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COOPERATION WITH THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

This document provides a checklist of activities undertaken in cooperation with the United Nations system from 6 October 2010 to 14 April 2011.

United Nations

- Over a dozen statements were delivered by the IPU before the General Assembly and its subsidiary organs, including the Geneva-based Human Rights Council. The statements drew from recent IPU resolutions and reported on IPU activities in all fields. The resolutions of the 123rd IPU Assembly were circulated in the General Assembly under the relevant agenda items.
- On 13 December, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 65/123 on *Cooperation between the United Nations, national parliaments and the IPU*. Adopted by consensus with the formal co-sponsorship of 90 Member States, the text contains several new provisions aimed at strengthening the partnership between the two organizations and increasing UN efforts to support national parliaments around the world.
- The annual joint IPU-UN Parliamentary Hearing, entitled *Towards economic recovery: rethinking development, retooling global governance*, took place in December 2010. Nearly 160 MPs, along with UN officials, ambassadors, and civil society experts attended the event. The final report of the Hearing was circulated at the United Nations as an official document of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council.
- A meeting of the IPU Advisory Group on United Nations Affairs was held in New York on 1 December. The Group heard briefings from senior UN officials on current global affairs and considered its own work plan for the following year, including a field mission to examine progress in the implementation of One UN reform and system-wide coherence at the national level.
- Together with the United Nations, the IPU organized the 2010 World e-Parliament Conference in Johannesburg on 22 and 23 October 2010. The Conference addressed, inter alia, relations between parliaments and the media in the context of new information and communication technologies.

- The IPU and the Mexican Congress held a parliamentary meeting in conjunction with the Conference of the Parties (COP16) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Cancún on 6 December. The UNDP Office in Mexico cooperated closely with the IPU in preparing the meeting. Legislators from over 30 countries adopted a declaration stating their common position on one of the most complex issues under negotiation within the United Nations – the global threat of climate change. The Declaration, which was conveyed to participants at the ministerial meeting, was also circulated among parliaments and the broader UN community.
- An International Parliamentary Conference on *Parliaments, minorities and indigenous peoples: Effective participation in politics* was held in Chiapas (Mexico), from 31 October to 3 November. The conference was organized jointly by the IPU, the Mexican Congress of the Union and the Government of the State of Chiapas, in partnership with UNDP, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the UN Independent Expert on Minority Issues and Minority Rights Group International. The outcome document of the Conference – the Chiapas Declaration – was circulated in the UN General Assembly.
- In preparation for the first High-level Symposium of the 2012 Development Cooperation Forum (Mali, 5-6 May 2011), the IPU contributed to the agenda of the meeting and facilitated the participation of parliamentarians. The IPU also provided support for the 2011 edition of the Survey on mutual accountability and aid transparency. The Survey is part of the exercise led by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to monitor implementation of the Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness.
- The IPU continued to work closely with the Office of the UN High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLS) in preparation for the Fourth Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC IV, Istanbul, 9-13 May 2011). As coordinator of the parliamentary track to the UN Conference, the IPU made inputs to the outcome document of the conference and will co-organize the Parliamentary Forum that will take place on the eve of the conference with the Grand National Assembly of Turkey. A joint project proposal with UN-OHRLS is being developed to help implement new LDC commitments for the next decade.
- The IPU organized a one-day meeting for parliamentarians attending the 55th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (23 February 2011). The meeting debated "The role of parliaments in promoting access to and participation of women and girls in education, training, science and technology." During the same week, the IPU held a joint event with UNDP on Political violence against women, and another independently on the role of parliaments in advancing the achievement of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 4 and 5: reduce child mortality and improve maternal health.

UNDP

- Work progressed on the first ever IPU-UNDP *Global Parliamentary Report*, to be issued in the second half of 2011. The report will provide an assessment of the state of parliaments worldwide – examining their changing role and the way in which they are responding to the increasingly complex demands of governance, citizens and society. This year's report will focus on the relationship between parliaments and citizens. More than 50 parliaments have already contributed to the research for the report.

- Last year's *Guidance Note for Parliamentarians on Development Effectiveness*, published online as a joint product of IPU and the UNDP-led Capacity Development for Development Effectiveness (CDDE) Facility, was translated into French, Spanish and Portuguese in a bid to extend its readership and facilitate further training of parliamentarians in non-English speaking countries.
- As a follow-up to the joint study of the IPU and the UNDP-led Millennium Campaign (September 2010), the two organizations pursued discussions with a view to formulating a joint work programme to help institutionalize the MDGs in the work of parliaments.
- Further to the conclusion of a global Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in 2010, the IPU and UNDP have signed MoUs at the national level to build the capacities of parliaments. Under these arrangements and during the period under review, the IPU organized, in partnership with UNDP, activities in Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau and Viet Nam. Joint IPU-UNDP activities have also taken place in support of the Palestinian Legislative Council.

UN WOMEN

- Following the merger of several UN gender entities into a single new agency, UN Women, the Secretary General hastened to establish contact and develop cooperation with the agency's Executive Director, Michelle Bachelet, and her team. As a first step, Ms. Bachelet addressed the annual parliamentary meeting on the occasion of the CSW and will be making the keynote address at the 124th IPU Assembly in Panama City.

UNICEF

- The IPU and UNICEF held a regional workshop on "Children and AIDS: The Social Protection Response, The Role of Parliaments" in Windhoek, Namibia, on 22 and 23 October 2010. The workshop examined the need to establish parliamentary mechanisms and build on good practices to develop a comprehensive response to the needs of children affected by HIV/AIDS.

UNAIDS

- Preparations got under way for the IPU to provide an input to the High-level Meeting of the UN General Assembly (June 2011), which will review progress on the realization of HIV/AIDS commitments. The IPU contributed to the related Report of the UN Secretary-General in keeping with the UN General Assembly resolution on modalities of the meeting, issued in December 2010, calling on the IPU to make a contribution.
- The IPU has joined the UNAIDS-led International Advisory Group (IAG) on universal access. The Group will guide a global vision of the country and regional findings from the 2010/2011 universal access review process. The IAG will produce a "leadership statement" reflecting the recognized global priorities and mapping the way forward to 2015 to scale up comprehensive national AIDS responses with a view to achieving universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support.
- The IPU established contact with the new Global Commission on HIV and the Law in order to organize parliamentary inputs to the Commission's debate, in view of its final report due in December. The subject matter of the Commission is central to the IPU's work plan on HIV/AIDS.

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

- In cooperation with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), on 7 October 2010, the IPU held a seminar on *Legislating for Women's Rights*. The seminar focused on the definition of discrimination, mainstreaming gender in the legislative process and monitoring the enforcement of laws. It also dealt with the role of parliaments in implementing the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and in particular on ways and means of enhancing cooperation between the CEDAW Committee, national parliaments and the IPU. The IPU presented a report to the 45th Session of the CEDAW Committee.
- Also in cooperation with OHCHR, on 7 October 2010, the IPU held a seminar entitled "Implementing the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: What part for parliaments? It sought to familiarize parliamentarians with the rights enshrined in the Covenants, the functioning of the UN monitoring committees and the contribution that parliaments can make to their work. The event also addressed the scope and practical implications of the right to freedom of expression and the right to work in a globalized world.

World Trade Organization (WTO)

- The annual 2011 session of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO took place in Geneva on 21 and 22 March. For the first time ever, the session was held on WTO premises and was organized with the support of the WTO. A unique tool for parliamentary scrutiny of international trade policies, the Conference is a joint undertaking of the IPU and the European Parliament. It serves as the de facto parliamentary dimension of the WTO.