



Inter-Parliamentary Union  
For democracy. For everyone.

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# 138<sup>th</sup> Assembly

## 1. Opening of the Assembly

The 138<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly was opened on Sunday, 25 March 2018 at 11 a.m. at the *Centre International des Conférences de Genève (CICG)*, with the IPU President, Ms. Gabriela Cuevas Barron (Mexico), in the chair. She was assisted by several Vice-Presidents: Ms. M. Mensah-Williams, Chairperson of the National Council (Namibia); Mr. M.A. Oquaye, Speaker of Parliament (Ghana); Mr. P. Gallagher, Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives (Ireland); Mr. I. Flores, Leader of the Delegation (Chile); Mr. M. Bouva, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly (Suriname); Mr. W. Simina, Speaker of the Congress (Federated States of Micronesia); Ms. A. Tolley, Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives (New Zealand); Mr. A. Jasem Ahmad, Leader of the Delegation (United Arab Emirates); Ms. C. Roth, Deputy Speaker of the Bundestag (Germany); and Mr. A. Anastasia, member of the Federal Senate (Brazil).

### High-level segment

The IPU President delivered an opening address on the main theme of the General Debate, *Strengthening the global regime for migrants and refugees: The need for evidence-based policy solutions*. The theme was very topical and relevant: nearly 258 million people in the world resided in countries not of their birth. Many of them were migrants, regular or irregular, who sought a better life, and refugees who had fled their countries because of persecution, conflict, natural or other disasters that jeopardized their safety and threatened their lives. Their numbers were expected to grow as a result of social, economic, environmental or political instability, combined with the search for new opportunities in an increasingly interconnected world.

Migration had long been part of the fabric of civilization. However, today's loosely-constructed global regime governing the movement of people between countries of origin, transit and destination was proving insufficient. Political will and a human rights approach were required to address the many legal, socio-economic and political issues that migrants and refugees, as well as host communities and countries of origin and transit, presented on the ground. Mixed migration flows added an additional layer of complexity. The United Nations was currently in the process of developing two global compacts – one on migration and one on refugee protection. The parliamentary perspective and engagement were critical to shaping sustainable solutions.

The General Debate was therefore designed to help articulate a parliamentary contribution to the global talks currently underway. To kick-start the debate, the heads of the key UN agencies involved in the process - Mr. William Lacy Swing, Director General, International Organization for Migration (IOM), Mr. Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), and Mr. Filippo Grandi, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) – featured in a high-level interactive debate moderated by Ms. Claire Doole, a former BBC journalist.

In their initial remarks and in their responses to questions from the floor, the three UN heads sought to dispel some of the common misconceptions that surrounded the public debate on refugees and migrants. Those included the idea that flows could not be managed, that migrants and refugees amounted to a net economic loss to their host countries, or that diversity undermined the social fabric of societies. There was overwhelming evidence that that was rarely the case but, the presenters noted, it was also true that migration governance needed to be strengthened in order to prevent large flows that could not be managed easily, to support the integration of migrants, to better share the responsibility for migrants and refugees among countries, and to help countries with funding and other forms of support as needed. Articulating those issues was precisely the point of the two global compacts on migrants and refugees that were being discussed at the United Nations.

The presenters also stressed that while all policies for refugees and migrants had to be based on carefully vetted evidence, in the final analysis, the bedrock that should inform the debate at all levels was that of the international human rights framework. All people, citizens and non-citizens, enjoyed the same inalienable rights. That was particularly true for refugees for whom the right to non-refusal and other rights were clearly enshrined in the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol. The panel's other key messages were that the two global compacts should provide for an effective review process so signatories would be compelled to maintain their commitments, and that parliaments were going to play a key role in the implementation of the global compacts by helping design effective policies for migrants and refugees and by helping mediate the public debate.

In keeping with the IPU's practice, gender and youth perspectives were invited so as to inform the General Debate that was to follow.

Ms. Margaret Mensah-Williams (Namibia), President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, underscored that at the national level parliamentarians needed to ensure that laws and migration policies systematically integrated a gender dimension, including in terms of identifying the multiple forms of discrimination and protecting migrant women and girls. At the regional and interregional levels, it was important to share best practices on integration policies, establish holistic pre-departure and post-arrival programmes, and develop targets to accelerate the inclusion of migrants. Last but not least, women migrants and refugees could no longer be seen primarily as victims – the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development demanded that all women be empowered. For that to happen, parliamentarians had the power to create an enabling environment that would ensure that migrant and refugee women were aware of their rights and were able to claim them, to create forums for women to voice their needs and concerns, and to ensure that women of all origins – including immigrant women – were represented in political institutions.

Ms. Ruth Itamari Choque (Plurinational State of Bolivia), member of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians, stressed the centrality of a human rights approach to all policies on migration and refugee protection, and called on all parliaments to hold governments to account in making sure that the relevant agreements were implemented. Policies also needed to be evidence-based, with age-disaggregated data on migrants and refugees so as to better understand the particularities of young people. Parliaments had a key role to play in ensuring that the services needed for young migrants and refugees to succeed in new surroundings were in place, in particular in terms of quality health care, education, economic opportunities through decent jobs, and entrepreneurship programmes. The cost of such measures was far lower than the cost of an uneducated and unhealthy population that was unable to contribute to society.

## 2. Participation

Delegations from 148 Member Parliaments took part in the work of the Assembly<sup>1</sup>:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Madagascar, Malawi, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The following eight Associate Members also took part in the Assembly: the Arab Parliament, the Central American Parliament, the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), the Interparliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States (IPA CIS), the Latin American Parliament (PARLATINO), the Parliament of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC), and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE).

Other observers comprised representatives of: (i) the United Nations system: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United

<sup>1</sup> For the complete list of IPU Members, see page 25

Nations entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN Women), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the World Health Organization (WHO), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR); (ii) the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), the World Trade Organization (WTO); (iii) the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA), the African Parliamentary Union (APU), the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union (AIPU), the Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA), Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie, the Forum of Parliaments of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (FP-ICGLR), the Maghreb Consultative Council, the Pan-African Parliament, Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament (PNND), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM), the Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic-speaking countries (TURKPA), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union of Belarus and Russia, the Parliamentary Union of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation Member States (PUIC); (iv) the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria; (v) Centrist Democrat International, Socialist International; (vi) the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and the International Institute for Democracy and the Electoral Assistance (International IDEA).

Of the 1,526 delegates who attended the Assembly, 744 were members of parliament. Those parliamentarians included 59 Presiding Officers, 39 Deputy Presiding Officers and 227 women (30.5%).

### 3. Choice of an emergency item

On 25 March 2018, the President informed the Assembly that the following four requests for the inclusion of an emergency item had been proposed:

- *Repercussions of Iran's malign activities, led by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and its Quds Force, in core arenas in the Middle East, including Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and Yemen, and in the Palestinian arena*, submitted by the delegation of Israel;
- *Violence against women in the workplace, in particular in parliaments, in the wake of the #MeToo movement*, submitted by the delegation of Sweden;
- *The consequences of the US declaration on Jerusalem and the rights of the Palestinian people in Jerusalem in the light of the UN Charter and resolutions*, submitted by the delegations of Palestine, Kuwait, Bahrain and Turkey;
- *The necessity to support the Palestinian people to achieve their inalienable rights and to reject the US Administration's decision on Al-Quds (Jerusalem)*, submitted by the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The delegations of Palestine, Kuwait, Bahrain and Turkey had initially submitted individual proposals and had subsequently merged those proposals into the one mentioned above. Before the vote, the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran withdrew its proposal.

The Assembly proceeded with a roll-call vote on the three remaining items (see pages 41-43). The proposals on the consequences of the US declaration on Jerusalem and on violence against women received the required two-thirds majority of the vote. The proposal on Jerusalem, which had received a higher number of positive votes, was adopted and added to the agenda as Item 9.

### 4. Debates and decisions of the Assembly and its Standing Committees

- (a) General Debate: *Strengthening the global regime for migrants and refugees: The need for evidence-based policy solutions* (Item 3)

During the three days of deliberations, over 120 legislators from 111 Member Parliaments, including 42 Presiding Officers, as well as representatives of five partner organizations, contributed to the General Debate. The proceedings of the Debate were webcast, and many of the good practices and recommendations that emerged were reflected in the outcome document.

In addition to the opening high-level interactive debate on 25 March with the Heads of the UN agencies responsible for migration and refugee protection – IOM, OHCHR and UNHCR – on 26 March the Assembly held a special session with Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO). Dr. Tedros highlighted the fact that at least half the world's population lacked access to essential health services and that almost 100 million people were pushed into extreme poverty every year due to having to pay for health care costs from their own pockets. He invited parliamentarians to engage on those issues and ensure that universal health coverage became a political and legislative priority.

Dr. Tedros stressed the role of parliaments in creating an environment in which health could flourish, not only by providing health services but also by influencing the social, environmental and economic determinants of health. He made three concrete requests to parliamentarians: to ratify the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products as soon as possible; to create a group of friends of the WHO in their respective countries to advocate for global health issues; and to attend the World Health Assembly. He announced that at the next World Health Assembly in May 2018, the WHO would hold a technical briefing for parliamentarians on universal health coverage and global health security.

On 27 March, the Assembly held a session with Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü, Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and Ambassador Nobushige Takamizawa, President of the Fourth Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty, who provided an overview of those two key agreements and encouraged all IPU Member Parliaments to play an active role in their ratification and implementation. In introducing the two special guests, the IPU President recalled the contribution of national parliaments and of the IPU in drafting and promoting the Convention on Cluster Munitions, in pursuing the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, as well as in protecting citizens from the scourge of gun violence.

The IPU President referred to the apparent use of chemical weapons both in war zones such as Iraq and Syria, but also in the very heart of Europe – for the first time since World War II. Those were extremely troubling issues, and all parliaments should be vigilant and prevent any such violations from occurring. The use of nuclear weapons, intentionally or accidentally, remained a real danger to humankind's very existence, and parliaments had a moral duty and responsibility to work towards a nuclear weapons-free world, including through the ratification and implementation of the new Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. She called on all parliaments to take resolute action in that regard.

The General Debate was complemented by *Humans & Climate Change Stories*, a multimedia project that provided a documentary approach to the effects of climate change on people's lives and to their capacity for resilience. Moreover, the stories depicted in the exhibition put into perspective the social, economic and political forces that had an impact on environmental phenomena. A refugee tent was also placed on the ground floor of the Conference Centre to provide parliamentarians with a real sense of the conditions faced by refugees each and every day.

#### (b) Standing Committee on Peace and International Security

The Standing Committee on Peace and International Security held four sittings from 25 to 27 March 2018 with its President, Ms. L. Rojas (Mexico), in the chair. At its first sitting, the Committee examined an explanatory memorandum and a draft resolution entitled *Sustaining peace as a vehicle for achieving sustainable development*, prepared by the co-Rapporteurs, Ms. M. Vargas Bárcena (Mexico) and Mr. A. Caroni (Switzerland). It also considered 136 draft amendments submitted by 18 Member Parliaments and the Forum of Women Parliamentarians.

Thirty-seven per cent of the amendments proposed were adopted, some with sub-amendments put forward primarily by the co-Rapporteurs. At its sitting on 27 March, the Committee adopted the amended text by consensus. The delegation of China lodged a reservation on operative paragraph 18. The draft resolution, as amended by the Committee, was submitted to the plenary Assembly on the afternoon of 28 March and was adopted unanimously.

Elections to the Bureau were held during the fourth and final sitting of the Committee. Nine of the ten vacant posts were filled (see pages 22-23).

The Bureau met on 26 March to discuss the subject item of the next resolution and the work programme of the Committee. It examined the two subject items received before the deadline and decided to propose to the Committee the item submitted by the delegation of Ukraine: *Non-admissibility of using mercenaries as a means of undermining peace and violating human rights*. The proposal was adopted by the Committee and subsequently by the Assembly.

The Committee agreed to hold at the 139<sup>th</sup> Assembly an expert hearing on that subject item and panel discussions, including on the subject item that had not been selected: *Combatting sexual violence in UN Peacekeeping operations and beyond*.

#### (c) Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade

The Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade held its sittings on 25, 26 and 27 March 2018 with its Vice-President, Mr. A. Cissé (Mali), in the chair. The Standing Committee had before it an explanatory memorandum and draft resolution, entitled *Engaging the private sector in*

*implementing the SDGs, especially on renewable energy*, jointly prepared by the co-Rapporteurs, Mr. A. Gryffroy (Belgium) and Mr. Duong Quoc Anh (Viet Nam). It also had before it 115 amendments to the draft resolution submitted by 18 Member Parliaments, as well as amendments from the Forum of Women Parliamentarians.

The Committee first heard a presentation of the draft resolution by the co-Rapporteurs, which was followed by a debate. A total of 25 speakers took the floor. The Standing Committee then proceeded to consider the proposed amendments in two plenary sittings.

At its final sitting on 27 March, the Standing Committee adopted the consolidated draft unanimously. The Committee agreed that Mr. Gryffroy would present the draft resolution to the Assembly.

On behalf of the Committee, Mr. Gryffroy presented the draft resolution to the Assembly at its plenary sitting in the afternoon of 28 March. The Assembly adopted it unanimously.

At its final sitting and at the proposal of the Bureau, the Standing Committee adopted its next subject item, *The role of fair and free trade and investment in achieving the SDGs, especially regarding economic equality, sustainable infrastructure, industrialization and innovation*. The Committee approved the nomination of Ms. S. Raskovic Ivic (Serbia) and Mr. J. Wilson (Australia) as co-Rapporteurs. Subsequently, the Assembly nominated Mr. H. Iddrisu (Ghana) as a third co-Rapporteur.

In terms of the work plan for the 139<sup>th</sup> Assembly, the Committee approved the proposal of the Bureau to organize a debate on the subject item, as well as a panel to discuss ways to implement the resolution on *Engaging the private sector in implementing the SDGs, especially on renewable energy*. The Committee also agreed that a short segment should be organized to prepare for the Parliamentary Meeting at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Poland in December 2018.

The Committee held elections to its Bureau (see pages 22-23).

(d) Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights

The Committee held sittings on 26 and 27 March with its President, Ms. B. Tshireletso (Botswana), in the chair. At its first sitting, the Committee held a preparatory debate on the theme of the next resolution: *Strengthening inter-parliamentary cooperation on migration and migration governance in view of the adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration*. The Committee approved the appointment of three Rapporteurs for the next resolution, Mr. J. Echániz (Spain), Ms. K. Sosa (El Salvador) and Mr. A. Touizi (Morocco).

The debate was introduced by the two co-Facilitators of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, Ambassador J. Lauber (Switzerland) and Ambassador J. Gómez Camacho (Mexico), followed by the three Rapporteurs. Delegates raised a number of issues, including the need to address the root causes of migration, development of comprehensive legislation that protected the rights of migrants, and the imperative to combat discrimination and xenophobia in the context of migration. The President invited all Members to assist the Rapporteurs in drafting the resolution by providing written contributions by the deadline of 20 April 2018.

At its second sitting, the Committee gave further consideration to the proposal for a debate on *The role of parliaments in ending discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, and ensuring respect for the human rights of LGBTI persons*. The Committee worked in an atmosphere of mutual respect, where all delegates wishing to do so were able to give their views on the proposal and listen to the views of others. The proposal was presented by Belgium, after which 28 delegates from all geopolitical groups took the floor to express their position. In order to avoid any possible doubt about the decision, the Committee held a roll-call vote and voted in favour of holding that debate at the next Assembly.

The Committee elected new members to its Bureau (see pages 22-23). It elected a new President but reserved the decision on the Vice-President until the 139<sup>th</sup> Assembly.

(e) Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs

The Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs met on 25 and 27 March 2018. Both sittings focused on the SDGs. The first sitting took stock of parliamentary action on the SDGs, and the second helped prepare parliamentarians for the debate that would be held at the forthcoming High-level Political Forum (HLPF), on the environmental pillar of the SDGs. Close to 60 parliaments were represented at the sittings, with over 20 statements made.



Mr. M. Mijatovic, (Serbia), Ms. C.L. Crexell (Argentina), and Mr. E. Saravanapavan (Sri Lanka) presented their work in parliament on SDGs implementation, outlining the structure, and providing examples of success. Ms. N. Isler, Director of the SDGs Lab in Geneva, provided an overview of the Lab's work in assisting with policy coherence across the SDGs.

At the second sitting, Mr. A. Sinmaleza (Ecuador) and Ms. H. Haukeland Liadal (Norway) described their parliamentary work in reducing energy consumption and building more sustainable societies. Mr. M. Wackernagel, Founder and CEO of the Global Footprint Network, and Mr. S. Stone of the United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment), explained the complementary work they were doing to encourage education on the alarming environmental situation worldwide and how much still needed to be done to reduce consumption and global warming.

(f) Debate on the emergency item

*The consequences of the US declaration on Jerusalem and the rights of the Palestinian people in Jerusalem in the light of the UN Charter and resolutions (Item 9)*

The debate was held in the morning of Monday, 26 March 2018 with Ms. E. Thalen Finne, Deputy Speaker of the Riksdagen (Sweden), in the Chair. Fourteen speakers took the floor, namely from the delegations of: Bahrain, Bangladesh, Cuba, France, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Morocco, Palestine, Qatar, Switzerland and the United Arab Emirates. Jordan and Israel exercised their rights of reply.

The majority of delegates condemned the US Administration's unilateral recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and its decision to move its embassy there, stating that such a move would seriously undermine security in the region and beyond. Delegates also expressed strong support for a two-State solution.

Many delegates also underscored the importance of the proposal on violence against women.

The Assembly then referred the emergency item to a drafting committee made up of representatives of Belgium, Chad, Indonesia, Mexico, Morocco, Palestine, Uruguay and Zambia.

(g) Adoption of the resolution on the emergency item

In the afternoon of 27 March 2018, the plenary sitting of the Assembly adopted the resolution by consensus (see page 44). Many delegations, while expressing their support for a two-State solution, had concerns about some of the language and elements of the substance of the resolution. The following delegations expressed reservations on specific operative paragraphs: Finland, Italy and San Marino (para. 2); France (paras 2 and 5); and Switzerland (paras 2, 4 and 5). France also expressed reservations on preambular paragraph 5. Furthermore, the delegations of Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Ecuador, Estonia, Fiji, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Malta, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Serbia, Seychelles, Sweden, Thailand, United Kingdom and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) expressed reservations on the resolution as a whole.

## 5. Concluding sitting of the Assembly

At the concluding sitting on 28 March, the IPU President presented the outcome document of the General Debate, the Declaration on *Strengthening the global regime for migrants and refugees: The need for evidence-based policy solutions*. The Declaration, building on the views expressed during the deliberations and through a survey for parliamentarians, was intended to send a clear message to the world and to the United Nations that parliamentarians were fully committed to helping manage the flows of migrants and refugees in a responsible way. That meant looking at the facts of the matter, listening carefully to all stakeholders, including migrants and refugees, and helping devise solutions that worked. The Declaration made it clear that countries needed to go beyond ad hoc, unilateral responses and work together through a more coordinated international system.

Quoting from the Declaration itself, the President highlighted that, as parliamentarians, *"We commit to stimulating a debate on migrants and refugees that builds on people's strengths, their dreams and aspirations, regardless of their differences. Where there are walls, we will work to build bridges; where there is fear, we will seek to restore hope"*. The Declaration (full text on pages 27-31) would be shared with all national parliaments for follow-up action, as well as with the UN negotiators, as a formal parliamentary contribution to the ongoing consultations leading up to the Global Compacts on migration and on refugee protection.

Several delegations – including Angola, Canada, Chile, Ghana, Ecuador, Sudan and Uganda – took the floor to reinforce the key messages of the Declaration and pledge their commitment to work hard in pursuit of the key objectives laid out in the outcome document. The Assembly endorsed the Declaration.

The resolution submitted by the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security, *Sustaining peace as a vehicle for achieving sustainable development*, as well as the resolution submitted by the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade, *Engaging the private sector in implementing the SDGs, especially on renewable energy*, were both adopted unanimously. The Assembly also approved the subject items and rapporteurs for those two Standing Committees for the following one-year cycle (see page 23).

The Assembly approved the proposed amendments to the IPU Statutes and Rules aimed at enhancing youth participation at IPU Assemblies.

The Assembly took note of the Reports of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights and the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs. Despite the decision adopted by the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights regarding its agenda for the next Assembly, several delegations took the floor to express their objection to the inclusion in the Committee agenda of a panel discussion to examine the role of parliaments in ending discrimination based on sexual orientation. In light of the late hour and the absence of a quorum required for a formal decision, it was decided to adjourn the meeting and to re-examine the issue on the occasion of the 139<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly.

At the conclusion of the Assembly, representatives of the Geopolitical Groups took the floor to commend the new IPU President for her leadership and to welcome the substantive outcomes of the Assembly. The IPU President summed up the results of the Assembly, thanked all participants for their active engagement and declared the 138<sup>th</sup> Assembly closed.

## 202<sup>nd</sup> session of the Governing Council

### 1. Membership of the IPU

There were no new requests for membership or observer status. However, in the IPU's bid to achieve universal membership, the Council endorsed modalities aimed at retaining the membership per se of defaulting Members while suspending their rights of participation in statutory meetings, voting rights and eligibility for IPU office. It requested that the Secretariat make the appropriate proposals to amend the IPU Statutes and Rules in order to reflect those changes.

At its sitting on 28 March, the Council was apprised of the situation of certain parliaments and endorsed the relevant recommendations formulated by the Executive Committee with regard to each of them. The Council decided to encourage all sides to dialogue in Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Guinea-Bissau and reiterated the IPU's offer of its good offices to mediate those crises. Regarding Cambodia, the Council noted the shrinking political space and urged the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians to pursue the cases before it involving Cambodian opposition MPs. It welcomed recent communications from Eritrea and decided to keep monitoring the situation in Libya, South Sudan, Thailand and Turkey. It endorsed the recommendations of a recently conducted mission to the Maldives.

The Council encouraged the Working Group on Syria to pursue its mandate and reiterated its call to conduct a political and human rights mission to Venezuela given the dire situation in that country. Regarding Yemen, it endorsed the decision by the Executive Committee to admit a single Yemeni delegation comprising the parliamentary factions based in Sana'a and Aden to the 138<sup>th</sup> Assembly on the understanding that they would work together and speak with one voice.

### 2. Financial results for 2017

The Governing Council considered the Financial Report and Audited Financial Statements for 2017. The Financial Statements had been prepared in full compliance with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) and the accounts of the IPU and the closed Pension Fund were consolidated into a single set of financial statements.

The financial results for 2017 were introduced by Mr. R. del Picchia (France), Chair of the Sub-Committee on Finance, who reported that the External Auditor had once more expressed to him that the financial statements were of high quality and the collaboration with the IPU finance team had been excellent. During the year under review, the net assets had increased by CHF 559,617 which had resulted from a combination of several positive factors. The performance of IPU investments had achieved a very good return, the addition of new Members had increased revenues above their originally budgeted amount, and tight budget control had been exercised on expenditures. Savings had been made on the second Assembly, which had taken place in St. Petersburg, where the Parliament of the Russian Federation had provided additional support to cover more costs than usual. In addition, voluntary contributions and related expenditure had remained stable. The Chair of the Sub-Committee also drew attention to the fact that the collection of assessed contributions from Members was lower than in previous years and asked the geopolitical groups to draw Members' attention to their responsibility to pay their dues on time.

The Internal Auditor's report was presented by Mr. K. Örnfjäder (Sweden). He conveyed his opinion that the accounts gave a true and fair reflection of the financial situation of the IPU at 31 December 2017 and complied with all current standards and rules. The External Auditor had expressed no reservations on the Financial Statements, noting that the quality of the financial statements was high and that all his previous recommendations had been fully implemented. One new recommendation relating to an evolution in interpretation of the IPSAS accounting for voluntary contributions will be implemented from 2018 onwards. The overall result for the year 2017 was to increase the reserves of the IPU thanks to higher income from investments and new Members, and savings made in budgeted expenditures. The Internal Auditor urged Members to be prompt in payment of any arrears of assessed contributions and encouraged all parliaments to pursue any opportunities for voluntary funding in support of IPU activities.

There were comments and questions from the floor relating to arrears of contributions, assistance to Members in financial difficulty and funding for counter-terrorism work. The Secretary General noted the need to reverse the trend of increasing arrears and underlined the efforts of the IPU to build capacity of parliaments while providing new opportunities for potential Members to participate in IPU activities through the Parliamentary Solidarity Fund. Several countries had expressed interest in funding the IPU's counter-terrorism programme and the United Arab Emirates had put forward seed funding while a detailed plan and budget was being finalized.

The Governing Council approved the Secretary General's financial administration of the IPU and the financial results for 2017.

### **3. Financial situation**

The Governing Council received a written overview of the IPU's financial situation at 31 January 2018 which noted that the overall level of expenditure was on track at this early stage of the year. Arrears in assessed contributions amounted to CHF 619,000, with 37 Members having overdue accounts. Assessed contributions of CHF 5.9 million had already been paid for 2017, being 56 per cent of the total amount due. The Secretary General gave an oral report to the Governing Council on the mobilization of voluntary funding towards implementation of the IPU Strategy for 2017-2021.

### **4. Cooperation with the United Nations system**

The Council took note of the usual checklist of activities conducted in cooperation with the United Nations since the previous Assembly held in October 2017 (see complete list on pages 49-52).

It took note of the draft resolution on "Interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union", which would likely be adopted by the UN General Assembly on 22 May 2018. Members were encouraged to lobby their foreign ministries to sponsor the resolution and to come out in large numbers in a display of support in New York.

The Secretary General informed the Council about a memorandum of understanding (MoU) that had been signed with UNDP in November 2017 and a planned MoU to be concluded with UN Environment in 2018. He was also in discussions with the WHO on a new MoU.

The Council noted in particular that a first meeting of the High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG) had been held in Geneva on 5 and 6 February in cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). While encouraging the Group to pursue its work, it recommended that its composition be reviewed as part of its Terms of Reference by the Executive Committee and resubmitted for endorsement at the next session.

## 5. Implementation of the IPU Strategy for 2017-2021

The Council took note of a report on recent activities in implementation of the Strategy. In particular, it took note of a detailed project report on the Centre for Innovation in Parliament, whose establishment the Council had approved at its 200<sup>th</sup> session in Dhaka in April 2017. The report would be used for resource mobilization purposes.

## 6. Recent specialized meetings

The Governing Council took note of the results of the Parliamentary Meeting on the occasion of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (<http://archive.ipu.org/splz-e/cop23.htm>); the International Conference on *Promoting better regional cooperation towards smart and humane migration across the Mediterranean* (<http://archive.ipu.org/splz-e/valletta17.htm>); the Fourth Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians (<http://archive.ipu.org/splz-e/youngmp17.htm>); the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO (<http://archive.ipu.org/splz-e/trade17.htm>); the 2018 Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations (<https://www.ipu.org/event/annual-parliamentary-hearing-united-nations>); and the Parliamentary Meeting on the occasion of the 62<sup>nd</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women (<https://www.ipu.org/event/parliamentary-meeting-62nd-session-commission-status-women-parliaments-deliver-rural-women-and-girls>).

## 7. Reports of plenary bodies and specialized committees

At its sitting on 28 March, the Governing Council took note of the reports on the activities of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians (see page 14); the Committee on Middle East Questions (see page 15); the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law (see page 16); the Gender Partnership Group (see page 16); the Advisory Group on Health (see page 17); the Group of Facilitators for Cyprus (see page 17) and the Forum of Young Parliamentarians of the IPU (see page 17).

The Council also heard the report of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians and approved nine decisions submitted by the latter (see pages 58-79), noting the reservations expressed by the delegations of Mongolia, Niger and Turkey concerning the cases in their respective countries.

## 8. Future inter-parliamentary meetings

The Council was informed that visa guarantees had been provided by the Argentinian authorities for all delegates attending the 140<sup>th</sup> Assembly in Buenos Aires barring those individuals who were on UN Security Council sanctions lists or on an Interpol arrest warrant list. It approved proposals for a number of specialized meetings (see pages 55-56 for the full list of future meetings).

## 9. Amendments to the Statutes and Rules

The Governing Council adopted amendments to the IPU Statutes and Rules aimed at enhancing youth participation at the IPU.

