

CL/188/SR.1
15 July 2011

SUMMARY RECORDS

OF THE

GOVERNING COUNCIL

(188th SESSION)

16 and 20 April 2011

PANAMA CITY (*ATLAPA Convention Centre*)

Participation

President: T.-B. Gurirab (Namibia)

Members and substitutes: M.N. Akbary, A.S. Darzabi, S.I. Gailani, A.R. Ibrahim, Ms. O. R. Salim and Mr. S. Wardak (Afghanistan); Ms. Z. Benarous, B. Benhalima, Ms. Z. Drif Bitat and A. Ziari (Algeria); J. Dalleres (Andorra); Ms. B. Henriques Da Silva, Ms. D. Ndakupapo and M. Nzola (Angola); D. Adams, H. Jenkins and Ms. J. Troeth (Australia); M. Graf, S. Markowitz and Ms. H. Silhavy (Austria); S. Abdulrahman, Ms. A. Al-Mubarak and J. Fakhro (Bahrain); S. Ali, M.U.K. Badal, Ms. S. Bulbul, S.H. Chowdhury and Md. F.H. Khan (Bangladesh); F.-X. de Donnea and P. Moriau (Belgium); D.R. Bado, Ms. M.M. Guigma Diasso and S.T. Ouedraogo (Burkina Faso); F. Kabura, A. Nkurunziza and E. Surwumwe (Burundi); V. Chheang, Ms. S.A. Krouch and T. Nhem (Cambodia); B. Abdoulaye, M. Ahidjo and Ms. J. Fotso (Cameroon); Ms. S. Carstairs, D. Dawson and Ms. S. Fortin-Duplessis (Canada); J.A. Coloma, T. Jiménez and R. León (Chile); Fan Fangping, Ms. Ma Li and Zha Peixin (China); Ms. P. Fouty-Soungou and A. Mboundou Nesa (Congo); Ms. J. Fonseca Solano, Ms. A. Gómez Franceschi and Ms. M. Zamora Alvarado (Costa Rica); Ms. M. Lugarić (Croatia); R. Pez Ferro and Ms. Y. Regueíferos Linares (Cuba); N. Anastasiades and Y. Thoma (Cyprus); I. Bárek, J. Lobkowicz and Ms. V. Parkanová (Czech Republic); Ms. B. Goya Kitende, E. Mokolo and L. She Okitundu (Democratic Republic of the Congo); K. Christiansen, K.P. Lorentzen and J.C. Lund (Denmark); P. Botello, P. Perez and Ms. A. Pozo (Dominican Republic); E. Nool and Ms. M. Tuus (Estonia); Ms. E. Ayelech, B. Gameda and K.G. Tekeleberhan (Ethiopia); Ms. K. Komi, J. Laakso and P. Salo (Finland); R. del Picchia, S. Janquin and P. Martin-Lalande (France); Ms. S. Moulengui-Mouele, A. Ndjave Ndjoy and G. Nzouba-Ndama (Gabon); Ms. B. Jarju, Y.M.C. Mballow and Ms. F. Mbye (Gambia); D. Bakradze, Ms. K. Gogorishvili and L. Vepkhvadze (Georgia); Ms. P. Ernstberger, P. Götz, Ms. A. Krüger-Leissner, N. Lammert and A. Ulrich (Germany); B. Djá, Ms. M. N'Dequi and R. Pereira (Guinea-Bissau); Ms. T. Backman, E.K. Gudfinnsson and S.E. Runarsson (Iceland); Ms. K. Kumar, P. Mohapatra and V.B. Singh (India); Ms. N. Ali Assegaf, M. Sopacua and A.S. Suratto (Indonesia); Ms. N. Akhavan, A. Eslamipanahm, H. Fallahat Pisheh and K. Jalali (Iran, Islamic Republic of); S.H. Hamoudi and Ms. A. Tahsin (Iraq); M. Sheerit (Israel); P.F. Casini, Ms. B. Contini and C. D'amico (Italy); Y. Komiyama, T. Morimoto and Ms. C. Nishimura (Japan); Ms. A. El Farhan, B. Haddadin and A. Mahmoud (Jordan); D.S. Eseli, F.M. Maalim and T.L. Mwadeghu (Kenya); Ms. A. Al-Awadhi, M. Al-Ghanim and A. Al-Omair (Kuwait); T. Mabetha, Ms. M. Makara, K. Mathaba, L. Moeketsi and Ms. N. Motsamai (Lesotho); J. Beck, Ms. D. Frommelt and J. Hilti (Liechtenstein); M. Wolter (Luxembourg); H. Chimunthu Banda, Ms. H. Daudi and T. Malipa (Malawi); M.N. Abdul Aziz, R. Kiandee, A.H. Mohamad Hanadzlah and Wee Ka Siong (Malaysia); K. Tapo (Mali); K.H. Baba (Mauritania); Ms. R. Green Macias, Ms. M. Guerra, Ms. L. Menchaca Castellanos, P. Muñoz-Ledo and M. Toledo (Mexico); F.O. Primo (Micronesia, Federated States of); C. Cellario, Ms. M. Dittlot and F. Notari (Monaco); O. Benabdallah, Ms. Z. Bouayad and A. Radi (Morocco); M. Cinquenta Naula, J.M. Katupha and Ms. M.J. Miguel (Mozambique); M. Amweelo, H. Lucks and Ms. M. Mensah-Williams (Namibia); Ms. M. Meindersma, G. Schaafsma and Ms. R. Vedder-Wubben (Netherlands); Ms. I. Heggø, Ms. A. Tingelstad Wøien, O. Vaksdal and T. Wickholm (Norway); Y. Al Balushi and M. Al-Hajri (Oman); R. Fatyana, Ms. F. Mirza and A. Waseem (Pakistan); Q. Abdelkarim, Ms. R. Diab and T. Quba'a (Palestine); Ms. D. Castañeda, M. Cohen Salerno and Ms. M. Vallarino (Panama); C. Aguilera and H. Capurro (Paraguay); Ms. M.Z. Angping, R. Daza, F. Drilon and R. Rodriguez (Philippines); Ms. B. Mazurek, F. Stefaniuk and M. Ziolkowski (Poland); A. Costa, J.M. Medeiros and G. Silva (Portugal); F.b.M. Al-Khayareen, I.M. Al-Missned and M.A. Al Sulaiti (Qatar); H.-C. Kim, Ms. J. Kim and Ms. H.-H. Lee

(Republic of Korea); Ms. C. Axenie, I. Palar and I. Stan (Romania); S. Cavrilov, M. Grishankov, V. Nefedov and Ms. E. Semenova (Russian Federation); Ms. D. Bronzetti, G. Sansovini and Ms. A. Venturini (San Marino); S. Al-Husseini, A. Al-Sheikh and S. Fadel (Saudi Arabia); Ms. S. Dukić Dejanović, N. Šarović and Z. Tomić (Serbia); A.N. Bankole Stronge, M. Betts-Priddy and Ms. A. Foyah (Sierra Leone); B. Barovič, Ms. J. Klasinc and M. Ziherl (Slovenia); C. Frolick, J.J. McGluwa and M.V. Sisulu (South Africa); Ms. T. Cunillera, L. Fraga and Ms. M.V. Monteserín (Spain); N.S. De Silva, Ms. C.B. Jayasinghe and M. Samarasinghe (Sri Lanka); E. El Siddig, M. Ibrahim Mohamed and Ms. B. Suliman Abbas (Sudan); M. Bouva, R.W. Panka and S.P. Somohardjo (Suriname); A. Avsan, Ms. U. Karlsson and K. Örnfjäder (Sweden); E. David, Ms. B.M. Gadiant, J.-R. Germanier, F. Gutzwiller and Ms. D. Stump (Switzerland); Ms. R. Aziz, S. Haddad and M.Z. Taghlibi (Syrian Arab Republic); L. Douglas (Trinidad and Tobago); A. Kurt (Turkey); Ms. R. Kadaga, J. Kawanga and Ms. P. Turyahikayo (Uganda); M. Gapes and R. Walter (United Kingdom); D. Kafulila, S. Masele and H. Mohammed (United Republic of Tanzania); L. Lacalle, J. Larrañaga, Ms. I. Passada and Ms. M. Xavier (Uruguay); J.C. Alemán, S. Ortega and R.D. Vivas (Venezuela); Ngo Quang Xuan, Ms. Nguyen Thi Bach Mai and Nguyen Van Son (Viet Nam); Ms. L.S. Changwe, Ms. B. Kawandami and A.K. Mwanamwambwa (Zambia); A. Chibaya, B. Gaule and Ms. E. Madzongwe (Zimbabwe)

Special guests: C. Núñez, Regional Director for Latin America, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS); Ms. N. Karsenty, Representative in Panama, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

Secretariat: A.B. Johnsson, Secretary General, and Ms. J. Toedtli, Secretary of the Governing Council

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FIRST SITTING

Sunday, 16 April 2011
(Morning)

The meeting was called to order at 9.20 a.m., with Dr. T.-B. Gurirab (Namibia), President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), in the Chair.

Item 1 of the agenda

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA
(CL/188/A.1)

The revised provisional agenda contained in document CL/188/A.1 was adopted.

Item 2 of the agenda

**APPROVAL OF THE SUMMARY RECORDS OF THE 187th SESSION OF
THE GOVERNING COUNCIL**
(CL/187/SR.1)

The summary records of the 187th session of the Governing Council were approved.

Item 3 of the agenda

PROPOSALS FOR THE ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE 124th ASSEMBLY

Mr. L. Lacalle (Uruguay) proposed that Mr. José Muñoz Molina, President of the National Assembly of Panama, be nominated President of the 124th Assembly.

Ms. M. Guerra said that she wished to second that proposal.

The Governing Council approved the nomination by acclamation.

