



INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION

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CONCLUSIONS OF THE SECOND MEETING OF THE IPU PRESIDENT'S WORKING GROUP ON REFORM

The IPU President's Working Group on reform met in Geneva on 17 and 18 July 2006, with a number of new members nominated by the Geopolitical Groups. To facilitate its discussions, the Group had before it the attached document outlining issues that need to be addressed in consolidating the reform of IPU and proposing a range of solutions and options, based on the views submitted by the Members.

The present note contains the conclusions and recommendations of the Working Group. It is submitted to the Executive Committee, the Geopolitical Groups and the Governing Council. It is hoped that the basic proposals made by the Group can be adopted in principle by the Council during the 115th Assembly in Geneva. Amendments to the Statutes and Rules required by some of the proposals would then be circulated to IPU Members with a view to their adoption by the Governing Council at the 116th Assembly in Bangkok in May 2007.

I. Strategic partnership with the United Nations and other multilateral institutions

1. The IPU should continue to build a strategic partnership with the United Nations that includes mechanisms for direct two-way consultation.
2. IPU events currently held during the United Nations General Assembly, such as the annual Parliamentary Hearing and the meeting held during the Commission on the Status of Women, should be made a formal part of the General Assembly agenda.
3. The IPU should also continue efforts to ensure that it is actively involved in the work of the three new bodies established under the current United Nations reform.
4. IPU operational expertise should be brought to bear on certain United Nations activities, in particular in the field of institution building in post-conflict and newly democratic countries.
5. The IPU should organize specialized meetings on major issues on the United Nations agenda more systematically, and invite members of those parliamentary standing and select committees that work on those issues.

II. Functioning of IPU Assemblies

6. The IPU should convert the first Assembly of the year into the one major annual political event of the organization and continue its efforts to make it much more interactive. For example, the practice of holding panel discussions during the first Assembly should be continued and enlarged in scope.
7. The IPU could encourage more Speakers of parliament to attend the first Assembly and offer them an opportunity to hold a high-level discussion on issues closely related to the promotion of democracy.
8. The first Assembly could also be the occasion for holding hearings with the executive heads of multilateral organizations.
9. The first Assembly of the year should be linked more closely to the situation prevailing in the host country, e.g. by organizing field visits for MPs and meeting local politicians.
10. The second Assembly of the year should be replaced by a meeting of the Governing Council, also addressing a major political issue. The meeting would last three days and each parliament would be represented by its three-member Council delegation. Members of subsidiary bodies of the Council could also be invited in addition to the three Council members.
11. The Council would discuss the policy and programme of the IPU and devote the remaining time to debate a major political issue. There would also be a meeting of the Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians.

III. Standing Committees

12. The subject items placed on the agenda of the Standing Committees should be more sharply focused. The outcome document should be prepared in simple and clear language, should be much shorter and largely dispense with a long preambular section.
13. The practice of designating two co-rapporteurs should be maintained, but there should be an option to prepare two reports, instead of one consolidated report.
14. The co-rapporteurs should submit one draft resolution to parliaments, and the drafting committee should have more flexibility to reflect the agreements reached in the Standing Committee in the resolution.
15. The deadline for submission of amendments could be extended from 7 to 15 days so that Members have an opportunity to discuss them before leaving parliament to attend the Assembly.

IV. Governance of the IPU

16. The role of the IPU President should be enhanced, especially to provide political guidance to the organization. The President should be given adequate human and financial resources in order to ensure that access to the leadership of the organization is open to all.
17. The Group also discussed the possibility of extending the term of office of the President to a duration of four years. There was also a proposal to institute a bureau composed of vice-presidents, each selected from one geopolitical group.

18. Members need to be more involved in deciding on the programme and activities of the IPU. This problem could be resolved by giving more time for the Governing Council to discuss the policy and programme of the IPU during its second meeting of the year, as outlined above.
19. In order to achieve the above objectives, the mandate of the Governing Council would need to be amended to include powers to express the political views of the IPU on a specific issue placed on its agenda. In this manner, the Council could assume part of the political functions of the second IPU Assembly.
20. The Executive Committee should change its meeting schedule to include a third session that is held outside the context of the statutory meetings of the IPU.
21. Within six weeks following the closure of the Assembly, heads of delegations should submit a report to their national parliaments, with a copy to the IPU Secretary General.

