIDA: UNDE SUNT PARLAMENTELE?"

UIP și UNAIDS: parlamentele trebuie să contribuie la realizarea accesului universal "(17 aprilie)

Doamna deputat **María Antonieta Saa**, președinta Adunării Parlamentare al Grupului Inter-American pentru Populație și Dezvoltare, a oferit un răspuns la această întrebare, la un eveniment care a avut loc duminică 17 aprilie a.c. în Panama City, în cadrul lucrărilor celei de-a 124-a Adunări a UIP. **Dna Saa** a prezentat un studiu privind problematica HIV din 13 țări din America Latină și a identificat lacunele din legislație legate, pe această temă, în acord cu legislația privind drepturile omului. Studiul poate fi, de asemenea, utilizat ca instrument pentru a monitoriza progresul, în conformitate cu orientările internaționale cu privire la HIV.

Panelul a fost moderat de **dl. Manuel Burgos**, director al Institutului de Sănătate și Drepturile Omului din Panama, care reprezintă societatea civilă în Panama. Invitați la acest eveniment au fost Dr. César Núñez, UNAIDS Director Regional pentru America Latină, doamna Susan Timberlake, consilier juridic al UNAIDS și Drepturile Omului de la Geneva, și domnul Jesudasu Seelam, membru al Parlamentului din India.

Manuel Burgos a apreciat că, un răspuns eficient la problematica epidemiei HIV depinde de capacitatea fiecărui guvern de a pune în aplicare cadrul juridic de protecție și de a elimina legile punitive. **Dr. Núñez** a enumerat realizările în materie de tratament și de prevenire, dar a subliniat faptul că, pentru fiecare persoană nouă aflată în tratament, două au fost infestate. Nu trebuie subestimat tineretul în răspunsul privind epidemia HIV. Pentru a demonstra angajamentul lor, parlamentarii ar trebui să solicite liderilor lor politici să se implice în cadrul Organizației Națiunilor Unite. Reuniunea la nivel înalt privind SIDA este programată să aibă loc la New York, în iunie 2011.

Dl. deputat J. Seelam a subliniat necesitatea unei atenții sporite în rândul migranților și a populației foarte sărace pentru a preveni epidemia HIV. India are ca obiectiv național trei zerouri: "zero infecții noi, zero decese cauzate de SIDA și zero legate de discriminare". Acest lucru ar putea fi atins în cazul în care guvernele au ca prioritate investițiile pentru tineret, pentru că tinerii sunt cei mai afectați de HIV.

2. Panelul cu tema "Reducerea decalajelor : realizarea echitabilă a Obiectivelor de Dezvoltare ale Mileniului în beneficiul copiilor" (18 aprilie)

În cadrul panelului **doamna Slavica Djukić-Dejanović**, președinta Adunării Naționale a Serbiei a subliniat importanța identificării comunităților marginalizate. "Este foarte important pentru noi, sublinia domnia sa, ca membri ai Parlamentului, să avem o imagine clară asupra acestei situații, să existe contacte directe cu copiii, adolescenții și familiile lor, prin organizarea de audieri publice și vizite în

comunitățile locale și prin discuții cu autoritățile locale și reprezentanți ai societății civile, pentru a înțelege mai bine situația acestora.

În acest sens, un rol important revine parlamentarilor în asigurarea rezultatelor echitabile în beneficiul copiilor care pot face mai mult, prin unirea eforturilor în sprijinul copiilor marginalizați proveniți din familii sărace și defavorizate - prin alocarea de resurse de la bugetele naționale, pe o bază echitabilă și prin îmbunătățirea aplicării legilor pentru populația defavorizată.

VI. GRUPUL GEOPOLITIC 12 PLUS

Grupul geopolitic 12 plus s-a reunit atât în prezența deschiderii oficiale (14 aprilie) cât și pe conferinței, sub președinția domnului John Austin, membru al Grupului interparlamentar britanic, pentru a trece în revistă problematica sesiunii, în vederea adoptării unei poziții coerente a membrilor săi, în raport cu aceasta.

La reuniuni au participat **domnul deputat Ionel Palăr, doamna deputat Carmen Axenie.**

În afara temelor curente care au decurs din agenda și din programul sesiunii (alegerea punctului de urgență, decizii ale Comitetului Executiv, reprezentarea Grupului în organele de decizie și în structurile de lucru ale UIP, agenda viitoarelor sesiuni), s-a discutat în detaliu despre procesul de reformă a UIP, cu accent pe propunerea unui nou sistem de contribuții, dar încă nu a fost luată nicio decizie cu privire la acest punct.

Referitor la acest subiect, au fost exprimate opinii diferite, subiectul urmând a fi reluat la reuniunea de la Berna. De asemenea, membrii 12 plus au fost de acord asupra faptului că ONU trebuie să precizeze, în mod clar, ce așteptări are de la UIP, în contextul redefinirii legăturii dintre cele două organizații, inclusiv să se pronunțe asupra unui eventual rol de control al UIP.

Unii reprezentanți au sugerat că un tratat care să stea la baza UIP ar putea fi util în dezvoltarea unor noi structuri democratice ale organizației. Majoritatea a fost de acord cu faptul că, deocamdată, UIP ar trebui să-și păstreze formatul actual de organizație de sine stătătoare care să mențină legături cu ONU într-un cadru formal, iar monitorizarea ONU să se facă, în continuare, la nivel național, până când se va clarifica poziția ONU cu privire la viitoarea sa colaborare cu UIP. În acest sens, trebuie insistat asupra participării secretarului general al ONU la Adunările UIP. Au fost și membri care și-au exprimat scepticismul în legătură cu avantajele pe care un acord consolidat cu ONU le-ar avea asupra parlamentelor. Pe de altă parte, s-a precizat că reformarea UIP ar proteja organizația față de încercările de înlocuire a UIP cu o altă adunare care să reprezinte dimensiunea parlamentară a ONU.

VII. ASOCIAȚIA SECRETARILOR GENERALI DE PARLAMENTE

Reuniunea Asociației Secretarilor Generali de Parlamente s-a desfășurat în perioada 16 -20 aprilie 2011, în paralel cu sesiunea UIP.

La lucrările ASGP a participat **domnul Gheorghe Barbu**, secretar general al Camerei Deputaților.

Lucrările reuniunii au fost deschise de **dl. Wigberto QUINTERO**, secretar general al Adunării Naționale din Panama, care a urat bun venit participanților și a prezentat sistemul parlamentar din țara gazdă, după care a fost finalizat procesul de afiliere la ASGP a unor noi membri din Afganistan, Australia, Belgia, Grecia, Madagascar, Republica Moldova, Muntenegru, Maroc, Nigeria, Santa Lucia, Thailandă, Marea Britanie, SUA, Adunarea parlamentară a țărilor de limbă turcă (TURKPA).

În intervenția sa în cadrul dezbaterilor generale privind «**ROLUL COMISIILOR ÎN EXERCITAREA CONTROLULUI PARLAMENTAR**», **dl. Gheorghe Barbu, secretar general al Camerei Deputaților, membru al ASGP**, a prezentat câteva aspecte privind controlul parlamentar exercitat prin comisiile de anchetă și comisiile speciale, în conformitate cu Regulamentul de organizare și funcționare a Camerei Deputaților, Parlamentul României.