# 278<sup>th</sup> session of the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee held its 278<sup>th</sup> session in Geneva on 22, 23 and 27 March 2018. The IPU President chaired the meetings. The following members took part in the session: Ms. F. Benbadis (Algeria); Ms. M.I. Oliveira Valente (Angola); Mr. A. Lins (Brazil) on 22 and 23 March; Mr. D. McGuinty (Canada); Ms. Y. Ferrer Gómez (Cuba); Mr. A.S. Abdel Aal (Egypt); Mr. R. del Picchia (France); Mr. K. Jalali (Islamic Republic of Iran); Mr. K. Tanaka and Ms. K. Otsuji replacing Mr. S. Suzuki (Japan) on 22, 23 and 27 March respectively; Mr. K. Lusaka (Kenya); Ms. A. Habibou (Niger); Ms. H. Haukeland Liadal (Norway); Mr. K. Kosachev (Russian Federation); Ms. M. Kiener-Nellen (Switzerland); Mr. Vu Hai Ha replacing Mr. Nguyen Van Giau (Viet Nam); and Ms. M. Mensah-Williams (Namibia) in her capacity as President of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians; Ms. R. Itamari Choque (Bolivia [Plurinational State of]) attended the sitting on 27 March on behalf of Ms. M. Osoru (Uganda), President of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians, who was absent.

The Executive Committee examined the audit of the President's vision for the IPU at its first and third sittings and proposed that priorities be set for the current year and 2019 with the costing of each new proposal. At its final sitting on 27 March, it endorsed a number of activities proposed by the President.

It examined the three sets of proposed amendments: (i) one set on enhancing youth participation at the IPU; (ii) another set proposed by the Russian Federation on defining the role of the IPU President; and (iii) a third set submitted by the IPU President. It decided unanimously to recommend that the Governing Council adopt the first set of amendments on youth participation.

After a lengthy debate about the other two sets of proposals, and in the absence of a consensus, the Vice-President of the Executive Committee and the President decided to withdraw their proposals so as to allow more time for consultations among the geopolitical groups and wider membership. It was decided that the issue of amendments would remain on the agenda of the Executive Committee, which would examine them at an extraordinary session in time to submit a reformulated package of amendments to the next Assembly in October 2018. Meanwhile, the Vice-President of the Executive Committee, Mr. K. Kosachev, was tasked with carrying out the necessary consultations.

The Executive Committee heard the report of Mr. R. del Picchia, Chair of the Sub-Committee on Finance. The Sub-Committee on Finance had met on 21 March 2018 to prepare and facilitate the Executive Committee's consideration of financial and budgetary matters. It had carefully examined all the financial documents, including the financial results, the External Auditor's report, the current financial situation and voluntary funding update. It had been pleased to note that the IPU's accounts were again fully IPSAS-compliant.

Net assets had increased by CHF 559,617, with the operational surplus being explained by a combination of factors including a good return on investments, tight budget control and savings made on the second Assembly in St. Petersburg, where the Parliament of the Russian Federation had absorbed a significant portion of the costs. The Chair of the Sub-Committee drew attention to the fact that the arrears of assessed contributions from Members were higher than in previous years and asked the geopolitical groups to draw Members' attention to their responsibility to pay their dues.

The Sub-Committee had noted the stability of voluntary contributions. It looked forward to its preparations for the 2019 budget. The Sub-Committee recommended the 2017 financial statements and the external audit report to the Executive Committee for its approval.

The Executive Committee thanked the Sub-Committee and the Secretariat for the work performed and recommended that the Governing Council should approve the financial administration of the IPU and the financial results for 2017.

The Executive Committee examined the draft UN General Assembly resolution on *Interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union* and agreed for the process to take its course, led by the country holding the IPU presidency, Mexico. Members were invited to lobby their foreign ministers to sponsor the resolution and to come out in full force in New York on 22 May 2018, when the resolution was likely to be adopted.

The Executive Committee was informed of staff developments. Ms. Marie-Graziella Nguini, a Cameroonian national, was recruited as an Administrative Assistant at the G5 level for the Gender Partnership Programme to replace Ms. Valeria Sistik, who had retired in December 2017.

The Secretary General announced that Mr. Thomas Fitzsimons, who holds dual British and French nationality, had been recruited as the new Communications Director at the P5 level. The latter introduced himself to the Executive Committee and briefed the members on his vision for a new and inclusive communications strategy that would be devised through broad consultations with the IPU membership. Already at the current Assembly, a satisfaction survey with a communications component was being circulated to Members.

The Secretary General presented the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) revision of the post-adjustment allocation for Geneva-based staff of the professional and higher categories to the members of the Executive Committee and the challenges it implied for the IPU (EX/278/10-P.1). The Executive Committee members unanimously expressed that the post-adjustment amount in Geneva should be maintained at its current (January 2018) equivalent level so that salaries of IPU staff were not reduced. The reduction of the post-adjustment in Geneva proposed in that ICSC revision should therefore not be applied by the IPU.

The Executive Committee heard a report of the Vice-Chairperson of the High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG) on its first meeting, held on 5 and 6 February 2018. The Group had discussed its Terms of Reference, including its composition, which, upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee, had been expanded in the interest of inclusiveness and geopolitical and gender balance. The Executive Committee had also recommended that a ceiling of 15 members be set and had asked the Secretariat to prepare a revised budget proposal. It recommended that the Council adopt the HLAG's report and Terms of Reference.

The Executive Committee examined the situation of certain parliaments, and made specific recommendations to the Governing Council on the parliaments of Burundi, Cambodia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Guinea-Bissau, Libya, Maldives, South Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Turkey, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and Yemen. It encouraged the promotion of dialogue between all sides and offered its good offices to the parliaments of Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Guinea Bissau. It welcomed recent offers of cooperation by the Permanent Mission of Eritrea in Geneva and took note of the recommendations of the recent mission conducted to the Maldives.

The Committee heard from the President of the Working Group on Syria and decided to allow it to pursue its mandate in spite of difficult conditions in Syria. The Executive Committee expressed concern over the dire political and socioeconomic situation in Venezuela and reiterated its call to conduct a political and human rights mission to Caracas. Efforts would be spearheaded by the IPU President and the Executive Committee member from Cuba.

It decided to unfreeze the participation of Yemen at the current Assembly, having ascertained that the two parliamentary factions based in Sana'a and Aden had indicated their willingness to participate as a single delegation and speak with one voice.

At its sitting on 27 March, the Executive Committee heard from the President of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians with a view to gaining a better understanding of the human rights situation in the parliaments under scrutiny. It undertook to build synergies between both Committees.

In a bid to achieve universal membership, it examined a paper on retaining the membership of parliaments in arrears for a variety of reasons while effectively suspending their rights in the IPU. Such parliaments would be moved to a new category of "non-participating Members", who would no longer be able to participate in statutory meetings, vote or hold an IPU office. It recommended that the Council approve the modalities.

The Executive Committee was informed that the hosting agreement had been formally signed with Argentina at the current session and that the Argentinian authorities had given full visa assurances for all IPU delegates except for individuals on UN Security Council sanctions list or for whom Interpol had issued warrants.

In connection with the implementation of the IPU Strategy for 2017-2021, the Executive Committee examined a number of matters that were subsequently referred to the Governing Council, in particular a detailed project proposal for a Centre for Innovation in Parliaments, which had been requested previously by the Committee, and which was intended for potential donors.

The Executive Committee decided to revert to the terms of reference of the high-level panel on parliamentary diplomacy at its next session in October 2018. The Secretary General reported that he had received a number of communications from Palestine and other Members on Jerusalem. In light of the resolution on the emergency item, the IPU position on the matter was now clear.

## Forum of Women Parliamentarians

The 27<sup>th</sup> session of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians was held on 24 and 27 March 2018. It brought together 116 participants, including 90 delegates from 63 countries, among whom there were 76 women and 14 men. Ms. M. Mensah-Williams (Namibia), President of the Bureau, chaired the proceedings. The IPU President, Ms. G. Cuevas Barron, welcomed the participants and made an opening statement. Later in the day, Mr. M. Chungong, Secretary General of the IPU, and H.E. Ms. R. McCarney, Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations, both members of the leadership network "International Gender Champions", introduced the network to participants.

As a contribution to the Assembly, participants considered, from a gender parity point of view, the draft resolutions before the 138<sup>th</sup> Assembly: *Sustaining peace as a vehicle for sustainable development* and *Engaging the private sector in implementing the SDGs, especially on renewable energy*. Two groups were formed to conduct the discussions. The Forum subsequently proposed amendments, which were incorporated by the Standing Committees in the two draft resolutions.

Participants then discussed the root causes of women's underrepresentation and ways to redress it. They agreed that education and socialization must prepare girls for public and political life. Education was also a key factor in changing cultural and social norms that worked against women's accession to decision-making positions. Participants cited real political will at all levels, the support of political parties, measures to encourage women to participate in politics and access by women to electoral campaign financing as ways of achieving progress and attaining equality in politics. Gender-based violence and negative stereotypes regarding women in politics were singled out as glaring obstacles requiring urgent action today. Internal reforms and plans for combating sexist behaviour, sexual harassment and sexist violence in parliament and in political parties were also needed. Measures had to be taken to end the cyberviolence and hate speech against women, which were frequently encountered in social media.

At its sitting on 27 March, the Forum elected representatives to fill half of the seats for regional representatives and to replace a representative who had left the Bureau. The updated list of members of the Bureau can be found on page 21. Based on a proposal by the Bureau, the Forum also elected Ms. U. Karlsson (Sweden) to fill the post of President, Ms. S. Wakarura Kihika (Kenya) to the post of First Vice-President and Ms. A. Al-Basti (United Arab Emirates) to the post of Second Vice-President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians.

## Subsidiary bodies of the Governing Council

### 1. Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians

Mr. A.A. Alaradi (Bahrain), President; Ms. D. Solórzano (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), Vice-President; Ms. F. Koofi (Afghanistan); Mr. F. Pinedo (Argentina); Mr. A.B.M.F.K. Chowdhury (Bangladesh); Mr. N. Bako-Arifari (Benin); Ms. L. Dumont (France); Ms. A. Jerkov (Serbia) and Mr. A. Caroni (Switzerland) took part in the Committee's 156<sup>th</sup> session, which was held from 23 to 27 March 2018. Ms. J. Mukoda-Zabwe (Uganda) was unable to attend.

The Committee submitted nine decisions to the Governing Council for adoption concerning the following countries: Cambodia, Maldives, Mongolia, Niger, Philippines, Turkey, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and Zambia.

During the session, the Committee held 12 hearings and informal meetings with delegations and complainants to reinforce its understanding of the cases before it and convey its concerns. At that session, the Committee had on its agenda 18 cases concerning the situation of 248 members of parliament in 12 countries. Of the cases examined, 44 per cent were from Asia, 25 per cent from the Americas; 23 per cent from Europe; 2 per cent from the Middle East and North Africa and 6 per cent from Africa. Ninety-eight per cent of the cases concerned opposition members of parliament and 22 per cent concerned women. Freedom of expression being a matter of direct or indirect concern in most cases, the violations most frequently considered by the Committee during the session were undue suspension and loss of parliamentary mandate, lack of fair trial, violation of freedom of assembly and torture.

### 2. Committee on Middle East Questions

The Committee held two sittings, on 24 and 26 March 2018. Ms. B. Grouwels (Belgium), Ms. S. Atallahjan (Canada), Ms. D. Pascal Allende (Chile), Ms. R.A. Elwani (Egypt), Mr. A.N.M. Al-Ahmad (Palestine), Mr. F. Müri (Switzerland) and Mr. M. Al Mehrzi (United Arab Emirates) attended both sittings. Mr. R. Munawar (Indonesia) attended the first sitting on 24 March while Mr. H. Julien-Lafférière (France) and Mr. N. Shai (Israel) attended the second sitting on 26 March.

The Committee unanimously elected Ms. S. Atallahjan as its new President for a one year-term ending in March 2019.

It examined the current situation in the region and received a brief update by the Yemeni delegation of the current situation in the country. The members of the Committee all welcomed the efforts of Yemen to participate in the 138<sup>th</sup> Assembly as a unified delegation and praised the IPU for offering delegations a platform for dialogue.

The Committee reaffirmed its commitment to its activities, including the Science for Peace Schools, despite the current tensions in the region. All the members also reiterated their commitment to work together on collaborative projects that fostered peace. They agreed to move forward with the activities of the Committee and to start planning the Third Roundtable on Water and the first Science for Peace School.

### **3. Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law**

The Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL) met on Monday, 26 March. Representatives of the ICRC, UNHCR and IOM participated.

The Committee discussed follow-up of the emergency item resolution, *Ending the grave human crisis, persecution and violent attacks on the Rohingya as a threat to international peace and security and ensuring their unconditional and safe return to their homeland in Myanmar*, adopted at the previous Assembly. Close to one million Rohingya had found refuge in Bangladesh, which had made considerable efforts, but more support was required to cater to the needs of both refugees and the host community.

Several protection issues had been raised, including securing identification of refugees and birth registration, addressing sexual and gender-based violence and providing education. Additionally, returns must only take place on a voluntary basis and in the absence of any security risks.

The Committee expressed concern that the situation did not seem to be improving. Attention should be devoted to addressing the root causes of the crisis, and ensuring the access of humanitarian aid to populations in Myanmar. It would share its concerns with the Myanmar Parliament, offer the IPU's support, and carry out a fact-finding mission to Bangladesh and Myanmar, if possible before the next IPU Assembly.

It also discussed the humanitarian situation in Yemen, where over 80 per cent of the population was in dire need of assistance. The Committee called on Member Parliaments to recommit to the action envisaged in the emergency item resolution on *Urgent international action to save millions of people from famine and drought in parts of Africa and Yemen* adopted in Dhaka, at the 136<sup>th</sup> Assembly.

The Committee encouraged Member Parliaments to secure the translation of the joint ICRC-IPU publication *International Humanitarian Law: Handbook for Parliamentarians No. 25* into national languages. It also welcomed the production of the IPU-UNHCR *Handbook for Parliamentarians: A Guide to International Refugee Protection and Building State Asylum Systems*.

Concerning the Global Compact on Refugees, the Committee noted that the current draft did not include any reference to parliament as a key stakeholder and called on IPU Member Parliaments to support the inclusion of such a reference through their respective representatives in the negotiations.

### **4. Gender Partnership Group**

The Gender Partnership Group, composed of Ms. H. Haukeland Liadal (Norway), Mr. K. Kosachev (Russian Federation), Mr. K.M. Lusaka (Kenya) and Ms. M. Mensah-Williams (Namibia), met on 27 March 2018. Ms. Mensah-Williams chaired the meeting. The Group reviewed figures regarding the composition of delegations present at the 138<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly. As at 27 March 2018, 30.5 per cent of the delegates at the Assembly were women (see page 53). The Group expressed its wish to have that figure continuously increase and agreed to discuss at its upcoming meetings ways to break what seemed to be a glass ceiling of 30 per cent female participation.

Of the 148 delegations present, 142 were composed of at least two delegates of which 18 were composed exclusively of men (12.7%) and three were composed only of women. The 21 single-sex delegations were from the parliaments of the following States: Andorra, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Guinea, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Maldives, Malta, Mauritania, Micronesia (Federated States of), Morocco, Panama, Peru, Republic of Moldova, Somalia and Yemen. In addition, there were six single-member delegations attending the Assembly – three were made up of a male delegate and three of a female delegate. Group members agreed to bring those figures back to their geopolitical groups for discussion and action.



The Group welcomed the new IPU study entitled *Women in parliament in 2017: The year in review*. They stressed the importance of access to such data for awareness-raising purposes and for policy-making. As at March 2018, four parliamentary chambers were all-male: the single houses of Micronesia, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and the lower house of Yemen. The Group welcomed the appointment of four women to the Advisory Council of Qatar, which was the last parliament in the Arab world to include women. The Group decided to invite representatives of the four parliaments with no women to a discussion at its next session. They also agreed, where possible, to carry out visits to those parliaments to engage in a dialogue and offer the IPU's assistance. It also took note of the IPU's work on violence against women in parliament.

## 5. Advisory Group on Health

The Advisory Group on Health met on 24 March, with seven out of ten members were present. Representatives of the World Health Organization (WHO), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH) and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria also attended and contributed to the discussions. The Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) made presentations on the importance of nutrition for health. The Advisory Group proposed that a side event on health promotion with a focus on nutrition be organized at the next Assembly.

The Advisory Group heard the report on the field visit it had carried out in Rwanda from 24 to 27 January 2018. The Group had been impressed by the country's progress on different health indicators, including on sexual and reproductive health. It praised the strong commitment to that issue at all levels, from government and parliament, to community health workers and leaders. The Group urged Rwanda to share its experience with other parliaments in Africa and more broadly, so as to inspire stronger parliamentary engagement on health.

The Advisory Group examined its rules and practices with a view to ensuring gender equality in its membership. It recommended that all IPU bodies pay careful attention to ensuring gender equality in their membership and in their leadership positions. The rule of the IPU Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians that defined gender parity in that Committee's membership was found to be a good model for the future composition of the Advisory Group. The principle of rotation between male and female chairpersons and vice-chairpersons in different IPU bodies was also an option to be considered. In addition to gender, geographical balance, competence and relevant experience were equally important criteria for strong IPU bodies. The Advisory Group therefore urged all the IPU Members to approach the selection of IPU office-holders in a methodical and careful way.

## 6. Group of Facilitators for Cyprus

The Group of Facilitators for Cyprus met on 24 March 2018. The meeting was attended by two Facilitators, Mr. P. Van Den Driessche (Belgium) and Mr. J. De Matos Rosa (Portugal) and four members of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Cyprus.

The members expressed the wish to resume the negotiations under the auspices of the United Nations in order to reach a comprehensive solution to the Cyprus problem, in accordance with international law, relevant United Nations resolutions and the values and principles of the European Union. The members expressed strong commitment to the achievement of a solution through peaceful dialogue, to the benefit of all Cypriots, especially the generations to come.

## 7. Forum of Young Parliamentarians of the IPU

The Forum of Young Parliamentarians met on Sunday, 25 March with 72 young parliamentarians in attendance, 36 per cent of who were women. In the absence of the President of the Board of the Forum, the Forum was chaired by Ms. R.B. Itamari Choque (Plurinational State of Bolivia) in her capacity as the youngest member of the Board present at the 138<sup>th</sup> Assembly.

The participants took stock of national efforts to enhance youth participation and highlighted the lowering of the age requirement to run for office, the adoption and implementation of youth electoral quotas and the enhancement of youth participation at the local and provincial levels as strategies conducive to the election of more young parliamentarians. Welcoming the approval by the Executive Committee of the proposed amendments to the IPU Statutes and Rules to enhance youth participation at the IPU, the young MPs called on the IPU to take the lead in identifying an internationally recognized target for youth participation in parliament. A special segment of the Forum focused on the need to review and reform policies, where necessary, to guarantee the enjoyment of human rights and eliminate stigma and discrimination faced by young people living with HIV/AIDS.

The Board also met on Sunday, 25 March. It identified the way forward regarding an IPU campaign for youth empowerment that had been recommended by the Fourth Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians in November 2017. The Board members agreed to hold a consultation on a target for youth representation in parliament, to work on technology-based means to better promote the work of the young MPs at the IPU and to better link it up with youth organizations at the national level and to take stock of the implementation of the IPU resolution entitled *Youth participation in the democratic process* (Bangkok, 2010). The Board appointed Mr. O. Altatabaee (Kuwait) to prepare a youth overview report to be submitted by 20 April 2018 to the co-Rapporteurs of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights.

## 8. High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism

The High Level Advisory Group did not meet at the 138<sup>th</sup> Assembly. However, its Vice-Chairperson, Ms. M. Kiener-Nellen (Switzerland), presented the report of the Group's first meeting, held on 5 and 6 February 2018 at IPU Headquarters in Geneva, to the Executive Committee and subsequently to the Governing Council.

Several Members expressed concern about how the Group's composition as contained in its Terms of Reference had been decided since the decision adopted by the Council at the previous Assembly. In that regard, the Council decided to send the matter back to the Executive Committee for further deliberation and review. The Members called for a transparent methodology in the selection of Group members with due consideration given to geopolitical and gender balance.

However, through a simple vote, the Council decided to allow the Group to pursue its work and report back to it at its next sitting in October 2018. To that end, it would hold its second meeting in Abu Dhabi in early May.

# Other events

## 1. Meeting of the Presidents of the Geopolitical Groups

In the morning of 24 March, the IPU President and Secretary General met with the Chairs of the Geopolitical Groups to discuss reform of the organization, the functioning of the Standing Committees and modalities to enhance the IPU's visibility.

The President referred to her vision for a more dynamic and relevant organization, and explained that further to the discussions in the Executive Committee, her proposals for amendments to the IPU Statutes and Rules would be withdrawn so as to allow more time for consultations within the Geopolitical Groups and among the Members. The Vice-President of the Executive Committee, Mr. K. Kosachev, had been entrusted with carrying out the necessary consultations and preparing a new set of proposals to be circulated well ahead of the 139<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly in October. At the March session, the governing bodies would be adopting the amendments aimed at enhancing youth participation at IPU Assemblies – in itself a huge achievement for the IPU and a powerful message to the international community about the need to engage youth in public life and in politics.

Further to consultations and based on the previous distribution of leadership positions in the IPU, the Chairs of the Geopolitical Groups agreed to the following redistribution of the Presidencies of the Standing Committees for the next two-year term (2018-2020):

- Standing Committee on Peace and International Security – Twelve Plus Group;
- Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade – Africa Group
- Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights – Asia-Pacific Group
- Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs – Group of Latin America and the Caribbean.

It was also agreed that the Eurasia Group would be assigned one of the Committee vice-presidencies, subsequently confirmed to be that of the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security. The Groups would then designate their candidates for the Standing Committee presidencies from among their most qualified Bureau members.

The Chairs of the Geopolitical Groups reviewed the modalities for the 2018 reporting exercise by Members on follow-up of IPU resolutions and other decisions. They examined good practices that could be replicated by other Members and agreed to step up their efforts to engage actively with their Group members with a view to securing the best possible response rate in advance of the 139<sup>th</sup> Assembly in October. They also welcomed the recruitment of a new Director of Communications and looked forward to working closely with him on the new IPU Communications Strategy.

## **2. Interactive session on *Ensuring Accountability and oversight for adolescent health***

The session was moderated by Ms. H. Fogstad, Executive Director, PMNCH. Mr. H. Millat, MP, President of the Advisory Group on Health, welcomed the participants. Presentations were made by Dr. V. Chandra-Mouli, scientist, WHO, and Dr. E. Mason, member of the UN Secretary-General's Independent Accountability Panel (IAP). The session was attended by over 50 delegates.

Dr. V. Chandra-Mouli noted that despite the significant progress made in reducing child and maternal mortality, adolescent health lagged behind. Nearly 1.5 million adolescents die annually, mainly from preventable causes. Particular attention should be paid to issues of domestic and sexual abuse, adolescent pregnancy, substance abuse, disability, as well as mental health in general. Dr. E. Mason stressed the urgency of removing legal, cost, and other key barriers to adolescents' access to health care. Free access should be provided to a package of essential health services. The role of parliamentarians was crucial in implementing adolescent-responsive budgeting, holding education ministries accountable for eliminating all discriminatory barriers, and ensuring that adolescents were consulted by parliaments, among other things.

The eleven parliamentarians who took the floor expressed strong support for the need to prioritize adolescent health and provided additional insights on their own country experiences. In spite of the different challenges experienced in developing and developed countries, a cross-cutting theme that emerged was the need to pay special attention to psychological and mental health. Belgium, New Zealand and Serbia raised concerns about the increasing incidence of teenage suicide. With regard to teenage pregnancy, Botswana noted the need for parliaments to investigate the underlying causes. Uganda indicated that public hearings would be convened and young people would be invited to participate. Lesotho committed to mainstreaming adolescent health as a priority across sectors.

All parliamentarians committed to implementing programmes to address adolescent health and called for support from the IPU in facilitating the oversight role of national parliaments.

## **3. Interactive session with regional and other parliamentary assemblies and organizations on the implementation of the SDGs**

The interactive session opened with introductions and overviews by participants of their respective areas of work. The IPU partner organizations shared toolkits, findings of studies and other knowledge products.

AirQuality Asia raised the issue of transboundary air pollution. It called upon parliamentarians to take legislative action to effectively protect the right to clean air by setting targets and timelines for air quality improvement with clear accountability, establishing a comprehensive air pollution monitoring network, promoting investment in clean energy and removing subsidies to thermal and fossil fuel consumption.

The International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) presented two specific digital tools that could help parliamentarians in bringing the SDGs from the global to the local level: the "Sustainable Energy Market Place" – a platform that connected project proposals and investors, and the "Project Navigator", which provided practical information, tools and guidance to assist in the development of bankable renewable energy projects.

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) stressed the importance of raising awareness about SDGs implementation and stated that political commitment and multi-ministerial approaches were fundamental for advancing that agenda.

Participants exchanged views and identified avenues for possible cooperation, taking into account national specificities and particular needs. The importance of working with the private sector was also highlighted. The session contributed to establishing clearer lines of communication and support among participants to avoid duplication and maximize outcomes.

#### **4. *Workshop on Refugee protection: Implementing the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework – What can parliaments do?***

The IPU–UNHCR Workshop on refugee protection took place on 24 March. It brought together close to 80 participants. MPs from 19 countries took the floor and exchanged views with experts from UNHCR.

The workshop focused on implementing the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) which, together with the New York Declaration on Refugees and Migrants, affirmed that humanitarian, development, political and security actors all had roles to play in the achievement of refugee protection and solutions, and paved the way for important policy shifts and new initiatives.

Experts highlighted how the Framework reflected important changes in historical approaches to refugee response: rather than responding through purely (and often underfunded) humanitarian methods and actors, the elements of the CRRF were designed to form a more systematic and sustainable response which benefited both refugees and host communities.

The workshop provided a space for countries implementing the CRRF to highlight policy shifts that most governments had made, as well as past and future participation of parliamentarians. The participants also highlighted key priorities and concerns: security of host countries; responsibility-sharing by the international community; addressing the root causes of movement of populations; limited understanding of the distinction between refugees and migrants; and the need to address climate-change-induced displacement and peace-building.

#### **5. *Workshop on Implementation of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, From the UN to parliaments: Putting the nuclear weapons ban to work***

On the afternoon of Wednesday, 28 March 2018, in cooperation with the Standing Committees on United Nations Affairs and on Peace and International Security, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize laureate, organized a workshop on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Mr. A. Avsan, President of the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs, moderated the discussion, during which the following speakers took the floor: Mr. D. Högsta, Coordinator, ICAN; Mr. L. Maresca, Senior Legal Adviser, ICRC; Mr. J. Wilson, Australian Member of Parliament; and Mr. J.-M. Collin, Associate Researcher, Group for Research and Information on Peace and Security (GRIP), ICAN France. At the start of the discussion, Mr. D. Pacheco, Vice-President of the Standing Committee on Peace and Security, read out a statement by the IPU President, in which she described the IPU's work on the prohibition of nuclear weapons and underscored the need for the involvement of parliamentarians.

The workshop provided participants with information on the Treaty and its implementation worldwide. Adopted by the United Nations on 7 July 2017, the Treaty drew on international humanitarian law and supplemented existing bans on other weapons of mass destruction. Its objective, once it entered into force, would be the criminalization, under international law, of the possession, acquisition or sale of nuclear weapons and devices. Like other treaties of a similar nature, it did not apply exclusively to its signatories. To date, 53 States had signed the Treaty, five had ratified it and it would enter into force once 50 States had done so.

The discussion also touched on various ways of convincing the nine known nuclear-weapon States and their allies to join the Treaty or to take other steps towards nuclear disarmament. One such step could be for parliamentarians to ensure that the issue remained a high priority within the IPU and that it came up for discussion again through a new resolution.

## Elections and appointments

### 1. Bureau of Women Parliamentarians

The Bureau elected Ms. U. Karlsson (Sweden) as its President for a four-year term ending in March 2022.

