



5, CHEMIN DU POMMIER
CASE POSTALE 330
1218 LE GRAND-SACONNEX / GENÈVE (SUISSE)

TELEPHONE (41.22) 919 41 50
FAX (41.22) 919 41 60
E-MAIL postbox@mail.ipu.org
ADR. TELEGR. INTERPARLEMENT GENEVE

Geneva, 27 April 2012

GLOBAL PARLIAMENTARY REPORT
The changing nature of parliamentary representation

Dear Madam President,
Dear Mr. President,

The first ever *Global Parliamentary Report* was launched on 2 April 2012 at the 126th Assembly in Kampala, Uganda. Many delegations declared that its theme - the relationship between parliaments and citizens - is a fundamental issue in their country. In his presentation, IPU President Radi declared that parliaments must do more to be closer to citizens. Society is changing fast, and parliament needs to modernize in order to keep pace. The Report analyzes the challenges and provides examples of good practice among parliaments and individual parliamentarians.

It is my pleasure to send you copies of the Report and its Executive Summary, jointly published with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). These documents, and much more, are available on the web pages dedicated to the Report at www.ipu.org/gpr.

I call upon parliaments to analyze the Report's findings in the light of their national context. I also encourage them to distribute the Report widely within parliament, and engage with civil society in discussions about how to strengthen the links between parliaments and citizens.

The IPU is ready to support parliamentary activities to present and promote the Report. The annex to this letter describes the type of support that the IPU can offer, and lists some suggestions for actions that parliaments may wish to take.

I would be very grateful if you could keep us informed of any plans to present this report. My colleague Andy Richardson (ar@mail.ipu.org; +41 22 919 41 35) is at your disposal to provide any further information you may require.

Yours sincerely,

Anders B. Johnsson
Secretary General



Annex: Parliamentary activities linked to the Global Parliamentary Report

The launch of the Global Parliamentary Report is an opportunity to encourage an open dialogue on the state of relations between parliaments and citizens.

The report is available in English, French, Spanish, and will shortly be published in Arabic. It can be downloaded from www.ipu.org/gpr. Parliamentary activities linked to the Report will be reflected on this section of the IPU web site.

For all questions and comments, please contact Mr. Andy Richardson (ar@mail.ipu.org; +41 22 919 41 35).

Support from the IPU

Documentation

- The IPU has only limited copies of the Report and Executive Summary in stock. The IPU can provide small numbers of additional copies free of charge. The IPU may ask parliaments to cover the cost of shipping.
- For parliaments that want to **reprint** the Report, the IPU can provide high-resolution press-ready PDF files that can be given directly to the printer.
- For parliaments that want to **translate** the Report or the Executive Summary into local languages, the IPU can provide the original text in a Word file.
- For parliaments that want to **print local translations** of the Report, the IPU can provide the InDesign files that can be used by a graphic designer to lay out the Report.

Organization of parliamentary activities

- The IPU can provide advice and feedback on the organization of parliamentary activities. This advice and feedback may cover, for example, the agenda, audience, speakers and follow-up. It is understood that the IPU's role is to support activities that are led by the parliament.
- Parliament may want to also seek the support of UNDP country offices, which have been briefed on the Report by UNDP.
- Upon request, the IPU can provide the name of experts who can participate in parliamentary activities. These experts could include the lead author of the Report, members of the Advisory Board and parliamentarians who contributed to the preparation of the Report. The participation of experts will depend on their availability and can not be guaranteed. In most cases, the cost of experts' participation should be covered by the parliament.

Possible forms of parliamentary activities

The following is a list of suggestions of actions that parliament may wish to take in relation to the Report.

# 1	Translate the Executive Summary and distribute it locally
The Executive Summary is an eight-page document that presents the key messages and conclusions of the Report. The IPU will make the source files available to any parliament that wishes to translate it into other languages and/or to print copies locally.	

# 2	Present the report in parliament
<p>There are many ways in which the report could be presented, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present the report in a plenary session and invite an exchange of views between the political groups • Refer the report to the parliamentary committee with responsibility for relations with citizens 	
# 3	Organize a public debate
<p>Bring together representatives of civil society, academia, the media and the government to exchange views on the state of relations between parliament and citizens. In countries where UNDP has an office, seek to establish a partnership on this initiative. Possible themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing public expectations and the challenges facing parliament • How is public pressure driving parliamentary change? 	
# 4	Engage the local media
<p>Organise a press conference to communicate the substance of the report. The global press release issued by IPU and UNDP, as well as an op-ed article for the press, can be used along with country specific data to tailor your statements to the local context.</p>	
# 5	Establish contact with local parliamentary monitoring organizations
<p>Establish, or strengthen, dialogue between parliament and parliamentary monitoring organizations about ways to enhance public engagement with parliament.</p>	
# 6	Link to the report on the parliamentary website
<p>Announce the launch of the report on the parliamentary website and include a link to the Executive Summary and the IPU and UNDP websites.</p>	

Issues raised by the Global Parliamentary Report

Parliamentary activities could seek to address themes of the report, such as:

1. What is the level of trust in parliament, according to public opinion polls? What are the reasons, and the consequences?
2. How are peoples' expectations of parliaments evolving? How is parliament responding?
3. Do people really know what an MP does? How to educate them?
4. What influence do citizens have over law-making? How much should they have?
5. What opportunities do parliamentarians have to feed their constituency expertise into parliamentary work?
6. Are parliamentarians accountable to their political party or to the citizens that elect them?
7. Do parliamentary codes of conduct make parliamentarians' jobs easier or more difficult?
8. Do Constituency Development Funds bring vital resources to local communities, or do they distract parliamentarians from their national duties of law-making and oversight?
9. Are communication technologies like Facebook helping parliamentarians to maintain contact with citizens, or are they an additional burden on their time?
10. Is it acceptable for external organizations to evaluate MPs' performance in parliament? Can 'parliamentary monitoring organizations' become partners to enhance perceptions of parliament?