Domnul Gheorghe Barbu a subliniat faptul că Parlamentul României ca structură bicamerală este alcătuit din Camera Deputaților și Senatul care, conform regulilor proprii de organizare și funcționare își desfășoară propria activitate în sesiuni plenare și în cadrul comisiilor parlamentare permanente sau temporare în funcție de caz.

Domnul Secretar general al Camerei Deputaților, **Gheorghe Barbu** a subliniat rolul controlului parlamentar, exercitat prin intermediul comisiilor permanente sau a comisiilor de anchetă, ca una dintre funcțiile importante ale Parlamentului.

În cuvântul său, **dl Gheorghe Barbu** a arătat faptul că, Camera Deputaților poate institui comisii speciale pentru avizarea unor acte legislative complexe pentru elaborarea unor propuneri legislative (care în acest caz nu se mai supun examinării altor comisii) sau pentru alte obiective. Comisiile de anchetă pot fi constituite de fiecare Cameră și reprezintă un instrument pentru exercitarea funcției de control parlamentar. Pentru constituirea unei asemenea comisii trebuie să existe un fapt determinat susceptibil de anchetă și să nu fie deschisă o procedură judiciară cu privire la acel fapt sau o hotărâre judecatorească definitivă.

Domnul Gheorghe Barbu s-a referit și la condițiile în care se consideră necesară clarificarea cauzelor și împrejurărilor în care s-au produs evenimente sau au avut loc acțiuni cu efecte negative, precum și stabilirea concluziilor, răspunderilor și măsurilor ce se impun. În acest sens, Camera Deputaților poate hotărî inițierea unei anchete parlamentare.

În intervenția sa, **dl Gheorghe Barbu**, a subliniat faptul că, în conformitate cu Regulamentul Camerei Deputaților, potrivit prevederilor art.1, ancheta poate fi realizată de o comisie permanentă, sau de o comisie de anchetă parlamentară înființată în acest scop. Domnia sa, a făcut referire la faptul că, anchetele parlamentare nu pot avea ca obiect investigarea unor fapte sau activități care fac obiectul unor anchete judiciare sau care se află pe rolul unor instanțe de judecată.

În cuvântul său, **dl. Gheorghe Barbu** a prezentat faptul că, o anchetă parlamentară încetează de drept în momentul deschiderii unor proceduri judiciare privitoare la faptele sau activitățile care constituie obiectul ei, situație în care Biroul Permanent al Camerei Deputaților anunță organele de urmărire penală că pot avea acces la toate documentele referitoare la cazul în speță, aflate în arhiva Camerei Deputaților.

În încheierea intervenției sale, **domnul Gheorghe Barbu** s-a referit la câteva aspecte legate de controlul parlamentar exercitat de comisiile de anchetă din Camera Deputaților din Parlamentul României în legislatura 2004-2008 și în legislatura prezentă 2008-2012, astfel au funcționat în total un număr de 10 comisii de anchetă, dintre care 6 au vizat activitatea unor ministere sau a unor instituții ale statului, în diferite spețe cum ar fi: analiza activității Ministerului Economiei și Comerțului sau verificarea sumelor cheltuite de Ministerul Turismului pentru acțiuni de promovare a turismului și a imaginii României, alte 3 comisii de anchetă au vizat legalitatea unor acțiuni de retrocedări și privatizări, iar o comisie de anchetă a vizat situația sistemelor de irigații, precum și a altor sectoare de îmbunătățiri funciare.

Dezbaterile generale cu tema „Rolul comisiilor în exercitarea controlului parlamentar” au continuat cu intervențiile domnilor **Vladimir SVINAREV** (Federația Rusă) și **V. K. AGNIHOTRI** (India).

Dezbaterile generale au continuat cu teme precum:

- „Evenimente și sarcini specifice finalului de sesiune și de legislatură: reguli care guvernează implicarea parlamentarilor

în procedurile care vizează interesele lor financiare” , moderate de **Dr V. K. AGNIHOTRI**, Secretar general al Rajya Sabha din India, la care a avut intervenții **dl. Vladimir SVINAREV** (Federația Rusă)

- „Autonomia administrativă a parlamentelor ”, moderate de **Dr Ulrich SCHÖLER**, Secretar general în Bundestagul German, la care au avut contribuții: **Vladimir SVINAREV** (Federația Rusă) **Dr V.K. AGNIHOTRI**, Secretar general în Bundestagul german și **Rogério TEIXEIRA** (Brazilia).

Pe agenda reuniunii ASGP au figurat, de asemenea, prezentarea de comunicări. În acest sens, **dl. Kwon Oh Eul**, secretarul general al Adunării Naționale din Republica Coreea, a prezentat Comunicarea cu tema **„Programe de deschidere și pregătire parlamentară”**. În esență, comunicarea a făcut referire la o apropiere a parlamentarilor cu rezultatele muncii lor față de cetățeni, precum și educarea viitoarelor generații despre democrație. Domnia sa a subliniat necesitatea continuării programelor de instruire dintre parlamentele țărilor membre UIP, precum și dezvoltarea pe mai departe și schimbul de experiențe între parlamente pe tema e-Parliament.

În cadrul lucrărilor, au mai fost prezentate următoarele **comunicări**, urmate de sesiuni de întrebări și răspunsuri:

- **„Rămășițele parteneriatului dintre cele două Camere ale Parlamentului Regatului Unit al Marii Britanii”**, comunicare susținută de dl. David Natzler, grefier în Camera Comunelor și de dr. Rhodri Walters, Grefier, responsabil cu citirea legislației în Camera Lorzilor din Regatul Unit al Marii Britanii;
- **„Codul eticii pentru oficialii parlamentari”**, comunicare susținută de dl. Vladimir V. SVINAREV, secretar general al Consiliului Federației Adunării Federale a Federației Ruse;
- **„Rolul serviciilor parlamentare cu privire la informarea procesului legislativ”**, comunicare susținută de dl. Sadettin, secretar general al Marii Adunări Naționale din Turcia;
- **„Primul program de pregătire pentru tinerii parlamentari afgani”**, comunicare susținută de dl. Mohamad Kazim Malwan, secretar general al Camerei Reprezentanților din Afganistan;
- **„Descalificarea membrilor pe motive de absențe ”**, comunicare susținută de dl. T.K. VISWANATHAN, secretar general al Camerei superioare (Upper Sabha) din Parlamentul Indiei;
- **„Implicațiile excluderii unui membru din propriul său partid”**, comunicare susținută de dr. V.K. Agnihotri, secretar general al Consiliului Federației Adunării Federale a Federației Ruse;
- **Cel de-al V-lea an de strategie în Camera Reprezentanților în „Afghanistan”**, comunicare susținută de dl. Ghulam Hassan Gran, secretar general al Camerei Reprezentanților din Afghanistan;
- **„Controlul parlamentar dincolo de puterea executivă”**, comunicare susținută de dr. José Pedro Montero., secretar general al Camerei Reprezentanților din Uruguay.

În finalul reuniunii s-a discutat despre propunerea de revizuire a regulilor și metodelor de lucru ale ASGP, despre chestiunile administrative și financiare ale Asociației, precum și despre proiectul de program al viitoarelor reuniuni a ASGP , Berna, 17-20 octombrie 2011, sesiunea de primăvară a UIP, 1-5 aprilie 2012 și Quebec City, 22-26 octombrie 2012.