It elected the following regional representatives for a four-year term ending in March 2022:

*African Group:*

- Ms. S. Wakarura Kihika (Kenya)
- Ms. M. Drame (Mali)

*Arab Group:*

- Ms. I. Almlohi (Syrian Arab Republic)
- Ms. A. Al-Basti (United Arab Emirates)

*Asia-Pacific Group:*

- Ms. P. Hematbhai (India)
- Vacancy

*Eurasia Group:*

- Ms. Z. Greceanii (Republic of Moldova)
- Ms. E. Vtorygina (Russian Federation)

*Group of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC):*

- Ms. J. Álvarez Vera (Chile)
- Ms. K. Sosa de Rodas (El Salvador)

*Twelve Plus Group:*

- Ms. A. Tolley (New Zealand)
- Ms. U. Karlsson (Sweden).

### 2. Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians

The Governing Council elected the following member for a five-year term ending in April 2023:

- Mr. D. Carter (New Zealand).

### 3. Committee on Middle East Questions

The Governing Council elected Ms. S. Atallahjan (Canada) as its President for a one-year term ending in March 2019.

It also elected the following two members to the Committee for a four-year term ending in March 2022:

*African Group:*

- Ms. A. Makonda Ridley (Malawi)

*Group of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC):*

- Ms. M. Guerra Castillo (Mexico).

### 4. Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL)

The Governing Council elected the following member for a four-year term ending in March 2022:

*Group of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC):*

- Mr. A. Sinmaleza (Ecuador).

## 5. Bureaux of the Standing Committees

Following elections in the Standing Committees, the following members were elected for a two-year term (renewable once) ending in March 2020:

### Standing Committee on Peace and International Security

- President: Mr. J.I. Echániz (Spain)
- Vice-President: Mr. S. Rakhmanov (Belarus)

#### *African Group:*

- Mr. R. Igbokwe (Nigeria) – first term
- Mr. A.L.S. Ssebagala (Uganda) – second term

#### *Arab Group:*

- Mr. K. Albakkar (Jordan) – second term
- Ms. Z. Ahmed Hassan Gaber (Sudan) – first term
- Mr. A. Jasem Ahmad (United Arab Emirates) – first term

#### *Eurasia Group:*

- Mr. S. Rakhmanov (Belarus) – first term
- Ms. V. Stratan (Republic of Moldova) – first term

#### *Group of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC):*

- Ms. M. Arregui (Ecuador) – first term
- Ms. L. Rojas (Mexico) – second term
- Mr. J.C. Mahía (Uruguay) – first term

#### *Twelve Plus Group:*

- Mr. H. Jelin (Israel) – first term
- Mr. J.I. Echániz (Spain) – first term

### Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade

- President: Ms. J. Mhlanga (Zimbabwe)
- Vice-President: Ms. W. Bani Mustafa (Jordan)

#### *African Group:*

- Mr. L. Batouth Penn (Togo) – first term

#### *Arab Group:*

- Mr. M. Al-Juboori (Iraq) – first term
- Mr. R. Elhilaa (Morocco) – first term

#### *Asia-Pacific Group:*

- Mr. V. Socratyanurak (Thailand) – first term

#### *Eurasia Group:*

- Ms. L. Nazaryan (Armenia) – first term
- Ms. L. Gumerova (Russian Federation) – second term

#### *Twelve Plus Group:*

- Ms. A. Mulder (Netherlands) – first term
- Mr. N. Evans (United Kingdom) – first term

### Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights

- President: Mr. A.Y. Desai (India)
- Vice-President: vacancy

#### *African Group:*

- Ms. B. Tshireletso (Botswana) – second term
- Mr. R. Ossele Ndong (Gabon) – first term

*Arab Group:*

- Mr. M. Musa (Lebanon) – first term
- Mr. Y. Al-Khater (Qatar) – first term

*Asia-Pacific Group:*

- Mr. P. Wangchuk (Bhutan) – second term
- Mr. A.Y. Desai (India) – second term
- Ms. S. Batsukh (Mongolia) – first term

*Eurasia Group:*

- Ms. S. Isayan (Armenia) – second term
- Mr. V. Batrincea (Republic of Moldova) – first term
- Ms. N. Rahmonova (Tajikistan) – first term

*Group of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC):*

- Ms. G. Fermin (Dominican Republic) – first term
- Mr. M. Teixeira (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) – first term. To be replaced by Mr. G. Boric (Chile) at the end of the first term.

*Twelve Plus Group:*

- Ms. S. Lahaye-Battheu (Belgium) – first term
- Ms. A. Gerken (Netherlands) – first term

Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs

- President: Mr. J.C. Romero (Argentina)
- Vice-President: vacancy

*Arab Group:*

- Ms. S. Al-Hashem (Kuwait) – first term
- Mr. A. Alamri (Oman) – first term
- Mr. M. Souf (Tunisia) – first term

*Eurasia Group:*

- Ms. D. Nazarbaeva (Kazakhstan) – first term

*Group of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC):*

- Mr. J.C. Romero (Argentina) (to replace Ms. C.L. Crexell who resigned during the Assembly) – March 2019, end of first term
- Ms. M. Jose Carrion (Ecuador) – first term
- Mr. B. Llano (Paraguay) – first term

*Twelve Plus Group:*

- Mr. L. Wehrli (Switzerland) – first term.

**6. Rapporteurs to the 140<sup>th</sup> Assembly**

The Standing Committee on Peace and International Security appointed Mr. K. Al Bakkar (Jordan) and Mr. B. Tarasyuk (Ukraine) as co-Rapporteurs for the subject item entitled *Non-admissibility of using mercenaries as a means of undermining peace and violating human rights*.

The Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade appointed Ms. S. Raskovic Ivic (Serbia), Mr. J. Wilson (Australia) and Mr. H. Iddrisu (Ghana) as co-Rapporteurs for the subject item entitled *The role of fair and free trade and investment in achieving the SDGs, especially regarding economic equality, sustainable infrastructure, industrialization and innovation*.

## Media and communications

Three press releases were issued during the 138<sup>th</sup> Assembly. One press conference was held with 15 international journalists registered. There was major interest in the interaction between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Republic of Korea delegations, the emergency item and the human rights decision on Venezuela. International media coverage included two articles in the New York Times and one article in the Washington Post. Reuters and Associated Press images and articles from the Assembly were picked up by over 100 media outlets. The Japanese media also covered the Assembly extensively.

According to MailChimp monitoring, there were some 2,499 views of Assembly press releases between 19 and 29 March. Media monitoring indicated that press releases reached a potential audience of 450 million people.

The General Debate was livestreamed on the IPU website for three days. It was also webcast to a global audience with a German media company. The South African Parliament also requested a direct feed.

According to the livestreaming company, there were 766 views of the different sessions streamed throughout the five days. During the Assembly IPU Communications staff also conducted 10 video interviews with selected parliamentarians.

The IPU tweeted 187 times around the Assembly. The tweets had 334,380 impressions and were engaged with 8,776 times, including 891 likes and 672 retweets. The IPU gained over 1,000 followers, making a total of 15,110.

The IPU had 43 Facebook posts around the Assembly. Their reach was 11,413, and they were engaged with 1,093 times, including shares and likes. The IPU gained 67 page followers, reaching a total of 1,214.

The IPU publications stand proved to be extremely popular and all publications were taken very quickly by delegates. There was considerable demand for copies of the *Annual Report 2017*, as well as of the *Women in parliament in 2017: The year in review*.

The survey for delegates on Assemblies and IPU Communications was completed by over 100 delegates in person, and a further 76 online.

Flickr was again used to distribute photos of the Assembly to the media and participants. There were 62 Flickr albums posted with 376,272 views from 21 to 28 March.



## Membership of the Inter-Parliamentary Union\*

### Members (178)

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Palestine, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe

### Associate Members (12)

Andean Parliament, Arab Parliament, Central American Parliament (PARLACEN), East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), European Parliament, Interparliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States (IPA CIS), Inter-Parliamentary Committee of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), Latin American Parliament (PARLATINO), Parliament of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Parliament of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC) and Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC), Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)

\* As at the close of the 138<sup>th</sup> Assembly.

## Agenda, resolutions and other texts of the 138<sup>th</sup> Assembly

1. Election of the President and Vice-Presidents of the 138<sup>th</sup> Assembly
2. Consideration of requests for the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda
3. General Debate on the theme *Strengthening the global regime for migrants and refugees: the need for evidence-based policy solutions*
4. Sustaining peace as a vehicle for achieving sustainable development  
(*Standing Committee on Peace and International Security*)
5. Engaging the private sector in implementing the SDGs, especially on renewable energy  
(*Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade*)
6. Reports of the Standing Committees
7. Approval of the subject items for the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security and for the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade at the 140<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly and appointment of the Rapporteurs
8. Amendments to the IPU Statutes and Rules
9. The consequences of the US declaration on Jerusalem and the rights of the Palestinian people in Jerusalem in the light of the UN Charter and resolutions

## Declaration on *Strengthening the global regime for migrants and refugees: The need for evidence-based policy solutions*

*Endorsed by the 138<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly  
(Geneva, 28 March 2018)*

At the end of a week-long debate on strengthening the global regime for migrants and refugees, and with the added input of survey responses (see below), of the outcome of the 2018 annual Parliamentary Hearing at the UN, entitled *Towards a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration: A parliamentary perspective*, and of the insights gained from the interactive debate with the heads of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), we, parliamentarians from around the world, issue the following declaration.

Migration has been a feature of human civilization and interaction from time immemorial. Properly managed, it contributes to greater human well-being and collective wealth. It expands knowledge and strengthens the bonds of human solidarity.

Likewise, the flight of refugees from persecution and conflict is not new. When refugees flee, those who provide them with the protection and assistance that they need contribute to the cause of humanity and should be supported in their efforts by the international community.

Over and beyond national differences, people everywhere aspire to the same things: a decent life, good health and education, a safe environment, strong democratic institutions and, above all, peace.

Yet today's global regime for migrants does not always harness the potential benefits of migration, nor does the international refugee regime do enough to ease the pressures on those who host large numbers of refugees. Too often, both regimes fail to protect increasing numbers of migrants and refugees from discrimination, exploitation, or other kinds of abuse. The human and economic costs of this failure are enormous and run counter to our common vision for a prosperous, sustainable, and peaceful world.

A large portion of refugee and migration policy today remains ad hoc, with countries devising their own solutions to a host of common problems. We need a more coordinated system that brings countries together around practical solutions that work for all. As this is one of the most important issues facing our countries, we welcome wholeheartedly the United Nations initiative to forge two Global Compacts - one for safe, orderly and regular migration, and another on refugees – which governments will formally adopt later this year.

While acknowledging important legal distinctions between *migrants* and *refugees*, we see many commonalities between these two large groups in terms of their need for basic services and their fear of discrimination or unlawful persecution. We affirm that all people on the move – voluntary and involuntary, regular and irregular, economic migrants, displaced people and refugees, regardless of their individual drivers to move to other countries – are entitled to the full enjoyment of their human rights pursuant to the relevant international treaties and covenants. We should not condone discrimination against migrants or refugees based on culture, gender, race, ethnicity, religion or other differences. We should support enhanced protection for the most vulnerable migrants and refugees, beginning with women, children and people with disabilities.

Our challenge, as policy-makers and opinion leaders and as representatives of the people, is to reconcile our short-term national interests with this long-term world view that seeks to reap the benefits of human mobility in an orderly fashion. We strongly believe that migration policies and the public debate about migrants and refugees must be more balanced and based on empirical evidence of what works and what does not. We recognize that diversity makes our countries stronger, not weaker. We condemn the worrying trend of holding foreigners responsible for home-grown problems not of their making. We affirm our duty, as trustees of the common good, to avoid language that stokes the flames of xenophobia and racism.

Most importantly, we have a responsibility to work resolutely to address the root causes of refugee situations (including persecution and armed conflict) and the drivers of migration, be they economic, social or environmental. Doing so will affirm the right to leave as well as the right to stay in one's home country. In a world of extreme income and wealth inequality, climate change, and weakening democratic institutions, a sense of deep insecurity on the part of growing numbers of people is both a reason why people move and a prime cause of the negative response to migrants and refugees in many countries. The response must be an all-encompassing one that seeks to support the well-being and prosperity of all people – citizens and non-citizens alike – everywhere.

We reiterate our pledge to work for the implementation of the UN-approved 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and attendant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs provide a clear road map for inclusive and sustainable prosperity for all. By empowering all countries economically and institutionally, and by strengthening the foundations of peace between and within countries, the SDGs will help to address the root causes of refugee movements and help to achieve a better balance between the benefits and the costs of migration, such as the benefit of remittances and the costs of brain drain to developing countries. The implementation of the SDGs will also support a fairer sharing of the responsibility all countries have toward migrants and refugees.

Combined, all of these actions will allow people to move by choice, not through necessity, thus largely containing the potential disruption that can come from large, unpredictable movement of persons related to society-wide shocks. At the same time, we recognize that the integration of migrants and refugees is not an event but a process requiring time and effort. Unlike inanimate capital and goods that can move quickly across borders, people have emotional ties and personal needs. We must be sensitive to this from the perspective both of host communities and of the migrants and refugees themselves by adopting proactive policies for social cohesion. That said, we find that by and large integration is possible and is working as it should in the majority of our countries.

As the statistics clearly show, only a tiny fraction of migrants and refugees has ever posed a threat to national security. While this is paramount to all of us, we commit to help dispel the misconceptions in the media and in the public discourse that migrants and refugees present a heightened risk. At the same time, we commit to ensuring that border controls and admission procedures are designed to detect and filter out potential terrorists and elements of organized crime.

We recognize that putting up artificial obstacles to the migration of people will generate needless human suffering and social tensions. The response to growing irregular migration is to generate more regular pathways for people to work and live in destination countries in mutually beneficial ways. Not all migrants seek permanent residence. Many of them can be accommodated through temporary arrangements and through policies that will facilitate their return to their home countries. At the same time, countries of origin need to do more to allow their people to return.

### **The Global Compacts**

The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees need to be mutually reinforcing, creating a comprehensive practical framework to manage all types of human mobility more effectively at national, regional and global levels. They need to embed the key principle of shared responsibility between countries of origin and destination as well as between countries and the international community.

For the compacts to be effective, they must first articulate a clear definition of migrant as a distinct category from refugee, which will be particularly useful in targeting policy at mixed flows, emerging new categories such as people fleeing the consequences of climate change, or displaced people whose status as migrants or refugees is not always easy to determine. The compacts need to reaffirm all relevant human rights treaties and conventions, including the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

The compacts need to establish strong review mechanisms to hold governments to account for their commitments. The role of parliaments as key stakeholders, particularly with regard to the implementation of both compacts, needs to be specifically acknowledged in the text. As for the legal status of the compacts, as our survey shows, the possibility of a legally binding regime should not be discounted altogether.

Our debate demonstrated high support for the following specific provisions to be articulated in both compacts:

- More and better data on migrants and refugees must be generated and exchanged at all levels nationally and globally to inform public debate as well as relevant national policies;
- Partnerships with local authorities, civil society organizations and private enterprises that are first in line to respond to the flow of migrants and refugees should be encouraged;
- Birth registration of all children of migrants and refugees needs to be enforced to ensure their rights are protected;
- An international standard of practice for countries dealing with vulnerable migrants, including unaccompanied children, needs to be established;
- Human trafficking must be brought to an end through stronger bilateral and multilateral cooperation as well as stronger enforcement of existing laws;
- National security policies should not single out migrants and refugees, and should instead aim at a comprehensive approach to detect and prosecute criminal elements in our societies at large;
- Public services such as health and education, housing and food support, should be provided to all refugees and migrants, along with a firewall protecting them from law enforcement
- Hate speech should be sanctioned and hate crimes clearly defined in the law, with law enforcement and social services departments provided with the tools to combat and punish such crimes;
- More support from the international community is needed to help countries cope with large inflows of migrants and refugees.

### **Migrants**

With regard specifically to regular and irregular migrants, we are supportive of the following provisions to be reflected in the Global Compact for Migration:

- Countries of origin, transit and destination need to cooperate more closely to facilitate the movement of migrant workers, including by facilitating the accreditation of academic and professional credentials, by allowing the portability of social security benefits, and by lowering the cost of remittances;
- Vulnerable groups such as women, children and people with disabilities should be given special protection in migration policies and in the law against exploitation and abuse;
- National migration policies need to include input from migrants themselves, ensuring that migrants are not passive subjects but active participants in the societies in which they live;
- National quotas of labour migrants can contribute to greater predictability of migration flows, although it remains up to each country to decide whether to establish a quota or not;
- Migrants should generally be granted the right to participate in political decision-making in their host countries only upon the obtainment of citizenship, though some provision for the participation of permanent residents should be considered.

### **Refugees**

With regard to the Global Compact on Refugees, we welcome the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework and its four key pillars to ease pressure on countries receiving large numbers of refugees, to provide for a dignified life for all refugees, to facilitate third-country resettlement, and to prepare for the return of refugees to their home countries when conditions so allow.

We further recommend that the following provisions should be reflected in the completed, final document:

- People fleeing conflict should enjoy legal protection as refugees under the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees;
- To the extent possible, countries should be incentivized to give long-term refugees permanent residence, while no refugee should be denied the right to return to the homeland;
- The freedom of movement of refugees in their host countries must be upheld in all circumstances;

- The return and resettlement of refugees requires their consent and needs to be carefully coordinated between host countries, countries of origin or third countries;
- The return of refugees to countries of origin can only take place when all fundamental freedoms and personal safety can be guaranteed;
- More funding for the accommodation of refugees in host countries should be channelled to developing countries where the vast majority of refugees live;
- All countries that have yet to join the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol should be encouraged to do so.

### **The way forward**

Along with governments and the United Nations, including in particular IOM and UNHCR, parliaments will have a key role to play in the implementation of the global compacts.

Our task as parliamentarians is to hold governments accountable for their commitments and to see to it that laws and budgets are consistent with those commitments. To that end, we encourage the international community and the IPU, as our world organization, to continue to work closely with our parliaments, strengthening our institutional capacities to design relevant policies for migrants and refugees and to oversee such policies effectively.

More importantly, we commit to stimulating a debate on migrants and refugees that builds on people's strengths, their dreams and aspirations, regardless of their differences.

Where there are walls, we will work to build bridges; where there is fear, we will seek to restore hope.

\* \* \* \* \*

### **Parliamentary Survey on Migrants and Refugees**

To ensure maximum parliamentary input in the present Declaration that would go beyond the official statements made during the general debate of the 138<sup>th</sup> Assembly, all participating MPs were invited to respond to an online survey questionnaire prepared in cooperation with First Contact, a polling firm specializing in public policy. The questionnaire was also made available to participants in the 2018 Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations (22-23 February 2018) and in the Parliamentary Meeting at the UN Commission on the Status of Women (13 March).

Two hundred and thirty-nine (239) delegate surveys, representing 84 countries, were analysed. Respondents were about equally divided between members of governing parties and opposition/independent parliamentarians. Sixty-four per cent (64%) of respondents identified as men, 33 per cent as women and 3 per cent as another gender or declined. Seventy-nine per cent (79%) of respondents believe their views are broadly aligned with those of members of their political party. The average tenure of parliamentarians answering the survey was 8.2 years.

Respondents described their country either as a country of origin (24%), transit (43%), destination (65%) or none of these (12%), totalling 144 per cent, and reflecting the multiple roles each country can play in the migration phenomenon. The survey found a high level of support for a Global Compact on Migration and a Global Compact for Refugees, with 86 per cent of respondents being strongly in favour, or in favour. Respondents reported a lower level (67%) of familiarity with a proposed Compact.

Ninety-one per cent (91%) of respondents believe there should be an international standard of practice when dealing with vulnerable migrants, including women and children. Ninety-four per cent (94%) believe countries should act to protect migrants from exploitation and human rights abuses. In both cases, respondents who support both Global Compacts were strongly supportive of these measures.

Support for a Global Compact was positively correlated with familiarity; respondents who reported being very familiar or somewhat familiar were more likely to be supportive than those who were unfamiliar. Similarly, respondents who reported that migration was viewed positively in their country were more likely to support a Global Compact, although only 45 per cent reported migration being viewed very positively or somewhat positively. Seventy per cent strongly agreed or agreed that their country needed a more balanced, evidence-based debate on the migration issue.

Fifty-one percent (51%) of respondents believe a Compact should be legally binding, while 36 per cent believe it should be voluntary and 14 per cent were undecided. A minority of respondents expressed support for adopting a quota of migrants to be admitted, with 15 per cent strongly agreeing and 26 per cent agreeing.

When asked when migrants should become involved in political decision-making in their country, 68 per cent said when they become citizens, 27 per cent when they have permanent status and 5 per cent when they arrive.

Taken together, the above suggests that although there is broad support for a Global Compact, some of the support expressed may be socially conditioned, and there is less support for specific binding measures on individual countries or measures that would give migrants equal participation with citizens. Further research may reveal that opponents of a Global Compact responded as undecided or unfamiliar rather than state opposition or lack of focus on migration and the Global Compact. Building awareness through continued education of parliamentarians will positively impact the debate.

Seventy-three per cent (73%) of respondents report that migration is one of the most important issues facing their country, while only 31 per cent say their country is well prepared to deal with the issue. Respondents from Africa reported being the least prepared (14%) to deal with migration, while Western Europe reported the highest level of preparedness (52%). By contrast, 56 per cent of respondents report that their countries are doing a good job of integrating migrants.

Seventy-five percent (75%) of delegates believe the migration issue is equally the responsibility of the individual country and the international community, while 13 per cent believe it is primarily the responsibility of the individual country and 12 per cent believe it is primarily the responsibility of the international community. Respondents from transit countries and countries that were less prepared to deal with migration were more likely to believe responsibility for the migration issue is the responsibility of the international community or the international community and the host country.

Respondents' predictions about the numbers of future migrants had little impact on their perception of the importance of the issue or their support for a Global Compact. Just under half of respondents (48%) believe that the number of migrants arriving in their country will increase in the future, while 29 per cent believe the number will stay the same and 23 per cent believe the number will decrease. By contrast, 72 per cent of respondents expect the number of global migrants to increase in the future, while 9 per cent believe the number will stay about the same and 19 per cent believe the number will decrease.

## Sustaining peace as a vehicle for achieving sustainable development

**Resolution adopted unanimously by the 138<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly  
(Geneva, 28 March 2018)**

The 138<sup>th</sup> Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

*Reaffirming* that, according to its Statutes, working for peace and cooperation among peoples is one of the main purposes of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

*Recalling* the IPU resolutions entitled *The prevention of conflicts and the restoration of peace and trust in countries emerging from war; the return of refugees to their countries of origin, the strengthening of democratic processes and the hastening of reconstruction* (99<sup>th</sup> Inter-Parliamentary Conference, Windhoek, 1998), *Achieving peace, stability and comprehensive development in the world and forging closer political, economic and cultural ties among peoples* (103<sup>rd</sup> Inter-Parliamentary Conference, Amman, 2000); *Ensuring respect for and peaceful co-existence between all religious communities and beliefs in a globalized world* (116<sup>th</sup> Assembly, Nusa Dua, 2007); *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* (126<sup>th</sup> Assembly, Kampala, 2012); *Enforcing the responsibility to protect: The role of parliament in safeguarding civilians' lives* (128<sup>th</sup> Assembly, Quito, 2013) and *The role of parliament in respecting the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of States* (136<sup>th</sup> Assembly, Dhaka, 2017),

*Also recalling* the IPU outcomes of general debates, namely the Quito Communiqué (128<sup>th</sup> Assembly, Quito, 2013), the Hanoi Declaration (132<sup>nd</sup> Assembly, Hanoi, 2015) and the St. Petersburg Declaration (137<sup>th</sup> Assembly, St. Petersburg, 2017), containing, among other things, the parliamentary community's action towards implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),

*Also recalling* the determination to establish a just and lasting peace all over the world in accordance with the purpose and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,

*Further recalling* that sustaining peace has been defined in the substantively identical resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly (70/262) and the United Nations Security Council (2282 [2016]) adopted on 27 April 2016 "as a goal and a process to build a common vision of a society, ensuring that the needs of all segments of the population are taken into account, which encompasses activities aimed at preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict, addressing root causes, assisting parties to conflict to end hostilities, ensuring national reconciliation, and moving towards recovery, reconstruction and development, and emphasizing that sustaining peace is a shared task and responsibility that needs to be fulfilled by the government and all other national stakeholders, and should flow through all three pillars of the United Nations' engagement at all stages of conflict, and in all of its dimensions, and needs sustained international attention and assistance",

*Welcoming* the renewed mandate these United Nations resolutions give to the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Fund and the Peacebuilding Support Office within the context of the Sustaining Peace Agenda,

*Also welcoming* the prioritization of prevention of violent conflict by the Secretary-General of the United Nations,

*Fully supporting* United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security which emphasizes the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, as well as United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 (2015) on youth, peace and security which recognizes the positive role of youth in the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security,

*Recognizing* these resolutions and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) as crucial steps towards more coherence among the three pillars of the United Nations, namely peace and security, development and human rights,



*Mindful* that the 2030 Agenda recognizes the need for sustaining peace and ensuring security and includes them as cross-cutting issues,

*Recognizing* that the SDGs apply to all States, while acknowledging that their implementation shall be adapted to the uniqueness of each and every State and that each State shall have the right to determine its priorities concerning the SDGs depending on its prevailing circumstances and needs,

*Recalling* that the 2030 Agenda calls on governments, parliaments and other stakeholders to design and deliver laws and programmes that meet the needs of the people, break down policy silos, uphold human rights, and leave no one behind,

*Underlining* that there is a link between peace and the promotion and protection of all human rights, included in, but not limited to, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and *recognizing* the will of the United Nations General Assembly to continue examining the issue of the promotion and protection of the right to peace,

*Also underlining* that, in view of the mutually reinforcing nature of development, human rights, peace and security, the strengthening of democracy and good governance, inclusive development, the promotion and protection of human rights, the eradication of poverty and the reduction of inequalities, the elimination of all forms of discrimination, the reduction of illicit financial and arms flows, effective, accountable and inclusive institutions and equal application of the law to all people are among the most effective ways to sustain peace and security and prevent the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflicts,

*Emphasizing* that peace and security are not only political issues defined by the absence of violence and war but also the freedom from fear, and that they encompass political, cultural, economic, social, environmental, educational and humanitarian issues,

*Recognizing* that violence is increasingly driven by domestic political instability and that one out of every two people in the world has been affected by or lives in proximity to political violence (OECD report *States of Fragility 2016*),

*Convinced* that parliaments can significantly contribute to sustaining peace, and *highlighting* both the constructive and preventive nature of parliamentary diplomacy in enhancing democracy and human rights, including its capacity to reduce tensions and mitigate and resolve conflicts by peaceful means,

*Reaffirming* that parliaments must guarantee inclusiveness through the representation and empowerment of women, the respect of the rights of children, youth, persons with disabilities, and marginalized groups, including ethnic and religious groups and those of LGBTI sexual orientation, and the expression of all their interests through parliamentary representation to ensure peace among all community members,

*Also reaffirming* that parliaments must guarantee that the situation and particular needs of migrant, refugee and displaced women and girls are taken into account, as well as the protection of their rights, their security, economic and social integration and their empowerment,

*Recognizing* that climate change has direct and indirect implications for peace and security, mainly affecting those in the most fragile and vulnerable situations, exacerbating the threat of social and political unrest, increasing environmental pressures and disaster risks, and causing the migration of populations that can be the source of conflicts,

*Underlining* the importance of enhancing national and regional initiatives, with international support, to address the negative consequences for sustainable peace, security and development of all aspects of the extraction and exploitation of mineral resources,

*Noting with concern* the plight of children in conflict situations, in particular the phenomenon of the recruitment and use of children by parties to armed conflicts, as well as other violations and abuses committed against children, and *stressing* the need for the protection of children in armed conflicts and for ensuring that the protection and rights of children in armed conflicts are integrated into all peace processes,

*Recognizing* that sustaining peace and achieving sustainable development requires regular, predictable and adequate financing and that innovative solutions must be pursued to increase the financial contributions made by non-traditional stakeholders, including the private sector,

*Emphasizing* the importance of the equal participation and inclusive involvement of all citizens of the nation, and of ethnic, religious and linguistic and other minorities, such as persons with different sexual orientations and persons with disabilities in national efforts towards sustaining peace, and *also emphasizing* the acknowledgement of the rights of all community groups and minorities, as principal partners in the attainment of peace,

