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INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION

Resolution adopted unanimously by the 114th Assembly

(Nairobi, 12 May 2006)

THE NEED FOR URGENT FOOD RELIEF IN ORDER TO COMBAT DROUGHT -INDUCED
FAMINE AND POVERTY IN AFRICA, FOR THE WORLD'S MOST INDUSTRIALIZED
NATIONS TO SPEED UP AID TO THE CONTINENT AND FOR PARTICULAR EFFORTS
TO BE MADE TO REACH DESPERATE AND POOR POPULATIONS

The 114th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Deeply concerned that intensive natural and human activity has continued to upset the environmental balance and thus erode the global environmental capital,

Noting that the negative effects of globalization, population growth and the exponential increase in demand for natural resources driven by consumerism pose far-reaching dangers to the ecosystem,

Further noting that Africa in particular is faced with the real challenge of high levels of poverty and environmental degradation, which compound the effects of floods, soil erosion and desertification, and that the consequent destruction of water catchment areas results in unreliable water supplies for domestic, industrial and agricultural purposes,

Aware that urgent food relief is needed in order to combat the drought-induced famine and poverty now pervading large areas of Africa,

Further aware that Africa needs sustainable development strategies to combat famine and poverty rather than relying on food relief every time natural disasters and calamities occur, and *recalling* in this regard the Millennium Development Goals, which aim inter alia to achieve a massive reduction in poverty,

Conscious of the need for a multisectoral approach to sustainable development that encompasses not only sustainable food production but also good governance, respect for human rights, eradication of corruption, development of infrastructure and provision of access to communities, and security for the population,

Recalling that the right to food is a basic human right and a binding obligation that is well established under international law and recognized in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and a plethora of other instruments,

Recognizing that women in Africa play a key role, especially in the agricultural sector, and that their empowerment can therefore contribute significantly to improving food security,

Aware that the heavy external debts owed by most African States constitute a major hindrance to development and that debt relief, where provided, has released substantial additional resources to support food security and other programmes, such as education and health, in many countries in Africa,

Noting that the world's most industrialized countries are capable of speeding up aid to the continent for the immediate purpose of famine relief, and *recalling* the numerous commitments made by these countries in, inter alia, the Monterrey Consensus, the Millennium Development Goals and the New York Declaration on Action against Hunger and Poverty,

Recalling the numerous previous resolutions adopted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union on the many issues relevant to famine and poverty, in particular the resolution on the right to food adopted at the 96th IPU Conference in Beijing in 1996,

1. *Makes a pressing appeal for* increased supplies of emergency food assistance to be made available to drought-affected nations in Africa, and *calls on* governments collectively to meet the targets contained in the repeated appeals from international agencies, in particular the World Food Programme, for such assistance;
2. *Urges* the governments concerned to take every appropriate measure to facilitate access to the affected areas for the speedy delivery of food supplies and to provide security;
3. *Calls on* all parties to ensure that food relief programmes are not used for political ends and that food is distributed to those in need without political interference;

4. *Recommends* that parliaments in the affected countries monitor the delivery of food relief programmes, and *invites* them to report on their findings to the Inter-Parliamentary Union;
5. *Calls on* the governments of the countries concerned to make every effort to implement the Millennium Development Goals, in particular those relating to the reduction of poverty, and, to this end, to pursue sustainable development strategies;
6. *Affirms* that such medium- and long-term strategies must be comprehensive and aim to promote good governance and respect for human rights, eradication of corruption, sustainable food production, development of infrastructure and provision of access to communities, and, most importantly, security for the population;
7. *Calls on* all African countries to develop policies that facilitate the full and equal participation of women in political and economic life, so that they can contribute to and benefit from the development of their countries;
8. *Further calls on* African countries to take measures to promote and protect the security of land tenure, especially with respect to women and poor and underprivileged segments of society, through legislation and programmes that protect the full and equal right to own land and other property, including the right to inherit, in accordance with the Voluntary Guidelines to support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food adopted by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization in November 2004;

9. *Further calls on* the international community to support all efforts to improve access to education and vocational training for people in poverty-stricken regions, this being one of the most effective measures of reducing poverty in the long term;
10. *Further calls on* all governments to facilitate conflict resolution in affected areas in order to ensure human security;
11. *Urges* governments to encourage people in the affected areas to end certain practices that promote hostilities, including cattle rustling;
12. *Appeals* to the developed countries to respect the commitments they have made to provide assistance to developing countries and *calls on* them to accelerate implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and the New York Declaration on Action against Hunger and Poverty in this regard;
13. *Strongly urges* the developed countries substantially to increase their financial assistance, notably through innovative sources of financing for development, for the specific purpose of improving agricultural industry in affected countries with a view to boosting food production and thus ensuring food security;
14. *Calls on* the developed countries to extend and implement debt cancellation programmes in respect of all African countries affected by drought-induced famine;
15. *Invites* relevant international and multilateral institutions to review their policies and programmes to ensure that these do not in any way detract from or undermine policies pursued by countries to ensure food security;

16. *Calls on* the developed countries to phase out all forms of agricultural export subsidies, to reduce trade-distorting domestic support to agriculture, and to open their markets to the world's poorest countries;
17. *Calls on* the United Nations agencies, in particular the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), to increase funding and other measures to combat worsening environmental degradation in Africa, in particular in areas affected by drought and famine;
18. *Encourages* African parliaments to promote the socio-economic development of areas affected by drought and famine, which are also often marginalized, through a range of legislative and budgetary measures, including income-generating measures;
19. *Invites* the United Nations to give rapid effect to General Assembly resolution 57/265 on the Establishment of the World Solidarity Fund (and the eradication of poverty), in order to expedite the provision of financial resources, and *calls on* parliaments to adopt the requisite implementing legislation and to encourage their respective governments to contribute to those resources so as to enable African countries to become self-sufficient and ensure their food security.