VIII. CONTACTE PARLAMENTARE ÎN PLAN BILATERAL

Cu ocazia încheierii sesiunii de primăvară a UIP (cea de-a 124-a Adunare), la 20 aprilie a.c., au avut loc scurte întâlniri parlamentare în plan bilateral cu reprezentanți ai Parlamentului României:

- **Președintele Adunării Naționale a Republicii Serbia, dna. Prof. Slavica Djukić-Dejanović** s-a întâlnit cu șeful delegației române dl. **deputat Ionel Palăr** și cu dna. **deputat Carmen Axenie**. În cadrul întâlnirii președintele Adunării Naționale a Serbiei a mulțumit reprezentanților Camerei Deputaților pentru oportunitatea de a accepta această întrevedere și a evocat cu plăcere prietenia ce leagă cele două țări vecine, ca tradiții, cultură, economie, etc.. Întrevederea a avut ca subiect *„dacă România va sprijini Serbia în integrarea în marea familie a Uniunii Europene?”* Interlocutorii și-au exprimat disponibilitatea de a face toate demersurile în vederea sprijinirii Serbiei, atât la nivel parlamentar, cât și guvernamental și de a încerca prin misiunile sale diplomatice să se stabilească o vizită între președinții celor două Parlamente și de a pune în discuție posibilitatea României de a acorda sprijin prin demersurile pe cale diplomatică privind ratificarea acordului de aderare a Serbiei la Uniunea Europeană. Domnul deputat Ionel Palăr a subliniat faptul că în România s-a accelerat procesul de integrare având în vedere atât poziția geo-politică, cât și integrarea României în NATO. **Dna. Slavica Djukić-Dejanović** a subliniat faptul că Serbia este pregătită pentru integrarea în Uniunea Europeană, având în vedere și dificultățile pe care le implică aceasta. Președintele Adunării Naționale a Serbiei a apreciat calitatea discuțiilor bilaterale avute cu acest prilej și a reiterat mulțumirile sale pentru sprijinul pe care îl va primi din partea României în procesul integrării în UE și a apreciat prietenia care leagă cele două țări vecine;
- **Președintele Camerei Reprezentanților a Regatului Maroc, dl. Abdelwahad Radi** s-a întâlnit cu șeful delegației române dl. **deputat Ionel Palăr** și cu dna. **deputat Carmen Axenie**. În cadrul întâlnirii, președintele Camerei Reprezentanților a Regatului Maroc a mulțumit reprezentanților Parlamentului României pentru că au acceptat invitația domniei sale pentru această întrevedere. **Dl. Abdelwahad Radi** a evocat cu plăcere faptul că a avut posibilitatea să cunoască România atât înainte de 1989 cât și după 1990, participând totodată și la reuniunea UIP organizată în România. De asemenea, a subliniat faptul că, acesta îi cunoaște pe mulți dintre colegii parlamentari români care au participat la diferite reuniuni organizate în Maroc. **Dl. Abdelwahad Radi** a solicitat delegației României susținerea candidaturii sale pentru funcția de președinte a UIP (candidatură prin rotație a grupului țărilor arabe), ce se va discuta la reuniunea Grupului 12 Plus, la Berna, în 16-19 octombrie 2011. **Domnul deputat Ionel Palăr și doamna deputat Carmen Axenie** au subliniat faptul că România respectă regulile și tradițiile din interiorul Grupului 12 Plus și nu are obligații față de nicio țară din interiorul Grupului. Interlocutorii și-au exprimat susținerea din partea României a candidaturii domniei sale ca președinte al UIP, având în vedere experiența care îl recomandă, atât în plan național ca parlamentar, cât și pe plan internațional pentru cei 20 de ani de experiență, prin contribuțiile sale la multiplele organizări de reuniuni ale UIP. Reprezentanții Camerei Deputaților și-au exprimat speranța că dl. Abdelwahad Radi va fi primul președinte UIP ales și prieten al României. **Președintele Camerei Reprezentanților Regatului Maroc** a reiterat mulțumirile sale pentru această

întrevedere și, totodată, pentru susținerea candidaturii sale la funcția de președinte a UIP;

- **Dl. Takashi ISHIZEKI, membru al Camerei Reprezentanților Japoniei** s-a întâlnit cu **dl. senator Emilian Frâncu**. În cadrul întrevederii, dl Takashi ISHIZEKI a subliniat faptul că este membru al Grupului de prietenie România-Japonia, fiind implicat și prieten al României, cu atât mai mult cu cât soția sa este de origine română. De asemenea, **dl. Takashi ISHIZEKI** a reamintit faptul că, în data de 29 aprilie a.c. era programată vizita sa în România, dar datorită catastrofei provocată de cutremur, și-a amânat vizita pentru o dată pe care o va comunica ulterior. Cu ocazia vizitei, domnia sa dorește să se întâlnească cu parlamentari români din Grupul de prietenie România+Japonia și cu doamna Roberta Alma Anastase, președinta Camerei Deputaților. **Takashi ISHIZEKI** a apreciat calitatea discuțiilor bilaterale avute cu acest prilej și a mulțumit pentru această întrevedere.

Delegația Parlamentului României s-a bucurat de prezența și de sprijinul logistic acordat de doamna Maria Bârsan de Saldana, consulul onorific al României în Ciudad de Panama, pe întreaga perioadă a șederii delegației în Panama City, căreia se propune transmiterea unei scrisori de mulțumire.

Deputat Ionel PALĂR

Secretar al Biroului Executiv al GRUI

Membru al Consiliului Director și al Grupului geo-politic 12 Plus

Șeful Delegației

Senator Alexandru MOCANU

Membru al Comitetului Director al GRUI

Deputat Carmen AXENIE

Membră a Comitetului Director al GRUI

Membră a Consiliului Director și a Grupului geo-politic 12 Plus

Senator Emilian Valentin FRÂNCU

Membru al Comitetului Director al GRUI

Deputat Ioan STAN

Membru al Comitetului Director al GRUI

Deputat KEREKES Karoly

Membru al Comitetului Director al GRUI

Gheorghe BARBU

Secretar general

Camera Deputaților

Redactat: Daniela Georgian, consultant parlamentar
Direcția pentru cooperare parlamentară internațională multilaterală
Camera Deputaților

**The Role of Parliaments in Ensuring Sustainable Development Through the
Management of Natural Resources, Agricultural, Production and
Democratic Change**

**SECOND STANDING COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT,
FINANCE AND TRADE**

Ionel PALĂR

Member of Romanian Parliament
Chamber of Deputies
Romanian IPU Group

Dear Mr. President,
Dear colleagues,

- Thank you for the opportunity to take the floor
- The concept of sustainable development crystallized in time, over decades, in the framework of in-depth international scientific debates and received concrete political meanings in the context of globalization.
- The National Sustainable Development Strategy of Romania 2013-2020-2030 offers either the general plans and thematic or sector-specific programmes in accordance with the common objectives outlined in the EU Sustainable Development Strategy and the Lisbon Strategy, while following the methodological guidelines of the European Commission.
- This Strategy sets specific objectives for moving, within a reasonable and realistic framework, toward a new model of development that is capable of generating high value added, is motivated by interest in knowledge and innovation, and is aimed at continued improvement of the quality of life and human relationships in harmony with the natural environment.
- The Romanian objectives on short, medium and long time are:
Horizon 2013: *To incorporate the principles and practices of sustainable development in all the programmes and public policies of Romania as an EU Member State.* **Horizon 2020:** *To reach the current*

average level of the EU countries for the main indicators of sustainable development. **Horizon 2030:** *To get significantly close to the average performance of the EU Member States in that year in terms of sustainable development indicators.*