*Stressing* the importance of addressing the socioeconomic dimension of youth unemployment, as well as of facilitating the enhanced participation of youth in decision-making processes, with a view of addressing social, political, cultural, and economic challenges, and *welcoming* in this regard the adoption of the United Nations Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth aimed at addressing youth unemployment,

*Also stressing* the need to accelerate the process of adoption of national plans of action for the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security while ensuring the full participation of parliaments in their drafting, oversight of their implementation and financing,

*Highlighting* the contribution of civil society in ensuring sustaining peace and the implementation of the SDGs, and *welcoming* mutually beneficial interaction with it in order to build linkages to enhance citizens' well-being,

*Reaffirming* the principle of national ownership and leadership in sustaining peace which is understood as a broadly shared responsibility by the parliament, the government, the judiciary and all other national stakeholders,

*Recognizing* the contribution of regional actors, governmental and non-governmental, regional parliamentary assemblies, local bodies, and other regional forums, to sustaining peace and the implementation of the SDGs,

1. *Welcomes* the adoption by consensus of the substantively identical resolutions on sustaining peace by the United Nations General Assembly (70/262) and the United Nations Security Council (2282 [2016]);
2. *Calls on* all parliaments to contribute to the implementation of the concept of sustaining peace and the SDGs, and to identify specific measures of implementation in accordance with their national contexts;
3. *Stresses* the importance of national ownership and leadership in sustaining peace, and that the primary responsibility for identifying, driving and directing priorities, strategies and activities for sustaining peace and the implementation of the SDGs lies with national parliaments and governments;
4. *Underlines* that, in this regard, inclusiveness and diversity are crucial to ensuring that the needs of all segments of society are taken into account, and *acknowledges* inclusiveness itself as a means of conflict prevention;
5. *Calls on* all parliamentarians to bear in mind the notion of sustaining peace in the implementation of the SDGs as well as in their daily parliamentary work, and to include conflict prevention and the implementation of peacebuilding strategies in their parliamentary relations agenda, without prejudice to the principle of State sovereignty;

6. *Also calls on* all parliaments to use the preventive potential of the parliamentary process fully as a way of mitigating and resolving conflict, including through monitoring of human rights protection, inclusive dialogue processes, and mediation to peacefully address the needs of all segments of society;
7. *Encourages* parliaments to collaborate with the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission in their conflict prevention efforts and *recommends* that their national governments seek inclusion of their country's situation on the Commission's agenda where appropriate;
8. *Invites* parliaments to adopt enabling legislation, including key budget laws in order to advance both the SDGs and sustaining peace agendas, including measures that promote increased financial support from national stakeholders, notably the private sector;
9. *Also invites* parliaments to apply all generic parliamentary functions to hold governments accountable for the effective implementation of the sustaining peace framework and the SDGs, including the relevant law-making, oversight, budget, representative and elective functions and sustainable development agendas informed by the work of independent oversight bodies such as audit institutions, ombudsman institutions and national human rights institutions;
10. *Calls on* parliaments to partner with civil society more regularly in order to build trust among the general public, including the marginalized sections of society, to ensure inclusiveness and representation of a variety of needs and enable more effective access to decision-making processes, according to the national legislations;
11. *Recommends* parliamentarians to engage with governments, international organizations and civil society to promote gender equality, bearing in mind the impact of conflict on women and children, as well as the women, peace and security agenda of the United Nations, and to further promote the participation of women in peace processes, particularly, in mediation, peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities, as well as in education, health care and promotion of a culture of peace; moreover, *urges* parliaments to work towards concrete measures to promote gender equality and to protect the rights of children such as encouraging gender responsive budgets and the provision of adequate funding of human rights components in UN peacekeeping operations;
12. *Calls on* parliaments to adopt national plans of action for the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security, and to oversee their implementation and adequate financing;
13. *Recommends* parliamentarians to work with governments, international organizations and civil society in order to guarantee the protection of children from conflict at all times, and to avoid the use of children in armed conflict;
14. *Insists* that national parliaments and the international community, in accordance with the Paris Agreement on climate change, put in place legislative and financial provisions based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, and *calls on* them to engage against climate change and its consequences, in particular on people who have to move and should be guaranteed a bedrock of international inalienable rights;
15. *Calls on* parliaments to ensure implementation of international commitments and treaties by the government, including the 2030 Agenda and human rights obligations, and *stresses* that a signed treaty is binding upon its signatories, who are obliged to implement it without any preconditions;
16. *Acknowledges* that particular attention must be paid to the prevention of violence in the context of elections, as pivotal moments of the political cycle, since politically stable situations provide an environment that is conducive to sustainable development and sustaining peace;

17. *Recognizes* the responsibilities of political parties and associations in this regard and the important role of free and fair elections and supporting institutions such as an independent electoral commission, the judiciary and free media;
18. *Urges* parliaments of conflict-affected countries to exert more efforts in supporting national reconciliation and transitional justice, the establishment of the truth, and in dealing with the past; *acknowledges* the important role of parliaments and national human rights institutions in national reconciliation; *underlines* the importance of bringing perpetrators to justice, and *calls on* parliaments to ratify the Rome Statute;
19. *Encourages* parliamentarians to legislate and collaborate with governments, international organizations and civil society, in accordance with international law, and international humanitarian law, to prevent the flow of arms in conflict-affected societies and regions;
20. *Declares* that an effective implementation of the SDGs not only contributes to preventing the outbreak of conflict but also supports the sustainability of peace and development by significantly reducing all forms of violence;
21. *Looks forward* to the High-level Meeting on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace on 24 and 25 April 2018 convened by the President of the United Nations General Assembly;
22. *Acknowledges* that cultural diversity has significant importance for achieving sustainable development and *invites* the Inter-Parliamentary Union to organize with the United Nations a world conference on the interfaith and inter-ethnic dialogue with the participation of the Heads of States, Parliaments and leaders of world religions;
23. *Encourages* ever-closer cooperation among parliaments and regional parliamentary organizations and local bodies within the Inter-Parliamentary Union with a view to contribute to sustaining peace and the implementation of the SDGs;
24. *Recommends* that governments of developed countries carry out their responsibilities in maintaining international peace and security in developing countries and promote the sustainable development process they originally initiated;
25. *Emphasizes* parliament's role in sponsoring active dialogues among various community members from different backgrounds to ensure sustaining peace and tolerance within communities.

## Engaging the private sector in implementing the SDGs, especially on renewable energy

*Resolution adopted unanimously by the 138<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly  
(Geneva, 28 March 2018)*

The 138<sup>th</sup> Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

*Reaffirming* its commitment to effectively implementing United Nations General Assembly resolution A/RES/70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, which laid the foundations for an inclusive sustainable development agenda with the involvement of all stakeholders, including the private sector, and set forth Sustainable Development Goal 7 on energy, in which the necessity of renewable energy development is affirmed,

*Stressing* that the Hanoi Declaration of 1 April 2015, adopted by the 132<sup>nd</sup> IPU Assembly, recognized parliament's role in mobilizing finance from both private and public sources to attain the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and stated that the environment for private investments should be strengthened in ways that directly support sustainable development; and *reaffirming* the IPU resolution on *Promoting enhanced international cooperation on the SDGs, in particular on the financial inclusion of women as a driver of development*, which was adopted by the 136<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly and calls for enhancing women's entrepreneurship and access to financial resources,

*Referring to* United Nations General Assembly resolutions A/RES/69/313 of 27 July 2015, entitled *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development*, and A/RES/71/233 of 21 December 2016, entitled *Ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all*, and to the outcomes of the United Nations Private Sector Forum 2017, the 2017 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development on progress towards the implementation of Goal 7, the 2017 IPU Regional Seminar on Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals for the Parliaments in the Asia-Pacific Region, the 2017 IPU Regional Seminar on the Sustainable Development Goals for the Parliaments of Sub-Saharan Africa, which recognized that the SDGs will have a disproportionate effect on the younger generations, in Africa and around the world, which should be included in the planning and implementation of development policies, and the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum,

*Asserting* that sustainable development is the common goal of society and that among the interconnected and indissociable 17 Sustainable Development Goals, Goal 7 is a significant linchpin for the success of the others, especially those relating to poverty reduction, education, health and environmental protection in response to climate change,

*Emphasizing* that the development of renewable energy sources and access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy sources have a significant contribution to make in ensuring energy security, minimize inequalities in energy access, both within and between countries, create jobs and improve people's livelihoods, including those of youths and women in society,

*Recognizing* the urgent need to ensure full and equal access of women to renewable energy as a means to enhance their economic empowerment, as well as women's potential, given their key role in producing and using energy in households and communities, particularly in developing countries,

*Observing* that renewable energy technologies have experienced remarkable cost reductions over the last decade, exhibiting lower unit costs than traditional thermal power plants in many regions, and that similar developments are envisaged for generation and storage technologies in the foreseeable future,

*Recognizing* that the contribution of the private sector to development goes beyond capital provision and employment creation and that the private sector can be a true development agent which drives technology development and innovation, makes smart investment in key areas, facilitates technology transfer and participates in the transition towards sustainable production, operation and

consumption, and that the active involvement of the private sector and the strategic partnership between the private sector and the public sectors, civil society and local communities are critical, especially in the field of renewable energy,

*Emphasizing* the responsibility of private sector entities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the surrounding community in which they operate their businesses, including in terms of environmental preservation and human rights protection,

*Stressing*, however, that it continues to lie primarily within the State's responsibility to assure and steer the SDG implementation process, not least because private investments tend to flow into middle-income countries and/or countries with a certain level of reliability in their respective investment structures which, in turn, results in a further disadvantage for the group of LDCs and thus for the countries that are the most dependent on support by the international community in implementing the 2030 Agenda,

*Acknowledging* that the organization and operation of the private sector are diverse, ranging from multinationals, cooperatives, small and medium enterprises, microenterprises, social enterprises and households to the informal sector, and that the modalities and scale and scope of public-private partnership vary from country to country and there should be institutional frameworks for these partnerships,

*Affirming* the need for countries to support small and medium enterprises through policies that support the creation of synergies between domestic companies and foreign actors,

*Cognizant* of the fact that developing countries are particularly vulnerable to the impact of climate change, and that although technology advancement has offered a reduction in renewable energy cost, developing countries are at a disadvantage when it comes to the technology and finance required for easier access to renewable energy,

*Underscoring* the indispensable role of parliaments in institution-building and sovereign oversight of the Government in effectively executing policies on engagement of the private sector in implementing the SDGs, especially in terms of renewable energy,

*Wishing* to promote international and national legal institutions where there is alignment between the interests of the private sector and poverty eradication and sustainable development, especially renewable energy,

1. *Strongly urges* parliaments to raise public awareness about the need for the engagement of multi-stakeholders in SDG implementation, especially renewable energy, by increasing the number of educational and awareness-raising campaigns and activities reaching out to all members of society in order to equip them with enhanced knowledge on sustainable development, and also to incorporate sustainable development content into curricula at all education levels, especially undergraduate and graduate courses in investment, production, business and commerce in order to change the business mindset towards SDG implementation;
2. *Calls on* parliaments to support gender-responsive legislation, policies and budgets aimed at ensuring equal access of youth, women and men to science and technology, education and training, capacity-building programmes for women, especially in rural areas, and equal opportunities to engage in all stages of the renewable energy value chain, including entrepreneurship opportunities, jobs and careers, as well as equal participation in local, national and international decision-making processes in the renewable energy sector;
3. *Also calls on* parliaments to support capacity-building programmes for poor and vulnerable sections of the population, and promote legislation and policies with a view to reducing energy poverty for vulnerable consumer groups;

4. *Urges* State agencies to recognize the important role of the private sector and simultaneously enlighten the private sector on its own important part and responsibility in SDG implementation, especially renewable energy, and to further promote entrepreneurship for sustainable development, boost corporate social responsibility and support social enterprise development so that the private sector is encouraged to integrate sustainable development concerns into its respective core business areas;
5. *Welcomes* the joining of hands by parliaments with governments to adopt national development strategies with mid-term and long-term sustainable development targets in which the engagement of the private sector as a stakeholder in SDG implementation is identified and SDGs are built into innovative and sustainable investment programmes;
6. *Appeals* to parliaments to build, and supervise governments in following, the road map to accelerate the transition to a low carbon economy, increase the share of renewable energy in the national energy mix, mitigate environmental pollution, implement solutions for efficient-effective energy usage and the use of renewable energy, develop green technologies and new environment-friendly materials as well as to develop domestic industries and infrastructure supporting renewable energy production, distribution and use;
7. *Also appeals* to parliaments together with governments to reorient financial markets to advance sustainability and consider suitable risk-sharing partnerships, such as innovative blended public-private finance mechanisms for funding sustainable development that ensure transparency and accountability and the balancing out of returns on private capital with social impacts;
8. *Urges* parliaments to establish, and support the development of, a transparent and competitive electricity market that will ensure that the production of electricity from renewable energy sources is self-supporting;
9. *Suggests* that parliaments safeguard policy space for investment into off-grid renewable energy and encourage private investment into off-grid renewable energy technology, including small-scale electricity generators converting power from renewable energy sources and mini-grids, through support to building risk management tools for such investments and an enabling regulatory and institutional framework and by preparing reliable long-term rural electrification road maps that mitigate the risks of grid extension interfering with private mini-grid and off-grid markets;
10. *Exhorts* parliaments to allocate appropriate budgets for investment and stimulate private investment into research and development (R&D) and innovation, and prioritize investment into essential infrastructure for renewable energy development;
11. *Urges* technologically advanced States to lead research in the practical application of technical solutions for storing and utilizing hydrogen produced from renewable energy, thereby making this technology a powerful option for the effective utilization of renewable energy;
12. *Calls on* parliaments to support the establishment of transparent and reliable databases for potential private investment in sustainable development, especially pipelines of small projects, the setting up of broader investor networks in the field of sustainable development, performance indicators, reporting systems for joint monitoring and evaluation on investment impacts, and standards for sustainable products and technologies, as well as the organization of multi-stakeholder forums allowing for constructively sharing knowledge, technical know-how, success stories, causes of failure and lessons learned in sustainable investment, production, operation and consumption;
13. *Also calls on* parliaments to continue their efforts to build economic institutions which foster an enabling business climate for the private sector to engage in SDG implementation and ensure the participation of the private sector and other stakeholders in policymaking and assessment;

14. *Further calls on* parliaments to support regulations for comprehensive, detailed and real-time energy measurements to facilitate cost-reflective billing and transparent revenue models;
15. *Recommends* that each parliament issue suitable incentive policies for the private sector, particularly small investment in small projects, in accordance with the respective socioeconomic conditions of the country in its own development period and without distorting functioning markets;
16. *Invites* parliaments, governments, international and regional organizations to identify and deliberate on new generation international investment agreements that focus on the promotion of sustainable development policies, bearing in mind the implementation of existing climate funding mechanisms;
17. *Proposes* more exchanges and enhanced cooperation between countries in order to promote the transfer of high-end technologies with more incentives, build policies that widen access to environmentally sound technologies, strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development as set forth in SDG Goal 17;
18. *Encourages*, in particular, the participation of parliaments and their members in specialized organizations and forums on renewable energy, such as the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), and the establishment of networks of parliamentarians, including between parliaments, parliamentary organizations and parliamentarians, to facilitate exchanges on best practices and enable knowledge transfer, including on policy, technology and finance; and *invites* the IPU to cooperate with these bodies with a view to enhancing parliamentary support for the SDG Goal 7 renewable energy targets.



## Repercussions of Iran's malign activities, led by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and its Quds Force, in core arenas in the Middle East, including Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and Yemen, and in the Palestinian arena

### Results of the roll-call vote on the request of the delegation of Israel for the inclusion of an emergency item

#### Results

Affirmative votes.....	118	Total of affirmative and negative votes ..	613
Negative votes .....	495	Two-thirds majority.....	409
Abstentions .....	841		

Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.
Afghanistan	<i>Absent</i>			Germany	12		7	Paraguay	<i>Absent</i>		
Albania	<i>Absent</i>			Ghana	<i>Absent</i>			Peru	<i>Absent</i>		
Algeria		16		Greece		3	10	Philippines	<i>Absent</i>		
Andorra			10	Guatemala	<i>Absent</i>			Poland		15	
Angola			14	Guinea	<i>Absent</i>			Portugal			13
Argentina	<i>Absent</i>			Guyana	<i>Absent</i>			Qatar		11	
Armenia	<i>Absent</i>			Hungary			13	Republic of Korea			17
Australia			14	Iceland			10	Republic of Moldova	<i>Absent</i>		
Austria			12	India			23	Romania			14
Bahrain		11		Indonesia		22		Russian Federation			20
Bangladesh		20		Iran (Islamic Republic of)		18		Rwanda			12
Belarus	<i>Absent</i>			Iraq		14		San Marino			10
Belgium			13	Ireland			10	Saudi Arabia		14	
Benin		12		Israel	12			Serbia			12
Bhutan			10	Italy			17	Seychelles	<i>Absent</i>		
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)		12		Japan			20	Singapore			12
Bosnia and Herzegovina	<i>Absent</i>			Jordan		12		Slovenia			11
Botswana			11	Kazakhstan			13	Somalia		13	
Brazil			22	Kenya	<i>Absent</i>			South Africa			17
Bulgaria	<i>Absent</i>			Kuwait		11		South Sudan			10
Burkina Faso		13		Lao People's Dem. Republic			12	Spain			15
Burundi		12		Latvia			11	Sri Lanka	<i>Absent</i>		
Cabo Verde			10	Lebanon		11		Sudan		15	
Cameroon			13	Lesotho	<i>Absent</i>			Suriname			10
Canada	15			Liechtenstein			10	Sweden		13	
Chad			13	Lithuania	11			Switzerland			12
Chile		9	4	Madagascar			10	Syrian Arab Rep.		13	
China			23	Malawi	<i>Absent</i>			Thailand			18
Colombia			10	Maldives	<i>Absent</i>			The fYR of Macedonia	<i>Absent</i>		
Costa Rica	<i>Absent</i>			Mali		13		Timor-Leste			11
Côte d'Ivoire	<i>Absent</i>			Malta	<i>Absent</i>			Togo	<i>Absent</i>		
Croatia	<i>Absent</i>			Mexico			20	Tunisia		13	
Cuba		13		Micronesia (Fed. States of)			8	Turkey		18	
Cyprus			10	Monaco			10	Uganda			15
Czech Republic	13			Mongolia			11	Ukraine	10		7
DPR of Korea		12		Montenegro	<i>Absent</i>			United Arab Emirates		11	
DR of the Congo			17	Morocco		15		United Kingdom	12		6
Denmark			12	Mozambique		13		Uruguay	3	8	
Ecuador		5	8	Namibia		11		Uzbekistan	<i>Absent</i>		
Egypt		19		Netherlands			13	Vanuatu	<i>Absent</i>		
El Salvador	<i>Absent</i>			New Zealand			11	Venezuela (Bolivarian Rep. of)	15		
Equatorial Guinea			11	Nicaragua	<i>Absent</i>			Viet Nam			19
Estonia			11	Niger	<i>Absent</i>			Yemen		11	
Ethiopia			19	Nigeria			10	Zambia			13
Fiji	<i>Absent</i>			Norway	12			Zimbabwe			13
Finland			12	Oman		11					
France	3		15	Pakistan		21					
Gabon			11	Palestine		11					
Georgia	<i>Absent</i>			Panama	<i>Absent</i>						

N.B. This list does not include delegations present at the session which were not entitled to vote pursuant to the provisions of Article 5.2 of the Statutes.

## Violence against women in the workplace, in particular in parliaments, in the wake of the #MeToo movement

### Results of the roll-call vote on the request of the delegation of Sweden for the inclusion of an emergency item

#### Results

Affirmative votes .....	830	Total of affirmative and negative votes ...	1,128
Negative votes .....	298	Two-thirds majority .....	752
Abstentions .....	326		

Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.
Afghanistan	<i>Absent</i>			Germany	19			Paraguay	<i>Absent</i>		
Albania	<i>Absent</i>			Ghana	<i>Absent</i>			Peru	<i>Absent</i>		
Algeria		16		Greece	13			Philippines	<i>Absent</i>		
Andorra	10			Guatemala	<i>Absent</i>			Poland	5	10	
Angola			14	Guinea	<i>Absent</i>			Portugal	13		
Argentina	<i>Absent</i>			Guyana	<i>Absent</i>			Qatar		11	
Armenia	<i>Absent</i>			Hungary	13			Republic of Korea	17		
Australia	14			Iceland	10			Republic of Moldova	<i>Absent</i>		
Austria	12			India			23	Romania	14		
Bahrain		11		Indonesia			22	Russian Federation			20
Bangladesh		20		Iran (Islamic Republic of)		18		Rwanda	12		
Belarus	<i>Absent</i>			Iraq		14		San Marino	2		8
Belgium	13			Ireland	10			Saudi Arabia		14	
Benin			12	Israel	12			Serbia	12		
Bhutan	10			Italy	17			Seychelles	<i>Absent</i>		
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)			12	Japan	20			Singapore	12		
Bosnia and Herzegovina	<i>Absent</i>			Jordan		12		Slovenia	11		
Botswana	11			Kazakhstan			13	Somalia		13	
Brazil	22			Kenya	<i>Absent</i>			South Africa	17		
Bulgaria	<i>Absent</i>			Kuwait		11		South Sudan	10		
Burkina Faso	3		10	Lao People's Dem. Republic	6		6	Spain	15		
Burundi			12	Latvia	11			Sri Lanka	<i>Absent</i>		
Cabo Verde	10			Lebanon		11		Sudan		15	
Cameroon	13			Lesotho	<i>Absent</i>			Suriname	10		
Canada	15			Liechtenstein	10			Sweden	13		
Chad	13			Lithuania	11			Switzerland	12		
Chile			13	Madagascar	10			Syrian Arab Rep.		13	
China	13		10	Malawi	<i>Absent</i>			Thailand	18		
Colombia	10			Maldives	<i>Absent</i>			The fYR of Macedonia	<i>Absent</i>		
Costa Rica	<i>Absent</i>			Mali			13	Timor-Leste	11		
Côte d'Ivoire	<i>Absent</i>			Malta	<i>Absent</i>			Togo	<i>Absent</i>		
Croatia	<i>Absent</i>			Mexico	20			Tunisia		13	
Cuba			13	Micronesia (Fed. States of)	8			Turkey		18	
Cyprus	7		3	Monaco	10			Uganda	15		
Czech Republic	7		6	Mongolia	11			Ukraine	17		
DPR of Korea			12	Montenegro	<i>Absent</i>			United Arab Emirates		11	
DR of the Congo			17	Morocco		15		United Kingdom	18		
Denmark	12			Mozambique			13	Uruguay			11
Ecuador	13			Namibia			11	Uzbekistan	<i>Absent</i>		
Egypt		19		Netherlands	13			Vanuatu	<i>Absent</i>		
El Salvador	<i>Absent</i>			New Zealand	11			Venezuela (Bolivarian Rep. of)	11		4
Equatorial Guinea	11			Nicaragua	<i>Absent</i>			Viet Nam	19		
Estonia	11			Niger	<i>Absent</i>			Yemen		11	
Ethiopia	15		4	Nigeria			10	Zambia	13		
Fiji	<i>Absent</i>			Norway	12			Zimbabwe			13
Finland	12			Oman		11					
France	18			Pakistan			21				
Gabon	11			Palestine		11					
Georgia	<i>Absent</i>			Panama	<i>Absent</i>						

N.B. This list does not include delegations present at the session which were not entitled to vote pursuant to the provisions of Article 5.2 of the Statutes.

## The consequences of the US declaration on Jerusalem and the rights of the Palestinian people in Jerusalem in the light of the UN Charter and resolutions

### Results of the roll-call vote on the request of the delegations of Palestine, Kuwait, Bahrain and Turkey for the inclusion of an emergency item

#### Results

Affirmative votes.....	843	Total of affirmative and negative votes ..	964
Negative votes .....	121	Two-thirds majority.....	643
Abstentions .....	490		

Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.
Afghanistan	<i>Absent</i>			Germany		10	9	Paraguay	<i>Absent</i>		
Albania	<i>Absent</i>			Ghana	<i>Absent</i>			Peru	<i>Absent</i>		
Algeria	16			Greece	9		4	Philippines	<i>Absent</i>		
Andorra			10	Guatemala	<i>Absent</i>			Poland	15		
Angola	14			Guinea	<i>Absent</i>			Portugal			13
Argentina	<i>Absent</i>			Guyana	<i>Absent</i>			Qatar	11		
Armenia	<i>Absent</i>			Hungary			13	Republic of Korea			17
Australia		10	4	Iceland			10	Republic of Moldova	<i>Absent</i>		
Austria			12	India	23			Romania			14
Bahrain	11			Indonesia	22			Russian Federation	10		10
Bangladesh	20			Iran (Islamic Republic of)	18			Rwanda			12
Belarus	<i>Absent</i>			Iraq	14			San Marino	8		2
Belgium			13	Ireland			10	Saudi Arabia	14		
Benin	12			Israel		12		Serbia	6		6
Bhutan			10	Italy	10	7		Seychelles	<i>Absent</i>		
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	12			Japan			20	Singapore			12
Bosnia and Herzegovina	<i>Absent</i>			Jordan	12			Slovenia			11
Botswana			11	Kazakhstan	13			Somalia	13		
Brazil			22	Kenya	<i>Absent</i>			South Africa	17		
Bulgaria	<i>Absent</i>			Kuwait	11			South Sudan	10		
Burkina Faso	13			Lao People's Dem. Republic	12			Spain			15
Burundi	12			Latvia		11		Sri Lanka	<i>Absent</i>		
Cabo Verde			10	Lebanon	11			Sudan	15		
Cameroon			13	Lesotho	<i>Absent</i>			Suriname	5		5
Canada		15		Liechtenstein			10	Sweden		13	
Chad	13			Lithuania			11	Switzerland	12		
Chile	11		2	Madagascar	10			Syrian Arab Rep.	13		
China	23			Malawi	<i>Absent</i>			Thailand	10		8
Colombia			10	Maldives	<i>Absent</i>			The fYR of Macedonia	<i>Absent</i>		
Costa Rica	<i>Absent</i>			Mali	13			Timor-Leste	11		
Côte d'Ivoire	<i>Absent</i>			Malta	<i>Absent</i>			Togo	<i>Absent</i>		
Croatia	<i>Absent</i>			Mexico	10		10	Tunisia	13		
Cuba	13			Micronesia (Fed. States of)			8	Turkey	18		
Cyprus	3	4	3	Monaco			10	Uganda	15		
Czech Republic		13		Mongolia			11	Ukraine			17
DPR of Korea	12			Montenegro	<i>Absent</i>			United Arab Emirates	11		
DR of the Congo	17			Morocco	15			United Kingdom		18	
Denmark	12			Mozambique	13			Uruguay	8		3
Ecuador		8	5	Namibia	11			Uzbekistan	<i>Absent</i>		
Egypt	19			Netherlands			13	Vanuatu	<i>Absent</i>		
El Salvador	<i>Absent</i>			New Zealand			11	Venezuela (Bolivarian Rep. of)	4		11
Equatorial Guinea			11	Nicaragua	<i>Absent</i>			Viet Nam	19		
Estonia			11	Niger	<i>Absent</i>			Yemen	11		
Ethiopia	19			Nigeria	10			Zambia			13
Fiji	<i>Absent</i>			Norway			12	Zimbabwe	13		
Finland			12	Oman	11						
France	18			Pakistan	21						
Gabon	11			Palestine	11						
Georgia	<i>Absent</i>			Panama	<i>Absent</i>						

N.B. This list does not include delegations present at the session which were not entitled to vote pursuant to the provisions of Article 5.2 of the Statutes.

