



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

139th IPU ASSEMBLY AND RELATED MEETINGS

Geneva, 14-18.10.2018

Assembly
Item 2

A/139/2-P.7
14 October 2018

Consideration of requests for the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda

Request for the inclusion of an emergency item in the agenda of the 139th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union submitted by the delegations of the Netherlands and the United Kingdom

On 14 October 2018, the Secretary General received a request from the Chair of the British Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union whereby the delegations of the Netherlands and the United Kingdom submit a joint proposal for an emergency item for the inclusion in the agenda of the 139th Assembly of an emergency item entitled:

"The urgent need to resolve the humanitarian crisis caused by the deterioration of parliamentary democracy in Venezuela".

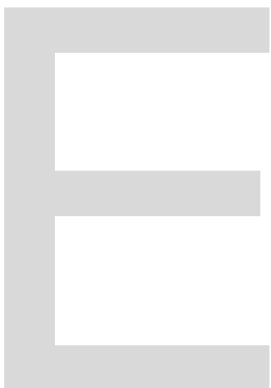
Delegates to the 139th Assembly will find attached the text of the communication submitting the request ([Annex I](#)), as well as an explanatory memorandum ([Annex II](#)) and a draft resolution ([Annex III](#)) in support thereof.

The 139th Assembly will be required to take a decision on the request of the delegations of the Netherlands and the United Kingdom on Monday, 15 October 2018.

Under the terms of Assembly Rule 11.1, any Member of the IPU may request the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda. Such a request must be accompanied by a brief explanatory memorandum and a draft resolution which clearly define the scope of the subject covered by the request. The IPU Secretariat shall communicate the request and any such documents immediately to all Members.

Furthermore, Assembly Rule 11.2 stipulates that:

- (a) A request for the inclusion of an emergency item must relate to a recent major situation of international concern on which urgent action by the international community is required and on which it is appropriate for the IPU to express its opinion and mobilize a parliamentary response. Such a request must receive a two-thirds majority of the votes cast in order to be accepted.
- (b) The Assembly may place only one emergency item on its agenda. Should several requests obtain the requisite majority, the one having received the largest number of positive votes shall be accepted.
- (c) The authors of two or more requests for the inclusion of an emergency item may combine their proposals to present a joint one, provided that each of the original proposals relates to the same subject.
- (d) The subject of a proposal that has been withdrawn by its authors or rejected by the Assembly cannot be included in the draft resolution submitted on the emergency item, unless it is clearly referred to in the request and title of the subject adopted by the Assembly.



#IPU139

**COMMUNICATION ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL BY
THE CHAIR OF THE BRITISH GROUP OF THE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION**

14 October 2018

Dear Mr. Secretary General,

In accordance with Rule 11.1 of the Rules of the Assembly, the delegation of the United Kingdom in partnership with the delegation of the Netherlands wishes to request the inclusion of an emergency item in the agenda of the 139th Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly which will be held in Geneva, Switzerland from 14 to 18 October 2018 entitled:

"The urgent need to resolve the humanitarian crisis caused by the deterioration of parliamentary democracy in Venezuela".

Please find attached an explanatory memorandum and a draft resolution in support of this request.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed)

Nigel EVANS, MP
Chair of the British Group of the
Inter-Parliamentary Union
(Submitted in partnership with the
delegation of the Netherlands)

**THE URGENT NEED TO RESOLVE THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS CAUSED BY THE
DETERIORATION OF PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY IN VENEZUELA**

***Explanatory memorandum submitted by the delegations of the Netherlands
and the United Kingdom***

This proposed draft resolution aims to highlight the urgent need for concerted global parliamentary action to address ongoing events in Venezuela which are threatening parliamentary democracy and human rights. The constitutional functioning of an IPU Member, the National Assembly of Venezuela, has been impeded by a severe and rapid deterioration of political, economic and social conditions with broader regional impacts which has caused a humanitarian crisis in the country and has created pressures for neighbouring countries in coping with unprecedented migrant outflows.

Background

A man-made humanitarian disaster is unfolding in Venezuela, exacerbated by years of mismanagement and corruption by the Maduro Government which still refuses to accept publicly that a crisis exists. There has been a severe deterioration of the democratic climate in the country with the free press silenced and other key institutions compromised.

There has also been violent repression of civilian protests with demonstrators imprisoned or beaten by security forces to the point of severe injury or death. There are estimated to be hundreds of political prisoners in Venezuela and thousands of people have been arbitrarily detained. Many of them, despite being civilians, are tried in military courts. There have been reports of torture and inhuman and degrading treatment in detention facilities, in addition to allegations of extrajudicial killings. It is a stark fact that Venezuela now ranks as the most violent country in the world outside of those experiencing actual armed conflict, with thousands of violent deaths attributed to recent unrest.

As a direct result of this deterioration, more than one million people have faced chronic food shortages resulting in increasing rates of child malnutrition and infant mortality. Food remains unaffordable for most of the population due to extreme hyperinflation and a lack of medicines has led to growing incidences of measles, diphtheria, and tuberculosis, and the first instances of polio in more than 25 years. To escape such hardships, United Nations agencies estimate that more than 2.3 million Venezuelans have migrated to neighbouring countries and to the wider region. This represents one of the largest displacements of people in the history of South America with significant impact in neighbouring countries, particularly Colombia.

On 28 September 2018, the International Criminal Court (ICC) approved a request by five Latin American countries (Argentina, Colombia, Chile, Paraguay, and Peru) and Canada to investigate crimes against humanity by the Maduro regime. This is unprecedented in being the first case in history of States referring another State to the ICC. These actions alone underscore the concerns of the international community at this unprecedented crisis and the urgency for action.

**THE URGENT NEED TO RESOLVE THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS CAUSED BY THE
DETERIORATION OF PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY IN VENEZUELA**

Draft resolution submitted by the delegations of the NETHERLANDS and the UNITED KINGDOM

The 139th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

- (1) *Expressing concern* regarding the ever-worsening humanitarian situation in Venezuela involving severe food and medical shortages which has led to millions of its citizens fleeing their country for refuge,
- (2) *Condemning* the actions of a national Government which, in addition to violating the most basic democratic principles, human rights and the rule of law, appears callously indifferent to the deteriorating situation and misery facing its civilian population,
- (3) *Stressing* the urgent need for the international community, including all Members of the IPU, to act to address the plight of thousands of Venezuelans including, where necessary, supporting international investigations of alleged abuses and crimes to restore justice and hold to account those responsible,
1. *Calls upon* the global parliamentary community to support peaceful international dialogue and remedial action to address this serious humanitarian crisis in Venezuela by exerting international pressure on the national authorities to address the urgent humanitarian needs of its population;
 2. *Also calls upon* the Venezuelan Government to urgently review the most pressing needs of its population to facilitate access to humanitarian aid and lessen the pressure for large-scale movements of its citizens elsewhere in the region, while also encouraging international assistance for those countries coping with these migrant outflows;
 3. *Strongly supports* international efforts, particularly through the International Criminal Court, to investigate allegations of abuses in Venezuela in order to ensure that the perpetrators of any crimes are brought to justice and that victims find redress, including through the immediate release of all political prisoners;
 4. *Expresses* solidarity with the Venezuelan people and parliamentary colleagues in the National Assembly, in support of a credible national dialogue and reconciliation in order that free and democratic presidential, parliamentary and local elections can be held as soon as possible in accordance with international norms and standards;
 5. *Pledges* to give meaningful practical support for the restoration of legitimate and constitutionally appropriate executive, legislative, judicial and electoral oversight powers, sufficient to restore good and effective governance in Venezuela.