Item 4 of the agenda

QUESTIONS RELATING TO IPU MEMBERSHIP

- (a) **Requests for affiliation and reaffiliation to the IPU**
(CL/188/4(a)-R.1)

The President said he was particularly pleased that requests for affiliation to the Union had been received from parliaments in the two regions to which he had specifically reached out in the interest of bettering their representation within IPU, namely the Pacific and the Caribbean regions. The recommendations of the Executive Committee with respect to those requests, from the Parliament of the Federated States of Micronesia and the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago respectively, were set forth in document CL/188/4(a)-R.1. He took it that

the Governing Council wished to approve the decision of the Executive Committee contained in that document concerning the request for affiliation from the Parliament of the Federated States of Micronesia.

It was so decided.

Mr. F.O. Primo (Federated States of Micronesia), in expressing thanks to the IPU for its approval of the request for affiliation submitted by his country's Parliament, said that it was an honour and a privilege for him to represent the latter at the present Assembly. He would do his utmost to assist the IPU in its efforts to fulfil its mandate.

The President said he further took it that the Governing Council similarly wished to approve the recommendation of the Executive Committee concerning the request for affiliation from the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago.

It was so decided.

Mr. L. Douglas (Trinidad and Tobago) expressed gratitude on behalf of his country's Parliament for its admission to the Union. He and his fellow parliamentarians looked forward to participating in the work of the IPU and to sharing in the achievement of its goals and ideals with respect to improving the functioning of parliaments worldwide.

(b) Situation of certain Members

(CL/188/4(b)-R.1)

The President informed the Council that the Executive Committee was currently examining the situation of two Members, Egypt and Tunisia, insofar as neither country any longer had a functioning parliament in the wake of the historic events that had recently taken place in each. The people of both countries were to be applauded for their courage and determination in calling for more transparency, freedom and greater social justice, or, in other words, for true democracy. They moreover deserved IPU's support as they progressed towards more democratic rule. The Committee had discussed the situation of both countries at length and would make a recommendation to the Council at its last sitting of the present Assembly.

The Committee had also examined the situation of two parliaments that were defaulting in their payments to the IPU, namely those of Liberia and Comoros, with respect to which it was particularly concerned in that they were liable for suspension under Article 5.3 of the IPU Statutes. In line with the statutory requirements, it therefore recommended that, in the absence of steps to redress their financial situation, both parliaments be suspended from the Organization at the Council's next session in October 2011.

The Committee had noted that Articles 5.2 and 5.3 of the Statutes did not specify that Associate Members defaulting in their financial contributions were liable to the same statutory sanctions as Members. It had consequently tasked the Secretariat with preparing an amendment to those Articles in order to make it clear that Members and Associate Members alike were subject to sanctions and suspension in the case of non-payment of contributions. The amendment would be submitted to the Council for approval at its next session.

The Governing Council took note of the President's oral report on the situation of certain Members.

(c) Requests for observer status

The President said that the Executive Committee was seized with requests for observer status from three organizations: Penal Reform International, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries and the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH). It had decided to defer a recommendation on the grant of permanent observer status to those organizations, pending a review of the conditions for the acquisition of such status at the IPU. In particular, the Secretary General had been asked to explore the possibility of imposing a fee for observer status. The Committee would make its recommendation in the light of that review at the Council's next session in October 2011.

The Governing Council took note of the President's oral report on observer status.

Item 5 of the agenda

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

**(a) On his activities since the 187th session of the Governing Council
(CL/188/5(a)-R.1)**

The President drew attention to document CL/188/5(a)-R.1, which contained full details of his activities since the 187th session of the Governing Council.

The Governing Council took note of the report of the President on his activities since its 187th session.

(b) On the activities of the Executive Committee

The President said that the Executive Committee had met in Panama the previous day in order to fine-tune the draft five-year strategy for the IPU, which had now been circulated and which he encouraged Members to read carefully with a view to its adoption in October 2011. He looked forward to hearing their views on the subject at the Council's next sitting on 20 April 2011.

The Committee had also examined a draft outline of the IPU budget for 2012 and 2013 and provided guidance on the content of the programme and budget to be presented to the Council for adoption in October 2011. On that score, it was very mindful of the financial and economic difficulties faced by parliaments the world over and of the need to maintain a zero-growth budget for the coming years.

The Governing Council took note of the President's oral report on the activities of the Executive Committee.

Item 6 of the agenda

**ANNUAL REPORT BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL ON
THE ACTIVITIES OF THE IPU FOR 2010**

The Secretary General recalled the IPU's focus in recent years on supporting the efforts of parliaments in least developed countries with the aim of enabling them not only to perform their functions but also to play an active part in the implementation of international development programmes. Due to take place in Istanbul from 9 to 13 May 2011, the Fourth

United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC-IV) would represent an important milestone in that process. The Turkish Parliament was therefore working with the IPU to host a Parliamentary Forum with a view to ensuring that parliamentarians from those countries provided a strong input to the LDC-IV deliberations.

Mr. A. Kurt (Turkey), speaking at the invitation of the President, said that he wished to extend an invitation on behalf of the Turkish delegation and people for all parliamentarians accredited to LDC-IV as members of their national delegations to attend a Parliamentary Forum to be organized by his Parliament and the IPU, with United Nations support, on 8 May 2011. The aim of the Forum was to develop a parliamentary message for adoption by LDC-IV, which provided a once-in-a-decade opportunity to create a substantial change in the lives of 850 million people through measures for inclusive growth, poverty reduction and prosperity. That message, to which Turkish parliamentarians had already made a substantial contribution, should reflect the parliamentary commitment to support least developed countries in their efforts to confront the challenges to their development. He therefore called on his fellow parliamentarians to contribute to the successful outcome of LDC-IV, which would be embodied in a new Istanbul Programme of Action, by participating in the first-ever Parliamentary Forum to be held in the context of such a conference.

The President endorsed that call, adding that the active involvement of parliamentarians in such an important and well-structured conference was to be encouraged.

The Secretary General, turning to his annual report on the activities of the IPU in 2010, drew attention to the new format of the report, which was designed to enhance accessibility to its content for Members while also bearing in mind its function as an information brochure for non-Members. In that vein, the cover image strikingly captured the IPU's work to promote democracy. Highlighted first in the report were the 3rd World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments and the 6th Annual Meeting of Women Speakers of Parliaments, both of which had provided important political input to parliaments in the context of international relations and to the IPU in the context of its relationship with the United Nations. Descriptions then followed of the IPU's work in the areas of democracy, technical assistance and human rights, including defence of parliamentarians and matters relating to minorities and indigenous peoples. Other IPU activities outlined in the report included those relating to women in politics, violence against women, the United Nations, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and climate change. Also set out in the report was the usual information on institutional developments within the IPU and a summary of the IPU's financial results.

During the Assembly, Members would be presented with the findings of an IPU global survey on gender-sensitive parliaments, a subject on which the IPU Gender Programme would continue to focus in the coming years. In conjunction with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the IPU was also conducting an anonymous survey to identify challenges facing parliaments worldwide and solutions applied to address those challenges. To that end, it had seized the opportunity of the Assembly to engage volunteers who would canvas participants' views on aspects of their parliamentary work. He therefore looked forward to a positive response in the interest of supplementing the information already provided by various Members, which would be incorporated into a forthcoming report on the subject.

The Governing Council took note of the annual report by the Secretary General on the activities of the IPU for 2010.

The meeting rose at 10 a.m.

SECOND SITTING

Wednesday, 20 April 2011
(Morning)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m., with Dr. T.-B. Gurirab (Namibia), President of the IPU, in the Chair.

Supplementary agenda item

The President informed the Council that, at its meeting of the previous morning, the Executive Committee had acknowledged the need to elect a member of the Executive Committee to replace Mr. Al Shariqi from the United Arab Emirates, who was no longer a member of parliament. Having discussed the matter, the Arab Group had proposed a candidate for the position, subject to election by the Council. The Executive Committee therefore recommended the addition of an item to the Council's agenda in order to cover the required election. He took it that the Council accordingly wished to agree to that addition, in which case the item would appear as the last on its agenda, namely item 16.

It was so agreed.

Item 4 of the agenda
(continued)

QUESTIONS RELATING TO IPU MEMBERSHIP

(b) Situation of certain Members
(CL/188/4(b)-R.1)

The President recalled that he had reported to the Council at its first sitting that the Executive Committee had been discussing the situation of two Members, Egypt and Tunisia. Noting that neither country any longer had a functioning parliament but that elections had been announced and were due to take place in the coming months, the Committee had taken the view that it was important for the IPU to support the people of Egypt and Tunisia as they moved towards more democratic rule. The IPU therefore stood ready to provide assistance in their respective election processes and in building strong and democratic parliaments in both countries. It would also carefully monitor the situation and present a progress report to the Council at its next session in Bern. A large majority of Committee members had also taken the view that, in the expectation that free and fair elections would be held as announced, the IPU should decide to maintain the membership status of both Egypt and Tunisia. On that basis, he took it that the Council wished to adopt the decisions to that effect contained in document CL/188/4(b)-R.1.

It was so decided.

Item 5 of the agenda
(continued)

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

(b) On the activities of the Executive Committee

The President said that the Executive Committee had met the previous day to complete its agenda, most of which was covered by items on the Council's present agenda. The outcome of the Committee's discussions on the subjects concerned would accordingly be reported under those items. As had also been the case at its meeting in February 2011, the Committee had discussed financial and budgetary matters in considerable depth, with the result that it had decided to establish a finance committee to assist in its work on budget, finance and auditing matters. A working group of the Committee had accordingly been tasked with developing the mandate and working modalities of the new committee, which was to be established at the 125th Assembly in Bern.

The Committee had also set up a working group in the context of its consideration of the IPU scale of contributions. The group had met twice during the current Assembly and would continue to examine a variety of options. It was determined to do its best, however, to avoid increases in contribution rates. The Committee would review the group's work at the Bern Assembly, when it hoped to be in a position to present a revised scale for consideration by the Council.

With regard to future budgets for the IPU, the Committee had looked at initial estimates of income and expenditure for 2012, according to which there was to be a reduction in the IPU's core budget. The explicit message from the membership was that the IPU must make economies on the basis of clear priorities and strive to reduce the budget and Members' contributions. That was the understanding of the Executive Committee as it continued to prepare the budget for 2012 and beyond.

The Governing Council took note of the report of the President on the activities of the Executive Committee.