## The consequences of the US declaration on Jerusalem and the rights of the Palestinian people in Jerusalem in the light of the UN Charter and resolutions

*Resolution adopted by consensus<sup>1</sup> by the 138<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly  
(Geneva, 27 March 2018)*

The 138<sup>th</sup> Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

*Recalling* the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council, including resolutions 181 (II) (1947), 242 (1967), 252 (1968), 298 (1971), 446 (1979), 465 (1980), 478 (1980), 1322 (2000), 2334 (2016), United Nations General Assembly resolutions and other relevant international documents,

*Taking note* of the final communiqué and resolutions adopted by the Extraordinary Islamic Summit Conference and the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation held in Istanbul on 13 December 2017 and the Istanbul Declaration on "Freedom for Al-Quds",

*Rejecting* any unilateral decisions dealing with any changes to the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council and General Assembly and other international covenants dealing with the legal status of the city of Jerusalem, whether through governments of States or the Israeli occupation or otherwise,

*Deploing and condemning* the announcement by the US Administration of the transfer of its Embassy to occupied Jerusalem by mid-May, which coincides with the anniversary of the Nakba (15 May 1948),

*Reaffirming* its support for the right of the Palestinian people in their legitimate struggle to end the Israeli occupation and to regain their rights to return and establish their independent state with East Jerusalem as its capital,

1. *Renews* its solidarity with and support to the Palestinian people in defending their just cause and their legitimate rights, including their historical and rooted rights in Jerusalem, guaranteed by the relevant resolutions of international legitimacy;
2. *Supports* all legal and peaceful steps taken by the Palestinian leadership at the national and international levels to consolidate the sovereignty of Palestine over the Holy City of Jerusalem and the Occupied Palestinian Territory;
3. *Affirms* its absolute rejection in its entirety of the recent US Administration's decision regarding Jerusalem and *considers* it null and void under international law;
4. *Calls on* all parliaments to urge their governments to recognize the State of Palestine along the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital in accordance with UN resolutions;
5. *Reaffirms* that all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken by Israel to impose its law and measures on Jerusalem are illegal and have no legitimacy;

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<sup>1</sup> Delegations expressed their support for a two-State solution, but had concerns with some of the language and elements of the substance of the resolution. The following delegations expressed reservations on specific operative paragraphs: Finland, Italy and San Marino (para 2); France (paras 2 and 5); and Switzerland (paras 2, 4 and 5). France also expressed reservations on preambular paragraph 5. Furthermore Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Ecuador, Estonia, Fiji, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Malta, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Serbia, Seychelles, Sweden, Thailand, United Kingdom, and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) expressed reservations on the resolution as a whole.

6. *Demands* that Israel cease all settlement-building activities and any other measures aimed at altering the status, character and demographic composition of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around Jerusalem, all of which have a detrimental impact on the human rights of the Palestinian people and on the prospects for a peaceful settlement;
7. *Expresses* grave concern at the restrictions imposed by Israel to impede access by worshippers to the holy sites in Jerusalem;
8. *Calls on* international organizations to take the necessary steps to preserve and maintain the historical heritage of Jerusalem;
9. *Emphasizes* the need to support the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) to carry out aid programmes for the relief of the Palestinian refugees in line with UN General Assembly Resolution 302 (IV) of December 1949;
10. *Encourages* the relaunch of the peace process through a multilateral initiative in accordance with United Nations resolutions to achieve the existence of a two-State solution on the basis of the 1967 borders.

## Report of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights

*Noted by the 138<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly  
(Geneva, 28 March 2018)*

### **Preparatory debate on the next resolution: *Strengthening inter-parliamentary cooperation on migration and migration governance in view of the adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration***

The debate took place on Monday 26 March with the Committee President Ms. B. Tshireletso (Botswana) in the chair. The Committee approved the appointment of three Rapporteurs for the next resolution, Mr. J. Echániz (Spain), Ms. K. Sosa (El Salvador) and Mr. A. Touizi (Morocco). The debate was introduced by the two co-facilitators of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, Ambassador J. Lauber (Switzerland) and Ambassador J. Gomez Camacho (Mexico), followed by the three Rapporteurs.

The co-facilitators outlined the consultation and negotiation processes that should lead to the adoption of the Global Compact on Migration in December 2018. They briefed the Committee on the structure of the current draft, and welcomed the input of parliamentarians to this process. The co-facilitators underlined the need to change the narrative on migration. Most migration takes place within the same region - for example, Africans moving within Africa, Latin Americans within Latin America. Evidence was now available that showed that the economic contribution of migrants was around USD 7 trillion or nine per cent of global GDP. Most of these economic benefits stayed in the country of destination. Migration policy, and indeed the entire debate on migration, needed to be informed by evidence and respect for the human rights of people on the move.

The Rapporteurs shared their views on the key issues that the IPU resolution on this theme could address in order to support the development of common standards in the area of migration. During the debate, 35 delegates from all geopolitical groups took the floor. Delegates highlighted the need for a well-informed debate, including information on the push and pull factors of migration, on the various forms it took, as well as on the challenges and benefits it brought. Migration contributed to economic development. No country was exclusively a country of origin, transit or destination.

Delegates raised a number of priority issues. These included the development of comprehensive legislation that protects the rights of migrants, the need to address the root causes of migration, and the imperative to combat discrimination and xenophobia in the context of migration. Disaster-related migration required stronger responses that provided adequate protection for people who were forced to move. There was also a need to support migrants' participation in development and political decision-making, both in host countries and in countries of origin. Parliaments had a crucial role to play in all these areas, and in ensuring that gender equality and the rights of children were protected in all aspects of migration. The IPU could and should support them in this endeavor.

The President invited all Members to assist the Rapporteurs in drafting the resolution by providing written contributions by the deadline of 20 April 2018.

### **Consideration of the proposal for a debate on the theme *The role of parliaments in ending discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, and ensuring respect for the human rights of LGBTI persons***

On Tuesday 27 March, the Committee gave further consideration to the proposal to hold a debate, which would not lead to a resolution, on the role of parliaments in ending discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. On the occasion of the 137<sup>th</sup> Assembly in October 2017, that proposal had been approved by the Committee without a vote. However, in light of opposing views on the matter, the President of the 137<sup>th</sup> Assembly subsequently referred the matter back to the Committee for further consideration at the 138<sup>th</sup> Assembly.

At the session on 27 March, the Committee worked in an atmosphere of mutual respect, where all delegates were able to give their views on the proposal and listen to the views of others. The proposal was presented by Belgium, then 28 delegates from all geopolitical groups took the floor to express their position. In order to avoid any possible doubt about the decision, the Committee held a roll call vote and voted in favour of holding this debate at the next Assembly.

### **Elections**

The Committee elected new members to its Bureau (see pages 22-23).

The Committee elected Mr. A. Desai (India) as its new President. It reserved the decision of who will become vice-president until the 139<sup>th</sup> Assembly, when the new Bureau will meet for the first time.

## Report of the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs

*Noted by the 138<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly  
(Geneva, 28 March 2018)*

The Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs met on 27 March 2018, with its President Mr. A. Avsan, in the Chair. He noted that since his term as president was coming to a close, a new president would be elected at the end of the meeting.

Seven new members of the Bureau were confirmed: Ms. S. Alhashim (Kuwait), Mr. A. Al-Amri (Oman), Mr. M. Ben Souf (Tunisia), Mr. B. Llano Ramos (Paraguay), Ms. M.J. Carrión (Ecuador), Mr. L. Wehrli (Switzerland) and Ms. D. Nazarbaeva (Kazakhstan). Ms. L. Crexell (Argentina) resigned from the Bureau and was replaced by Mr. J.C. Romero (Argentina).

The President explained that the sitting was meant to provide a bridge to the session of the UN High-level Political Forum (HLPF) for sustainable development in July 2018 and that it had two primary objectives: to take stock of parliamentary action for the SDGs, and to prepare parliamentarians for the debate to be held at the HLPF.

### **Panel discussion on the parliamentary follow-up to the Sustainable Development Goals.**

Presenters: Mr. M. Mijatovic, MP (Serbia), Ms. L. Crexell, Senator (Argentina), Mr. E. Saravanpavan, MP (Sri Lanka), Ms. N. Isler, Director, SDG Lab, Geneva.

The discussion highlighted various initiatives taken by parliaments to institutionalize the SDGs and to oversee their implementation. Best practices included: setting up a focus group of MPs; reviewing institutional capacity for the SDGs using the IPU-UNDP self-assessment toolkit; holding public debates to raise awareness among citizens, civil society organizations and entrepreneurs; supporting multi-stakeholder consultative platforms; creating an observatory within parliament to evaluate legislative proposals from an SDG standpoint; and requiring each new piece of legislation to clearly indicate an SDG that would be advanced by it.

Some of the most common risks associated with parliamentary work for the SDGs were also discussed. They included: the tendency of most MPs to be conditioned by short-term electoral pressures more than the long-term vision of the SDGs; the tendency of governments and parliaments to only focus on those SDGs that were seen as critical to their countries, ignoring that the SDGs were all interlinked; the difficulty of setting policy priorities within a complex framework where virtually all issues mattered; the relative disadvantage of developed countries that were only now learning ways of pursuing global goals.

Looking at ways to improve the implementation of the SDGs across regions, it was noted that while the collection of quality data remained critical, an even bigger challenge was finding ways to ensure that all relevant data informed the policymaking process. A second challenge was finding an optimal balance between raising additional resources to finance and support the SDGs and making the best use of the resources that were already available. A third, common problem was the difficulty of breaking up policy silos in order to improve policy coherence among the goals. There was also a need to better articulate the vaguely defined "private sector" so that different actors such as transnational corporations, small and medium enterprises, and family-run businesses could be engaged more effectively in SDG implementation.

The particular role of youth was underscored. In the relatively long lifespan of the SDGs, today's youth would be tomorrow's voters, taxpayers and decision-makers who would need to carry the SDGs through to the end. It was important therefore that parliaments work particularly closely with young people, including by ensuring that the SDGs were part of the school curriculum at a very early stage. Parliaments and MPs, along with governments and other stakeholders, also needed to do a much better job of publicizing the SDGs in language that everyone could understand.

As much of the responsibility for the SDGs lay with the governments that held executive power, the UN would continue to play a critical role in supporting the relevant efforts by its Member States. It had a unique convening power to bring governments together, the means and the moral authority to raise difficult questions for which innovative solutions were needed, and the ability to provide a repository of good practices for governments to learn from. With the help of the IPU, parliaments too could benefit from all that the UN had to offer with regard to SDGs implementation.

**Panel discussion on the main theme of the HLPF: Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies.**

Presenters: Mr. A. Sinmaleza, MP (Ecuador), Ms. H. Haukeland Liadal, MP (Norway), Mr. M. Wackernagel, President and CEO (Global Footprint Network), Mr. S. Stone (United Nations Environment Programme).

The discussion focused on the environment as one of the pillars of sustainable development. The challenge of reversing unsustainable consumption and production patterns and of shifting energy production toward renewable sources (green energy) to combat climate change was deemed the most immediate threat to the planet.

Global consumption and production was now well above the environment's regenerative capacities. While economies might be growing in monetary terms, they were also undermining their own resource base and causing irreparable damage to the environment. The concept of the ecological footprint and its attendant calculator very effectively demonstrated how current consumption and production patterns demanded more of nature than nature could deliver. That was evidenced in particular by rising carbon emissions and their impact on climate change. Most of the ecological deficit could be attributed to unsustainable lifestyles in developed countries.

The discussion exposed the shortcomings of GDP as a key measure of economic and social progress. GDP assumed that material wealth was tantamount to human well-being, when in fact the latter depended on many other factors, such as education, health, culture, free time, friendship, community and a clean environment. Health care expenditure related to environmental pollution was counted towards GDP, as a benefit to the economy, when in fact it should count as a liability. The ecological footprint therefore provided the ideal counterweight to GDP: whereas GDP assumed potential infinite economic growth, the ecological footprint showed the limits of growth in environmental terms.

Energy was vital to all human activity. As carbon emissions linked to fossil fuels were the principle cause of the current environmental deficit, massive investments in renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power were urgently needed. However, that required urgent action against illicit capital flows and tax evasion, as well as increasing levels of public finance, so that more funds could be allocated to help developing countries.

In addition to scaling up green energy, other factors would prove decisive in the conversion toward environmental sustainability: urban design, so that cities were more compact and more efficient in their use of energy and other inputs; sustainable food production, which required more efficient agriculture and land use; and policies to contain population growth.

At the end of the session, the President encouraged participants to join their national delegations to the upcoming HLPF, from 9 to 18 July, in New York. He further announced that the IPU would hold an event on 16 July as an opportunity for parliamentarians to take stock of the main messages of the HLPF.

The Committee proceeded to formally endorse the nomination of Mr. J.C. Romero as its President, and the sitting was then closed.



## Cooperation with the United Nations system

### List of activities undertaken by the IPU from 15 September 2017 to 15 March 2018

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 202<sup>nd</sup> session  
(Geneva, 28 March 2018)*

#### **Democracy and Human Rights**

The IPU continued to contribute to the UN process for a Global Compact for Migration that would conclude with a major conference in December 2018. The IPU President led a delegation to a Stocktaking Meeting to recap UN migration debates over the year from 4 to 6 December in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. On 11 December, the Head of the Office of the Permanent Observer to the UN in New York participated in a panel discussion at the United Nations on the political and civil rights of migrants and refugees. Members of parliament participated in UN multi-stakeholder hearings held on 18 December and 21 February.

The joint UN-IPU 2018 Parliamentary Hearing, also on migration, was held on 22 and 23 February in New York. Some 200 parliamentarians participated, along with high level UN officials, ambassadors and experts. The President of the UN General Assembly was actively involved in the preparation and running of the Hearing, the outcome of which will be shared with the UN membership as a document of the UN General Assembly and a formal contribution to the process on the Global Compact for Migration.

The second edition of the IPU-UNDP Global Parliamentary Report, entitled *Parliamentary oversight: Parliament's power to hold government to account*, was launched during the 137<sup>th</sup> Assembly in St. Petersburg. The report was presented to a group of UN ambassadors (friends of the IPU) during a luncheon event on 28 November in New York. The IPU and UNDP are actively encouraging parliaments to use the report as a basis for reviewing their oversight performance, notably with regard to parliament's role in monitoring progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

UNDP and the IPU continued their joint project of assistance to the Parliament of Myanmar. The two organizations also continued their collaboration in support of the Parliaments of Djibouti and Georgia, and began collaboration in support of the parliament of Vanuatu.

The IPU Secretary General addressed the high-level segment of the 37<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Human Rights Council, and underscored the work carried out by the IPU and its Member Parliaments in the promotion of democracy and human rights, including in terms of mobilizing parliamentary involvement in the Universal Periodic Review of human rights commitments.

#### **Gender equality**

A special launch event of the new iKNOW Politics website took place at the IPU's New York Office on 29 November. iKNOW Politics is an online platform to support women in politics, a joint initiative of the IPU, UN Women, UNDP and International IDEA. The event marked the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and focused on violence against women in politics.

On the same topic, the IPU was a collaborating partner of an Expert Group Meeting organized by UN Women and OHCHR and convened by the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women (SRVAW), in view of her upcoming 2018 UN General Assembly Report (73<sup>rd</sup> session) on the issue of violence against women in politics. The Meeting took place on 8 and 9 March in New York.

On 13 March 2018, the IPU and UN Women held their annual parliamentary meeting on the occasion of the 62<sup>nd</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women, on the theme of the empowerment of rural women and girls. The IPU held two other side events of the CSW to highlight women issues.

The IPU pursued its collaboration with the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee). It provided the Committee with information on the countries up for review at its 68<sup>th</sup> and 69<sup>th</sup> sessions (October-November 2017 and February-March 2018) in Geneva. The IPU also met with the Committee's CEDAW-IPU Working Group on both occasions in order to discuss how to further strengthen parliaments' ability to advance gender equality.

## Youth empowerment

A delegation of MPs from the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians of the IPU participated in the annual Youth Forum of the UN Economic and Social Council on 30 and 31 January. The Forum's main theme was the role of youth in building sustainable and resilient urban and rural communities.

On 17 and 18 November, the IPU held the fourth edition of its annual Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians in Ottawa. The Conference was hosted by the Parliament of Canada. The UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth and the President of the UN General Assembly delivered video messages focusing on the theme of the Conference: Young parliamentarians as drivers of inclusion. Representatives from the ILO and UNAIDS also took part as panellists during the event.

On 27 and 28 September, the IPU also organized the Regional Conference of Young Parliamentarians of Africa on the subject of enhancing political participation for more inclusive and peaceful societies. Focusing on political empowerment and the prevention of violent extremism, the young MPs were joined by representatives from UNICEF, UNDP, OHCHR and UNODC, who took part as panellists during various sessions.

## International peace and security

A representative of the UN Peacebuilding Support Office participated in an event on *Sustaining peace as a vehicle for achieving sustainable development* on 18 October, during the 137<sup>th</sup> Assembly.

The IPU Standing Committees on UN Affairs and on Peace and International Security held a joint event on 16 October, during the 137<sup>th</sup> Assembly, to discuss the newly minted UN Nuclear Prohibition Treaty. The Chair of the preparatory conference for the treaty, Ambassador Whyte-Gomez of Costa Rica, was among the presenters. The treaty specifically invites parliamentarians to be engaged in this important process.

In mid-December, the UN General Assembly's annual resolution on inter-religious dialogue included a paragraph welcoming the IPU Declaration on *Promoting cultural pluralism and peace through interfaith and inter-ethnic dialogue*, which was adopted at the 137<sup>th</sup> Assembly, St. Petersburg, Russian Federation.

On 5 and 6 February 2018, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) participated in the first meeting of the High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism and presented its expertise in the subject matter. Since 2015, UNODC and the IPU have been working closely on an IPU-UNODC Joint-Programme, which aims to bridge the significant gaps in the implementation of IPU and UN counter-terrorism resolutions. The High-Level Advisory Group was established to guide the Member-driven plan of action of the Joint-Programme.

## Sustainable development

During this period, the IPU participated actively in several working group meetings of the Global Partnership for Development Cooperation (GPEDC), which includes UNDP. Work on a joint IPU-UNDP Guidance note for MPs on development cooperation proceeded with two drafts prepared during the first quarter of 2018.

The UN Secretary-General's second report on *Repositioning of the UN development system*, issued in January, contained provisions for UN engagement with parliaments.

The IPU provided support to the Global Accountability Report of the UN Development Cooperation Forum (DCF), helping secure the participation of a number of parliaments in the survey exercise leading up to the report. Preparations got underway to engage parliamentarians in the biannual ministerial meeting of the DCF in May 2018.

The IPU and the UN Environment Programme agreed on a Memorandum of Understanding that sets priorities for cooperation until the end of 2020. At the time of writing, the MoU was in its final stages before signature. The MoU prioritizes the SDGs related to climate change and the environment and focuses on building capacity in parliaments to legislate and oversee the implementation of laws and policies. The MoU is expected to be signed by the heads of the two organizations in the coming weeks. The two organizations are also working on producing a background paper for parliamentarians on the green economy.

The IPU and UNDP continued to support SDG self-assessments in parliaments through the IPU-UNDP SDG Self-Assessment Toolkit. During the reporting period the parliaments of Serbia, Fiji, Mali, Kenya and Djibouti came up with action plans to set up institutional arrangements and mainstream the SDGs in their work.

### Senior-level interaction

The Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna, Mr. Yury Fedotov, represented the UN Secretary-General at the opening of the 137<sup>th</sup> Assembly in St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, on 14 October. During the Assembly, the former Chief of Staff to two Presidents of the General Assembly, Ambassador T. Christensen, participated in a panel discussion of the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs on *The role of the UN General Assembly in international governance* on 18 October.

On 13 November, the IPU President met with the Assistant UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. Volker Türk, and discussed the need for the IPU to develop more fieldwork in order to address the legislative challenges in terms of nationality laws. They also talked about the need to conduct more field missions and UNHCR proposed different places such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan and Zambia.

The President of the UN General Assembly, Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, sent a video message to the opening session of the Fourth Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians on 17 November in Ottawa, Canada. The conference was organized in cooperation with the Parliament of Canada.

On 27 November, the UN-IPU annual senior leadership meeting took place at UN Headquarters in New York. Co-chaired by the IPU Secretary General and the UN Deputy Secretary-General, Ms. Amina Mohammed, the meeting helped clarify a number of coordination issues at national and global levels. It recommended, among other things, that a working-level meeting should take place each year in advance of the senior leadership meeting.

The IPU President requested a personal meeting with Ms. Mohammed to introduce herself. The discussions delved into the IPU's willingness to work in a coordinated manner with the United Nations, in particular regarding the SDGs, and women and youth empowerment, which was of great importance to parliaments and countries.

Also on 27 November, the IPU Secretary General met with the Administrator for UNDP, Mr. Achim Steiner, to officially sign a new Memorandum of Understanding which sets the priorities and institutional parameters for further cooperation between the two organizations.

On 28 November, 21 Permanent Representatives attended the Group of Friends of the IPU luncheon hosted by the IPU Secretary General. The event marked the beginning of the consultative process for a UN General Assembly resolution on interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the IPU, expected in May 2018.

On 13 December, the IPU President met with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr. Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein. She reaffirmed the IPU's commitment to protect and defend the human rights of parliamentarians. She also extended an invitation to him to participate in the 138<sup>th</sup> Assembly and requested his support for carrying out workshops that could provide in-depth information and tools to allow parliamentarians to improve the policy frameworks on human rights in every country.

The IPU President and the Vice-President of the Executive Committee held a meeting in mid-December with the Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Mr. Michael Møller. They discussed existing cooperation and explored further avenues for the future, particularly regarding the SDGs. They proposed to organize a workshop for the Chairs of Foreign Affairs and Finance Committees of all IPU Member Parliaments to offer practical information for better implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

At a stock-taking meeting on the Global Compact for Migration held in Puerto Vallarta in December, the IPU President met with the Director General of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Ambassador William Lacy Swing, and extended to him an invitation to address the 138<sup>th</sup> Assembly.

On 22 February, the IPU President and Secretary General met with the United Nations Secretary-General, and discussed parliamentary action on some of the principal issues on the international agenda, as well as opportunities to further strengthen the partnership between the IPU and the United Nations. They underscored the critical role and responsibility of parliaments in achieving the SDGs, particularly in terms of ratification, adjustment of the national legislation, budget allocation and accountability to make the Goals feasible at the local level. The IPU President invited Mr. Guterres to the 139<sup>th</sup> Assembly, to which he replied favourably.

## Report of the Committee on Middle East Questions

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 202<sup>nd</sup> session  
(Geneva, 28 March 2018)*

The Committee held two sittings, on 24 and 26 March 2018. The Committee's President Ms. S. Ataullahjan (Canada), Mr. A.N.M. Al-Ahmad (Palestine), Ms. R.A. Elwani (Egypt), Mr. F. Müri (Switzerland), Mr. M. Al-Mehrzi (United Arab Emirates), Ms. D. Pascal Allende (Chile) and Ms. B. Grouwels (Belgium) attended both of the sessions. Mr. R. Munawar (Indonesia) attended the sitting on 24 March. Mr. N. Shai (Israel) and Mr. H. Julien-Laferrière (France) attended the sitting on 26 March.

The Committee opened the meeting of 24 March with the election of a new president and unanimously elected Ms. S. Ataullahjan (Canada) to this position.

The Committee heard a report on the latest general developments in the Middle East. In this context, the Committee was informed about the situation in Syria, in particular in Afrin and the Eastern Ghouta, and on updates on the Working Group on Syria (WGS). The Committee was informed about the All Syrian Forum held in Sochi, Russia earlier in the year. The members were also informed that a report from the WGS would be presented to the Executive Committee by the President of the WGS.

Furthermore, the Committee invited the delegation of Yemen to present a short update of the current situation in the country. The delegation highlighted that it was attending the 138<sup>th</sup> Assembly as a single, united delegation. The delegation further recognized the IPU's role in providing a platform for dialogue between the two factions of the Yemeni parliament, which had facilitated this outcome. The Committee welcomed the efforts of all actors and encouraged the Yemeni delegation to continue these positive developments, especially in order to help alleviate the suffering of the Yemeni people.

Ambassador Christian Dussey from the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP) gave a presentation on the work of GCSP and its focus on providing training for the purpose of promoting peace and security to a wide range of actors. The synergies between GCSP and the mandate of the Committee on Middle East Questions were evident and could provide opportunities aimed at empowering members of parliaments in international policies.

The Committee heard an update on the Science for Peace projects, which aim at taking elements of conflict and turning them into reasons for co-existence. The Members of the Committee were informed that the details of the Science for Peace Schools, such as the curriculum and the dates for the inaugural classes, had all been put in place. The project however, had been stalled following the recognition by the US administration of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. This decision had generated an un conducive climate for the implementation of the projects. Despite the resulting tense political climate in the region, the Members of the Committee reiterated their determination for the Committee to implement the Science for Peace Schools, in accordance with its decision in St. Petersburg to move ahead with concrete action.

The Committee highlighted the importance of maintaining new water as the theme for the first school and of looking into science and technology for future schools. Moreover, it remained convinced that in exploring the feasibility of working together on things that unite rather than divide, peace and dialogue remained viable.

The Committee heard the views of both Israel and of Palestine regarding the US administration's recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. That said, both parties underscored their commitment to the work and projects of the Committee as all efforts to build bridges and foster peace had to be pursued, particularly for the good of future generations.

The Secretariat was asked to draw up a plan of action laying out the next steps of the Committee's projects, including details for the Third Roundtable on Water and a follow-up meeting on the Science for Peace Schools.

## Statistics of the Gender Partnership Group

### Status of participation of women delegates at the 138<sup>th</sup> Assembly of the IPU (at 27 March 2018)

#### Composition of delegations at the last eight IPU statutory meetings (October 2014 - present)

Meeting	Total delegates	Total/percentage of women delegates		Total delegations	Total/percentage of all-male delegations (2 or more)		Total all-female delegations (2 or more)	Total single-sex delegations (2 or more)	Total single-member delegations (male and female)
		Total	Percentage		Total	Percentage			
Geneva (27/03/18)	745	227	30.5	148	18	12.7	3	21	6
St. Petersburg (10/17)	829	249	30.0	155	17	11.8	1	18	11
Dhaka (04/17)	612	193	31.5	126	11	9.6	1	12	12
Geneva (10/16)	693	228	32.9	141	15	11.5	3	18	11
Lusaka (03/16)	636	190	29.9	126	19	15.8	0	19	6
Geneva (10/15)	647	210	32.5	133	12	9.9	2	14	12
Hanoi (03/15)	675	189	28.0	128	16	13.7	1	17	11
Geneva 14 (10/14)	717	229	31.9	145	18	12.9	1	19	6

#### Single-sex, multi-member delegations present in Geneva (status on 27 March 2018)

N°	Country	Geneva 03/18			St. Petersburg 17			Dhaka 17			Geneva 16			Lusaka 16			Geneva 15			Hanoi 15			Geneva 10/14		
		Women MPs	Men MPs	total	Women MPs	Men MPs	total	Women MPs	Men MPs	total	Women MPs	Men MPs	total	Women MPs	Men MPs	total	Women MPs	Men MPs	total	Women MPs	Men MPs	total	Women MPs	Men MPs	total
1	Andorra	0	3	3	2	2	4	1	2	3	2	2	4	0	2	2	3	1	4	absent			2	0	2
2	Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	4	4	0	2	2	absent			0	2	2	absent			0	3	3	absent			1	2	3
3	Burkina Faso	0	7	7	1	7	8	1	6	7	1	6	7	1	7	8	1	7	8	1	7	8	2	5	7
4	Cabo Verde	0	3	3	3	2	5	1	2	3	3	1	4	absent			0	3	3	absent			1	2	3
5	Côte d'Ivoire	0	3	3	1	2	3	absent			absent			1	4	5	absent			1	2	3	1	4	5
6	DPR Korea	0	4	4	0	6	6	0	3	3	0	4	4	0	4	4	absent			0	4	4	absent		
7	Denmark	0	2	2	1	5	6	4	2	6	0	2	2	3	4	7	1	4	5	0	8	8	0	4	4
8	Guinea	0	2	2	0	2	2	1	1	2	0	4	4	1	1	2	1	4	5	1	1	2	0	3	3
9	Laos	0	2	2	1	2	3	1	3	4	1	2	3	absent			1	1	2	3	4	7	1	1	2
10	Lebanon	0	2	2	1	2	3	0	2	2	1	3	4	0	2	2	1	3	4	absent			1	4	5
11	Liechtenstein	0	2	2	0	2	2	absent			1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	absent			1	1	2
12	Maldives	0	3	3	1	5	6	1	4	5	0	4	4	1	4	5	0	1	1	0	5	5	2	6	8
13	Malta	0	2	2	0	3	3	0	1	1	absent			0	2	2	absent			0	2	2	0	2	2
14	Mauritania	2	0	2	2	2	4	1	1	2	1	1	2	0	1	1	3	0	3	2	0	2	0	3	3
15	Micronesia	0	4	4	0	4	4	absent			0	3	3	0	3	3	0	4	4	0	3	3	0	2	2
16	Morocco	0	8	8	0	8	8	1	4	5	0	4	4	1	7	8	3	5	8	1	7	8	1	7	8
17	Panama	0	2	2	1	5	6	1	1	2	absent			0	1	1	1	3	4	1	3	4	1	2	3
18	Peru	2	0	2	3	1	4	absent			2	1	3	absent			2	1	3	1	2	3	2	3	5
19	Republic of Moldova	2	0	2	1	1	2	absent			absent			absent			1	0	1	absent			absent		
20	Somalia	0	2	2	0	3	3	absent			absent			0	2	2	absent			absent			absent		
21	Yemen	0	7	7	absent			absent			0	8	8	absent			absent			absent			absent		

#### Single-member delegations present in Geneva (status on 27 March 2018)

N°	Country	Geneva 03/18			St. Petersburg 17			Dhaka 17			Geneva 16			Lusaka 16			Geneva 15			Hanoi 15			Geneva 10/14		
		Women MPs	Men MPs	total	Women MPs	Men MPs	total	Women MPs	Men MPs	total	Women MPs	Men MPs	total	Women MPs	Men MPs	total	Women MPs	Men MPs	total	Women MPs	Men MPs	total	Women MPs	Men MPs	total
1	Colombia	0	1	1	1	1	2	absent			1	1	2	absent			absent			absent			1	7	8
2	Costa Rica	1	0	1	0	1	1	absent			0	1	1	absent			1	0	1	absent			2	1	3
3	Guatemala	1	0	1	1	2	3	0	2	2	2	0	2	absent			absent			absent			0	1	1
4	Nicaragua	1	0	1	1	0	1	absent			1	0	1	absent			absent			absent			1	0	1
5	Paraguay	0	1	1	0	1	1	absent			absent			absent			absent			absent			1	2	3
6	Vanuatu	0	1	1	not affiliated																				

## Amendments to the IPU Statutes and Rules

*Adopted by the IPU Governing Council at its 202<sup>nd</sup> session  
and by the 138<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly  
(Geneva, 28 March 2018)*

### (a) Statutes

Article 10.2, add at the end of the paragraph: "***A Member Parliament may register one additional delegate if at least one young parliamentarian<sup>1</sup> is part of the delegation, on condition that the delegation is composed of both sexes and the Member is not in arrears in the payment of its assessed contributions***".

