

IPU Document No.5 (110th IPU Assembly)

*circulated in the 59th session of the General Assembly, in accordance with resolution A/57/47,
under agenda items 36, 79, 108 (a) (b) of the preliminary list*



INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION

Resolution adopted by consensus* by the 110th IPU Assembly

(Mexico City, 23 April 2004)

**Promoting international reconciliation, helping to bring stability to regions
of conflict, and assisting with post-conflict reconstruction**

The 110th Inter-Parliamentary Assembly,

* The delegation of the United Kingdom expressed a reservation regarding the wording of the second preambular paragraph, and the delegation of India expressed a reservation regarding operative paragraphs 15 and 26.

Recalling that, pursuant to the provisions of Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations, Member States shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force,

Recalling that, except in the case of self-defence expressly provided for in Article 51 of the Charter, the Security Council alone is empowered to decide on measures involving the use of armed force as defined in Chapter VII of the Charter,

Drawing on the provisions of Chapter VI of the United Nations Charter on the settlement of disputes and in particular, considering that the parties to a dispute shall first seek a solution by negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, recourse to regional agencies or arrangements or other peaceful means of their own choice,

Highlighting the common objectives of the United Nations (as enshrined in Article 1 of the Charter) and the IPU (as per Article 1 of its Statutes), in particular the objectives of maintaining international peace and security and developing friendly relations among peoples and nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and mutual respect,

Recognising that the root causes of armed conflict are multidimensional in nature, thus requiring a comprehensive and integrated approach to the prevention of armed conflict, and *aware* that conflicts that turn into armed violence are one of the most serious obstacles to development,

Considering the manifest link between peace, development and democracy, and the role of Parliament in strengthening this link,

Convinced that the development of democracy and the enjoyment of human rights are the surest means of preventing conflicts and restoring trust and peace in the post-war or post-conflict period,

Observing that the reconciliation of peoples and nations is the crowning achievement of peace and the means of moving beyond conflicts,

Affirming that reconciliation should go hand in hand with forgiveness without forgetting, and that reconciliation is characteristic of any society restored to peace and which has embarked on a future of joint reconstruction underpinned by the values of mutual respect, equality and tolerance,

Recalling that Parliament is the institution *par excellence* that embodies the diverse attributes and opinions of society and reflects and channels this diversity in the political process, and that its mission is to defuse tensions and maintain a balance between rival aspirations of diversity and uniformity, and the individual and the collective, with the aim of strengthening social cohesion and solidarity,

Recalling the provisions of the Universal Declaration on Democracy (Cairo, September 1997) and the information document on the IPU's stance (CONF/108/4-Inf. Doc.1),

Recognising the role that the Inter-Parliamentary Union and its Member Parliaments can and must play in restoring lasting peace by promoting international reconciliation,

Recalling that Parliament is the ideal forum for giving expression to democracy,

Noting that armed conflict is often the result of a crisis and/or of a poorly managed reconciliation,

1. *Reiterates* the call on governments made at the 109th Inter-Parliamentary Assembly to “promote reconciliation processes aimed at achieving sustainable solutions to internal conflicts”;
2. *Reiterates* the call on parliaments made at the 109th Inter-Parliamentary Assembly to do everything possible “at the national level to facilitate the establishment of standing mechanisms for conflict prevention and resolution, as a way to promote action geared to achieving real peace”;
3. *Requests* that parliaments engage in a policy of good offices, cooperation and assistance with parliaments of countries in conflict or undergoing reconciliation, when requested;
4. *Requests* that parliaments of countries engaged in a process of reconciliation meet and develop joint projects;
5. *Encourages* parliaments to support international reconciliation efforts conducted under the aegis of the United Nations and regional or sub-regional organisations;
6. *Calls* on Parliaments to support the inter-governmental structures, mechanisms and processes that promote stabilisation, reconciliation and peaceful development at regional and sub-regional level, and to enhance their parliamentary dimension;