Item 7 of the agenda

REPORTS ON RECENT IPU SPECIALIZED MEETINGS

- (a) **Eastern and Southern Africa Parliamentary Regional Workshop on "Children and AIDS: The social protection response, the role of parliaments"**
(CL/188/7(a)-R.1)

The President, introducing the report, said that he had been extremely pleased to host the Eastern and Southern Africa Parliamentary Regional Workshop held in Windhoek, Namibia. The Workshop had been attended by some 50 members of parliament, who had shared their experiences on how parliaments ensured social protection for children affected by HIV/AIDS. He encouraged Council members to read the report.

The Governing Council took note of the report on the Eastern and Southern Africa Parliamentary Regional Workshop.

(b) World e-Parliament Conference 2010

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

The President, introducing the report, said that participants in the World e-Parliament Conference held in Johannesburg in October 2010 had analysed good practices and exchanged views on latest trends and institutional developments. They had also reviewed the findings of the World e-Parliament Report 2010, which highlighted communication with citizens and the demand for transparency as two critical issues. The Report had also found that a greater number of members of parliament were using technologies more effectively to engage with citizens.

The Governing Council took note of the report on the World e-Parliament Conference 2010.

(c) International Parliamentary Conference on "Parliaments, minorities and indigenous peoples: Effective participation in politics"

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

The President, introducing the report, said that the International Parliamentary Conference, which he had regrettably been unable to attend, had taken place in Chiapas, Mexico, in late 2010. The Conference had concluded with the adoption of the Chiapas Declaration, in which parliaments were urged to adopt a Plan of Action to make the right to equal participation and non-discrimination a reality for minorities and indigenous peoples. The Declaration was available on the IPU website for downloading, with a link to the relevant page provided in document CL/188/7(c)-R.1.

The Secretary General added that part of the IPU's work with its membership to develop standards and best practices for democratic parliaments was focused on the representation of minorities and indigenous peoples. In that context, the results of a parliamentary questionnaire circulated as part of a joint project between the IPU and UNDP had revealed that too little attention was devoted to promoting the representation of those particular groups in parliament. The Conference had therefore served as a welcome opportunity to take stock and discuss possible actions by parliaments and the IPU for improving the situation. The resulting Chiapas Declaration was commendably clear and concise in its recommendations, which, if implemented, would already constitute a great step forward. The IPU was also called upon to take the lead in collecting much-needed data on the representation of minorities and indigenous peoples in parliament and to monitor implementation of the Declaration. He urged Members to study the text of the Declaration, not least in that it would be instrumental to the IPU's strategy for following up the issue in the coming years.

The Governing Council took note of the report on the International Parliamentary Conference.

(d) Annual Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations

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

The President, introducing the report annexed to document CL/188/7(d)-R.1, said that he had chaired the Annual Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations in December 2010, which had underlined the importance of the partnership between the IPU and the United Nations. Indeed, the firm relationship between the two organizations was advancing from

strength to strength, as exemplified by General Assembly resolution 65/123 on cooperation between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, which had been adopted shortly after the event.

The Governing Council took note of the report on the Annual Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations.

(e) **Parliamentary Meeting on the occasion of the United Nations
Climate Change Conference (COP16/CMP6)**
(CL/188/7(e)-R.1)

Mr. P. Muñoz-Ledo (Mexico), speaking at the invitation of the President, presented the report on the Parliamentary Meeting held in Cancún, Mexico, on 6 December 2010, which, in his capacity as a member of the Mexican Chamber of Deputies, he had been involved in organizing with the IPU on the occasion of the United Nations Climate Change Conference. He drew attention to the outcome document annexed to the report, which had been drafted with input from the Mexican Congress over a six-month period and adopted by consensus following its discussion and amendment by participants at the Meeting, including 145 parliamentarians. In his view, however, it would be preferable if such documents were henceforth to result from a lively discussion on climate change that also took into account underlying themes. He therefore urged wider participation in future by parliamentarians and civil society, expressing the hope in that context that the venue of the next United Nations Climate Change Conference in Durban, South Africa, would additionally encourage a greater African presence. Any parliamentary meeting held on that occasion should be an exercise in political autonomy, have its own agenda and serve as a forum for reflection, with due regard for differing systems of government.

The Secretary General said that those suggestions had been noted and were being discussed with the Parliament of South Africa in the context of preparations for such a meeting in Durban.

The Governing Council took note of the report on the Parliamentary Meeting.

(f) **Regional Seminar for Twelve Plus Parliaments on youth
participation in democracy**
(CL/188/7(f)-R.1)

The Secretary General, introducing the report, said that the Regional Seminar for Twelve Plus Parliaments had been hosted by the United Kingdom House of Commons as part of the follow-up to the IPU resolution on youth participation in the democratic process, adopted at the 122nd Assembly. Subjects discussed had included ways of promoting political engagement among young people, whose generally declining interest in politics had been attributed by some to distrust of the system and to lack of investment in youth. Suggested solutions and other details of the debate were contained in the report.

The Governing Council took note of the report on the Regional Seminar for Twelve Plus Parliaments.

(g) Parliamentary Meeting on the occasion of the 55th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women
(CL/188/7(g)-R.1)

The Secretary General, introducing the report, said that the Parliamentary Meeting held in February 2011 had as its theme the role of parliaments in promoting access to and participation by women and girls in education, training, science and technology. Ms. M. Bachelet, Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, also known as UN Women, had delivered the keynote address. A summary of the debates on the main issues at stake was contained in Annex 1 to the report, while annex 2 contained the statement on the outcome of the Meeting delivered by Ms. M. Mensah-Williams, Second Vice-President of the IPU Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians, to the plenary session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

The Governing Council took note of the report on the Parliamentary Meeting.

(h) Annual session of the Parliamentary Conference on the World Trade Organization
(CL/188/7(h)-R.1)

The Secretary General, introducing the report, said that the annual session of the Parliamentary Conference on the World Trade Organization (WTO) was a major event for parliamentarians, in particular those dealing with financial, trade and other issues of relevance to the negotiations on the Doha Development Agenda. The session had been well attended as usual and, for the first time ever, held on the WTO premises, giving it a significance that was more than just symbolic insofar as the IPU had long been working in close coordination with the European Parliament to secure greater parliamentary input into WTO activities. That process was now being led by Senator Oliver of Canada, who had co-presided over the session's lively and engaging debates. Many penetrating questions had been raised during a hearing with the WTO Director-General, Mr. P. Lamy, and various interactive discussions had also taken place with key WTO negotiators. The consensus outcome document annexed to the report argued very strongly in favour of an early conclusion to the Doha Round negotiations and called on parliamentarians to raise the matter with their respective governments in order to build the impetus needed to reach a final agreement.

The Governing Council took note of the report on the annual session of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO.

(i) Regional seminar for parliaments of West and Central Africa on combating violence against women
(CL/188/7(i)-R.1)

Ms. G. Guigma (Burkina Faso), speaking at the invitation of the President, presented the report by detailing its full contents on the regional seminar on combating violence against women, which had been hosted by her Parliament in April 2011. As mentioned at the close of the report, her country's parliamentarians had set as a priority the elaboration of a law dealing specifically with violence against women and girls. The benefit of IPU financial support for conduct of the studies needed to that end would be most welcome.

The Governing Council took note of the report on the regional seminar.

Item 8 of the agenda

COOPERATION WITH THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

(CL/188/8-R.1 and 8-P.1)

Mr. C. Núñez, Regional Director for Latin America, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), speaking at the invitation of the President in the context of IPU cooperation with UNAIDS, outlined some of the important gains achieved since the appeal made at the 122nd Assembly by UNAIDS Executive Director, Mr. M. Sidibé, for parliamentarians to promote respect for people living with HIV and encourage informed debate on HIV-related issues. Nonetheless, approximately one third of countries still lacked laws prohibiting HIV-related discrimination. The HIV epidemic also visited particular ills on women and girls, whose ability to protect themselves against it was compromised by gender inequality, harmful gender norms and violence. Parliamentarians were in an exceptional position to influence the response to the HIV epidemic, to which end they must continue to take leadership by speaking out on the response to HIV, ensuring the allocation of sufficient funding for that response and promoting protective, rather than punitive, legislation. They were also urged to encourage their country leaders to attend the United Nations General Assembly High-level Meeting on AIDS, to be held in June 2011, at which the IPU would hold a side event. The Meeting would provide a unique opportunity to determine progress made, remaining challenges and the way forward.

The Secretary General drew attention to document CL/188/8-R.1, which contained a checklist of activities undertaken in cooperation with the United Nations system since October 2010. Members were encouraged to familiarize themselves with General Assembly resolution 65/123 on cooperation between the United Nations, national parliaments and the IPU, to which the second paragraph of the document was dedicated. After summarizing the main substance of that resolution, he highlighted the important decision, set forth in its final paragraph, to include in the provisional agenda of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly an item entitled "Interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union". He looked forward to a dialogue with Members concerning the content and desired outcome of the debate on that item, for which it would now be necessary to prepare.

As to the remainder of the document, it focused on the IPU's various activities in conjunction with the United Nations, all of which were dealt with under other items of the Council's agenda. The IPU had additionally cooperated with the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) to produce an advocacy kit for parliamentarians entitled "Disaster risk reduction: an instrument for achieving the Millennium Development Goals", which had been launched at the previous Assembly in October 2010 and which he commended to the attention of Members. Now available in the six official languages of the United Nations, the kit was designed to assist members of parliament in their oversight of national progress and investments made towards achieving the MDGs from the perspective of disaster risk reduction, outlining goal by goal the priorities, steps and interventions required to reduce or eliminate disaster risks.

The Governing Council took note of the checklist of activities undertaken in cooperation with the United Nations system since October 2010.

The Secretary General, recalling the invitation extended by the Turkish delegation at the first sitting of the Council for Members to attend the Parliamentary Forum to be held on the eve of the forthcoming LDC-IV in Istanbul, drew attention to document CL/188/8-P.1, which

contained a draft parliamentary message prepared in cooperation with Turkey's Grand National Assembly for delivery to LDC-IV. The text had been reviewed by the Executive Committee, which recommended its endorsement by the Governing Council.