### (b) Rules of the Assembly

Rule 22.1, amend as follows: "~~No more than~~ **Two** representatives of each delegation may speak during the General Debate. ~~For this Debate, every delegation shall be entitled to eight minutes' speaking time unless the Steering Committee decides otherwise. When two speakers from the same delegation are registered for this Debate. They shall share the speaking time~~ **as they deem fit** in the most appropriate way. **An additional MP from each delegation may address the General Debate, provided he/she is a young parliamentarian<sup>2</sup>.**"

Delete Rule 22.2

~~2. With a view to ensuring the normal running of the debates, the Steering Committee may adjust the above-mentioned speaking time to suit the circumstances.~~

### (c) Practical modalities of the rights and responsibilities of Observers at IPU Meetings

Paragraph 7, amend as follows: "In the General Debate of the Assembly, the speaking time of observers will be limited to **three five** minutes. Some flexibility will be shown to executive heads of organizations of the United Nations system who wish to address the IPU."

#### Explanatory note

The 8-minute speaking time referenced in the Rules has not been applicable for several years now. In 2014, the format of IPU Assemblies changed from a five-day event to four days, with the consequent reduction of time allocated to the General Debate (as compared to the 18 hours devoted to the Debate prior to 2014, only 13-14 hours were available in 2017). Moreover, IPU membership has grown considerably (from 108 Members in 1987 to 178 Members now), which has also led to the reduction in speaking time.

As part of the modalities to enhance youth participation at IPU Assemblies, the Governing Council agreed that a list of speakers shall be opened and reserved exclusively for young MPs. Therefore, it is suggested that an additional two minutes be given to delegations registering a young MP as a third speaker in the General Debate, on condition that the additional time is used by a young MP.

Consequently, it is proposed that the speaking time in the General Debate be modified as follows:

List A	High-level segment (Presiding Officers)	7 minutes
List B	First speakers from delegations	6 minutes
List C	Second speakers from delegations	Time remaining (up to a total of 7 minutes for two speakers)
List D	Young parliamentarians	2 minutes

In case of need and depending on the number of speakers, the Assembly Steering Committee may decide to further reduce the speaking time. As usual, Members and Associate Members have the right to divide their speaking time between two speakers from the same delegation (majority-opposition, male-female, etc.). Observer delegations will have three minutes' speaking time and will normally speak at the end of List B. Heads of Organizations will be included in the usual drawing of lots for the order of speakers.

<sup>1</sup> In these Statutes, whenever the words "young parliamentarians" are used, they should be construed as referring to parliamentarians who are below the age of 45 years.

<sup>2</sup> In these Rules, whenever the words "young parliamentarians" are used, they should be construed as referring to parliamentarians who are below the age of 45 years.

## Calendar of future meetings and other activities

*Approved by the IPU Governing Council at its 202<sup>nd</sup> session  
(Geneva, 28 March 2018)*

41 <sup>st</sup> session of the Steering Committee of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO	BRUSSELS (European Parliament) 24-25 April 2018
12 <sup>th</sup> Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament	COCHABAMBA (Plurinational State of Bolivia) 25-26 April 2018
Fourth regional seminar on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for the Parliaments of Eastern and Central Europe and Central Asia	BELGRADE (Serbia) 24-25 May 2018
Parliamentary meeting at the World Health Assembly	GENEVA May 2018 (Dates to be confirmed)
Information seminar on the structure and functioning of the Inter-Parliamentary Union for French-speaking participants	GENEVA (IPU Headquarters) 19-22 June 2018
Third South Asian Speakers' Summit on the achievement of the SDGs	COLOMBO (Sri Lanka) 11-12 July 2018
Parliamentary side event at the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF)	NEW YORK 16 July 2018 (to be confirmed)
Third inter-regional seminar on the achievement of the SDGs for parliaments of developing countries	BEIJING (China) 10-12 September 2018 (to be confirmed)
Second regional seminar on the achievement of the SDGs for the Parliaments of Latin America and the Caribbean, organized by the IPU and Parlantino	PANAMA CITY (Panama) September 2018 (Dates to be confirmed)
42 <sup>nd</sup> session of the Steering Committee of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO on the occasion of the annual WTO Public Forum	GENEVA (IPU Headquarters) September/October 2018 (Dates to be confirmed)
Parliamentary session within the framework of the annual WTO Public Forum	GENEVA September/October 2018 (Dates to be confirmed)
139 <sup>th</sup> Assembly and related meetings	GENEVA 14-18 October 2018
Parliamentary Meeting at the G20 Summit	BUENOS AIRES (Argentina) 1-2 November 2018
Seminar on the achievement of the SDGs for the Parliaments of the Twelve Plus Group and East Asia	JERUSALEM (Israel) 20-22 November 2018
Regional workshop for non-Member parliaments in the Caribbean	Suriname November 2018 (Dates to be confirmed)

43 <sup>rd</sup> session of the Steering Committee of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO on the occasion of the annual WTO session	GENEVA (IPU Headquarters) November/December 2018 (Dates to be confirmed)
Annual session of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO	GENEVA November/December 2018 (Dates to be confirmed)
Parliamentary Meeting at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP24)	KRAKOW (Poland) 9 December 2018
Regional seminar on the achievement of the SDGs for the Parliaments of IPA-CIS	ST. PETERSBURG (Russian Federation) (Dates to be confirmed)
Conference for gender equality committees in the framework of the joint IPU, UN Women and the Committee on Equal Opportunity for Women and Men of the Parliament of Turkey project	Turkey (Dates to be confirmed)
Regional seminar on the contribution of parliament to the promotion and the protection of the rights of the child on the occasion of the CEMAC Parliamentary session	CEMAC Parliament HQ MALABO (Equatorial Guinea) (Dates to be confirmed)
Regional seminar on the achievement of the SDGs for Arab Parliaments	Egypt (Dates to be confirmed)
Regional workshop on the Parliament's contribution to the work of the World Trade Organization (WTO) for African English-speaking parliaments, organized by the IPU and the WTO	GABORONE (Botswana) (Dates to be confirmed)
Second regional seminar on the achievement of the SDGs for Parliaments in the Asia-Pacific Region	ULAANBAATAR (Mongolia) (Dates to be confirmed)
Third Roundtable convened by the Committee on Middle East Questions	Venue and dates to be confirmed
World e-Parliament Conference 2018	Venue and dates to be confirmed
Regional seminar on <i>Translating international human rights commitments into national realities: The contribution of parliament to the work of the United Nations Human Rights Council</i>	Venue and dates to be confirmed
5 <sup>th</sup> Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians	BAKU (Azerbaijan) (Dates to be confirmed)
Second regional seminar on the achievement of the SDGs for African Parliaments	Venue and dates to be confirmed
Parliamentary Meeting at the Global Compact on Migration	MARRAKECH (Morocco) November/December 2018 (Dates to be confirmed)
140 <sup>th</sup> Assembly and related meetings	BUENOS AIRES (Argentina) 6-10 April 2019
141 <sup>st</sup> Assembly and related meetings	GENEVA 13-17 October 2019



## Agenda of the 139<sup>th</sup> Assembly

(Geneva, 14-18 October 2018)

1. Election of the President and Vice-Presidents of the 139<sup>th</sup> Assembly
2. Consideration of requests for the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda
3. General Debate
4. *Strengthening inter-parliamentary cooperation on migration and migration governance in view of the adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights)*
5. Reports of the Standing Committees on Peace and International Security; Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade; and United Nations Affairs
6. Approval of the subject item for the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights at the 141<sup>st</sup> IPU Assembly and appointment of the Rapporteurs
7. Amendments to the IPU Statutes and Rules

## Decisions concerning the Human Rights of Parliamentarians

### Cambodia

*Decision adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 202<sup>nd</sup> session  
(Geneva, 28 March 2018)*

KHM27 - Chan Cheng	KHM76 - Ky Wandara
KHM48 - Mu Sochua (Ms.)	KHM77 - Lath Littay
KHM49 - Keo Phirum	KHM78 - Lim Bun Sidareth
KHM50 - Ho Van	KHM79 - Lim Kimya
KHM51 - Long Ry	KHM80 - Long Botta
KHM52 - Nut Romdoul	KHM81 - Ly Srey Vyna (Ms.)
KHM53 - Men Sothavarin	KHM82 - Mao Monyvann
KHM54 - Real Khemarin	KHM83 - Ngim Nheng
KHM55 - Sok Hour Hong	KHM84 - Ngor Kim Cheang
KHM56 - Kong Sophea	KHM85 - Ou Chanrath
KHM57 - Nhay Chamroeun	KHM86 - Ou Chanrith
KHM58 - Sam Rainsy	KHM87 - Pin Ratana
KHM59 - Um Sam Am	KHM88 - Pol Hom
KHM60 - Kem Sokha	KHM89 - Pot Poeu (Ms.)
KHM61 - Thak Lany (Ms.)	KHM90 - Sok Umsea
KHM62 - Chea Poch	KHM91 - Son Chhay
KHM63 - Cheam Channy	KHM92 - Suon Rida
KHM64 - Chiv Cata	KHM93 - Te Chanmony (Ms.)
KHM65 - Dam Sithik	KHM94 - Tioulong Saumura (Ms.)
KHM66 - Dang Chamreun	KHM95 - Tok Vanchan
KHM67 - Eng Chhai Eang	KHM96 - Tuon Yokda
KHM68 - Heng Danaro	KHM97 - Tuot Khoert
KHM69 - Ke Sovannroth (Ms.)	KHM98 - Uch Serey Yuth
KHM70 - Ken Sam Pumsen	KHM99 - Vann Narith
KHM71 - Keo Sambath	KHM100 - Yem Ponhearith
KHM72 - Khy Vanndeth	KHM101 - Yim Sovann
KHM73 - Kimsour Phirith	KHM102 - Yun Tharo
KHM74 - Kong Bora	KHM103 - Tep Sothy (Ms.)
KHM75 - Kong Kimhak	

#### Alleged human rights violations

- ✓ **Violation of freedom of opinion and expression**
- ✓ **Violation of freedom of assembly and association**
- ✓ **Abusive revocation of the parliamentary mandate**
- ✓ **Lack of due process in proceedings**
- ✓ **Violation of freedom of movement**
- ✓ **Threats and acts of intimidation**
- ✓ **Failure to respect parliamentary immunity**

#### A. Summary of the case

On 16 November 2017, the Supreme Court dissolved the sole opposition party in Cambodia, the Cambodian National Rescue Party (CNRP). The one page court decision is based on recent legislative amendments that are at odds with the Constitution and with the international human rights obligations of Cambodia. It also banned a total of 118 CNRP leaders (including all 55 CNRP members of the National Assembly) from political life for five years with no possibility of appeal. Their parliamentary mandates were immediately revoked and their seats reallocated to non-elected political parties allegedly aligned with the ruling party.

The dissolution of the CNRP has left the ruling Cambodian People's Party (CPP) - and Prime Minister Hun Sen - with no significant opponent in the run-up to the July 2018 elections. The UN and other international stakeholders have voiced grave concerns about the political environment and its consequences for the conduct of credible, free and fair elections in Cambodia.

The complainant has called for the immediate reinstatement of all parliamentarians and the unhindered participation of the opposition in the elections, claiming that the dissolution of the CNRP violated the fundamental rights of the parliamentarians targeted and was in breach of the Constitution and laws of Cambodia. The Cambodian authorities affirmed that the Supreme Court decision was based on charges of conspiracy with a foreign country to overthrow the legitimate Government. They pointed out that the National Assembly remained a multiparty parliament composed of four political parties.

Following the dissolution of the CNRP, elections for the Senate in February 2018 took place unopposed, with all seats going to the CPP.

The dissolution of the CNRP takes place against the backdrop of long-standing and repeated threats, intimidation or groundless criminal charges against its parliamentarians. They have been repeatedly warned by the Prime Minister that their only choice was to join the ruling party or to be prepared for the dissolution and ban of their party. All the parliamentarians are currently in exile.

Since 2013, some 15 of them have been facing criminal accusations and have been subjected to physical attacks that have gone unpunished. The few assailants who were briefly detained have been released, promoted and reintegrated into the Prime Minister's team of private security guards. The judicial proceedings against opposition parliamentarians have concluded with systematic convictions. Serious issues of due process and lack of judicial independence have been raised. The complainant alleges that the convictions violate the right to freedom of expression of the parliamentarians concerned, who were sentenced for using social media to issue statements criticizing the ruling party and the Prime Minister.

Two former parliamentarians remain in detention (Mr. Kem Sokha and Mr. Um Sam An). Judicial proceedings are still ongoing against Mr. Sam Rainsy and Mr. Kem Sokha. The latter incurs a 30 year prison term for planning to overthrow the Government. The charge is essentially substantiated by a 2013 TV speech in which Mr. Kem Sokha calls for peaceful political change in Cambodia without at any point inciting violence, hatred or uttering defamatory words.

Mr. Kem Sokha remains detained in solitary confinement and his health has allegedly deteriorated in recent months. The Cambodian authorities denied the IPU permission to visit Mr. Kem Sokha in detention.

## B. Decision

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

1. *Notes with consternation* that all 55 parliamentarians of the only opposition party elected to the National Assembly were stripped of their parliamentary mandates and were banned from political life as a result of a Supreme Court ruling and on the basis of legislation which ran completely counter to their individual and collective rights to take part in the conduct of public affairs and their right to a fair trial; *is deeply concerned* that all 55 opposition members of the National Assembly of Cambodia were promptly replaced by non-elected political parties allegedly aligned with the ruling party, which only reinforces the perceived political motivation for the Supreme Court decision;

### Case CMBD-Coll.3

**Cambodia:** Parliament affiliated to the IPU

**Victims:** 57 former parliamentarians of the opposition (50 men and 7 women), 55 from the National Assembly and two from the Senate

**Complainant(s):** Section I.1 (a) and (c) of the [Committee Procedure](#) (Annex 1)

**Submission of complaint:** November 2011

**Recent IPU decision:** [February 2018](#)

**IPU Mission:** [February 2016](#)

#### Recent Committee hearing:

- Hearing with the delegation of Cambodia at the 137<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly (October 2017)
- Complainant: January 2018

#### Recent follow-up:

- Communication from the authorities: Letters of the Secretary General of the National Assembly (March 2018)
- Communication from the complainant: January 2018
- Communication from the IPU to the Secretary General of the National Assembly (March 2018)
- Communication from the IPU to the complainant: March 2018 ■

2. *Concludes* that these latest repressive measures clearly constitute violations of the fundamental rights of the parliamentarians concerned; *observes with regret* that they are sadly reminiscent of a long-standing pattern of abuse against the opposition that has been documented by the IPU before every election in Cambodia in the past;
3. *Is deeply concerned* that these measures leave the ruling party with no significant challenger ahead of the upcoming general elections and therefore deprive a significant part of the Cambodian population from parliamentary representation and from the ability to freely exercise their right to vote for the political representatives of their choice; therefore *expresses serious concerns* about the conduct of credible, free, fair and transparent elections in July 2018;
4. *Urges* the Cambodian authorities to immediately reinstate all 55 members of the CNRP in the National Assembly, and to resume the political dialogue and allow the CNRP to field candidates for the upcoming elections; *reiterates its call* on the Cambodian authorities to take urgent measures to end the ongoing harassment of the CNRP and its members, as well as provide all appropriate guarantees to ensure that those who have gone into exile are able to return safely, without delay, to resume their political activities within the CNRP and to campaign freely in the run-up to the fast-approaching elections, without fear of reprisals;
5. *Seriously questions* the current integrity and legitimacy of the parliamentary institution as a whole in Cambodia in light of these recent developments and the lack of a level playing field in the lead-up to the general elections, which go directly against the core principles of parliamentary democracy, multi-party liberalism and of a governance system based on the rule of law; *recalls* that, pursuant to the principles and values defended by the IPU, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration on Democracy adopted by the IPU in September 1997, “a state of democracy ensures that the processes by which power is acceded to, wielded and alternated allow for free political competition and are the product of open, free and non-discriminatory participation by the people, exercised in accordance with the rule of law, in both letter and spirit”; *urges* for increased tolerance and acceptance of the role of the political opposition in Cambodia;
6. *Reiterates* the availability of the IPU to facilitate the resumption of a political dialogue and to mediate between the parties;
7. *Invites* the global parliamentary community, primarily through IPU member parliaments, as well as other relevant international, regional and domestic stakeholders, to engage in joint efforts to help resolve the current crisis in a manner consistent with democratic and human rights values, including by facilitating the resumption of a political dialogue, adopting public statements and making representations to the Cambodian authorities;
8. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this decision to the competent authorities, the complainants and any third party likely to be in a position to supply relevant information;
9. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report back to it in due course.

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## Maldives

### *Decision adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 202<sup>nd</sup> session (Geneva, 28 March 2018)*

MDV16 - Mariya Didi (Ms.)*	MDV54 - Ibrahim Shareef*
MDV28 - Ahmed Easa	MDV55 - Ahmed Mahloof*
MDV29 - Eva Abdulla (Ms.)*	MDV56 - Fayyaz Ismail*
MDV30 - Moosa Manik*	MDV57 - Mohamed Rasheed Hussain*
MDV31 - Ibrahim Rasheed	MDV58 - Ali Nizar*
MDV32 - Mohamed Shifaz	MDV59 - Mohamed Falah*
MDV33 - Imthiyaz Fahmy*	MDV60 - Abdulla Riyaz*
MDV34 - Mohamed Gasam	MDV61 - Ali Hussain*
MDV35 - Ahmed Rasheed	MDV62 - Faris Maumoon*
MDV36 - Mohamed Rasheed	MDV63 - Ibrahim Didi*
MDV37 - Ali Riza	MDV64 - Qasim Ibrahim*

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\* (Re-)elected to parliament in the elections of March 2014.

MDV39 - Ilyas Labeeb	MDV65 - Mohamed Waheed Ibrahim*
MDV40 - Rugiyya Mohamed (Ms.)	MDV66 - Saud Hussain*
MDV41 - Mohamed Thoriq	MDV67 - Mohamed Ameeth*
MDV42 - Mohamed Aslam*	MDV68 - Abdul Latheef Mohamed*
MDV43 - Mohammed Rasheed*	MDV69 - Ahmed Abdul Kareem*
MDV44 - Ali Waheed	MDV70 - Hussein Areef*
MDV45 - Ahmed Sameer	MDV71 - Mohamed Abdulla*
MDV46 - Afrasheem Ali	MDV72 - Abdulla Ahmed*
MDV48 - Ali Azim*	MDV73 - Mohamed Musthafa*
MDV49 - Alhan Fahmy	MDV74 - Ali Shah*
MDV50 - Abdulla Shahid*	MDV75 - Saudhulla Hilmy*
MDV51 - Rozeyna Adam (Ms.)*	MDV76 - Hussain Shahudhee*
MDV52 - Ibrahim Mohamed Solih	MDV77 - Abdullah Sinan*
MDV53 - Mohamed Nashiz	MDV78 - Ilham Ahmed*

### Alleged human rights violations

- ✓ **Torture, ill-treatment and other acts of violence**
- ✓ **Arbitrary arrest and detention**
- ✓ **Violation of freedom of opinion and expression**
- ✓ **Threats, acts of intimidation**
- ✓ **Murder**
- ✓ **Violation of freedom of movement**

#### A. Summary of the case

Following the controversial transfer of power in February 2012, there have been serious and credible reports and allegations of arbitrary arrest, ill-treatment, attacks and death threats against several opposition members of the People's Majlis, most of whom belong to the Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP).

Since the 2014 parliamentary elections, the opposition has repeatedly claimed that the ruling Progressive Party of Maldives (PPM), with the support of the Speaker of the People's Majlis, has systematically limited the space for the opposition to contribute meaningfully to the work of parliament, and that parliament has adopted laws that seriously diminish human rights, including the rights to freedom of expression and assembly. The parliamentary authorities have denied these allegations.

Tension and violence erupted after an opposition alliance and defections from the PPM galvanized the opposition to move a no-confidence motion against the Speaker in March 2017. The Elections Commission and the PPM subsequently used the Supreme Court ruling of 13 July 2017 to affirm that the 12 members of parliament who had defected from the PPM had lost their seats in parliament. In their absence, the attempts by the opposition to pass the no-confidence motion failed.

The political crisis in Maldives took a further turn for the worse in the aftermath of the ruling by the Supreme Court on 1 February 2018 to release nine high-profile politicians and to reinstate the 12 members of parliament, thereby giving the opposition a majority in parliament. President Yameen has refused to implement the ruling, claiming it to be unlawful, and on 6 February 2018 declared a state of emergency, which was extended by 30 days on 20 February. The opposition and its supporters have protested against the refusal to respect the ruling, have contested the validity of the state of emergency and are boycotting parliament.

More than a dozen members of parliament were arrested under the state of emergency, which expired on 22 March 2018 and was not extended. Most were released shortly after their arrest, although it is not clear whether they are still under investigation. Shortly before the state of emergency expired, the Prosecutor

#### Case MDV-Coll.1

**Maldives:** Parliament affiliated to the IPU

**Victims:** 50 opposition members of parliament, except Mr. Afrasheem Ali, a member of the majority (46 men and four women)

**Complainant(s):** Section I.1(a) of the [Committee Procedure](#) (Annex 1)

**Submission of complaint:** February 2012

**Recent IPU decision:** [October 2017](#)

**IPU Missions:** March 2018, [October 2016](#), November 2013, [November 2012](#),

**Recent Committee hearing:** Hearing with the Maldives delegation at the 137<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly (October 2017)

#### Recent follow-up:

- Communication from the authorities: Letter from the Deputy Secretary General of the People's Majlis (March 2018)
- Communication from the complainant: March 2018
- Communication from the IPU: Letter addressed to the Speaker of the People's Majlis (February 2018)
- Communication addressed to the complainant: March 2018 ■

General's Office announced charges of terrorism - concerning an alleged plot to overthrow the Government - against 11 high-profile individuals, including the four members of parliament Mr. Faris Maumoon, Mr. Abdulla Riyaz, Mr. Abdulla Sinan and Mr. Ilham Ahmed, and ordered that they remain in detention until the end of the trial. Three other members of parliament, namely Mr. Ahmed Mahloof, Mr. Ibrahim Mohamed Solih and Mr. Ali Azim, are also still in detention. While 10 other members of parliament are at liberty, they are facing charges, most of which date back to 2017. The opposition claims that all of this is part of a pattern of intimidation and repression by the authorities.

A delegation mandated by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians carried out a mission to Maldives from 19 to 21 March 2018 to address ongoing and new concerns.

## B. Decision

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

1. *Thanks* the Speaker for receiving the mission and for all the arrangements made;
2. *Thanks* the delegation for its work; *looks forward* to receiving its full written report, which will be shared with the authorities, complainants and relevant third parties for their comments;
3. *Takes note*, in the meantime, of the delegation's following preliminary observations and recommendations:
  - The delegation is deeply concerned about the continued political instability in Maldives, which appears to be the result of a variety of factors, including a "winner-takes-all" political mentality, lack of a culture of political dialogue, reports of widespread corruption, systematic floor crossing in parliament and the absence of a fully independent judiciary and independent oversight institutions. The delegation underscores that the next 12 months, with a presidential election in September 2018 and parliamentary elections in March 2019, are bound to lead to further tension if the underlying causes for the continued political instability and the perceived absence of a level playing field for the participation of presidential candidates are not seriously addressed.

The delegation therefore calls on all political stakeholders in Maldives to decisively work together to effectively address the causes for continued political instability. The delegation also calls on the authorities to do everything in their power to ensure that the planned presidential and parliamentary elections will be free and fair and are perceived as such.

- The delegation considers that the revocation of the mandate of the 12 members of parliament has to be seen in the light of the aforesaid factors causing continued political instability. That said, the delegation believes that there are clear indications that their revocation was arbitrary, including the following: (i) despite widespread floor crossing since 2014, only the 12 members of parliament who defected from the main ruling party lost their seats; (ii) the Supreme Court ruling of 13 July 2017 was adopted less than three days after the matter was brought before it, at a time when a vote on the no-confidence motion against the Speaker was imminent and likely to pass with the support of the 12 members of parliament; (iii) several of the 12 members of parliament, such as Mr. Abdul Latheef and Mr. Mohamed Abdulla, took all the necessary steps, as attested by documentation provided to the delegation, to renounce their party membership before 13 July 2017, which the Supreme Court considered to be the date from when floor crossing would be banned; and (iv) the recently adopted Anti-Defection Act retroactively approves the revocation of the 12 members of parliament, instead of applying to future cases only.

The delegation therefore calls on the Maldivian authorities to allow the 12 members of parliament to take their seats in the People's Majlis as soon as possible.

- The delegation is concerned about the attempts to thwart the no-confidence motion against the Speaker in 2017, in particular the events that occurred on 24 July 2017, including the forcible removal of several members of parliament from the People's Majlis. The delegation considers that parliament should be accessible to its members at all times, and is therefore deeply concerned that several parliamentarians are still facing legal proceedings for attempting to access the parliament that day.

The delegation therefore calls on the Maldivian authorities to withdraw these charges forthwith.

- The delegation is deeply concerned about the wave of arrests of members of parliament under the state of emergency, the charges brought against four parliamentarians, and their detention until the end of their trial on charges of terrorism. The delegation is also concerned at the continued detention of three other members of parliament.

The delegation calls on the authorities to fully ensure that all members of parliament enjoy the right to a fair trial, and that any cases against them are brought diligently and swiftly before the courts and only when clear evidence is available. The delegation believes that it would be very useful to send a trial observer to the court proceedings in one or more of these cases.

- The delegation has received contradictory information about the conditions of detention of the members of parliament, which it will describe in its full mission report. The delegation regrets, therefore, that it was not allowed to meet the members of parliament in detention to assess their situation.

The delegation trusts that the authorities are taking all the necessary steps to ensure that the detained members of parliament are being kept in proper conditions and have access to their family, lawyers and a doctor.