V. Cooperation with the ASGP

22. Cooperation with the ASGP should be strengthened, for example by enlisting the support of Secretaries General of Parliaments in ensuring that relevant parliamentary committees are aware of and, where possible, participate in the work of specialized meetings held with the United Nations.
23. The ASGP could also organize panel discussions and workshops for members of parliament attending the first IPU Assembly on matters relating to democracy and the functioning of parliaments.

Geneva, 19 July 2006



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26 June 2006

SECOND MEETING OF THE PRESIDENT'S WORKING GROUP ON IPU REFORM

Geneva, 17 and 18 July 2006

This document proposes a list of issues that need to be addressed in the consolidation of the reform of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. It divides the questions into six thematic areas, and under each proposes a range of solutions and options based on the views submitted by the Members.

CONSOLIDATING THE REFORM OF THE IPU
- List of issues that need to be addressed -

There is broad support among IPU members for the changes to IPU's structures and working methods that were introduced in 2003. At the same time, many members feel that they did not go far enough and that further improvements are both necessary and achievable.

Many members have expressed support for the conclusions of the first meeting of the IPU President's Working Group on Reform. Broadly speaking, these conclusions suggest six areas that need to be examined with a view to improving on the IPU:

1. Strategic partnership with the UN and other multilateral institutions;
2. Functioning of IPU Assemblies;
3. Governance of the IPU;
4. Democracy promotion;
5. Visibility, outreach and information; and
6. Programme management and funding.

The table below sets out many of these issues and possible solutions or options that have been identified by members in the written contributions they have submitted so far.

1. Strategic partnership with the UN and other multilateral institutions

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Solutions and options</i>
Facilitate parliamentary input to and scrutiny of UN activities on specific issues, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and UN reform.	<p>Expand on the annual parliamentary hearing during the UNGA, turn it into a "real" hearing, ensure that it is fully a part of the UN agenda and that it becomes a joint UN/IPU event.</p> <p>Similarly, expand on the parliamentary meeting organized during the annual session of the Commission on the Status of Women and, systematically, provide substantive input to the work of the Commission.</p> <p>Organize, more systematically, specialized meetings on specific issues on the UN agenda to which the IPU would invite members of those parliamentary standing and select committees that work on those issues, as the IPU does already in relation to the WTO.</p> <p>Establish, on an ad hoc basis, small advisory groups composed of members of these committees to provide advice to the IPU and the UN on their respective work programmes.</p> <p>On occasion undertake field visits for these advisory groups to examine local realities relating to the issues and relevant UN programmes and activities.</p>

	<p>Develop tools to assist parliaments in monitoring the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.</p> <p>Develop activities to monitor reform of the United Nations and, where appropriate, facilitate input and follow-up from parliaments.</p> <p>Systematically encourage the presence of parliamentarians in their national delegation to major UN meetings, and organize meetings for them alongside these events.</p> <p>Link IPU's own agenda more closely to the priority areas of the UN agenda.</p>
Achieve a more substantive and equitable working relationship with the UN.	<p>Establish a regular consultation mechanism between the UN and the IPU.</p> <p>Develop a strong working relationship (including an advisory role for the IPU) with the new UN bodies conducting work in areas where the IPU has specific expertise to offer (the Peace Building Commission, the Democracy Fund and the Human Rights Council).</p> <p>Monitor implementation by parliaments of recommendations formulated by the IPU on the main issues of the international agenda and submit conclusions for consideration by both the UN and the IPU.</p>
Develop relationship with other multilateral institutions	<p>Strengthen the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO, develop institutional links between the Conference and the WTO, and improve the standing of the Conference and the IPU at WTO Ministerial Conferences.</p> <p>Develop a working relationship with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.</p>