The President said he took it that the Council wished to endorse the proposed parliamentary message.

It was so decided.

Item 9 of the agenda

CONSOLIDATION OF THE REFORM OF THE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION

(A/124/Inf.5)

The President drew attention to the draft IPU strategy for 2012-2017, set forth in document A/124/Inf.5, which he hoped that Members had had the opportunity to discuss within their respective geopolitical groups.

The Secretary General, following a screening of a video film aimed at visualizing the thrust of the strategy for the IPU and its leitmotiv of working for better parliaments and stronger democracies, presented the document prepared by the Executive Committee, which was the outcome of a lengthy participatory process involving the IPU membership, geopolitical groups and committees. As shown in the executive summary, the draft strategy comprised a mission statement, a vision, three strategic directions - each with its own defined work areas, objectives and expected outcomes - and a conclusion, from which it was clear that the strategy was not a vehicle for an increase in Members' contributions. Its purpose was rather to build a shared vision of the IPU's future direction and the priorities that should inform the budget discussion being pursued in parallel. Full implementation of the strategy would, however, necessitate an increase in voluntary contributions.

In short, the strategy essentially sought to render more effective participation by Members in the work of the IPU and their ownership of the organization, emphasizing such values as gender-mainstreaming and a rights-based approach. Members were encouraged to submit any further comments or suggestions concerning the draft by the end of June 2011 with a view to their incorporation in an effort to ensure that the strategy met expectations and would thus be ripe for adoption at the next Assembly in Bern.

The President, responding to a query from *Mr. A.K. Mwanamwambwa (Zambia)*, confirmed that it was in order for parliaments to make the draft strategy available on their websites; indeed, they were encouraged to do so and, more importantly, to engage their general public on its content during the lead-up to the Assembly in Bern, where he looked forward to a decision for adopting the draft.

The Governing Council took note of the IPU strategy for 2012-2017.

Item 10 of the agenda

FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR 2010

(CL/188/10-R.1, R.2 and R.3)

The Secretary General, presenting the financial report and audited financial statements contained in document CL/188/10-R.1, drew attention to the synopsis of the revenue and expenses budget for 2010 set forth in table 1, which showed that actual revenue was some CHF 4,000 lower than the revised budget figure. The sole reason for that discrepancy was that voluntary contributions had not reached the anticipated level. Similarly, the operating deficit was largely explained by fluctuations in the value of the euro and United States dollar, in which the IPU had substantial holdings. The report succinctly described the various sources of revenue in the form of contributions from Member parliaments, voluntary contributions and staff assessment, as well as from investment income and other revenues, which were relatively meagre on account of the IPU's prudent safeguarding of IPU holdings. Also outlined were the expenditures by division, which included explanations for any instances of over and underspending.

Concerning the analysis of expenditures by object of expenditure, some of the figures in the pie chart of expenditures by category appearing on page 7 of the document required correction, as they had been calculated without taking into account the cost of projects funded by voluntary contributions. The figures concerned should therefore be amended to read: 27% for planning and coordination; 13% for language services; 12% for experts; and 12% for secretarial services. As to the situation of the IPU Staff Pension Fund, it was more fully addressed in the report of the Internal Auditor (CL/188/10-R.2). Essentially, however, the value of the Fund for actuarial purposes was CHF 10.2 million, whereas its actuarial liabilities amounted to CHF 12 million. The final recommendation was that the Council should approve the financial administration of the IPU and the financial results for 2010. The statements of financial position, financial performance and cash flows followed the usual pattern, as did the notes to the financial statements. Particular attention to the programme results for 2010 tabulated in annex II was merited in that they provided a wealth of information that was now much more meaningfully presented than when the results-based system had first been introduced, summarizing as they did the activity or output, outcome, indicators of achievement and results achieved in connection with each objective.

Mr. R. Walter (United Kingdom) expressed concern that the budget trends revealed by the financial results were moving in the wrong direction, particularly given the context of IPU reform and overall cuts in parliamentary and government expenditures. The fact that expenditure on support services had increased by CHF 320,000 while expenditure on the Division for the Promotion of Democracy had decreased by CHF 200,000 was a case in point. The budget of the Executive Office had also risen by 10%. More stringent efforts should be made to curb overhead expenditure; his own delegation's budget for IPU expenditure, for example, had been cut by 10% and international organizations should act in like fashion. On a lesser note, the pie chart of expenditures by division gave a misleading picture as it had not been updated to show that certain expenditures were in fact creeping upwards. It was essential to ensure that information remained current.

The Secretary General explained that the budget of the Executive Office had been increased in order to ensure better governance and also to fund an additional meeting of the Executive Committee, as well as the 6th Annual Meeting of Women Speakers of Parliament. As mentioned in the financial report, the increase in expenditure on support services had been almost entirely due to exchange rate losses. The consequent need to make savings elsewhere

in order to remain within the overall budget had led to the lowering of expenditure for the Division for the Promotion of Democracy on the ground that voluntary contributions could be used to fund its activities, which had not necessarily been affected as a result. It was nonetheless correct to state that the IPU should remain focused in its activities and frugal while effective in its spending, which must also comply with the strategy of affording preference to democracy-related activities. The Executive Office was in fact the target of the biggest cuts proposed in the context of the budget discussions currently under way, which were aimed at investing not only in the promotion of democracy but also in a modern communication strategy and improved operational management, governance and internal oversight. The IPU would therefore continue to do its utmost to curb overhead expenditure. He apologized for any inaccuracies in the pie chart, which would be amended as necessary.

Mr. T.L. Mwachugu (Kenya) asked why the IPU was under obligation to pay a contingent liability for tax assessment by the French Government for 2005 and 2009.

The Secretary General replied that the IPU generally followed the common system of salaries, allowances and the other main conditions of service and was a member of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund. As such, its staff were required to pay internal taxation on salary recorded as budget income. Pursuant to the headquarters agreement with the Swiss authorities, those living in Switzerland were not subject to Swiss income tax and consequently avoided double taxation. IPU staff living in neighbouring France, however, had become subject to French income tax, which the IPU was contractually obliged to reimburse to them in the interest of equality with its Swiss-based staff. In a bid to address that situation, it had recently amended the relevant rules to state that any staff not already resident in France who opted to live there would not have the benefit of that tax reimbursement. As to the tax status of staff who were already resident in France at the time of that amendment, it was currently negotiating with the French authorities and was hopeful of finding a solution, with the assistance of the French Parliament, whereby they would be exempt from payment of French income tax.

The Governing Council took note of the financial report and audited financial statements.

Mr. M. Sheerit (Israel), Internal Auditor, read out his report contained in document CL/188/10-R.2 and highlighted the current shortfall of CHF 5 million in voluntary contributions, the accrued pension liability of almost CHF 2.5 million and the unpaid contributions at 19 April 2011, which amounted to almost CHF 589,000, as detailed in annex II of the report on the financial situation of the Union at 31 March 2011 (CL/188/10-R.3). In addition to his recommendation that the Council approve the financial administration of the IPU and the financial results for 2010, he further recommended that the IPU engage an auditing firm in the interest of ensuring continuity and ongoing follow-up throughout the year in order to identify and deal with discrepancies as they arose.

The Secretary General, responding to a question from **Mr. K.H. Baba (Mauritania),** provided details of the four projects that showed almost no activity, despite receipt of the necessary funding. The first case involved a parliamentary project in Equatorial Guinea for which the funding provided by the European Commission would be returned at the end of the current year, together with the contribution of the national authorities, if progress towards implementation was not accelerated by the beneficiary. In the second case, the implementation of a Finnish-funded project for a handbook on the rights of migrant workers had been delayed because the author had fallen ill, but the draft had now been finalized and

the handbook would be published during 2011. In the third case, a UNDP-funded project in support of the Pakistani Parliament had been completed under budget and negotiations were under way concerning the possibility of starting a new project with the surplus amount, which would otherwise be returned to UNDP. In the final case, closure of the accounts relating to some of the Union's MDG-related activities in 2010 was pending receipt of the funding pledged in support of those activities by the United Nations Millennium Campaign.

Mr. M. Sheerit (Israel), *Internal Auditor*, added that the funding in each case amounted to: CHF 197,000 for the project in Equatorial Guinea, for which a previous amount of CHF 253,000 had also been received in 2009; CHF 90,000 for the Finnish-funded project; CHF 47,850 for the project in Pakistan; and CHF 15,521 for the activities funded by the United Nations Millennium Campaign. An amount of CHF 48,188 had also been received for a project in Sierra Leone, which had ended in 2009. He confirmed that funding would be returned in the case of projects that were not implemented.

Mr. J.J. McGluwa (South Africa), noting the contentious nature of such expenditure items as travel and accommodation, suggested the establishment of an internal financial management committee.

The President confirmed that, on the basis of discussions on that subject within the Executive Committee, the intention was to establish such a committee at the next Assembly in Bern.

The Secretary General, turning to the report on the financial situation of the Union at 31 March 2011 contained in document CL/188/10-R.3, summarized its contents and again highlighted the information on unpaid contributions contained in annex II, which had been updated to reflect all contributions paid in Panama to the end of the previous day. He urged Members still in arrears to do their utmost to pay their contributions.

The Governing Council took note of the report on the financial situation of the Union at 31 March 2011.

The President, concluding the discussion on the item, said he took it that the Governing Council wished to approve the financial administration of the IPU and the financial results for 2010.

It was so decided.

Item 11 of the agenda

**ACTION BY THE IPU TO STRENGTHEN DEMOCRACY
AND PARLIAMENTARY INSTITUTIONS**

Mr. M. Chungong, *Director of the Division of Programmes*, reporting on the activities carried out under the Programme for the Promotion of Democracy, drew attention to the report entitled "The IPU in 2010", which had been presented by the Secretary General at the Council's first session and which contained an overview of democracy activities in four core areas: promoting the capacity of parliaments to perform their constitutional role; promoting gender equity in politics; promoting and defending human rights; and setting standards for democratic parliaments. He also drew attention to pages 27 to 57 of the financial report and

audited financial statements (CL/188/6(a)-R.1), which provided a detailed account of the objectives sought in the IPU's democracy work, the related activity or output, the outcome, indicators of achievement and results achieved.