- This Sustainable Development Strategy sets the main guidelines for action towards the adoption and implementation of the principles of sustainable development in the immediate future, namely:

Rational correlation of development goals, including cross-sector and regional investment programmes, with the established potential and sustaining capacity of natural capital;

Accelerated modernisation of the educational, training and public health systems with due consideration of the unfavourable demographic trends and their impact on the labour market;

Use of the best available technologies, by both economic and ecological standards, for publicly funded investments at national, regional and local levels, and encouraging the choice of such technologies on the part of private investors; entrenchment of eco-efficiency standards in all production and service activities;

The ability to anticipate the effects of climate change, to prepare solutions for adaptation in the long run and to develop cross-sector contingency plans comprising portfolios of alternative crisis-management solutions in case of natural or man-made disasters;

Ensuring food security and safety by turning to good account Romania's comparative advantages with regard to increased agricultural production, including organic farming; balancing the quantitative and qualitative growth of agricultural output for human and animal consumption with the higher demand for biofuel production without compromising the need to maintain and improve soil fertility, biodiversity and environmental protection;

The need to identify additional, sustainable financial resources for large-scale projects and programmes, particularly in areas such as infrastructure, energy, environmental protection, food safety, education, healthcare and social services;

Efforts to meet the European norms and standards on the quality of life should be pursued together with the revival of traditional occupations and ways of life in a modern setting, especially in high areas and wetlands.

Thank you for your attention.

Première Commission Permanente – Paix Et Sécurité Internationale

*Mettre en place un cadre législatif propre à prévenir la violence électorale,
à améliorer le suivi des élections et à assurer une transition politique sans heurt*

*Député Karoly Kerekes
Groupe interparlementaire roumain*

**Monsieur le Président,
Mesdames et Messieurs,**

Tout d'abord je tiens à féliciter les rapporteurs pour les documents élaborés. Je me réjouis d'avoir, une fois de plus, l'occasion de participer aux travaux de cette commission dont les débats s'avèrent, comme toujours, riches et intéressants.

Je dirais tout d'abord qu'une approche législative efficace, à même de prévenir la violence électorale, à améliorer le suivi des élections et à assurer une transition politique sans heurt ne peut se limiter aux lois qui régissent les élections.

L'on doit avoir en place aussi des garanties constitutionnelles, d'autres lois pertinentes dans un contexte électoral, comme par exemple celles qui visent les partis politiques et le financement des campagnes, la citoyenneté, l'activité des médias, et même certaines dispositions dans les Codes pénal et civil. La législation qui défend les droits de l'homme et le principe de la non-discrimination joue, elle aussi, un rôle important.

J'ajouterais que la Roumanie attache une attention particulière aux missions d'observation électorale. En tant que membre de l'OSCE, mon pays s'est engagé à inviter des observateurs internationaux à ses élections, notamment de la part de l'Office pour les Institutions Démocratiques et les Droits de l'Homme, ainsi qu'à répondre avec promptitude aux recommandations de l'Office en la matière.

L'activité d'observation électorale doit être soutenue en priorité, car elle est à même d'accroître la confiance dans les processus électoraux et peut aider les pays à atteindre l'objectif d'organiser des élections libres et équitables, un élément indispensable à la stabilité démocratique.

En même temps, l'observation électorale contribue à la promotion des droits de l'homme, notamment des droits civils et politiques, puisque la participation aux élections est un facteur clé dans l'exercice de ces droits.

Le cadre juridique international sur lequel repose la législation roumaine en matière d'élections démocratiques comprend aussi les dispositions pertinentes de plusieurs instruments des droits de l'homme, adoptés par les Nations Unies, le Conseil de l'Europe (*la Convention européenne pour la protection des droits de l'homme et des libertés fondamentales, et ses Protocoles facultatifs*) et l'Union européenne (*le Traité et la Carte des droits fondamentaux de l'Union européenne*).

En termes généraux, un cadre législatif propice aux élections libres et équitables, sans manifestations de violence, doit trouver le juste équilibre entre le respect des droits des candidats et des électeurs et la nécessité d'assurer l'ordre public et un climat de sécurité.

La sécurité ne doit pas servir de prétexte pour limiter la liberté d'expression ou de réunion ou bien le droit d'association. De même, un discours électoral ne doit pas inciter à des manifestations de haine ou de violence.

Tant pour les restrictions non justifiables des droits et des libertés fondamentales, que pour la rhétorique violente au cours de la campagne et du scrutin, la loi doit prévoir des remèdes juridiques prompts et efficaces.

Je vous remercie de votre attention !

Commission permanente de la démocratie et des droits de l'homme

**FINANCEMENT DES PARTIS POLITIQUES
ET DES CAMPAGNES ÉLECTORALES :
TRANSPARENCE ET RESPONSABILITÉ**

Sénateur Emilian Valentin FRÂNCU
Groupe interparlementaire roumain

**Monsieur le Président,
Chers collègues,**

Permettez-moi de féliciter les rapporteurs pour la qualité des documents qu'ils ont élaborés. Je me réjouis d'avoir, une fois de plus, l'occasion de participer aux travaux de cette commission dont les débats s'avèrent, comme toujours, riches et intéressants.

Pour dresser brièvement le contexte législatif national, je dirai que la Roumanie s'est dotée d'une loi spécifique en la matière - la loi sur le financement des activités des partis politiques et des campagnes électorales. Celle-ci établit quatre sources de financement: cotisations des membres, dons et héritages, revenus provenant de leurs propres activités, subventions du budget de l'État.

L'application de la loi est surveillée par l'Autorité électorale permanente, une institution publique autonome, à personnalité morale, qui est tenue de faire des rapports d'activité annuels au Parlement.

Mesdames et Messieurs,

Dans une note plus générale et pour entrer dans le vif du sujet, je voudrais passer en revue les propositions que nous avons faites en guise de recommandations à même d'assurer un financement politique transparent et responsable.

Du point de vue législatif, nous avons un instrument international relativement nouveau en la matière – la Convention des Nations Unies contre la corruption, à laquelle 150 États sont parties et qui est entrée en vigueur il y a à peu près environ 6 ans. Néanmoins, sa mise en pratique au plan national requiert toujours des efforts soutenus, de nature législative et administrative.

L'appui parlementaire devrait se manifester davantage dans ce sens, y compris afin d'assurer le bon fonctionnement du mécanisme d'examen de l'application de la convention.

J'ajouterais aussi – puisqu'on évoque constamment la nécessité d'accroître la cohérence de nos démarches parlementaires – qu'un bon nombre de nos collègues participent aux activités de la GOPAC – le réseau mondial des parlementaires contre la corruption. Il serait peut-être utile d'examiner la possibilité de développer le dialogue entre l'UIP et ce réseau, sur des sujets tels que celui que nous débattons aujourd'hui.