2. Functioning of IPU Assemblies

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Solutions and options</i>
Improve the content and visibility of the Assemblies.	<p>Invite senior international and national personalities to address IPU Assemblies and to interact with participants in question-and-answer sessions.</p> <p>Invite presidents of parliaments and senior political leaders to attend the first Assembly of the year and offer them an opportunity to participate in a high-level segment of the general debate.</p> <p>Hold hearings with heads of UN agencies in the course of the first Assembly of the year.</p> <p>Expand on the scope of the panel discussions.</p> <p>Organize field visits for MPs during the first Assembly of the year.</p> <p>Make a more proactive effort in promoting parliamentary diplomacy during, in particular, the first Assembly of</p>

	the year.
Maintain, or discontinue, the second annual IPU Assembly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the second annual Assembly in its present form; • Revert to an earlier system where the second Assembly had at least one more working day at its disposal and was therefore in a better position to conclude discussions and negotiations in the Standing Committees; • Replace the second Assembly with a two-day meeting of the Governing Council to discuss IPU policies and programmes and hold a parallel political event; • Discontinue the second Assembly.
Improve the work of the Standing Committees.	<p>Select subject items for debate that are focused and succinctly worded.</p> <p>Change style of resolutions into declarations, statements or reports and use more concise and direct language. Introduction should be brief and recommendations should be sharply focused and succinct.</p> <p><u>Options for preparation of the report</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain current practice of designating co-rapporteurs who prepare a joint report; • Designate two [or more] Rapporteurs who each prepare one report; • Revert to the previous system when all IPU Members could submit a Memorandum. <p><u>Options for preparation of draft resolution</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain current practice of designating co-rapporteurs who prepare a single draft resolution; • Revert to previous system when all members could submit draft resolutions. • Maintain current practise of inviting Members to present amendments to an original draft and a subsequent revised draft resolution; • Offer an opportunity to Members to submit amendments to the original draft resolutions and leave the work of revising the original draft entirely to the drafting committee. <p><u>Options for deadlines for presenting amendments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the current deadline for submitting amendments; • Extend that deadline from 7 days to 15 days (or so) before the Assembly so that all IPU Members can

	<p>receive them and discuss them with their colleagues before leaving parliament to attend the IPU Assembly;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do away with the deadline altogether. <p>Offer greater powers to the drafting committee when finalising the draft resolution so as to reflect what has been said in the Committee debate.</p> <p><u>Options for improving committee debates</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resort more frequently to external experts to act as panellists and invite delegates only to take the floor to comment on the draft resolution • Extend the time of the debate so that all delegates can participate. <p>Improve on the selection process for rapporteurs.</p> <p>Offer a more meaningful role for the Bureaux of the Standing Committees.</p>
<p>Promote democracy during IPU Assemblies.</p>	<p>Organize special events and debates on matters relating to democracy and parliamentary life during IPU Assemblies.</p> <p>Arrange for presentations of IPU operational activities with question-and-answer sessions during the Assemblies.</p> <p>Organize workshops during the first Assembly of the year where members of parliament can exchange experiences on legislative and oversight work.</p>

3. Governance of the IPU

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Solutions and options</i>
<p>Strengthen IPU governing bodies.</p>	<p>Disassociate the second annual Governing Council from the Assembly so that, once a year, IPU Members can focus on the policy and programme of the Organization without distraction.</p> <p>Hold one of the annual sessions of the Executive Committee away from the annual Assemblies.</p> <p>Clarify the composition, competence and role of the geopolitical groups at the IPU.</p> <p>Identify a more concrete role for the ASGP in relation to the IPU.</p>