- The delegation is concerned that, with the opposition boycotting parliament, legislation that falls under article 87(b) of the Constitution is being passed without half the members being present, as is required. The delegation is also concerned that the ruling parties and the opposition appear to be unable to use parliament as the platform to discuss their differences and find common solutions.

The delegation calls on the parliamentary authorities to ensure that parliament fully abides by the Constitution when conducting its work and calls on all sides to engage in constructive political dialogue. The delegation encourages all sides to make use of the expertise and the platform that IPU can offer to promote such dialogue.

4. *Requests* the Secretary General to bring these preliminary findings and recommendations to the attention of the relevant authorities, complainants and interested third parties;
  5. *Requests* the Committee to continue its examination of the cases at hand and to report back to it in October 2018 in light of the full mission report and any observations received.
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## Mongolia

*Decision adopted by consensus by the IPU Governing Council at its 202<sup>nd</sup> session (Geneva, 28 March 2018)*<sup>1</sup>

MNG01 - Zorig Sanjasuuren

### Alleged human rights violations

- ✓ **Murder**

#### A. Summary of the case

Mr. Zorig Sanjasuuren (“Mr. Zorig”) was assassinated on 2 October 1998. Regarded by many as the father of the democratic movement in Mongolia in the 1990s, Mr. Zorig was a member of parliament and acting Minister of Infrastructure. At the time, Mongolia was undergoing a period of political upheaval after the breakdown of the coalition government. Negotiations were in place to select the next Prime Minister. Mr. Zorig was being considered as a candidate for the post on the day he was killed. The murder is widely believed to have been a political assassination that was covered up.

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<sup>1</sup> The delegation of Mongolia expressed its reservations regarding the decision.

Since a parliamentary report in July 2000 harshly criticized the severe deficiencies in the initial investigation, the Mongolian authorities have repeatedly affirmed that every effort was being made to identify the murderers and bring them to justice. Successive judicial investigative working groups were established and parliamentary committees were mandated to monitor, support and exercise oversight of the investigation.

However, little progress was reported. By mid-2015, nobody had been held accountable and the authorities affirmed that no suspects had been identified. The investigation was entirely shrouded in secrecy, considered a “state secret” and handled primarily by the intelligence services, with recurring allegations over the years that a number of persons had been pressured and tortured in order to obtain confessions.

Between late 2015 and 2017, suspects were suddenly arrested, expeditiously tried and sentenced during trials closed to the public shortly before the presidential elections. The trials were held in the absence of the only eyewitness of the assassination, Ms. Banzragch Bulgan (“Ms. Bulgan”), Mr. Zorig’s widow. She was herself treated as a suspect and held in solitary confinement in conditions tantamount to torture. The other suspects also appear to have been exposed to torture to force them to admit involvement in the assassination. On 27 December 2016, the three main accused were sentenced to prison terms of 23 to 25 years for killing Mr. Zorig on the orders of an unidentified mastermind. These sentences were upheld by the Appeals Court and the Supreme Court.

In September 2017, a delegation of the IPU Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians visited Mongolia to seek further information on these developments and concerns. During the visit, neither the parliamentary authorities nor Mr. Zorig’s family or the Mongolian people considered that justice had been done despite the recent convictions.

The final mission report fully confirms the preliminary observations and recommendations of the Committee presented during the 137<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly (St. Petersburg, October 2017). Its main findings and recommendations are the following:

- Serious violations of international fair trial standards have taken place. Prior IPU recommendations have not been implemented by the Mongolian authorities. Intimidation and pressure are being exercised against all persons taking an interest in the case.
- The Committee is deeply worried that the recent trial proceedings were aimed at covering up for the real culprits of the assassination (direct perpetrators, organizer(s) and mastermind(s)). The three convicted persons appear to have been framed by the intelligence services and pressured to make false confessions. Their involvement in the crime is seriously questioned on account of suspicious inconsistencies and exculpatory evidence brought to the attention of the Committee. The mastermind(s) remain unidentified and serious due process issues persist in relation to the ongoing investigation.
- The Committee remains concerned about the conditions of detention of the three convicted persons and the fact that their families appear to face ongoing intimidation and pressure. It is equally worried by the fact that Ms. Bulgan and other persons are still kept under close surveillance and barred from travelling abroad although the criminal charges against them have been dropped.
- The Committee calls upon the Mongolian authorities to declassify the case and conduct, without further delay, a fair and open retrial before an independent and impartial court in the presence of international and domestic observers. The delegation strongly believes that justice must be provided to Mr. Zorig’s family, as well as to the convicted persons and their families, to avoid a serious miscarriage of justice. Given the profound distrust that has developed over the years, this

#### Case MNG01

**Mongolia:** Parliament affiliated to the IPU

**Victim:** A male parliamentarian of the majority

**Complainant(s):** Section I.1(a) of the [Committee Procedure](#) (Annex 1)

**Submission of complaint:** October 2000

**Recent IPU decision:** [October 2017](#)

**IPU Missions:** September 2017, [September 2015](#), August 2001

**Recent Committee hearing:** Hearing with the delegation of Mongolia at the 138<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly (March 2018)

#### Recent follow-up:

- Communication from the authorities: Letter of the Deputy Speaker of the State Great Hural, November 2017
- Communications from the complainant: March 2018
- Communications from the IPU to the executive, judicial and parliamentary authorities (February 2018)
- Communication from the IPU addressed to the complainant: March 2018 ■



is a crucial test of the ability of the Mongolian judiciary to demonstrate that it operates under the rule of law and has not become hostage to political and commercial interests. A proactive and impartial exercise of the oversight functions of the State Great Hural is also needed if there is to be any progress in the case.

The following updated information and observations were received since the mission took place:

- In December 2017, the Mongolian Government decided that most of the files relating to the Zorig case should be declassified.
- The Mongolian media published a long and detailed letter written by Mr. B. Sodnomdarjaa, one of the persons sentenced for the murder of Mr. Zorig who is in prison, and to whom access was denied to the IPU delegation during its mission. In the letter, Mr. Sodnomdarjaa affirmed that he was pressured and mistreated in detention to confess to the murder. The letter provides many details, including the dates and names of the persons involved, who include intelligence officers.
- The family of Mr. Zorig submitted a formal communication in early March 2018 and endorsed the findings and recommendations of the mission report. The family states the following: “We seriously question that the justice is done .... We fear that the convicted three were wrongfully convicted .... We are disappointed in our judicial system: we feel that the case was not resolved in an independent, impartial and just manner .... We call upon our authorities to remedy this grave situation and ask IPU to support fair and true justice.”
- Three separate official communications were received from the Mongolian authorities on 24 March 2018. They object to the findings of the mission report.
  - The Prosecutor General’s Office submitted detailed legal observations on the mission report. These observations point out that the trial proceedings were conducted fully in line with Mongolia’s Constitution and laws. They refer to legal provisions and documents but no supporting documentation was enclosed. They conclude that the mission conclusions are unfounded and one-sided because they rely on the “opposite side’s information” also referred to as “unproven, non-factual information provided by the family members of Mr. B. Sodnomdarjaa and Mr. T. Chingee [two of the three persons convicted of murdering Mr. Zorig S.], people who have [a] conflict of interest to the case and a certain group of people who are intentionally obstructing the court procedure” even if the delegation “heard about the reality during the meeting with the Deputy State General Prosecutor and the Head of the General Intelligence Agency”.
  - The National Human Rights Commission confirmed that the three persons convicted of the assassination and Ms. Bulgan filed eight complaints to the Commission from August 2015. It stated that “the Commission resolved the complaints within its mandate” and referred them to the Prosecutor General, the General Executive Agency of Court Decisions and the General Intelligence Agency. No details were included on the substance of the complaints or how they were resolved.
  - In its observations, the Mongolian Parliament recalled that it could only act within the limits of the constitutional provisions related to the separation of powers and the independence of the judiciary. It confirmed that upon receiving the letters of concern from the IPU, it had sought clarifications from the relevant authorities in order to convey their responses. It confirmed that part of the files concerning the case of the perpetrators had been recently disclosed by the Government. As to the separate case to identify the organizer or mastermind, nobody had yet been identified and the case was still under State confidentiality and could not be disclosed. The Parliament confirmed that as part of its oversight function, it would continue to observe the process and developments in the case, to keep the IPU informed and to cooperate in efforts to seek justice and fairness to solve this case under the existing Mongolian laws.

During the hearing held at the 138<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly, the Deputy Speaker of the State Great Hural and other members of the delegation of Mongolia said that the situation was different now that the Government had declassified part of the files. The Parliament would be pleased to welcome a new visit of the Committee to Mongolia to introduce its members to the declassified files now available in the archives. Furthermore, bodies such as the parliamentary human rights subcommittee or the national human rights commission were now also authorized to review the declassified case materials and would make their own verifications.

## B. Decision

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

1. *Thanks* the authorities of Mongolia for sharing their observations on the final report of the mission conducted to Mongolia in September 2017 by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians; *is grateful* to the Deputy Speaker of the State Great Hural and the delegation of Mongolia for making themselves available at short notice to meet with the members of the Committee during the 138<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly; *also thanks* the family members of Mr. Zorig for their observations;
2. *Fully endorses* the conclusions and recommendations of the mission report while *taking due note* of the updated information and the observations received;
3. *Considers* that the judicial proceedings that were completed in 2017 cannot be regarded as a legitimate and credible effort to establish truth and accountability in the Zorig case as they were not in line with international human rights standards of due process and fair trial; *recalls* that conducting expedited secret trials on the basis of secret evidence can never be seen as serving justice or the rule of law;
4. *Is deeply worried* that the three convicted persons may have been framed by the intelligence services and pressured into making false confessions; *renews its call* to the relevant authorities of Mongolia urgently to conduct a public retrial in a fair, just and transparent manner in the presence of domestic and international observers, including an IPU observer, to avoid a serious miscarriage of justice;
5. *Notes with satisfaction* the Government's decision to declassify a large part of the case files and the fact that the State Great Hural's human rights subcommittee is now authorized to review the declassified case files; *welcomes* the renewed commitment of the Parliament to exercise parliamentary oversight to ensure that justice is done and seen to be done in the present case while respecting the separation of powers; *hopes* to be kept apprised of the action taken by the Parliament and their results on a regular basis;
6. *Welcomes* the invitation extended by the Deputy Speaker for another IPU visit to introduce the members of the Committee to the now accessible declassified files; *wishes*, before sending another delegation to Mongolia, first to receive the key documents and answers to the questions that the Committee has been seeking for a long time from the relevant authorities, starting with copies of all court verdicts delivered in the case;
7. *Remains deeply concerned* about the use of investigative methods by intelligence officers that involve torture, intimidation and pressure and the apparent lack of any independent accountability mechanisms to facilitate and address such complaints under Mongolia's current legislation; *calls* for urgent measures to be taken to end all acts of intimidation, pressure and surveillance against family members of the convicted persons and against witnesses and former suspects, as well as the immediate lifting of all restrictions on the freedom of movement of persons who are not currently formally charged by a court as suspects in the case; *also invites* the Parliament to undertake appropriate legislative reform to address these issues;
8. *Deplores* once more that the case continues to be used as a political bargaining chip by all political parties; *stresses* that the delegation that travelled to Mongolia was particularly careful to collect information and documentation from a wide variety of sources from all sides before, during and after its mission so as to make an objective and thorough assessment in its final report; *recalls* that the authorities of Mongolia have failed to answer many of the questions of the delegation and to provide supporting documentation on the grounds of the State secrecy; *reiterates its deep regret* that the delegation was not allowed to meet with the detainees or with any representatives of the judicial branch, which factor was not conducive to alleviating the serious concerns reflected in the mission report;
9. *Wishes* to be kept apprised of new developments related to the case by the parliamentary and other relevant authorities;
10. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this decision to the relevant authorities, the complainant and any third party likely to be in a position to supply relevant information and to follow up with them to obtain all necessary information and documentation before organizing a new visit;
11. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report back in due course.

## Niger

*Decision adopted by consensus by the IPU Governing Council at its 202<sup>nd</sup> session (Geneva, 28 March 2018)*<sup>1</sup>

NER115 - Amadou Hama

### Alleged human rights violations

- ✓ **Failure to respect parliamentary immunity**
- ✓ **Lack of due process**
- ✓ **Violation of freedom of opinion and expression**

### A. Summary of the case

Mr. Amadou Hama, former Speaker of the National Assembly, leader of the MODEN/FA Lumana-Africa party and head of the opposition, has been exiled in France since 2014 as a result of legal proceedings being brought against him. His parliamentary immunity was lifted in August 2014 by the Bureau of the National Assembly, when parliament was in recess, without Mr. Hama being given a preliminary hearing.

Having returned to Niger in November 2015 to face justice and to campaign as a candidate in the presidential election, Mr. Hama was arrested as he stepped off the plane. Despite having been unable to campaign because of his detention, Mr. Hama came second in the first round of the presidential election, on 21 February 2016. The opposition then withdrew from the electoral process, making allegations of fraud. On 16 March 2016, Mr. Hama was granted a transfer to France, officially for medical reasons. The outgoing President was re-elected in the second round of voting on 20 March.

After many procedural complications, Mr. Hama was convicted in absentia and sentenced to one year in prison in March 2017 for the offence of aiding and abetting the concealment of newborns, together with around 30 other people, including his wife. They were accused of having purchased babies in Nigeria from a woman suspected of being the head of a subregional child trafficking ring. Mr. Hama lodged a number of appeals, including one to the Constitutional Court, which handed down its judgment on 21 March 2018, and one to the Court of Cassation, on which the Court has yet to rule.

The children of the couples convicted in March 2017 were taken from them and placed in orphanages, with the exception of Mr. Hama's children, who were taken out of Niger in order to avoid the same fate. The children are currently in hiding in Nigeria with their mother – who has finished serving her sentence in Niger – and are reportedly enrolled in school there. Proceedings are reportedly under way to have the children transferred to an orphanage in Niger.

The complainant alleges that Mr. Hama's parliamentary immunity and defence rights were violated, that the charges brought against him are unfounded and that proceedings were neither impartial, independent nor fair. The complainant affirms that no evidence against Mr. Hama or his wife was provided by the prosecution or judges (unlike in the case of the other couples charged). The complainant submitted exculpatory evidence that he says was not taken into account. The complainant points out that the Nigerian woman presumed to be at the centre of the suspected trafficking ring was never brought before the courts. The complainant considers that Mr. Hama has been the victim of acts of political and legal harassment since his party sided with the opposition in August 2013. He emphasizes that these acts intensified when Mr. Hama refused to resign from his post of Speaker of the National Assembly and in the run-up to the presidential election in February 2016. The complainant points out that Mr. Hama's children, on whose account legal proceedings have been brought in order to have them placed in orphanages in Niger, are the main victims in the case at hand, which is likely to affect them their entire lives, and considers that their best interests should take precedence.

<sup>1</sup> The delegation of Niger expressed its reservations regarding the decision.

### Case NER115

**Niger:** Parliament affiliated to the IPU

**Victim:** A male opposition member of the National Assembly

**Complainant(s):** Section I.1(a) of the [Committee Procedure](#) (Annex 1)

**Submission of complaint:** October 2014

**Recent IPU decision:** [February 2018](#)

**IPU Mission:** - - -

**Recent Committee hearings:** - - -

Hearings with the complainant and the delegation of Niger during the 138<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly (March 2018)

**Recent follow-up:**

- Communication from the authorities: Letter from the Speaker of the National Assembly (January 2018)
- Communication from the complainant: March 2018
- Communication from the IPU to the Speaker of the National Assembly (February 2018)
- Communication from the IPU to the complainant: March 2018 ■

The parliamentary authorities maintain that the case is in no way politically motivated. The procedure to authorize the lifting of parliamentary immunity was conducted in accordance with the Constitution and the Rules of Procedure. New Rules of Procedure were adopted in March 2017 and, according to the Speaker of the National Assembly, the procedure is now better regulated. The charges against Mr. Hama were made following a judicial investigation lasting several months, and Mr. Hama's conviction, and those of the 30 or so others who were jointly prosecuted, were set out in judgments handed down by an independent judiciary in accordance with the Constitution of Niger. The authorities emphasize that none of the other convicted couples lodged an appeal, and that they have now finished serving their sentences. They confirm that the convicted couples' children were removed from them and placed under the authority of the State, for their protection, in consequence of a lawful order of a court.

## B. Decision

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

1. *Thanks* the delegation of Niger and the complainant for the information shared in the hearings with the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians held during the 138<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly;
2. *Commends* the National Assembly for appointing an inclusive delegation to the 138<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly; *welcomes* the fact that the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians was able to hear the different views on the case held by the various parties making up the delegation; *notes* the view of the National Assembly that it cannot take up the case owing to the principle of the separation of powers and the independence of the judiciary; *encourages* it nevertheless to continue dialogue and to transmit the concerns that persist in this case to the competent authorities and to actively undertake to facilitate a solution in accordance with the Constitution of Niger;
3. *Deplores* the fact that no progress has been made to enable the case to be settled in a satisfactory manner; *expresses concern* about the current situation of Mr. Hama and his family, particularly that of the two children involved; *recalls* that under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by Niger, and in particular article 9 thereof, States Parties are obliged to ensure that a child shall not be separated from his or her parents against their will, except where such separation is necessary for the best interests of the child, for example in cases of abuse or neglect; *stresses* that, regardless of the children's biological parentage, which is a key aspect of the present case, Mr. Hama and his wife consider themselves to be the children's parents, and appear to have always behaved as such; *considers* therefore that the decision to place the children in an orphanage, and the ongoing proceedings in their regard, do not take into account the children's best interests; *calls upon* the Niger authorities to comply with their obligations regarding the rights of the child; *hopes* that all the competent authorities, including the judiciary, will take into account this fundamental aspect of the case;
4. *Deeply regrets* that it has not been kept informed by the parties of the dates of Mr. Hama's trial and that it has therefore not been able to send an independent observer, despite its requests to that end; *stresses* the major differences of opinion between the parties, and the many procedural complications that continue to exist in this complex case;
5. *Notes* that this case continues to be a sensitive one at the current time, and that it has an undeniable political dimension, in view of the following factors: the history of relations between Mr. Hama and the Head of State; the fact that Mr. Hama is the head of the opposition; the fact that he aspires to be President of the Republic; the manner and circumstances in which his parliamentary immunity was lifted by the Bureau of the National Assembly during parliamentary recess, without this being subsequently confirmed in plenary, despite a problematic and controversial procedural legal vacuum; the many grey areas in the "baby trafficking" case, including the continuing lack of clarity concerning evidence of Mr. Hama's and his wife's guilt, in terms of the relevant judgments handed down and the complainant's allegations; and lastly, the clear connection between the key stages in Mr. Hama's prosecution and the political calendar, in particular the latest presidential election;
6. *Expresses the wish* for a delegation from the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians to visit Niger, possibly extending the visit to include Nigeria, in order to carry out additional checks, talking directly with all actors involved, in particular with those in the judiciary

and the executive, and to encourage the parties to re-establish political dialogue and find a satisfactory solution to this case; *hopes* to receive a positive reply from the National Assembly to this end, and assistance from the Assembly to enable the mission to proceed smoothly;

7. *Recalls* the Committee's previous conclusions, according to which Mr. Hama's defence rights were not respected during the parliamentary procedure for lifting his immunity, since he was not given a preliminary hearing; *notes with interest* that the Rules of Procedure of the National Assembly have been amended to better regulate the lifting of parliamentary immunity by the Bureau when parliament is in recess; *requests* the Speaker of the National Assembly to provide a copy of the amended provisions;
8. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this decision to the parliamentary authorities, the complainant and any third party likely to be able to provide relevant information; and *requests* him also to take all necessary steps to organize the mission by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians;
9. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report back to it in due course.

## Niger

**Decision adopted by consensus by the IPU Governing Council at its 202<sup>nd</sup> session (Geneva, 28 March 2018) <sup>1</sup>**

NER116 - Seidou Bakari

### Alleged human rights violations

- ✓ **Arbitrary detention**
- ✓ **Lack of due process and excessive delays in proceedings**
- ✓ **Failure to respect parliamentary immunity**
- ✓ **Violation of freedom of opinion and expression**

### A. Summary of the case

On 28 July 2015, the Bureau of the National Assembly authorized the arrest of parliamentarian Seidou Bakari, chairperson of the MODEN/FA Lumana-Africa parliamentary group, without giving him a preliminary hearing. He was not re-elected and was arrested when his parliamentary mandate came to an end on 16 May 2017, since which date he has been held in pre-trial detention.

Mr. Bakari is accused of having embezzled public funds in 2005, when he was coordinator of a food emergency committee (CCA) that answered to the Office of the Prime Minister. At the time, the prime minister was Mr. Amadou Hama (NER115), currently the head of the opposition. According to the complainant, Mr. Bakari's parliamentary immunity was not respected and he was not given a hearing by the Bureau before his immunity was lifted, despite the fact that no criminal charges had yet been brought against him.

The complainant believes that Mr. Bakari's continued detention, and the lack of progress of the legal proceedings, are deliberate acts which constitute violations of Mr. Bakari's fundamental right to be given a fair hearing without undue delay. Mr. Bakari's applications for bail were allegedly refused, in violation of the Code of Criminal Procedure. The complainant also alleges that the rights of the defence were violated, and that the investigating judge ignored exculpatory evidence provided by Mr. Bakari's lawyer. According to the complainant, a hearing took place on 23 March 2018 following a request by Mr. Bakari's lawyer for the investigating judge to be taken off the case. The ruling is expected on 13 April.

### Case NER116

**Niger:** Parliament affiliated to the IPU

**Victim:** A male opposition member of the National Assembly

**Complainant(s):** Section I.1(a) of the [Committee Procedure](#) (Annex 1)

**Submission of complaint:** September 2015

**Recent IPU decision:** [February 2018](#)

**IPU Mission:** - - -

**Recent Committee hearings:** - - -

### Recent follow-up:

- Communication from the authorities: Letter from the Speaker of the National Assembly (January 2018)
- Communication from the complainant: March 2018
- Communication from the IPU to the Speaker of the National Assembly (February 2018)
- Communication from the IPU to the complainant: February 2018 ■

<sup>1</sup> The delegation of Niger expressed its reservations regarding the decision.

The complainant asserts that the charges brought against Mr. Bakari are unfounded, and that no funds were embezzled by the food emergency committee (CCA). He states that Mr. Bakari was tasked simply with implementing decisions taken collectively by the CCA, and had no power to take individual decisions or order expenditure. He pointed out that all the CCA's decisions were recorded in writing. He recalled that Niger's international partners had been satisfied with the way the funds and the food crisis were being managed, at the time, and had officially thanked Mr. Bakari for his work (letter transmitted by the complainant). According to the complainant, several international audits had been carried out over the years of the CCA's operation, in order to certify its accounts.

The complainant asserts that Mr. Bakari is the victim of political and judicial harassment purely because he is a member of the opposition and a close collaborator of Mr. Amadou Hama. As a deputy, and as chairperson of his parliamentary group, he supported Mr. Hama – then Speaker of the National Assembly – when the latter was subjected to criminal proceedings after announcing that his party would be siding with the opposition at the next presidential elections.

The parliamentary authorities affirmed that they followed the procedure for lifting parliamentary immunity. New Rules of Procedure were adopted in March 2017 and, according to the Speaker of the National Assembly, the procedure is now better regulated. No information was provided by the authorities on the other allegations, neither on the alleged acts being prosecuted nor the reasons why charges were brought against Mr. Bakari 12 years after the acts in question. The Speaker of the National Assembly said he had been unable to obtain any answers owing to the principle of the separation of powers and the confidentiality of preliminary investigations, but that the investigating judge would soon be handing down a ruling on the case.

## **B. Decision**

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

1. *Thanks* the delegation of Niger and the complainant for the information shared during the hearings with the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians during the 138<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly;
2. *Commends* the National Assembly for appointing an inclusive delegation to the 138<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly; *welcomes* the fact that the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians was able to hear the different views on the case taken by the various parties making up the delegation; *notes* the view of the National Assembly that it cannot take up the case owing to the principle of the separation of powers and the independence of the judiciary; *encourages* it nevertheless to continue dialogue and to transmit the concerns that persist in this case to the competent authorities and to actively undertake to facilitate a solution in accordance with the Constitution of Niger;
3. *Is concerned* at the length of Mr. Bakari's continued pre-trial detention, which does not appear to be in keeping with articles 131 and 133 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, and at the length of the preliminary investigation, in which no progress appears to have been made; consequently, *invites* the competent authorities to release him immediately, and to expedite the processing of the case;
4. *Expresses its concern* also regarding the merits of the charges brought against Mr. Bakari, given the substantial information and documentation provided by the complainant and the lack of response by the authorities on the issue;
5. *Urges* the Niger authorities to do their utmost to guarantee that the case is processed quickly, fairly and independently, in strict compliance with national and international fair trial standards and the fight against corruption; *requests* the authorities to keep it informed of the decisions to be taken by the Appeal Court and the investigating judge and, if appropriate, of the trial dates, so as to be able to send an observer; *reiterates its request* that the authorities provide their observations and more detailed information on the case regarding the allegations made by the complainant;
6. *Notes* that this case has an undeniable political aspect to it, and that the proceedings brought against Mr. Bakari have evident similarities with those brought against the president of his party, Mr. Amadou Hama (NER115) – whose case is also before the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians – and that these similarities, as well the fact that the proceedings were initiated to coincide with the latest presidential and parliamentary elections, add weight to the complainant's allegations;

7. *Expresses the wish* for a delegation from the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians to visit Niger, in order to carry out additional checks, and talk directly with all actors involved, in particular with those in the judiciary and the executive, and to encourage the parties to re-establish political dialogue and find a satisfactory solution to this case; *hopes* to receive a positive reply from the National Assembly in this regard, and assistance from the Assembly to enable the mission to proceed smoothly;
8. *Recalls* the Committee's previous conclusions, according to which Mr. Bakari's defence rights were not respected during the parliamentary procedure for lifting his immunity, as he was not given a preliminary hearing; *notes with interest* that the Rules of Procedure of the National Assembly have been amended to better regulate the lifting of parliamentary immunity by the Bureau when parliament is in recess; *requests* the Speaker of the National Assembly to provide a copy of the amended provisions;
9. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this decision to the parliamentary authorities, the complainant and any third party likely to be able to provide relevant information; *also requests* him to take all necessary steps to organize a mission to Niger by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians;
10. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report back to it in due course.

## Philippines

*Decision adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 202<sup>nd</sup> session (Geneva, 28 March 2018)*

PHL08 - Leila de Lima

### Alleged human rights violations

- ✓ **Threats, acts of intimidation**
- ✓ **Arbitrary arrest and detention**
- ✓ **Lack of due process in proceedings against parliamentarians**
- ✓ **Violation of freedom of opinion and expression**

### A. Summary of the case

Ms. Leila de Lima served as Chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines from May 2008 to June 2010. In that capacity she led a series of investigations into alleged extrajudicial killings linked to the Davao Death Squad (DDS) in Davao City, where Mr. Duterte had long held the post of mayor, and concluded that Mr. Duterte, now President of the Philippines, was behind the DDS.

In 2010, Ms. de Lima was appointed Secretary of Justice. She resigned from this position in October 2015 to focus on her campaign for a seat in the Senate in the elections of May 2016, in which she was successful. In August 2016, as Chair of the Senate Committee on Justice and Human Rights, she initiated an inquiry into the extrajudicial killings of thousands of alleged drug users and drug dealers alleged to have taken place since President Duterte took office in June 2016. Since the start of her term as Senator, she has been subject to widespread intimidation and denigration, including by President Duterte directly.

Senator de Lima was arrested and detained on 24 February 2017 on the basis of accusations that she had received drug money to finance her senatorial campaign. The charges, in three different cases, were brought in the wake of an inquiry by the House of Representatives into drug trading in New Bilibid

### Case PHL08

**Philippines:** Parliament affiliated to the IPU

**Victim:** Female opposition member of parliament

**Complainant(s):** Section I.1(d) of the [Committee Procedure](#) (Annex 1)

**Submission of complaint:** September 2016

**Recent IPU decision:** [October 2017](#)

**IPU Mission:** [May 2017](#)

**Recent Committee hearing:** Hearing with the Philippines delegation to the 136<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly (April 2017)

### Recent follow-up:

- Communication from the authorities: Letter from the President of the Senate (January 2017)
- Communication from the complainant: March 2018
- Communication from the IPU: Letter addressed to the President of the Senate (February 2018)
- Communication from the IPU to the complainant: March 2018 ■

Prison and into Senator de Lima's responsibility in that regard when she was Secretary of Justice. The House inquiry was launched one week after she initiated her inquiry in the Senate into the extrajudicial killings.