S'agissant de la lutte contre le financement politique illégal, un facteur-clé qui mérite une attention constante, y compris de la part des commissions parlementaires ayant des responsabilités en la matière, est la spécialisation adéquate dont les autorités judiciaires et les autres autorités compétentes doivent bénéficier.

La coopération régionale et internationale entre ces autorités est, elle-aussi, indispensable, vu qu'elle permet des échanges et l'harmonisation des approches, mais surtout puisque les défis que pose le financement illégal de la vie politique dépassent souvent le cadre des frontières nationales.

Finalement, je crois qu'il est important de souligner que le financement politique peut servir à promouvoir l'égalité des chances entre hommes et femmes dans la vie politique.

Plusieurs mesures peuvent être envisagées en vertu des bonnes pratiques connues en ce qui concerne le soutien financier accordé par l'État aux partis politiques. En outre, les partis politiques eux-mêmes ont la possibilité d'adopter leurs propres mesures financières pour assurer des chances égales à tous leurs candidats, hommes et femmes.

Je vous remercie.

UNION INTERPARLEMENTAIRE



INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION

Association des Secrétaires Généraux de Parlement

CONTRIBUTION

de

M. Gheorghe BARBU
Secrétaire général de la Chambre des Députés du Parlement de Roumanie

Au débat général sur

LE RÔLE DES COMMISSIONS DANS LE CONTRÔLE PARLEMENTAIRE

Session de Panama
Avril 2011

« LE RÔLE DES COMMISSIONS DANS LE CONTRÔLE PARLEMENTAIRE » DE LA CHAMBRE DES DÉPUTÉS DU PARLEMENT DE ROUMANIE

Chers collègues,
Mesdames et Messieurs,

1. Le Parlement de Roumanie comprend dans sa structure bicamérale la Chambre des Députés et le Sénat qui, suivant les règlements propres d'organisation et de fonctionnement, déploient leur activité en réunion plénière et dans les commissions parlementaires permanentes ou temporaires, selon le cas.

La Chambre des Députés constitue des commissions permanentes et peut instituer des commissions d'enquête ou d'autres commissions spéciales.

2. L'une des plus importantes fonctions du Parlement est le contrôle parlementaire, réalisé par l'intermédiaire des commissions parlementaires permanentes ou des commissions d'enquête ou d'autres commissions spéciales. Les activités de contrôle parlementaire sont exercées en dehors du Parlement pour des raisons très diverses: la nécessité de constater la manière dont certaines autorités ou institutions publiques déploient leur activité et sa conformité avec la Constitution et la loi; la situation difficile dans laquelle se trouvent certains secteurs de l'économie roumaine; l'investigation des abus; des actes de corruption et des pétitions adressées au Parlement par les citoyens; la monitorisation du respect des droits des personnes détenues dans des pénitenciers.

Mesdames et Messieurs,
Chers collègues,

3. Les activités de contrôle parlementaire exercé par des commissions d'enquête ou d'autres commissions spéciales de la Chambre des Députés

La Chambre des Députés peut instituer des commissions spéciales pour l'approbation des actes législatifs complexes, pour élaboration des propositions législatives (qui dans ce cas ne sont plus soumises à l'examen des commissions ou autres) ou pour d'autres objectifs.

Les commissions d'enquête peuvent être constituées par chaque Chambre à la demande d'au moins un tiers de ses membres et sont un outil pour exercer la fonction de contrôle parlementaire. Pour constituer une telle commission il devrait y avoir un fait susceptible d'être enquêté. En même temps

une procédure judiciaire ne devrait pas avoir été ouverte et il ne doit pas y avoir une décision judiciaire définitive.

S'il est considéré nécessaire d'éclaircir les causes et les circonstances dans lesquelles des événements se sont produits ou des actions aux effets négatifs ont eu lieu, ainsi que d'établir les conclusions, les responsabilités et les mesures qui s'imposent, la Chambre des Députés peut décider de démarrer une enquête parlementaire.

En conformité avec le présent Règlement de la Chambre des Députés et selon l'article 71 prévues, l'enquête peut être réalisée par une commission permanente, ou par une commission d'enquête parlementaire créée à cet effet.

Les enquêtes parlementaires ne peuvent pas avoir pour objet l'investigation de faits ou activités faisant l'objet d'enquêtes judiciaires ou se trouvant sur le rôle des instances judiciaires.

Une enquête parlementaire cesse de droit au moment de l'ouverture de procédures judiciaires concernant les faits ou les activités constituant son objet, situation dans laquelle le Bureau permanent de la Chambre des Députés annonce les organes de poursuite pénale qu'ils peuvent avoir accès à tous les documents concernant le cas en question, qui se trouvent dans les archives de la Chambre des Députés.

Sur la demande d'un nombre minimum de cinquante députés provenant de deux groupes parlementaires au moins, la Chambre des Députés peut décider de créer une commission d'enquête, les dispositions des articles 39 à 58 et l'article 72 alinéas (2)-(5) étant applicables.

En vue de l'audition, la Commission d'enquête parlementaire peut citer toute personne qui peut avoir connaissance d'un fait ou d'une circonstance capable de servir à la découverte de la vérité dans la cause faisant l'objet de l'activité de la commission.

Les personnes citées sont tenues de se présenter devant la Commission d'enquête parlementaire.

4. Les activités déployées par les commissions en dehors du Parlement visent aussi d'autres buts, tels que la participation à des débats publics, des séminaires, des symposiums, des conférences sur divers thèmes, organisées dans le pays ou à l'étranger, des rencontres avec des représentants des autorités de l'administration publique locale, des syndicats, des patronats, des associations professionnelles et des organisations non-gouvernementales.

Afin de consolider les relations extérieures bi- et multilatérales avec les Parlements d'autres Etats, les commissions parlementaires ont établi des contacts avec la plupart des Parlements d'Europe, d'Asie, d'Afrique et des deux Amériques et leurs membres ont pris part d'enquête à des réunions, dont certaines périodiques, avec les structures de la Conférence des Organes

Spécialisés dans les Affaires Communautaires et Européennes des Parlements de l'Union Européenne (COSAC).

Je vous remercie de votre attention.

**Session du Panama/Panama Session
Avril 2011/April 2011**

**LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS/
LIST OF ATTENDANCE**

MEMBRES PRÉSENTS/MEMBERS PRESENT

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M. Mana Digne ROA (<i>non-membre/non-member</i>)	<i>Paraguay</i>
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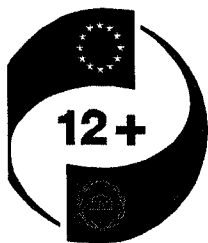
SUPPLÉANT POUR MEMBRE ASSOCIÉ/SUBSTITUTE FOR ASSOCIATE MEMBER

M. Kursad Melih SARIARSLAN (pour M. Ramil Hasanov – membre associé [suppléant/substitute])	<i>TURKPA (Assemblée parlementaire des pays turcophones/Parliamentary Assembly of the Turkic Countries)</i>
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EXCUSÉS/APOLOGIES

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Mme Emma DE PRINS	<i>Belgique/Belgium</i>
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M. Michael POWNALL	<i>Royaume-Uni/United Kingdom</i>
Mme Norarut PIMSEN	<i>Thaïlande/Thailand</i>



*Groupe des Douze Plus
à l'Union interparlementaire*

*Group of the Twelve Plus
in the Inter-Parliamentary Union*

REUNIONS DU GROUPE DES DOUZE PLUS
DU 14 AU 20 AVRIL 2011, PANAMA

POSTES À POURVOIR PENDANT LA 124^{ème} ASSEMBLÉE DE L'UIP

Veillez trouver ci-dessous la liste des postes à pourvoir par le Groupe des Douze Plus pendant la 124^{ème} Assemblée à Panama. Si vous désirez proposer votre candidature, veuillez remplir ce formulaire et l'envoyer au Secrétariat du Groupe des Douze Plus en assurant que chaque candidat prépare une lettre explicative et un curriculum vitae à présenter au Secrétariat de l'UIP à l'occasion de l'Assemblée à Panama.