4. Democracy promotion

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Solutions and options</i>
<p>Place greater emphasis on democracy promotion.</p>	<p>Take part in public debate on bridging the democracy gap in international relations - alone and in cooperation with others (such as the Helsinki Group) - and produce position papers and organize work shops and panels on the subject.</p> <p>Undertake a review of IPU activities to promote democracy.</p> <p>Build on the work contained in the recent publication on parliaments and democracy in the 21st century and step up efforts to identify good parliamentary practice.</p> <p>Build upon the existing resource centre and invest more efforts in investigation and research on democracy issues from a parliamentary angle and making the result available to a broader public.</p> <p>Strengthen the technical assistance programme with a focus on providing long term assistance to parliaments in countries emerging from conflict.</p> <p>Provide a mechanism - "clearing-house" - for cooperation and coordination relating to technical assistance projects.</p> <p>Strengthen the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians and develop projects to enhance parliamentary work in relation to the human rights treaty bodies.</p> <p>Strengthen the gender partnership programme and develop capacity building activities in this field.</p>

5. Outreach and information

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Solutions and options</i>
<p>Ensure a more visible presence of the IPU internationally.</p>	<p>Provide the President with the necessary authority to make public pronouncements on behalf of the Organization on political crisis in the world and other matters of grave international concern.</p> <p>Continue implementing the recommendations contained in the Saatchi & Saatchi report, including by developing audio visual material.</p> <p>Investigate the possibility of facilitating cooperation between parliamentary and public broadcasters to exchange and air news about parliaments and the IPU.</p> <p>Continue enriching the content and improving the usability of the IPU website and provide adequate resources to this end.</p> <p>Digitise and make IPU archives and relevant historical documents publicly available.</p>

6. Programme management and funding

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Solutions and options</i>
<p>Secure adequate funding and support for the activities of the IPU.</p>	<p>Establish close and professional working relations with donors based on credibility and transparency.</p> <p>Seek to obtain timely and predictable funding allowing for appropriate planning of activities.</p>
<p>Improve programme delivery.</p>	<p>Establish a coherent long-term plan for IPU activities funded from both assessed contributions from IPU Members and voluntary contributions.</p> <p>Devise a system to ensure adequate planning, priority setting, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of activities in regular cycles.</p> <p>Improve on results-based budget exercise, mainstream gender issues and undertake gender analysis of the IPU budget.</p>

IPU WORKING GROUP ON REFORM
Geneva, 17 and 18 July 2006

President:

Mr. Pier Ferdinando Casini, member and former President of the Italian Chamber of Deputies, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Members:

- Mr. Bhokin Bhalakula, Former President of the Parliament of Thailand
- Mr. Boris Gryzlov, Speaker of the State Duma of the Russian Federation (represented by Mr. Alexander Kozlovskiy, MP, member of the IPU Executive Committee)
- Mr. Ibrahim Kéita, Speaker of the National Assembly of Mali*
- Ms. Margareth Mensah-Williams, Vice Chairperson of the National Council of Namibia, Vice-President of the IPU Executive Committee
- Mr. Sergio Páez Verdugo, Honorary President of the IPU (Chile)
- Dr. Ahmed Fathy Sorour, Speaker of the People's Assembly of Egypt, Honorary President of the IPU
- Dr. Björn von Sydow, Speaker of the Riksdag of Sweden
- Senator Monica Xavier (Uruguay), President of the Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians and member of the IPU Executive Committee
- Mr. Anders Forsberg, President, ASGP (Sweden)

Representatives of IPU Geopolitical Groups:

African Group

- Mr. Alban Kingford Sumana Bagbin, MP (Ghana)
- Mr. Pierre Sende, MP (Cameroon)*

Arab Group

- Mr. Mustafa Al-Jadaeih, MP (Jordan)
- Mr. Nour Eddine Bouchkouj, Secretary General of the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union

Asia-Pacific Group

- Mr. Ngo Anh Dzung, MP (Viet Nam), Chairperson of the Asia-Pacific Group
- Mrs. Judi Moylan, MP, Leader of the Australian IPU delegation, incoming Chair of the Asia Pacific Group

Group of Latin America and the Caribbean

- Senator Georgina Trujillo (Mexico)*

Twelve Plus Group

- Mr. Rudy Salles, MP (France)

Secretary General of the IPU:

Mr. Anders B. Johnsson

* Absent