Activities undertaken included projects for strengthening the parliamentary institution in some 15 countries in areas where parliaments were most challenged, primarily in Africa, Asia and the Arab world. Negotiations had also recently been concluded with the European Union and the United Nations concerning a project for strengthening the secretariat of the Palestinian Legislative Council. In the area of gender equity, the focus continued on promoting implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and on improving women's presence in politics, notably in the Arab world. The current status was illustrated in the latest World Map of Women in Politics launched in 2010 in conjunction with the United Nations. A major project for strengthening parliamentary action to combat violence against women, particularly in Africa, was actively continuing, as evidenced by the earlier report on the regional seminar for parliaments of West and Central Africa on that subject. The IPU had also played a part in ensuring that the new Tunisian electoral code was gender-sensitive and it was proactively monitoring developments both in Tunisia and in Egypt with a view to offering its support to newly established legislative institutions.

The IPU was ever active in promoting and defending human rights, including by promoting networking among parliamentary human rights bodies. In the specific area of human trafficking, it had followed up on the resolution on migrant workers, people trafficking, xenophobia and human rights adopted at the 118th Assembly in Cape Town by launching a project, with Belgian support, to strengthen the role of parliaments in West and Central Africa in combating child trafficking, child labour and other practices harmful to children. With respect to standard-setting for democratic parliaments, the guide to good practice and the self-assessment toolkit developed by the IPU continued to assist parliaments in identifying and rectifying shortcomings in their functioning. Focus also continued on mitigating the challenges facing parliaments in young and emerging democracies, particularly in conflict-prone environments. In that context, the IPU actively supported the work of the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission, including through projects aimed, inter alia, at promoting political dialogue and national reconciliation in such countries as, Guinea-Bissau, the Maldives and Sierra Leone.

In response to a query from *Mr. K.H. Baba (Mauritania)* concerning support for parliaments in dealing with poverty alleviation frameworks and related budgeting issues, he said that the IPU was open to dialogue with any parliaments wishing to benefit from its seminars aimed at strengthening their participation in the elaboration and implementation of poverty reduction strategies.

The Governing Council took note of the oral report on activities carried out under the Programme for the Promotion of Democracy.

Item 12 of the agenda

**PARLIAMENTARY ACTION IN SUPPORT OF THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS
HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (UNHCR) AND REFUGEE PROTECTION**

(CL/188/12-P.1)

The President said that 2011 was the sixtieth anniversary of the adoption of the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and fiftieth anniversary of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. The present gathering in Panama therefore represented an opportune moment to mark those anniversaries by reiterating support

for refugee protection and for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). In the present climate of turmoil around the world, the challenges faced by those working for the protection of refugees were greater than ever before. It was therefore all the more important to make a renewed commitment to extend support for the protection of those who had been forcibly displaced or were stateless, and for UNHCR. In that context, he invited the UNHCR representative in Panama to address the Council.

Ms. N. Karsenty, *UNHCR representative in Panama*, paid tribute to parliamentarians for their commitment to issues relating to displacement and statelessness. The IPU had a long history of valuable cooperation with UNHCR and it had consistently encouraged the protection of displaced and stateless persons and refugees. The anniversaries of the two Conventions mentioned by the President provided an opportunity for parliamentarians to promote accession to and implementation of both instruments and she looked forward to continuing work with the IPU to achieve that goal.

The President drew attention to a draft parliamentary statement on parliamentary action in support of the UNHCR and refugee protection, contained in document CL/188/12-P.1. He took it that the Council wished to adopt the text.

It was so decided.

Item 13 of the agenda

ACTIVITIES OF COMMITTEES AND OTHER BODIES

(a) Meeting of Women Parliamentarians
(CL/188/13(a)-R.1 and R.2)

Ms. D. Castañeda, *President and Rapporteur of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians*, speaking at the invitation of the President, presented the report on the Meeting, which had first of all focused on providing a contribution to the deliberations of the Assembly by considering the subject items debated by the First and Third Standing Committees from a gender perspective. Those items were of great importance to the promotion of women in politics and the amendments proposed to the relevant draft resolutions as a result of the Meeting's discussions had subsequently been taken on board. Participants had then debated the results of the IPU's global survey on gender-sensitive parliaments, which had been launched at the Meeting by the IPU President. She encouraged Members to consider the elements essential to transforming parliaments into gender-sensitive institutions, as set forth in paragraph 14 of the report, and commended the survey to Members' attention; it provided examples of best practices and would undoubtedly serve as a useful resource for parliamentary action.

The Governing Council took note of the report on the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians.

Presentation by the President of the Swiss Federal Assembly

Mr. J.-R. Germanier (Switzerland), speaking at the invitation of the President in his capacity as President of the Swiss Federal Assembly, said that he was honoured to extend his personal invitation to Members to attend the 125th IPU Assembly to be hosted by his country's Parliament in Bern from 16 to 19 October 2011. He then provided the narrative to a slide presentation depicting the deep-rooted links between the IPU and Bern; the long-standing Swiss role in the work of the IPU; the history and culture of Bern, which was listed as a World

Heritage Site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; and the natural and other attractions in the surrounding area. He looked forward to welcoming participants to the Swiss capital for what promised to be an enriching and unforgettable Assembly.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

THIRD SITTING

Wednesday, 20 April 2011
(Afternoon)

The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m., with Dr. T.-B. Gurirab (Namibia), President of the IPU, in the Chair.

Item 13 of the agenda
(continued)

ACTIVITIES OF COMMITTEES AND OTHER BODIES

(a) **Meeting of Women Parliamentarians**
(continued)
(CL/188/13(a)-R.1 and R.2)

Ms. M. Vallarino (Panama), *President of the Committee on Women, Children, Young People and the Family of the National Assembly of Panama and Panel Rapporteur*, speaking at the invitation of the President, presented the report on a panel discussion that had taken place two days earlier on *Narrowing the gaps: Achieving the Millennium Development Goals with equity for children*, contained in document CL/188/12(a)-R.2, which had been organized in cooperation with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Participants had stressed the importance of reducing disparities among children by responding to the needs of the disadvantaged and marginalized among them and of pursuing an equity-based approach in order to achieve more sustainable progress towards attainment of the MDGs. The areas of parliamentary focus that had been identified as essential to those ends were detailed in paragraph 3 of the report. Importantly, a commitment had been made to advancing the cause of underprivileged children and to ensuring their education, health and protection in the belief that working for children was a vital mission.

Mr. S. Janquin (France) noted that the fundamental issue of the rights of migrant children and adolescents, which had been raised by his delegation during the discussion, was not reflected in the report. He therefore looked forward to a further discussion of that issue in all its aspects at a future IPU Assembly.

The Governing Council took note of the report on the panel discussion.

(b) Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians

*(i) Election of two titular members
(CL/188/13(b)-P.1 to P.4)*

The President said that it was necessary to elect two titular members to the Committee to replace Ms. Z. Benarous from Algeria and Ms. S. Carstairs from Canada, whose terms of office were due to expire at the end of the current session. One candidature had been submitted by the Twelve Plus Group to replace Ms. Carstairs, namely that of Mr. B. Barovič of Slovenia, who was currently a substitute member of the Committee and whose curriculum vitae was appended to document CL/188/13(b)-P.4. He took it that the Council wished to elect Mr. Barovič as a titular member of the Committee.

It was so decided.

Mr. B. Barovič (Slovenia) expressed his gratitude for the faith placed in him and thanked his predecessor for her assistance to him during his term as a substitute member. He pledged to serve democracy and protect the human rights of his parliamentary colleagues, without distinction.

The President said that it would be necessary to proceed to a vote by show of hands to elect a replacement for Ms. Z. Benarous from Algeria, as three candidatures had been submitted, namely those of Mr. B. Boutouiga from Algeria, Mr. K. Tapo from Mali and Mr. S.A. Al-Jumaili from Iraq, whose curricula vitae were annexed to documents CL/188/13(b)-P.1, P.2 and P.3, respectively.

Ms. Z. Drif Bitat (Algeria) expressed her support for the Malian candidate.

Mr. K. Tapo was elected as titular member of the Committee by 44 votes to 9 for Mr. B. Boutouiga and 8 for Mr. S.A. Al-Jumaili.

Mr. K. Tapo (Mali) thanked those who had voted for him and gave his assurance that he would live up to their expectations, citing among his credentials his background as a trained lawyer, a human rights defender and a prominent campaigner against the death penalty in Mali.

*(ii) Reports of the Committee
(CL/188/13(b)-R.1 to R.4)*

Ms. R. Green Macias (Mexico), *President of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians*, presenting the Committee's report, expressed gratitude to those delegations that had taken the time to exchange views with the Committee or provide information in writing. During the current session, the Committee had examined the individual situations of 374 parliamentarians in 39 countries and held 18 meetings with official delegations. It had also met with the parliamentarians concerned or their representatives in three cases. The resolutions submitted for approval concerned cases in 21 countries around the world. Three of them were presented for the first time.

Cases concerning which the news was positive

PHILIPPINES

Senator Trillanes, a Navy lieutenant, had been elected by more than 12 million Filipinos in May 2007 while in detention. He had been accused of participation in the so-called "Oakwood Siege" of July 2003, when more than 300 soldiers had gone to the Oakwood Hotel to make known their grievances over corruption within the Philippine Armed Forces and the previous administration. He had been granted an amnesty, been released and was now able fully to exercise his mandate. Senator Trillanes had addressed a letter to the Council thanking it for the work it had done in his case and stressing the vital role the IPU, and particularly the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians, had played in securing his eventual release and allowing him to perform his duties as an elected Senator of the Philippines. A copy of the letter was available in the meeting room.