Comité des droits de l'homme des parlementaires

Un poste de titulaire à pourvoir

Première Commission permanente

Un poste de vice-président titulaire à pourvoir

Deuxième Commission permanente

Un poste de vice-président titulaire et un poste de vice-président suppléant à pourvoir

Troisième Commission permanente

Un poste de vice-président titulaire à pourvoir

(Veillez écrire les NOMS en MAJUSCULES)

NOM DU CANDIDAT: EMILIAN VALENTIN FRANCU

PAYS: ROUMANIE

CANDIDATURE POUR TROISIEME COMMISSION PERMANENTE – VICE-PRESIDENT

VEUILLEZ RENVoyer CE FORMULAIRE AU SECRETARIAT DU GROUPE DES DOUZE PLUS À PARIS
AVANT LE MARDI 5 AVRIL 2011

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INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION
124th Assembly and related meetings
Panama City (Panama), 15 – 20 April 2011



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

Amendments
proposed by the Romanian IPU Group,

The 124th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

- (1) *Considering* that representative and participatory democracies function largely within the political party system as essential expressions of the political will of the people,
- (2) *Recognizing* that political parties require appropriate funding to fulfil their core functions, both during and between elections,
- (3) *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 transparency mechanisms,
- (4) *Acknowledging* that in modern democracies, significant amounts of money are required to conduct competitive election campaigns so as to enable political parties to communicate their policy proposals as broadly as possible,
- (5) *Also recognizing* that the funding of political parties may comprise both public and private funding and encompass both direct and indirect forms, such as free broadcasting time on television and radio, tax subsidies, use of public buildings and public election billboards and that in order to mitigate the risks associated with the financing of political parties, 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,
- (6) *Noting* that in systems where there is limited public funding of political parties, the importance of private funding increases and vice versa,
- (7) *Also noting* that the concerns surrounding the private funding of political parties are often viewed as a question of political equality and can be divided into three main areas of concern: 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

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Third Standing Committee
on . C-III/124/DR-rev¶
Democracy and Human
Rights . 28 February 2011 ¶

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draft resolution submitted
by the co-Rapporteurs ¶
Mr. P. Moriau (Belgium) and
Ms. M.T. Kubayi (South
Africa) ¶

cases where campaign finances come from compromised sources that expect a legislative or other benefit,

(8) *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 a call to tender,

(9) *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,

(10) *Further noting* that clear guidelines to regulate party and campaign finance, including reasonable limitations on campaign finance, campaign finance reporting requirements, political finance reporting requirements, measures to prevent the abuse 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 are all measures that should be given consideration in order to ensure that political parties remain accountable to citizens,

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New paragraph (former paragraph 4 of the Operative, revised)

is Convinced that raising public awareness of the funding of political parties⁺ enhances the functioning of democratic institutions and limits the negative impact of corruption:

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(11) *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",

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

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(13) *Recognizing* that the State should provide reasonable support to political parties in a fair and objective manner in accordance with a set of agreed criteria in order to promote equal access to resources in accordance with the principle of political pluralism and as a counterweight to corruption by eliminating the need for undue reliance on private donors,

(14) *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 former 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,

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

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

(17) *Recognizing* that in many countries, measures such as bans or limits on private political contributions, expenditure limits for election campaigns, increased public funding of political parties and controls over political expenditure have been taken,

(18) *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 or financial sanctions to ensure compliance with the law,

(19) *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,

(20) *Noting* that the reasons for regulating the funding of political parties 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,

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

(22) *Recognizing* that while mandatory disclosure of the funding of political parties 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,

(23) *Mindful* that disclosure laws, regulations and guidelines on campaign and political party funding seek to limit the negative impact of anonymous, foreign or business sources of funds to political parties as well as 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 in 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 avoiding corruption and excessive spending on election campaigns;
2. *Recommends* that the call for reducing spending on elections and election campaigns also take into account low levels of income, literacy, access to information and technology and vast distances between urban and rural areas in some countries, which would make such a reduction difficult;
3. *Considers* that the funding of political parties should aim to give a voice to the people 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, irrespective of their financial means and access to resources;
4. ~~*Is convinced that raising public awareness of the funding of political parties enhances the functioning of democratic institutions and limits the negative impact of corruption.*~~ *Revised and moved in the preambular part.*
5. *Recognizes* the difficulty of setting universal accountability mechanisms for the funding of political parties due to different democratic and constitutional systems and political parties; ~~*encourages nevertheless, Member Parliaments, through the IPU, to continue to ensure accountability and transparency in keeping with the prevailing realities in different countries while drawing upon the basic principles established in international instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the United Nations Convention against Corruption;*~~
6. *Recommends* that parliaments, as institutions tasked with overseeing government action, civil society organizations and the media serve as watchdogs, ~~*to educate citizens about the funding of political parties and*~~

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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;

Recommends also that party statutes and practice include financial measures to promote gender equality and a level playing field for all candidates, men and women;

Invites parliaments to examine the possibility of adopting or revising the political financing legislation so as to facilitate women's access to resources, through measures such as tax breaks, provisions for campaign expenses and guidelines on the use of public funds;

9. *Invites* IPU Member Parliaments to consider putting in place measures to limit, prohibit or regulate funding by inter alia NGOs, corporate bodies and foreign sources so as to ensure that they do not exert undue influence on political outcomes;

Invites IPU Member Parliaments to support the specialisation of the judiciary and all relevant law enforcement agencies in the fight against illegal funding of political parties and election campaigns;

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* IPU Member 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 the funding of political parties do not already exist;

Calls for further steps towards wider ratification of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, *invites* parliaments to promote its implementation including as regards transparency in the funding of candidatures for elected public office and of political parties, and *encourages* parliaments to actively support the Convention's review mechanism;

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12. *Calls upon* the Inter Parliamentary Union to develop a technical assistance and training programme for political parties on financial accounting systems and codes of conduct for political parties.

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Inter-Parliamentary Union

Chemin du Pommier 5, C.P. 330, CH-1218 Le Grand-Saconnex/Geneva, Switzerland

124th IPU ASSEMBLY (Panama, 15 - 20 April 2011)

Contents:

1. Inaugural ceremony
2. Election of President and keynote addresses
3. Participation
4. Choice of an emergency item
5. Debates and decisions of the Assembly and its Standing Committees

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. The ceremony concluded with a statement by the President of Panama, who declared the 124th Assembly officially open.