Senator de Lima has still not been arraigned in any of the three cases, which have now been lodged with Branch 205 of the Regional Trial Court (RTC) in Muntinlupa City. A petition to the Supreme Court to reconsider its earlier decision accepting the legality of Senator de Lima's arrest is still pending.

Although Senator de Lima remains very politically active during her detention, and receives newspapers, journals and books, she has no access to Internet, computers, TV or radio, nor to an air-conditioning unit, despite a doctor's order. Senator de Lima has written a letter to the chief of the Philippine National Police in this regard.

Requests from her defence counsel to the courts that she be granted "legislative furlough" - or temporary release in order to attend to her legislative duties - have remained unanswered. Senators in the minority in the Senate have to date filed three resolutions urging that she be allowed occasional furlough.

## **B. Decision**

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

1. *Is deeply concerned* that Senator de Lima remains in pre-trial detention, more than one year after her arrest;
2. *Reiterates its call* upon the relevant authorities to release Senator de Lima immediately and to abandon the legal proceedings against her, unless serious evidence is rapidly forthcoming; *reaffirms* in this regard that the IPU Committee mission report clearly shows that the steps taken against Senator de Lima were in response to her vocal opposition to President Duterte's war on drugs, including her denunciation of his alleged responsibility for extrajudicial killings, and that there is no serious evidence to justify the criminal cases against her;
3. *Decides* to send an observer to monitor and report on respect for fair trial standards in the cases before Branch 205 of the Regional Trial Court (RTC) in Muntinlupa City;
4. *Trusts* that the Supreme Court will give full consideration to the arguments presented by Senator de Lima and her lawyers in her motion for reconsideration of the legality of her arrest; *wishes* to be kept informed in this regard;
5. *Remains shocked* at the public campaign of vilification by the highest state authorities against Senator de Lima, which portrays her as an "immoral woman" and as guilty, even though a trial has yet to commence; *regrets* that the Supreme Court has yet to rule on this matter, thereby missing an important opportunity to condemn and end the public degrading treatment to which she has been subjected as a woman parliamentarian; *calls* on the Supreme Court to rule on this matter as quickly as possible;
6. *Considers* that the Senate has a special responsibility to help ensure that its colleagues participate in its deliberations and to speak out when they face reprisals for their work; *regrets* therefore that the Senate has not been able to take a firm stance in favour of Senator de Lima's direct participation in the Senate's most important work; *sincerely hopes* that the Senate, under the leadership of its President, will finally be able to act in solidarity with its colleague;
7. *Urges*, in the event that Senator de Lima is not immediately released, the Supreme Court to grant her occasional "legislative furlough"; *also urges* that the relevant authorities will swiftly grant her access to Internet, TV and radio, since this would greatly facilitate her parliamentary work; *trusts* that the authorities will also provide her with an air-conditioning unit, as ordered by her doctor; *wishes* to be kept informed in this regard;
8. *Considers* that the matters at issue in this case warrant an urgent follow-up visit by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians; *requests* the Secretary General to seek the parliamentary authorities' support for this visit to take place as soon as possible;
9. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this decision to the competent authorities, the complainant and any third party likely to be in a position to supply relevant information;
10. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report back to it in due course.



## Turkey

### *Decision adopted by consensus by the IPU Governing Council at its 202<sup>nd</sup> session (Geneva, 28 March 2018) <sup>1</sup>*

TUR69 - Gülser Yıldırım (Ms.)	TUR99 - Altan Tan
TUR70 - Selma Irmak (Ms.)	TUR100 - Ayhan Bilgen
TUR71 - Faysal Sariyildiz	TUR101 - Behçet Yıldırım
TUR72 - Ibrahim Ayhan	TUR102 - Berdan Öztürk
TUR73 - Kemal Aktas	TUR103 - Dengir Mir Mehmet Firat
TUR75 - Bedia Özgökçe Ertan (Ms.)	TUR104 - Erdal Ataş
TUR76 - Besime Konca (Ms.)	TUR105 - Erol Dora
TUR77 - Burcu Çelik Özkan (Ms.)	TUR106 - Ertuğrul Kürkcü
TUR78 - Çağlar Demirel (Ms.)	TUR107 - Ferhat Encü
TUR79 - Dilek Öcalan (Ms.)	TUR108 - Hişyar Özsoy
TUR80 - Dilan Dirayet Taşdemir (Ms.)	TUR109 - Idris Baluken
TUR81 - Feleknas Uca (Ms.)	TUR110 - Imam Taşçier
TUR82 - Figen Yüksekdağ (Ms.)	TUR111 - Kadri Yıldırım
TUR83 - Filiz Kerestecioğlu (Ms.)	TUR112 - Lezgin Botan
TUR84 - Hüda Kaya (Ms.)	TUR113 - Mehmet Ali Aslan
TUR85 - Leyla Birlik (Ms.)	TUR114 - Mehmet Emin Adiyaman
TUR86 - Leyla Zana (Ms.)	TUR115 - Nadir Yıldırım
TUR87 - Meral Daniş Beştaş (Ms.)	TUR116 - Nihat Akdoğan
TUR88 - Mizgin Irgat (Ms.)	TUR117 - Nimetullah Erdoğan
TUR89 - Nursel Aydoğan (Ms.)	TUR118 - Osman Baydemir
TUR90 - Pervin Buldan (Ms.)	TUR119 - Selahattin Demirtaş
TUR91 - Saadet Becerikli (Ms.)	TUR120 - Sirri Süreyya Önder
TUR92 - Sibel Yiğitalp (Ms.)	TUR121 - Ziya Pir
TUR93 - Tuğba Hezer Öztürk (Ms.)	TUR122 - Mithat Sancar
TUR94 - Abdullah Zeydan	TUR123 - Mahmut Toğrul
TUR95 - Adem Geveri	TUR124 - Aycan Irmez (Ms.)
TUR96 - Ahmet Yıldırım	TUR125 - Ayşe Acar Başaran (Ms.)
TUR97 - Ali Atalan	TUR126 - Garo Paylan
TUR98 - Alican Önlü	

#### **Alleged human rights violations**

- ✓ **Failure to respect parliamentary immunity**
- ✓ **Revocation of the parliamentary mandate**
- ✓ **Lack of due process in the proceedings**
- ✓ **Violation of freedom of opinion and expression**
- ✓ **Violation of freedom of assembly and association**
- ✓ **Violation of freedom of movement**
- ✓ **Arbitrary arrest and detention<sup>2</sup>**
- ✓ **Ill-treatment<sup>3</sup>**

#### **A. Summary of the case**

Over 600 criminal and terrorism charges have been brought against the members of parliament of the People's Democratic Party (HDP) since 15 December 2015, when the Constitution was amended to authorize the wholesale lifting of parliamentary immunity. Hundreds of trial proceedings are ongoing against the HDP parliamentarians throughout Turkey. Some of the parliamentarians also continue to face older charges in relation to the KCK first-instance trial that has been ongoing for seven years, while others face more recent charges. In these other cases, their parliamentary immunity has allegedly not been lifted.

<sup>1</sup> The delegation of Turkey expressed its reservations regarding the decision.

<sup>2</sup> Concerns only the members of parliament placed in detention.

<sup>3</sup> Concerns three male members of parliament (Mr. Adiyaman - TUR114; Mr. Behçet Yıldırım - TUR101; Mr. Mahmut Toğrul – TUR123) and three women members of parliament (Ms. Feleknas Uca - TUR81, Ms. Besime Konca – TUR76 and Ms. Sibel Yiğitalp – TUR92).

According to the complainant, most HDP members of parliament have been repeatedly arrested and forcefully brought to court for questioning since November 2016. Some of them have been placed in pre-trial detention, while most were granted release by the trial courts pending completion of the criminal proceedings. The complainant affirmed that at least 14 HDP parliamentarians, eight of whom were women, have received prison sentences of one year or more. A number of acquittals have also been handed down.

The complainant further stated that the parliament has ended the parliamentary mandate of nine of its members (including five women parliamentarians): three for their prolonged absence from parliament and six following final convictions (apparently partially related to older charges not covered by the blanket amnesty law and for which parliamentary immunity was therefore not lifted, according to the complainant). Two of the parliamentarians, Mr. Sariyildiz and Ms. Hezer Öztürk, may also be deprived of their citizenship. According to the complainant, one member of parliament – Ms. Figen Yüksekdağ, HDP Co-Chair – was further deprived of her HDP membership and executive position and banned from exercising any political activities, pursuant to a final court conviction.

Ms. Yüksekdağ remains subject to other criminal proceedings: an IPU trial observer was mandated to attend the hearings in her case on 18 September and 6 December 2017 (as well as the hearing of 7 December 2017 in the case of Mr. Demirtaş). The trial observer was denied access to the courtrooms during her December mission but regained access “as a member of the public”, rather than as an observer, at the 20 February 2018 hearing in Ms. Yüksekdağ’s case. The judges indicated that the observer would be granted accreditation for future hearings in the case.

Nine members of parliament continue to be held in detention. They are no longer in solitary confinement but are still held in remote high-security prisons under restrictive conditions applicable to terrorism suspects (video surveillance, seizure of books and letters, restricted visits, etc.), which according to the complainant prevent them from exercising their parliamentary mandate.

The other members of parliament are free but have had their freedom of movement restricted; many have been placed under judicial control and are banned from travelling abroad. Four have also sought refuge abroad. This, together with the multitude of ongoing trials against them throughout Turkey, has restricted their ability to exercise their parliamentary mandate. A few HDP members of parliament, after expressing their opinion in the parliamentary debate, have also been subjected to physical attacks, including inside parliament, and to disciplinary sanctions.

The complainant alleges that, through the ongoing proceedings, the ruling party intends to exclude the Kurds, and other marginalized peoples represented by HDP, from the Parliament of Turkey. According to the complainant, the charges against the HDP members of parliament are groundless and violate their rights to freedom of expression, assembly and association. The complainant claims that the evidence adduced to support the charges against the members of parliament relates to public statements, rallies and other peaceful political activities carried out in furtherance of their parliamentary duties and their political party programme. Such activities include mediating between the PKK and the Turkish Government as part of the peace process between 2013 and 2015, advocating publicly in favour of political autonomy, and criticizing the policies of President Erdoğan in relation to the current conflict in south-eastern Turkey and at the border with Syria (including denouncing the crimes committed by the Turkish security forces in that context). The complainant alleges that such statements, rallies and activities did not constitute any offence, and that they fall under the clear scope and protection of the fundamental rights of members of parliament. The complainant also alleges that proper standards of due process are being disregarded. The complainant does not believe that the judicial process is being administered in a fair, independent and impartial manner. The complainant has submitted extensive and detailed information in support of its claims, including excerpts of indictments and court decisions and the exact words of the incriminating speeches made by the parliamentarians that are being used as evidence of terrorism activities. Concerns also exist in relation to restrictive

#### Case TUR-Coll.1

**Turkey:** Parliament affiliated to the IPU

**Victims:** 57 individuals (47 current and 10 former parliamentarians, all members of the HDP opposition party (34 men and 23 women)

**Complainant(s):** Section I.1(c) of the [Committee Procedure](#) (Annex 1)

**Submission of complaint:** June 2016

**Recent IPU decision:** [October 2017](#)

**IPU Mission:** [February 2014](#)

**Recent Committee hearings:** Hearings held with the Turkish delegation and the complainants at the 138<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly (Geneva, March 2018)

#### Recent follow-up:

- Communication from the authorities: Letters from the President of the Turkish IPU Group (January 2018)
- Communication from the complainant: March 2018
- Communication from the IPU: Letter to the President of the Turkish IPU Group (March 2018)
- Communication from the IPU to the complainant: March 2018 ■

conditions of detention and to the denial of prison visits to foreign observers. Many of these claims are the subject of a petition to the European Court of Human Rights, which is pending. The IPU has made a submission to the Court as a third party intervener.

The Turkish authorities deny all these allegations. They have invoked the independence of the judiciary, the need to respond to security/terrorism threats and existing legislation, including decrees adopted under the state of emergency, to justify the legality of the measures taken. Some detailed information on the charges and ongoing prosecutions was provided by the authorities, but it is purely legal and does not provide any information on the facts and evidence underlying the charges despite repeated requests to that end. The Turkish authorities have rejected in two instances the Committee's request to conduct a fact-finding mission to Turkey on the grounds that it "could negatively affect the judicial process" and was not considered "appropriate".

## B. Decision

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

1. *Thanks* the Turkish IPU Group and the complainant for the information provided and for meeting with the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians to discuss the cases and concerns at hand;
2. *Remains deeply concerned* at the allegations of widespread and systematic violations of the rights of HDP parliamentarians, which reportedly obstruct their ability to undertake their parliamentary duties and to represent their constituencies in an effective and unhindered manner, given that over 600 criminal and terrorism charges have been brought against them since December 2015, and that nine parliamentarians continue to be held in detention, at least 14 have received prison sentences and nine have been stripped of their parliamentary mandate in recent months;
3. *Welcomes* the invitation extended to the Committee by the Turkish delegation to the 138<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly to visit Turkey to meet with the parliamentary and executive authorities; *trusts* that written confirmation of the approval of the mission will be forthcoming at the earliest convenience;
4. *Expresses the hope* that the fact-finding mission will facilitate progress in the case and enable the Committee to collect first-hand information about the serious allegations raised by the complainant and make an in-depth and objective assessment of the prior concerns expressed in the case;
5. *Is also pleased* that the Turkish authorities granted access for the IPU trial observer to the last hearing in the case of Ms. Yükkedag; *decides* to renew the mandate of the IPU trial observer for future hearings, including the next hearing scheduled on 17 May 2018; *expresses the hope* that the observer will be duly granted access to all future hearings as decided by the judges; *looks forward* to receiving a full report on the hearings upon the completion of the observer's mandate;
6. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this decision to the parliamentary authorities, the complainant and any third party likely to be in a position to supply relevant information and to proceed with all necessary arrangements to organize the requested mission by a Committee delegation and future trial observation missions;
7. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report back to it in due course.

## Venezuela

***Decision adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 202<sup>nd</sup> session (Geneva, 28 March 2018)***

VEN13 - Richard Blanco

VEN16 - Julio Borges

VEN19 - Nora Bracho (Ms.)

VEN20 - Ismael Garcia

VEN22 - William Dávila

VEN24 - Nirma Guarulla (Ms.)

VEN25 - Julio Ygarza

VEN26 - Romel Guzamana

VEN48 - Yanet Fermin (Ms.)

VEN49 - Dinorah Figuera (Ms.)

VEN50 - Winston Flores

VEN51 - Omar González

VEN52 - Stalin González

VEN53 - Juan Guaidó

VEN54 - Tomás Guanipa

VEN55 - José Guerra

VEN27 - Rosmit Mantilla	VEN56 - Freddy Guevara
VEN28 - Enzo Prieto	VEN57 - Rafael Guzmán
VEN29 - Gilberto Sojo	VEN58 - María G. Hernández (Ms.)
VEN30 - Gilber Caro	VEN59 - Piero Maroun
VEN31 - Luis Florido	VEN60 - Juan A. Mejía
VEN32 - Eudoro González	VEN61 - Julio Montoya
VEN33 - Jorge Millán	VEN62 - José M. Olivares
VEN34 - Armando Armas	VEN63 - Carlos Paparoni
VEN35 - Américo De Grazia	VEN64 - Miguel Pizarro
VEN36 - Luis Padilla	VEN65 - Henry Ramos Allup
VEN37 - José Regnault	VEN66 - Juan Requesens
VEN38 - Dennis Fernández (Ms.)	VEN67 - Luis E. Rondón
VEN39 - Olivia Lozano (Ms.)	VEN68 - Bolivia Suárez (Ms.)
VEN40 - Delsa Solórzano (Ms.)	VEN69 - Carlos Valero
VEN41 - Robert Alcalá	VEN70 - Milagro Valero (Ms.)
VEN42 - Gaby Arellano (Ms.)	VEN71 - German Ferrer
VEN43 - Carlos Bastardo	VEN72 - Adriana d'Elia (Ms.)
VEN44 - Marialbert Barrios (Ms.)	VEN73 - Luis Lippa
VEN45 - Amelia Belisario (Ms.)	VEN74 - Carlos Berrizbeitia
VEN46 - Marco Bozo	VEN75 - Manuela Bolivar (Ms.)
VEN47 - José Brito	

### Alleged human rights violations

- ✓ **Torture, ill-treatment and other acts of violence**
- ✓ **Threats, intimidation**
- ✓ **Arbitrary arrest and detention**
- ✓ **Lack of due process in proceedings against parliamentarians**
- ✓ **Violation of the right to freedom of opinion and expression**
- ✓ **Violation of freedom of assembly and association**
- ✓ **Violation of freedom of movement**
- ✓ **Failure to respect parliamentary immunity**
- ✓ **Other acts obstructing the exercise of the parliamentary mandate**

#### A Summary of the case

The case concerns credible and serious allegations of human rights violations affecting 57 parliamentarians from the coalition of the Democratic Unity Roundtable (MUD) against the backdrop of continuous efforts by Venezuela's executive and judicial authorities to undermine the functioning of the National Assembly and to usurp its powers. The MUD opposes President Maduro's Government and obtained a majority of seats in the National Assembly following the parliamentary elections of 6 December 2015.

Soon after the elections, on 30 December 2015, the Electoral Chamber of the Supreme Court ordered the suspension of four members of parliament, three of them from the MUD, following allegations of fraud. The National Assembly first decided to disregard the ruling, considering the allegations to be baseless, which led the Supreme Court to declare all the Assembly's decisions null and void. No effort appears to have been made to examine the alleged fraud and the members of parliament remain suspended.

Since March 2017, close to 40 parliamentarians have been attacked with impunity by law enforcement officers and pro-government supporters during demonstrations. These protests intensified after President Maduro announced the convening of a Constituent Assembly, which was subsequently elected on 30 July 2017, to rewrite the Constitution.

#### Case VEN-Coll.3

**Venezuela:** Parliament affiliated to the IPU

**Victims:** 57 opposition members of parliament (42 men and 15 women)

**Complainant(s):** Section I.1(c) of the [Committee Procedure](#) (Annex 1)

**Submission of complaint:** March 2017

**Recent IPU decision:** [February 2018](#)

**IPU Mission:** - - -

**Recent Committee hearings:** - -

#### Recent follow-up:

- Communication from the authorities: Meeting between the IPU Secretary General and the Permanent Representative of Venezuela to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Geneva (June 2017)
- Communication from the complainant: March 2018
- Communication from the IPU: Letter to the Speaker of the National Assembly (February 2018)
- Communication from the IPU to the complainant: March 2018 ■

Mr. Gilber Caro was arrested and detained on 11 January 2017. There are serious concerns about his conditions of detention and the legal proceedings brought against him. On 18 August 2017, shortly after he started accusing the Government, the Constituent Assembly lifted the parliamentary immunity of Mr. German Ferrer, even though he is not a member of the Constituent Assembly, accusing him of involvement in a widespread extortion ring. Mr. Ferrer and his wife fled to Colombia the same day. Mr. Rosmit Mantilla, Mr. Enzo Prieto and Mr. Gilberto Sojo, alternate members of parliament, were deprived of their liberty in 2014 in connection with ongoing legal proceedings, for political reasons according to the complainant. Mr. Mantilla and Mr. Sojo were released at the end of 2016. The legal case against them continues. However, Mr. Prieto remains in detention,

In 2017, at least eight members of parliament had their passports confiscated or were subjected to other acts of intimidation at Caracas airport in connection with their international parliamentary work. Two other parliamentarians were disbarred from holding public office, allegedly in the absence of a legal basis.

The Government has not provided any funding to the National Assembly since August 2016. In its decision of 18 August 2017, the Constituent Assembly invested itself with legislative powers. The Constituent Assembly has taken over many of the premises of the National Assembly. Even the limited space used by the National Assembly has been invaded and occupied, with several members of parliament being taken hostage and beaten up by government supporters, with impunity, most notably on 5 July and 27 June 2017.

Long-standing efforts since 2013 to send a delegation of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians to Venezuela have failed in the absence of clear authorization from the Government to welcome and work with the delegation.

Since January 2018, there have been widespread demonstrations across Venezuela to protest against the dire economic situation and the decision to hold snap presidential elections on 20 May 2018. In early 2018 the National Electoral Council (CNE) decided that the Democratic Unity Roundtable coalition (MUD) would not be allowed to present a joint candidate, and then later, that none of the individual parties belonging to the MUD could participate either. Most of the MUD's leaders and other members of the opposition are either in prison, disqualified from standing in the elections or in exile. Citing deficiencies in the electoral process the MUD has announced that it will boycott the elections. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the European Union, the [Organization of American States](#), the "[Lima Group](#)" (comprising 15 countries of the Americas) and the [United States](#) of America have rejected the electoral process. Recent proposals by President Maduro and the President of the Constituent Assembly to bring the legislative elections forward, to coincide with the presidential elections even though the National Assembly's term is due to expire in January 2021, are not being implemented, although early legislative elections are still anticipated. The opposition considers that such an effort is illegitimate and would also completely exclude the MUD and its member parties, even should they choose to participate, as the authorities have taken away their legal status for not having participated in the most recent elections.

Since May 2016, mediation efforts, primarily by stakeholders in the region, have sought to bring the Government and the opposition together. These efforts have not produced any concrete results and broke down in early February 2018,

## B. Decision

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

1. *Remains deeply concerned* about the scale of ongoing efforts, with apparent impunity, to repress opposition members and undermine the integrity and autonomy of the National Assembly of Venezuela, which now include possible plans to curtail its term; *fears* that this repression is bound to increase against the backdrop of the fast-approaching presidential election and existing concerns about a free and fair voting process in that election;
2. *Urges* the authorities to put an immediate stop to the harassment of and attacks against opposition parliamentarians, to take effective action to hold to account those responsible for past abuses and to ensure that law enforcement officers respect human rights at all times in the conduct of their work; *requests* the relevant authorities to provide concrete information on steps taken by them to shed light on and establish accountability for the past incidents and to prevent new abuses from occurring;

3. *Urges once more* the relevant authorities to ensure that the National Assembly and its members can fully carry out their work by respecting its powers and allocating the necessary funding for its proper functioning; *requests* the relevant authorities urgently to provide information on steps taken to this end;
  4. *Remains deeply concerned* about Mr. Caro's situation more than one year after he was arrested, and about the alleged circumstances under which he was recently moved to another detention centre; *urges* the authorities to ensure that he receives adequate treatment in detention and to inform his lawyers and family members at all times of important changes to his situation; *requests* the relevant authorities to provide official information on these points and on the exact charges against him and the facts underpinning them; *also requests* these authorities to provide the full details of the legal grounds and facts that underpin the charges against Mr. Prieto;
  5. *Deeply regrets* that the human rights mission to Venezuela has still not taken place; *remains* all the more convinced, given the ongoing deteriorating situation, that such a mission could help address the concerns at hand; *requests*, therefore, the Secretary General to work with the relevant authorities with a view to the mission taking place as soon as possible;
  6. *Reaffirms* its stance that the issues in these cases are part of the larger political crisis in Venezuela, which can only be solved through political dialogue; *calls once again on* all sides to act in good faith and to commit fully to political dialogue with the assistance of external mediation; *reaffirms* IPU's readiness to assist with these efforts; and *requests* the relevant authorities to provide further official information on how this assistance can best be provided;
  7. *Invites* the global parliamentary community to engage urgently, given the looming presidential election, in efforts to address the concerns raised in this decision and resolve the current crisis in a manner consistent with democratic and human rights values, including in particular joint efforts by IPU member parliaments and other relevant international, regional and domestic stakeholders to facilitate the resumption of political dialogue, adopt public statements and make representations to the Venezuelan authorities;
  8. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this decision to the competent authorities, the complainants and any third party likely to be in a position to supply relevant information;
  9. *Requests* the Committee to continue examining this case and to report back to it in due course.
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## Zambia

### *Decision adopted unanimously by the IPU Governing Council at its 202<sup>nd</sup> session (Geneva, 28 March 2018)*

ZMB02 - Jack Mwiimbu  
ZMB03 - Garry Nkombo  
ZMB04 - Request Muntanga  
ZMB06 - Moono Lubezhi (Ms.)  
ZMB10 - Lt. Gen. Ronnie Shikapwasha  
ZMB13 - Annie Munshya Chungu (Ms.)  
ZMB14 - Howard Kunda  
ZMB15 - Michael Katambo  
ZMB18 - Lucky Mulusa  
ZMB19 - Patrick Mucheleka  
ZMB20 - Eustacio Kazonga

#### **Alleged human rights violations**

- ✓ **Arbitrary arrest and detention**
- ✓ **Lack of due process in proceedings against parliamentarians**
- ✓ **Violation of freedom of opinion and expression**
- ✓ **Violation of freedom of assembly and association**
- ✓ **Torture, ill-treatment and other acts of violence**
- ✓ **Arbitrary invalidation of the election of a parliamentarian**
- ✓ **Abusive revocation or suspension of the parliamentary mandate**

## A. Summary of the case

According to the complainant, the 11 current and former opposition parliamentarians have allegedly been the victims of a campaign of score settling, which started immediately after the legislative and presidential elections of September 2011, which were won by the Patriotic Front. This campaign has included abuse of provisions of the Public Order Act – some of which, according to the complainant, have long been ruled unconstitutional by the courts – and disruption of opposition activities in 2012 and 2013. The parliamentary authorities have forwarded their official views, which present a different version of the facts, while acknowledging challenges in the proper implementation of the Public Order Act, which was often perceived by the opposition purely to serve the interest of the Government. The Zambian Government is currently analysing submissions received from various stakeholders for the review of the Public Order Act so as to make it more appropriate and responsive to new trends in an open and democratic society. Moreover, the Ministry responsible for internal security has embarked on an in-house training programme for police officers on respect for human rights in the application of the Public Order Act.

## B. Decision

The Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

1. *Thanks* the Speaker of the National Assembly of Zambia for the information shared in the hearing with the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians held during the 138<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly;
2. *Reiterates* its conclusions that on several occasions in 2012 and 2013 the police overstepped their authority when they harassed opposition parliamentarians who were holding meetings, including by arresting them arbitrarily;
3. *Reaffirms its view* that a full review of the Public Order Act is essential to ensure that there is no repeat of these incidents, including by giving due consideration to the recommendations made to this end in the report of the Committee delegation that visited Zambia in 2014;
4. *Is confident* that the current review of the Public Order Act will effectively bring about the necessary changes to the Act to bring it fully into line with international and national human rights standards and ensure its fair and impartial application; *reaffirms* that the IPU stands ready to assist in those efforts, including by sharing relevant experience from other countries; *requests* the Secretary General to write to the Minister of Justice to make a specific offer for assistance and seek the Speaker's intervention to obtain a favourable response;
5. *Decides* to close the cases at hand in accordance with article 25 (b) of Annex I of its Procedure for the examination and treatment of complaints, given that, despite repeated requests, the complainant has provided no updated information over a prolonged period of time with regard to the aforesaid incidents, thus making it impossible for the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians to effectively continue its examination of the case;
6. *Requests* the Secretary General to convey this decision to the relevant authorities and the complainant.

### Case ZMB-Coll.1

**Zambia:** Parliament affiliated to the IPU

**Victims:** Opposition members of parliament (9 men and 2 women)

**Complainant:** Section I.1(a) of the [Committee Procedure](#) (Annex 1)

**Submission of complaint:** March 2013

**Recent IPU decision:** [February 2017](#)

**IPU Mission:** [September 2014](#)

#### Recent Committee hearing:

Hearing with the Speaker of the National Assembly during the 138<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly (March 2018)

#### Recent follow-up:

- Communication from the authorities: Letter from the Speaker of the National Assembly (December 2016)
- Communication from the complainant: November 2016
- Communication from the IPU: Letter to the Speaker of the National Assembly (February 2018)
- Communication from the IPU to the complainant: December 2017 ■