Governing Council

Item 7

CL/188/7(b)-R.1

15 March 2011

REPORTS ON RECENT IPU SPECIALIZED CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

(b)   WORLD e-PARLIAMENT CONFERENCE 2010

The World e-Parliament Conference 2010 took place on 21 and 22 October 2010 at the Pan-African Parliament in Midrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. The event was co-organized by the United Nations, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Parliament of South Africa, the Pan-African Parliament and the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament.

The World e-Parliament Conference addresses, from both the political and technical perspectives, how the use of information and communication technology (ICT) can help improve representation, transparency, accountability, openness, and effectiveness in the complex parliamentary environment.

The Conference brought together about 300 members of parliaments, Secretaries-General, parliamentary staff, experts from international organizations and academics who work with ICT in legislatures. It provided an opportunity to analyze good practices, exchange views on latest trends and institutional developments, learn from each other's experiences, network with peers, and build partnerships in an international setting.

Building on the experience of previous meetings held in 2007, 2008 and 2009, the 2010 Conference was structured around plenary sessions focusing on high-level policy discussions and parallel sessions of a more general and technical nature. The Board of the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament met in parallel with the conference. The representatives of the parliaments that are members of the board expressed their continued support for the Global Centre and adopted a workplan for 2011-2020. The European Parliament and the Dominican Republic were elected as the new co-Chairs of the Board.

The 2010 Conference also provided an opportunity to review and discuss the findings of the World e-Parliament Report 2010, prepared by the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament and published by the IPU and the United Nations in May 2010. The Report highlights two critical issues - communication with citizens and the demand for transparency. Findings regarding how parliaments are faring in communicating with the public suggest there has been some improvement since 2007 and that a greater number of parliaments and members are using these technologies more effectively to engage with citizens.