2. Election of the President and keynote addresses

The 124th Assembly opened at the ATLAPA Convention Centre on the morning of Saturday, 16 April, with the election by acclamation of Mr. José Muñoz Molina, Speaker of the National Assembly of Panama, as President of the Assembly.

The President said that it was a great honour for him to have been elected to preside over the Assembly's work. After opening the general debate on the overall theme of Parliamentary accountability: Living up to people's expectations, he invited Ms. Michelle Bachelet, Executive Director of UN Women, to deliver a keynote address.

Ms. Bachelet said she was very glad to take part in the IPU Assembly and have the opportunity to present the new UN entity for women, UN Women, to the IPU membership. Respect for women's rights and the achievement of gender equality were core tenets of progress not only for women, but for society as a whole. Parliaments and their members - men and women - had an important role to play in the promotion of gender equality as legislators, overseers of government action, representatives of the people and opinion leaders.

UN Women was currently developing its three-year strategic plan. It had identified five thematic priorities for its operational activities: (1) enhancing women's economic empowerment; (2) expanding women's voice, leadership and political participation; (3) ending violence against women; (4) strengthening implementation of the women's peace and security agenda; and (5) 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 as well as interesting initiatives taken to secure a minimum number of women in decision-making positions, including through the adoption of positive action measures. 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 natural and 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.

Ms. Bachelet welcomed the IPU's latest global survey on gender-sensitive parliaments, which would provide new avenues for cooperation and strategies to promote gender equality. She called on parliaments to develop and adopt gender priorities and plans at the beginning of each legislature, and pledged UN Women's support in that endeavour. She repeated her wish for stronger cooperation with parliaments and the IPU.

After her address, Ms. Bachelet answered questions from delegates relating to the contributions of the IPU and parliaments to the Commission on the Status of Women, to an inclusive process in political decision-making, to the promotion of young women's participation in politics and to rural outreach.

In the morning of Sunday, 17 April, the Vice-President of Panama and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Juan Carlos Varela, addressed the Assembly. He was very proud to present to the Assembly Panama's views on the agenda items. In the two decades since it had emerged from a dictatorship, Panama had continually strengthened its democracy. Panamanians were proud of the progress made since the first general elections, which ushered in a peaceful political transition. The new Electoral Code allowed for free, fair and transparent elections. At the international level, Panama supported all initiatives aimed at reinforcing democracy. The Government of Panama condemned populist demagoguery, which tended to limit democratic rights, and the use of religious dogma to void fundamental freedoms of their substance. It had no army, but was home to strategic installations that were key for international transport. Panama was deeply attached to respect for international law, the guarantor of regional stability. It had worked to consolidate the United Nations Inter-Agency Regional Centre and strengthen the Americas regional logistics centre. It was committed to fighting organized crime by establishing a third regional centre, in coordination with other Latin American countries, to reinforce coordination on security issues and fight trafficking in drugs and arms and all other forms of organized crime. The Government had strengthened its action on economic issues; Panama was now a member of the Central America-European Union trade agreement; it had adhered to the agreement on the exchange of fiscal information, and therefore appeared on the list of countries considered to be transparent in that field. Panama had encouraged the ratification of a trade treaty with the United States and was negotiating free-trade treaties with Canada, Colombia and Peru. It had ratified the principal human rights instruments. At the subregional level, Panama had been deeply involved in finding a political solution to the crisis in Honduras. In 2012, it would celebrate the 500th anniversary of Vasco Núñez de Balboa's discovery of the Pacific Ocean, which it would commemorate at a large number of international events. For all of that, the Government requested the support of the world's parliaments. Lastly, Panama supported the powerful movements for democracy that had emerged in a number of Arab countries, which it believed would herald the birth of the democracy that was indispensable for the well-being of the people. On behalf of Panama, of a land open to the world, where paths crossed and minds met, Mr. Varela wished the 124th Assembly fruitful deliberations.

At the closing sitting of the 124th Assembly, on 20 April, Ms. S. Ataullahjan (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. Ataullahjan concluded by expressing renewed appreciation for the excellent cooperation between the IPU and UNICEF.

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 presiding officers, 44 deputy presiding officers and 182 women (29.6%).

4. Choice of an emergency item

On 16 April, the President informed the Assembly that five requests for the inclusion of an emergency item had been initially received. The delegations of Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran and New Zealand had subsequently decided to present a joint proposal entitled "Strengthening democratic reform in emerging democracies, including in North Africa and the Middle East". That had left three proposals to be considered by the Assembly: "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, "Parliamentary action to strengthen the right to self-determination of peoples within the framework of international law", submitted by Venezuela, and the above-mentioned joint proposal.

Ms. F. Mirza, Speaker of the Parliament of Pakistan, explained the reasons underlying the Pakistani proposal. 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 intended to issue such a declaration.

Mr. D. Vivas (Venezuela) explained that the Venezuelan 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. Considering that some of the ideas expressed were included in the joint proposal put forward by Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran and New Zealand, he withdrew the proposal.

Ms. N. Ali Assegaf (Indonesia) expressed her deep condolences and sympathy to the people of

Japan. She was confident that the resilience and strength of the Japanese people would help them to recover. The IPU should help countries manage transitions democratically and peacefully and she hoped that the joint proposal would be adopted.

The President of the Assembly noted that of the three remaining proposals, two had been withdrawn. The Assembly therefore adopted the joint proposal submitted by Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran and New Zealand and included it in the Assembly agenda.

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. It called on the international community to provide generous human, material and financial support.

Mr. T. Marimoto (Japan) expressed deep appreciation for the declaration, which was a source of encouragement and hope to all those working tirelessly to reconstruct the country. As in the past, Japan would share its experience with other countries and international organizations, and would continue to contribute to common efforts to reduce the effects of natural disasters whenever and wherever they struck.

5. Debates and decisions of the Assembly and its Standing Committees

(a) General Debate on the political, economic and social situation in the world (Item 3)

The general debate on the political, economic and social situation in the world, under the theme of *Parliamentary accountability: Living up to people's expectations*, took place in the morning and afternoon of 16 and 17 April and in the morning of 19 April. A total of 104 speakers from 90 delegations took part in the debate, which was chaired by the President of the Assembly. During the sittings, the President invited several Vice-Presidents, members of the delegations of Costa Rica, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iceland, Jordan, Lesotho and New Zealand, to replace him in the Chair.

(b) First Standing Committee (Peace and International Security)

(i) *Providing a sound legislative framework aimed at preventing electoral violence, improving election monitoring and ensuring the smooth transition of power (Item 4)*

The Committee held three sittings: two on 16 April and one on 18 April, with Mr. S.H. Chowdhury (Bangladesh), Vice-President, in the Chair. In addition to the reports and the preliminary draft resolution prepared by the co-Rapporteurs, Mr. J.D. Seelam (India) and Mr. W. Madzimore (Zimbabwe), the Committee had before it amendments to the draft resolution submitted by the delegations of Canada, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Morocco, Sweden, Venezuela and the Latin American Parliament.

The first sitting began with the presentation of the joint report and preliminary draft resolution by the two co-Rapporteurs. A presentation was also made by Mr. T.A. Diabacte, Deputy Director of the United Nations Electoral Assistance Division. 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 (Islamic Republic of), Palestine, Republic of Korea, South Africa, United Kingdom, Venezuela and Zimbabwe. Mr. Diabacte was invited to participate in an advisory capacity.