7. *Requests* that parliaments promote dialogue, exchange and mutual understanding among cultures and civilisations;
8. *Requests* that the IPU establish committees to foster dialogue among MPs in cases where peace and reconciliation processes fail to work;
9. *Urges* parliaments to oversee the foreign policy of their government in order to bring reconciliation processes to a successful conclusion;
10. *Requests* parliaments, together with the IPU, as appropriate, to develop democratic engineering activities and intensify technical assistance to countries endeavouring to establish a new system of parliamentary democracy, and to make use of its valuable expertise to promote a balanced gender perspective in this process;
11. *Proposes* that the IPU's Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians develop its role and activities in truth and reconciliation commissions (TRCs) and make its expertise in the field of human rights available to TRCs;
12. *Recommends* regular participation in United Nations peace-keeping operations, and particularly in initiatives aimed at reconciliation;
13. *Urges* parliaments to establish, when needed, legally constituted TRCs; ensure fair representation of national diversity within TRCs, including that of women; ensure that TRCs have the resources they need to carry out their mandate; ensure that the work and outcomes of the TRCs are made public; monitor consideration of TRC recommendations by the Executive; and ensure follow-up of TRC recommendations;

14. *Recommends* that the statute of limitations shall not apply to serious crimes in violation of human rights;
15. *Recommends also* the ratification of international human rights instruments, in particular the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and the special tribunals established by the United Nations;
16. *Proposes* that human rights bodies be established in each parliament;
17. *Encourages* the IPU to promote cooperation among parliamentary human rights bodies and to develop relations with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and regional human rights mechanisms;
18. *Recommends* repealing existing laws or amending bills that grant an amnesty by applying the statute of limitations to actions considered crimes under international law;
19. *Encourages* the IPU to enhance its role and activities in the areas of peace and security, in particular by developing its United Nations dimension by making its expertise in democracy available to stabilisation and peacekeeping operations;
20. *Recommends* that parliaments bring pressure to bear on governments to participate in and finance peacekeeping operations under the aegis of the United Nations;

21. *Encourages* the development of parliamentary diplomacy, technical assistance under bilateral cooperation, and participation in consortia and multilateral cooperation projects;
22. *Encourages* the development of multilateral cooperation within and under the aegis of the IPU;
23. *Proposes* that special attention be given to the bicameral parliamentary system in order to represent the various national groups;
24. *Encourages* the United Nations to pursue and intensify its efforts to prevent conflicts and maintain and consolidate peace worldwide, particularly in Africa, where slow and fragile development is a fertile breeding ground for instability, and in the Middle East, which, for over half a century, has been plagued by one of the most appalling and bloody conflicts of recent times;
25. *Encourages* all countries to implement United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on "women and peace and security", as well as the specific recommendations on women and war made in the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the Beijing+5 Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly;
26. *Encourages* all international, regional, and sub-regional organisations, as well as non-governmental organisations involved in promoting international reconciliation, to stabilise conflict-prone regions and consolidate peace through post-conflict

reconstruction and to continue their efforts despite the failures and serious obstacles they encounter;

27. *Calls* on the countries engaged in assistance activities for reconstruction in post-conflict countries or regions to achieve a smooth and gradual transition from humanitarian assistance to reconstruction and development, in order to prevent the re-occurrence of conflicts and fresh waves of refugees or internally displaced persons;

28. *Urges* the Inter-Parliamentary Union to become more involved in seeking solutions to conflicts and promoting international reconciliation by:

(a) participating actively in concerted global efforts to resolve conflicts through dialogue among MPs and cooperation with competent international organisations and agencies, thereby contributing to peace and security;

(b) encouraging, in conflict-prone countries or regions, all efforts likely to promote national reconciliation such as, inter alia, good governance, respect for human rights and basic freedoms, and disarmament;

29. *Urges* the Inter-Parliamentary Union to become more involved in promoting post-reconstruction by:

(a) recommending international organisations and countries capable of so doing to establish, in post-conflict countries or regions, substantial economic assistance

programmes that are needed for reconstruction and lasting stability, following the example of the Marshall Plan;

(b) encouraging governments to support fully programmes needed for post-conflict reconstruction, by mobilising their resources;

30. *Requests* parliaments to foster or support, as the case may be, national measures designed to promote international reconciliation, such as promoting the concept and culture of peace, volunteerism, combating all forms of violence, outlawing terrorism, promoting development and education for all, including human rights education;

31. *Requests also* that parliaments foster or support, as the case may be, measures to strengthen peace and security, such as reconstruction, reducing the trade in weapons, particularly small arms, and in narcotics, promoting social justice, and combating poverty, corruption and environmental degradation;

32. *Encourages* parliaments, in their reconstruction efforts, to bring pressure to bear on their governments to respect the commitments undertaken in Monterrey and to alleviate or cancel, as far as possible, the debt burden, which is one of the main causes of poverty and conflict;

33. *Calls on* the Inter-Parliamentary Union to play a more meaningful part in debates, forms of concerted action and negotiations involving peace and security through its Permanent Observer.