The hope was that the second case in the Philippines would also be brought to a satisfactory conclusion in the not too distant future. The so-called "Batasan-Four" had been charged with rebellion. In July 2007, the Supreme Court had dismissed the charges as politically motivated. Since that time, new criminal cases had been brought against those individuals and there was reason to believe that they were also politically motivated. The Committee was, however, very confident that the new administration under President Benigno Aquino would take the necessary measures to ensure that the justice system was not used for political ends.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Mr. Antonio F. Trillanes, together with another draft resolution relating to the case of Mr. Saturniño Ocampo, Mr. Teodoro Casiño, Ms. Liza Maza and Mr. Rafael Mariano, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

TURKEY

Good news could also be reported in the case of Mr. Sinçar, who had been killed in September 1993 in circumstances suggesting an extrajudicial execution. For a long time, the Committee had been without news on whether or not an investigation into his murder was under way, until the parliament had reported that suspects were being tried. Mr. Sinçar's family had learned of the trial only through the IPU and had therefore been able to join it as a civil party. On 1 October 2010, two suspects had been found guilty of Mr. Sinçar's murder along with that of other persons who had been killed during the same period in the same region. They had been sentenced to life imprisonment. Mr. Sinçar's family had appealed the judgment because it had failed to establish the identity of the instigators. The Court had now accepted the application of Mr. Sinçar's family to be admitted as joint plaintiff. The Committee was hopeful that the ongoing proceedings would open up a real prospect for the full elucidation of Mr. Sinçar's assassination.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Mr. Mehmet Sinçar, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

Other cases

BANGLADESH

The case in question concerned the grenade attacks in January 2005 on Mr. Shah Ams Kibria, a former Finance Minister of Bangladesh, which had killed him, and in August 2004 on Ms. Sheikh Hasina, the opposition leader at the time. Several suspects were in detention, not only those who were suspected of carrying out the crime but also the alleged masterminds. The investigations, which were monitored by Parliament, had been under way for some time now, which could be easily explained by the complexity and ramifications of the crimes. The Committee fully understood that the authorities wished to act with the necessary thoroughness in order to present a clear and full picture of how the attacks had been carried out and who would be responsible. It trusted that the investigators were doing that as swiftly as possible so that trial proceedings could soon take place.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the two draft resolutions relating to the case of Mr. Shah Ams Kibria and to the case of Ms. Sheikh Hasina, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

BELARUS

Mr. Victor Gonchar and his friend Mr. Anatoly Krasovsky had disappeared eleven years previously. The investigation was shrouded in secrecy; not even the families knew what was happening. The Parliament of Belarus regularly communicated with the Committee in writing. Unfortunately, however, its letters continually failed to address the Committee's repeated concerns and did nothing to indicate that the authorities were seriously trying to find out what had happened to Mr. Gonchar and his friend. The Committee believed that in such high-profile cases it was in the interest of the authorities to show that they were doing their utmost to reveal the truth. In that regard, the Belarusian Parliament must not stand on the sidelines and should make sure that an effective investigation was indeed in place.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Mr. Victor Gonchar, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

BURUNDI

The Committee was examining several cases in Burundi concerning the murders of six parliamentarians more than a decade ago and attempts on the lives of eight others. The common thread was that those crimes had remained unpunished. In yet another case, that of four former parliamentarians, the concerns related to the criminal proceedings brought against them. The Parliament had set up a working group to look into the cases and had recently started to put increasing pressure on the Government to act more forcefully in addressing the long-standing concerns in these files. The Committee was convinced that an on-site mission would assist the Parliament in those efforts and thus make a significant contribution to reaching a satisfactory settlement. The Committee hoped that the mission, which was to be organized in close cooperation with the National Assembly, could soon take place. It would report further on that matter in October.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of the 18 parliamentarians in Burundi, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

CAMBODIA

The main concerns in the two cases in Cambodia under examination by the Committee related to parliamentary immunity, freedom of speech and the functioning of the Cambodian judicial system. Ms. Mu Sochua was a member of the opposition Sam Rainsy Party. Her troubles had started when she had decided to bring a defamation lawsuit against Prime Minister Hun Sen, taking the view that he had insulted her. Not only had her case been quickly dismissed, but the Prime Minister had decided to sue her in return. He had felt that she had tarnished his reputation by announcing publicly her intention to sue him and writing letters to the IPU and the Global Fund for Women. The court had agreed with him, sentenced her to a fine and awarded the Prime Minister compensation. The court had never examined whether or not his reputation had indeed been tarnished. Ms. Sochua had said that she would not pay the fine. Although in such a case, people were normally sent to jail, the fine had been deducted from Ms. Sochua's parliamentary salary. By November 2010, the fine had been paid off in full and the case was therefore over. Everyone had expected her immunity to be restored, but that had not happened. She had recently been informed that she would have to wait one year before she could ask the Appeal Court to rehabilitate her and, if she did not submit such an application, she would have to wait five years before being rehabilitated and recovering not only her immunity but also her eligibility. In other words, she was being punished again. The Committee did not understand how rehabilitation could play a role in her case and considered that there would be ample room for the National Assembly to restore her immunity without delay.

Mr. Sam Rainsy, the opposition leader, had been sentenced to a total of 12 years' imprisonment, which would bar him from standing in the 2013 elections and had already led to the loss of his parliamentary mandate. He had been punished first of all for having, in October 2009, removed temporary border demarcation posts along the Cambodian-Vietnamese border. Local peasants had complained to him that those posts encroached on their land. The second conviction had been for divulging false information because he had tried to show that those posts indeed encroached on Cambodian territory. Meanwhile, the Prime Minister himself had said that the border posts in question had not yet been posted and that the border demarcation process was still under way. The Committee regarded the issue as a political one that should be resolved at the political level. It sincerely hoped that the authorities would find ways of doing just that to enable Mr. Rainsy to resume his parliamentary activities as quickly as possible and stand in the next elections.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the two draft resolutions relating to the case of Ms. Mu Sochua and to the case of Mr. Sam Rainsy, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

COLOMBIA

At the invitation of the Colombian Congress, the President of the Committee had led a delegation to Bogotá in October 2010. The mission had offered an opportunity to have an exchange of views with the new Colombian authorities, as well as the victims and their families, on the Committee's extensive case-load in Colombia, essentially focusing on the investigations into the murders of members of the Congress, protection for those at risk, and the question of full respect for the right to fair trial for members of Congress. As part of the mission, the delegation had also met with former parliamentarian, Mr. Álvaro Araújo, in his prison in the north of Colombia, where he had been serving his sentence before being released in February 2011.

The Committee considered it necessary to draw attention to two cases in the mission report before the Council (CL/188/13(b)-R.2). The first concerned the case of Ms. Piedad Córdoba, a former Senator. Days before the IPU delegation had reached Bogotá, Colombia's Procuraduría, a uniquely Colombian institution, through a disciplinary sanction and in the absence of a criminal conviction, had debarred Senator Piedad Córdoba from holding public office for 18 years in the belief that she worked with and promoted Colombia's largest guerrilla group, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). The Committee was appalled at the harshness of what was a disciplinary sanction and the fact that it was imposed when criminal proceedings regarding the same alleged facts were still under way. It also believed that the decision failed to dispel the suspicion that Ms. Córdoba had been punished for what in fact should rather be considered a political activity. An appeal was pending and the Committee was exploring the possibility of sending a trial observer.

The second new case concerned death threats against members of the opposition party Democratic Alternative Pole by groups that looked much like the paramilitary groups that the authorities said they had dismantled. The Committee was extremely concerned about those threats, all the more as the history of the Patriotic Union showed how political persecution could take shape and spread, and with what devastating consequences, if it was not brought to an immediate end. The Committee therefore called on the authorities to do everything they could to identify and bring the culprits to trial and to provide those who had been threatened with effective protection.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the seven draft resolutions relating to the case of Mr. Pedro Nel Jiménez Obando, Mr. Leonardo Posada Pedraza, Mr. Octavio Vargas Cuéllar, Mr. Pedro Luis Valencia Giraldo, Mr. Bernardo Jaramillo Ossa, Mr. Manuel Cepeda Vargas and Mr. Hernán Motta Motta, the case of Mr. Luis Carlos Galan Sarmiento, the case of Ms. Piedad Córdoba, the case of Mr. Jorge Tadeo Lozano Osario, the case of Mr. Wilson Borja, the case of Mr. Alvaro Araújo Castor and the case of Mr. Iván Cepeda Castro, Mr. Alexander López, Mr. Jorge Enrique Robledo, Mr. Guillermo Alfonso Jaramillo and Mr. Wilson Arias Castillo, all of which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

ECUADOR

In the long-standing case in Ecuador concerning Mr. Hurtado and Mr. Tapia, who had been shot dead in February 1999, two prime suspects had been arrested in recent years in the United States of America and in Colombia. In 2011, the Colombian authorities had agreed to extradite the suspect in their custody. Ecuador's national court, however, had soon after considered that the statute of limitations had run and would make it impossible to put him to trial. That decision had nevertheless been challenged and the suspect was now in detention in Ecuador. The Committee and the Parliament of Ecuador believed that there were sufficient legal grounds for trial proceedings to take place, and they sincerely hoped that they would soon start and help shed further light on this crime, in which the masterminds had still not been identified.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Mr. Jaime Ricaurte Hurtado González and Mr. Pablo Vicente Tapia Farinango, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

ERITREA

The case of the 11 parliamentarians in Eritrea defied all imagination. They had been arrested in September 2001, held without any contact with the outside world and never brought before a judge, simply because they had called for democratic reforms in Eritrea. There had long been fears that some of them had died in prison. In October 2010, the Committee had been informed of a recent unofficial witness report stating that only two of the 11 parliamentarians were still alive. It was impossible to verify that allegation, which nevertheless had to be taken very seriously, with the Eritrean authorities. Each time the Committee contacted them, it ran into a wall of silence. It would not, however, give up trying, including by pursuing its contacts with the competent authorities of the European Union and the Africa Caribbean Pacific-European Union (ACP-EU) Joint Parliamentary Assembly. The Committee likewise appealed to all IPU Member Parliaments to take urgent action to find out what had happened to their colleagues in Eritrea.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of the 11 parliamentarians in Eritrea, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