The drafting committee met in the afternoon of 16 April and the morning of 17 April. It appointed Mr. G. Schneeman (South Africa) as its president and rapporteur. It examined 89 amendments submitted by 11 delegations and by the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians and adopted many of them.

The First Standing Committee considered the consolidated draft in the afternoon of 18 April. Several delegations took the floor, seeking clarification, proposing that amendments which had been rejected or accepted by the drafting committee be re-examined, or expressing support for the text. Some of the proposed amendments were adopted by consensus, while others were put to a vote. The Standing Committee adopted the draft resolution by consensus and requested the drafting

committee rapporteur to present it to the Assembly.

The draft resolution was submitted to the plenary sitting of the Assembly in the afternoon of 20 April and adopted by consensus, with reservations expressed by 18 delegations on preambular paragraph 6 and by three delegations on preambular paragraph 8.

(ii) Selection of subject item and co-Rapporteurs for the First Standing Committee at the 126th Assembly

The Bureau of the First Standing Committee met on 18 April with Mr. S.H. Chowdhury (Bangladesh), Vice-President, in the Chair. It examined seven proposals submitted by IPU Member Parliaments for the subject to be debated by the Standing Committee at the 126th Assembly. The Bureau was unable to reach a consensus, and decided to bring the choice of subject item to the Committee's next plenary sitting. Three proposals were debated; one was subsequently withdrawn by its sponsor, and the committee voted on the two remaining proposals. Following the votes, the First Standing Committee proposed the following subject to the Assembly for inclusion in the agenda of the 126th Assembly: 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. The subject item was subsequently approved by the Assembly, which appointed Mr. J.J. Mwiimbu (Zambia) and Mr. M. Gyöngyösi (Hungary) as co Rapporteurs.

(c) Second Standing Committee (Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade)

(i) The role of parliaments in ensuring sustainable development through the management of natural resources, agricultural production and demographic change (Item 5)

The Second Standing Committee held sittings on 17 and 19 April, with its President, Mr. P. Martin-Lalande (France), in the Chair. In addition to a report and preliminary draft resolution prepared by the co-Rapporteurs, Mr. A. Cherrar (Algeria) and Ms. K. Ferrier (Netherlands), the Committee had before it amendments to the draft resolution submitted by the delegations of Belgium, Canada, China, Cuba, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Morocco, Romania, Sweden, Switzerland, Venezuela and the Latin American Parliament. Two additional sub-amendments were submitted by the delegation of Norway.

A total of 47 speakers took the floor during the plenary 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 met on 18 April. It appointed Mr. D. Adams (Australia) as its president and Mr. T. Wickholm (Norway) as its rapporteur. It examined 128 amendments to the preliminary draft resolution, adopting some either in full or in part. A number of other amendments were accepted in letter or spirit.

In the afternoon of 19 April, the Second Standing Committee examined the consolidated draft resolution paragraph by paragraph and made a number of further changes. It had to vote in four instances.

In the afternoon of 20 April, the draft resolution was submitted to the Assembly, which adopted it unanimously.

(ii) Selection of subject item and co-Rapporteurs for the Second Standing Committee at the 126th Assembly

The Bureau of the Second Standing Committee met on 19 April with the Committee President in the Chair. It examined proposals submitted by IPU Member Parliaments for the item to be debated by the Second Standing Committee at the 126th Assembly. The Bureau voted to approve the subject item Redistribution of power, not just wealth: Ownership of the international agendas, which it subsequently submitted to the Second Standing Committee. The Committee also voted on and approved the proposal, which was subsequently approved by the Assembly for inclusion in the agenda of the 126th Assembly. The Assembly appointed Lord Judd (United Kingdom) and Mr. O.

Benabdallah (Morocco) as co Rapporteurs.

(d) Third Standing Committee (Democracy and Human Rights)

(i) *Transparency and accountability in the funding of political parties and election campaigns (Item 6)*

The Third Standing Committee held three sittings, on 16, 17 and 19 April, with its President, Mr. J.C. Mahía (Uruguay), in the Chair. The Committee had before it a report and preliminary draft resolution prepared by the co-Rapporteurs, Ms. M. Kubayi (South Africa) and Mr. P. Moriau (Belgium), along with amendments to the draft resolution submitted by the delegations of Canada, France, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Morocco, Romania, Sweden, Venezuela, and by the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians.

In all, 47 speakers took part in the debate.

The Committee designated a drafting committee composed of representatives of Bahrain, Canada, Ecuador, Ghana, Indonesia, Malaysia, Monaco, Philippines, Switzerland, Togo and Uruguay. It met on 18 April and began its work by appointing Mr. C. Cellario (Monaco) as president and Ms. M. Kubayi (South Africa) as rapporteur. It considered the proposed amendments and incorporated some of them into the draft resolution.

On 19 April, the Third Standing Committee considered the consolidated text of the draft resolution presented by the drafting committee and adopted the amended resolution. The delegations of Algeria and Sudan expressed reservations on operative paragraph 9 and preambular paragraph 17 respectively.

The Assembly, meeting in plenary on 20 April, adopted the resolution by consensus.

(ii) *Selection of subject item and co-Rapporteurs for the Third Standing Committee at the 126th Assembly*

The Bureau of the Third Standing Committee met on 18 April with the Committee President, Mr. J.C. Mahía (Uruguay), in the Chair. It examined various proposals submitted by Member Parliaments for inclusion in the agenda of the 126th Assembly. At its sitting on 19 April, the Third Standing Committee decided to add 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 to the agenda of the 126th Assembly. It took note of the nomination of Ms. P. Turyahikayo (Uganda) as co-Rapporteur. Ms. S. Ataullahjan (Canada) and Mr. C. Sardinha (India) were also nominated as rapporteurs after the Committee's meeting. The item and proposed co-Rapporteurs were subsequently approved by the Assembly on 20 April.

(e) Emergency item

Strengthening democratic reform in emerging democracies, including in North Africa and the Middle East (Item 8)

The Assembly referred the emergency item it had adopted on 16 April to a drafting committee composed of representatives of Australia, Belgium, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Oman, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Togo and Venezuela. It appointed Ms. N. Ali Assegaf (Indonesia) as president and Mr. H. Jenkins (Australia) as rapporteur. It met on 17 April, and drafted a resolution that was adopted unanimously by the Assembly on 20 April.



Inter-Parliamentary Union

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

*Endorsed by the 124th IPU Assembly
(Panama, 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.



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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, 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 up on* 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.



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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, 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:
 - o lower birth rates and an ageing population in countries of the North;
 - o a high birth rate in Africa, the level of which depends on the country;
 - o exponential urbanization compounded by higher levels of migration to coastal areas; and
 - o 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 biofuels compounds the growing imbalance between the supply of and demand for foodstuffs;
- f. The growing demand at the global level for biofuels, 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.
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TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE FUNDING OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

Resolution adopted by consensus by the 124th IPU Assembly
(Panama, 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;
4. *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.



Inter-Parliamentary Union

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STRENGTHENING DEMOCRATIC REFORM IN EMERGING DEMOCRACIES, INCLUDING IN NORTH AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

*Resolution adopted unanimously by the 124th IPU Assembly
(Panama, 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.
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