IRAQ

Mr. Al-Dainy had been a member of the previous Iraqi legislature. When the case had been presented to the Council in April 2009, there were fears that he had been the victim of an enforced disappearance. Those fears later turned out to be groundless. Mr. Al-Dainy had been among those who had revealed what was now public knowledge, namely the existence of secret detention centres in Iraq where torture was routinely practised. As a result, he had found himself accused of a series of grave crimes, including the suicide attack inside parliament in April 2007. He had escaped arrest, but many of his family members and guards had been arrested, severely tortured and forced to sign confessions accusing him of the crimes in question. In January 2010, in what can only be called a travesty of justice, a court had sentenced him to death in absentia. The Committee call on the new parliament to make sure that iniquitous judgment was quashed and that Mr. Al-Dainy was rehabilitated. Of course, it also hoped that the new parliament would start tackling the huge challenges facing the judicial system in Iraq.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Mr. Mohammed Al-Dainy, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

LEBANON

In March 2009, the Special Tribunal for Lebanon had started its work to dispense justice in the case of the murder of former Prime Minister Hariri. It could be that in future one or more of the four cases of murdered parliamentarians before the Committee would also come under the jurisdiction of the Tribunal. However, it was clear that for the time being that only the State of Lebanon was responsible for the investigations and proceedings in those cases. The Committee therefore regretted that, more than five years after the first murder had been committed, it still had no information on file showing that the Lebanese authorities had taken that responsibility seriously. The Committee therefore renewed its call on them to do everything possible to elucidate those crimes. It put a special onus on the National Assembly, which should consider itself directly concerned by the murder of four of its former members and carry out its oversight function stringently to ensure that effective investigations were indeed taking place.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Mr. Gibran Tueni, Mr. Walid Eido, Mr. Antoine Ghanem and Mr. Pierre Gemayel, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

MADAGASCAR

A political process had been under way in Madagascar for some time. When the Committee had met in January 2011, a new agreement had been signed between national political parties and stakeholders. The authorities had indicated that the former parliamentarians whose case the Council had been examining were all free, that the charges of various public order offences brought against them – and which the Council had considered to be politically motivated – had been dismissed, and that most of the individuals concerned were taking part in the transitional parliament. Those developments had led the Committee to believe that it could well propose to the Council to close the case.

Since that time, however, the situation had taken a turn for the worse with the arrest of three parliamentarians. They had furthermore been arrested against a background of strong indications that non-legal consideration were involved, and just when a new agreement between the country's political stakeholders expressly obliged the authorities to end any proceedings that could be interpreted as politically motivated. The Committee believed that the arrests cast doubt on the commitment of the authorities to comply with the agreement and therefore called on them to respect it faithfully. It also asked them to formally notify the original group of parliamentarians whose situation the Council was examining of the dismissal of the charges against them.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of the 12 parliamentarians in Madagascar, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

MALAYSIA

It was not the first time that the Committee was dealing with the case of Anwar Ibrahim of Malaysia, at present the leader of the opposition People's Alliance. Back in 1998, a sodomy charge had been brought against him. He had been acquitted by the Federal Court. Now he was again being prosecuted on the same charge and almost the same concerns arose. The Committee had sent a trial observer to hearings, and his reports were also submitted to the Council, along with the comments of the Malaysian delegation on them (CL/188/13(b)-R.3). The Committee did not agree with the view of the delegation that the reports showed bias in favour of the defence. With regard to the proceedings, the prosecution case was about to be closed and the trial judge would now decide whether to acquit Anwar Ibrahim or ask him to enter his defence.

In addition, on 16 December 2010, the Malaysian Parliament had suspended Anwar Ibrahim for six months. Behind his suspension was a statement that he had made on the floor of the House about the possible link between the One Malaysia and One Israel campaign via the international consultant firm APCO Worldwide. The Committee on Privileges had found that he had misled the Parliament, and its recommendation to suspend Anwar Ibrahim had been adopted by the House after the opposition had walked out. The Committee was concerned at the consequences that could have for freedom of speech in the House. Moreover, it considered that the decisions of the Committee on Privileges not to allow

Mr. Ibrahim to defend himself not only infringed his right to fair proceedings but was also counterproductive, as it reinforced the impression of political persecution.

Mr. Wee Ka Siong (Malaysia) said that his delegation had submitted clarifications to the Committee and refuted the allegations contained in the report by Mark Trowell QC on the trial of Anwar Ibrahim (CL/188/13(b)-R.3). The trial and appeal processes in the sodomy case should be left to take their course, without interference from any party; the prosecution and defence would be making their submissions to the trial judge on 25 April 2011 and justice must be served to both the complainant and the accused.

Concerning the six-month suspension of Mr. Ibrahim, Mr. Gopalakrishnan - now an independent member of parliament who, moreover, contrary to the Committee's information, had never joined the majority party - had testified that Mr. Ibrahim had deliberately orchestrated the commotion in the House of Representatives. Furthermore, it had never been the practice of the Malaysian Parliament to prosecute any of its members for political motives. On 20 March 2011, Mr. Ibrahim had abused the opportunity provided to him to clarify his earlier accusations against the Government by instead making new and baseless allegations. The Malaysian Parliament allowed freedom of speech but not, pursuant to its Standing Orders, to the extent of making statements that misled the House. The decision of the Committee on Privileges not to authorize Anwar Ibrahim to engage counsel or cross-examine witnesses was also in accordance with those Standing Orders. It was therefore grossly unfair to claim that Mr. Ibrahim had been denied freedom of speech and that the fundamental principle of *audiatur et altera pars* had not been observed. The draft resolution also contained a serious factual error; no parliamentary elections were due to be held until the term of the current Parliament expired in 2013. In the light of its observations, his delegation had no option but to express its reservation to the draft resolution.

The Governing Council adopted by consensus the draft resolution relating to the case of Mr. Anwar Ibrahim, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

MONGOLIA

When Mr. Zorig's case had been presented to the Council in October 2010, exactly twelve years had elapsed since his murder. There was now some hope that the investigation would make more progress, as it had been possible to analyse certain important pieces of evidence. The Committee remained confident that the authorities would ultimately succeed in identifying and holding to account the assassins.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Mr. Zorig Sanjasuuren, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

MYANMAR

The IPU had repeatedly called on the Myanmar authorities to release 12 former parliamentarians and other political prisoners in time for them to take a meaningful part in the elections that had taken place in November 2010. The Committee deeply regretted that those calls had not been heeded. Hopes that the results of the recent elections in Myanmar would bring a change of heart already appeared vain. The Government had quickly dismissed as untimely calls from the few opposition members in Parliament for an amnesty for political prisoners. The Committee believed that it had been wrong to do so, not only because it would

prolong the suffering of the prisoners but also because their release was indispensable for a meaningful process of dialogue in Myanmar. The Committee therefore urged it to reconsider its position. It also urged the Parliament to give its full support to an amnesty. Indeed, if it was to act as the State institution representing the people and their interests, the Parliament should be mindful of the full enjoyment of their human rights.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of the 21 parliamentarians in Myanmar, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

PALESTINE

Three days earlier, on 17 April 2011, Palestinian Prisoner's Day had been celebrated. It was an occasion to call forcefully for the release of all Palestinian political prisoners. The Committee, and indeed the Governing Council, had been consistently calling for the release of the members of the Palestinian Legislative Council, who continued to languish in jail, several of them for many years. Such was the case of Mr. Marwan Barghouti, who had completed nine years of imprisonment the previous week, on 15 April. Concerning Mr. Ahmed Sa'adat, he had served five of the 30 years' imprisonment to which he had been sentenced, and there were the members elected in January 2006 on the Change and Reform list who had been sentenced for having stood in those elections and exercised their mandate. Many of them had been released but afterwards taken into administrative detention. In all those cases, the Committee was deeply concerned about the legality of arrest, the fairness of the legal proceedings, and the conditions of detention. It denounced the practice of administrative detention in the Occupied Territories, which had created an arbitrary regime with no place for the rule of law and respect for human rights.

The Committee was also concerned at the situation of three of those parliamentarians, residents of East Jerusalem, where they had been born and spent their entire lives. In May 2006, the Israeli Interior Minister had revoked their residency permits and argued that, as members of the Palestinian Legislative Council, they were not loyal to Israel. At the time, that decision had had no practical effect, as they had been arrested one month later. However, upon their release, they had been notified that they had to leave East Jerusalem. One of them, Abu Teir, had meanwhile been deported to the West Bank and the other two had sought refuge in the building of the International Committee of the Red Cross in East Jerusalem. On 6 September 2010, the Supreme Court, instead of resolving their case, had decided that they should petition the Interior Minister to review his cancellation of their residency permits. No date for a new hearing had been set, and all of them had to continue living with this prospect of being driven from their homes. The Committee believed that the IPU should pay a visit to them and requested the Council to authorize it to send a delegation to see them.

Lastly, United Nations human rights bodies had stated that all persons under Israel's jurisdiction and effective control should be afforded the full enjoyment of the rights enshrined in the international human rights treaties to which Israel was a party. The Committee firmly believed that the Knesset had a role to play in that regard and called on it to examine the human rights situation in the Occupied Territories.

Mr. M. Sheerit (Israel) expressed astonishment that the Council should be defending the human rights of terrorists such as Marwan Barghouti, who had been convicted by an Israeli court for the murder of Israeli citizens and sentenced to five life terms, plus 20 years. Ahmad Sa'adat had likewise been convicted for the murder of an Israeli minister. His delegation rejected the draft resolution.

Mr. S. Janquin (France) expressed support for the draft resolution. A member of the Palestinian Legislative Council at the time, Marwan Barghouti had been abducted on Palestinian territory and had moreover been subjected to torture, denied visits from his family and refused permission to attend his mother's funeral. Terrorism was not the issue; it was a question of humanity and respect for the law.

Mr. P. Muñoz-Ledo (Mexico) commented that the verbal violence displayed by the Israeli delegate was a reflection of physical violence. Israel had been engaged in extraterritorial activities ever since the adoption of Security Council resolution 242 (1967). The fact was that the right of the Palestinian Authority to interact with citizens and function as a political entity was universally recognized. In short, it was highly regrettable that the discussion had taken on a tone that was inconsistent with the defence of human rights. The draft resolution merited adoption by acclamation.

Mr. T. Quba'a (Palestine) said that the Israeli delegate's statement told of the arrogance of superiority. He appealed to the Council not only to defend the human rights of parliamentarians in detention but also to protect and defend the Palestinian people against such arrogance, both verbal and physical.

Mr. M. Sheerit (Israel) expressed further astonishment at the double standards underlying some of the comments made, bearing in mind the actions of such groups as Hamas. It was unfitting for a body such as the IPU to protect the rights of any individual, parliamentarian or otherwise, who was involved in terrorism.

Mr. S. Haddad said that it was not the likes of Mr. Barghouti who were terrorists but those who occupied the territories of others and violated Security Council resolutions.

The Governing Council adopted by consensus the three draft resolutions relating to the case of Mr. Marwan Barghouti, the case of Mr. Ahmad Sa`adat and the case of the 19 parliamentarians in Palestine, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Ms. Galina Starovoitova, a prominent Russian human rights advocate, had been shot dead on 20 November 1998 in the stairwell of her apartment in St. Petersburg. The courts had convicted several persons of involvement and concluded that the murder had been politically motivated. The Committee regretted that, as on previous occasions, it had not been possible in Panama to meet with the Russian delegation to discuss its main concern in the case, namely that the masterminds of the murder had yet to be identified and held to account. The Committee sincerely hoped that such an exchange of views could soon take place and that, in the meantime, the Russian Parliament would do everything possible to help ensure that fresh impetus was lent to the investigation with a view to finally elucidating the crime. The Committee also hoped that the Parliament would soon send it updated information on the current state of the investigation.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Ms. Galina Starovoitova, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

RWANDA

Mr. Léonard Hitimana had disappeared on 7 April 2003 and had still not been found. At its session in January 2011, the Committee had felt that it would be useful to carry out an on-site mission to Rwanda. In its view, direct dialogue not only with the parliamentary authorities but also with competent government and administrative authorities would go a long way towards gaining a better understanding of the existing challenges. The Committee was very pleased that the Presidents of both Chambers had agreed to the proposed mission, and hoped it would be in a position to report back to the Council by the time it met in October.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Mr. Léonard Hitimana, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

SRI LANKA

The cases before the Council concerned the murder of five members of parliament, three of them members of the Tamil National Alliance (TNA). The murders had been committed in the years 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008. In two of the cases, suspects had been identified and were in custody; trial proceedings were under way. In one case, that of Mr. Raviraj, suspects who reportedly belonged to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) had been identified, but were at large. The Committee was particularly concerned at the absence of any progress in the case of Mr. Pararajasingham, who, like Mr. Raviraj, had been a moderate TNA leader. He had been shot dead during the Christmas Mass in St. Mary's Church in Batticaloa with more than 300 attending the Mass. The church was located in a high-security area with additional security on duty at the time, so that the killers could have escaped only with the complicity of the security personnel. Nonetheless, the investigation had now been suspended for lack of evidence. The Committee believed that the adoption of a witness protection law corresponding to international witness protection standards would certainly encourage witnesses to come forward.

With respect to the case of Mr. Sivanasan, who had been killed in a Claymore mine attack in Vanni when the area was still under LTTE control, the Committee proposed that the Council should close the case because of the extremely remote prospect of his murder being resolved, and reopen it should fresh evidence come to light.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the five draft resolutions relating to the case of Mr. Joseph Pararajasingham, the case of Mr. Nadarajah Raviraj, the case of Mr. Thiyagarajah Maheswaran, the case of Mr. D.M. Dassanayake and the case of Mr. Kiddinan Sivanesan, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

THAILAND

The case of 180 former parliamentarians in Thailand was being presented for the first time. They had all been members of the executive bureaux of one of four Thai political parties. Through two separate decisions, the Constitutional Tribunal had dissolved those parties and disbarred all from exercising their political rights for five years. It had done so after finding a total of five individuals in those parties guilty of corruption and electoral fraud.

The Committee was deeply concerned at the collective disbarment, which was based on legal provisions adopted after the military coup in September 2006, and which had the effect of punishing retroactively entire groups for the behaviour of a few individuals. The Committee

was likewise concerned that their disbarment deprived the significant part of the Thai population that they represented of its voice in Parliament and of a free choice to elect its representatives in elections scheduled for mid-2011. The Committee believed that the situation could only seriously compromise the political process in Thailand and called on the competent Thai authorities, including the Parliament, to do everything possible to modify the sweeping legal provisions that had been applied in the case, and to look at ways to have the disbarment of the parliamentarians reconsidered.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of the 180 parliamentarians in Thailand, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

ZIMBABWE

The Committee remained deeply concerned at the continuing impunity in the case of Mr. Sikhala and Mr. Madzore, who had both been tortured, and of Mr. Chamisa, who had been beaten up by individuals while the police had stood by and done nothing. The Committee believed that the authorities were intentionally failing to redress the situation. There had been no serious investigation, which should have been relatively easy and successful in view of the existing evidence of torture. The victims had filed civil complaints, which had been totally neglected, gathering dust in the registry of the court or wherever.

The Committee again urged the authorities to comply with their duty to make a serious effort to hold to account those responsible for the torture and the attack. It considered that the denial of justice in the case should be of great concern to the Parliament, and urged it to make full use of its oversight function to ensure that the authorities were finally indeed taking action.

Ms. E. Madzongwe (Zimbabwe) said that she wished to draw attention to the third preambular paragraph of the draft resolution, which stated: "*Recalling* that, in his letter of 30 August 2010, the Attorney General of Zimbabwe affirmed that Mr. Chamisa, Mr. Sikhala and Mr. Madzore had not brought any admissible evidence enabling any suspect(s) to be identified and, that being so, there was no basis for alleging that they had not been accorded the protection of the law...".

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Mr. Job Sikhala, Mr. Paul Madzore and Mr. Nelson Chamisa, which had been submitted to it by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

Ms. Green Macias (Mexico), *President of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians*, concluding her presentation, drew attention to an issue that had been examined by the Committee during its session, namely the situation where a political party obliged its members to sign undated resignation letters if they wished it to put them up for election. The party hierarchy was thereby very conveniently able to get rid of members of parliament who might not always vote along party lines. The Committee believed the imposition of that obligation constituted a dangerous practice that was anything but democratic and posed a real threat to freedom of speech, introducing through the back door an imperative mandate. It believed that political parties should ban the practice.

(c) **Committee on Middle East Questions**(i) *Election of two titular and two substitute members*
(CL/188/13(c)-P.1 to P.4)

The President said that the Council was called upon to elect two titular and two substitute members to the Committee and recalled that, at its last session in October 2010, it had endorsed the Committee's recommendation to increase the membership from five to seven for both titular and substitute members, no more than four of whom should be of the same sex. Of the three original candidates for the two vacant titular position, Mr. A.L. El-Zein from Lebanon had withdrawn. The remaining two candidates were Mr. H. Fallahat Pisheh from the Islamic Republic of Iran and Ms. A. Van Miltenburg from the Netherlands. As four of the five current titular members were male, the Council was not in a position to admit Mr. Fallahat Pisheh at the current session. He therefore suggested that the Council elect the sole female candidate for titular membership, Ms. A. Van Miltenburg from the Netherlands, and that the second post of titular member be filled in October 2011.

Commentaire [A1] : N.B. Name as it appears in the list of participants, whereas in the documents it appears as "Falahaatpisheh". He also comes up on Google with a hyphen, i.e., Fallahat-Pisheh.

It was so decided.

Mr. K. Jalali (Islamic Republic of Iran) noted that the Committee comprised no members from the area with which it was concerned, the Middle East, whereas by contrast it was now to include four titular members from Europe. In order to rectify that situation and ensure an appropriate geographical representation, he appealed for consideration to be given to the candidature of Mr. Fallahat Pisheh, whose background more than qualified him to deal with Middle East questions.

The President replied that the Council's election of a female, Ms. A. Van Miltenburg, to fill one of the two vacancies for titular membership was consistent with the rules on the gender composition of the Committee, pursuant to which the second vacancy must now remain open until the next Assembly. Concerning the substitute membership, it currently comprised three males and one female, thereby allowing for the election of another female. He accordingly suggested that the Council approve the sole candidature received for the vacant positions by electing Ms. Z. Benarous from Algeria.

Commentaire [A2] : N.B. As per the list of participants (is "Ms." in the documents).

It was so decided.

Ms. Z. Benarous (Algeria) expressed her thanks to the African Group for placing its confidence in her to represent it in the Committee, which, as already noted, was lacking in terms of its Arab, African and female membership. She looked forward to putting parliamentary diplomacy into wise practice with her fellow parliamentarians in addressing Middle East questions, in particular that of Palestine, and would bring her own people's history of occupation to bear in working with the IPU for just causes.

Commentaire [A3] : Speaker's intervention was made under (ii) (Report of the Committee) after the Palestine intervention, but it seems more relevant to place it here. Also the name of the speaker as provided by the room attendants was Ms. Z. Bitat Drif, which I believe is incorrect.

Mr. P. Muñoz-Ledo (Mexico) agreed that Western membership of the Committee was disproportionate. Care should be taken to ensure a regional balance in the membership.

Commentaire [A4] : Same comment as above, i.e., this intervention was also made under (ii) (after the Algerian intervention above) but it seems more appropriate here. The rest of the speaker's intervention remains on the next page, under (ii). In other words, the Mexican interventions on this and the next page were originally one intervention made under (ii).

(ii) *Report of the Committee*
(CL/188/13(c)-R.1)

Mr. S. Janquin (France), member of the Committee on Middle East Questions, read out the Committee's report contained in document CL/188/13(c)-R.1.

Mr. M. Sheehrit (Israel) said that the current version of the report was unacceptable to his delegation, which reserved its right to seek drafting changes. It nonetheless accepted the content in principle.

Mr. T. Quba`a (Palestine) said that the members of any mission sent by the Committee to Palestine would be most welcome as guests of the Palestinian people and entirely free to see for themselves the conditions in which those people lived under Israeli occupation. It was similarly vital, however, for Committee members to familiarize themselves with the various IPU resolutions adopted on such issues as the separation wall, the status of Jerusalem and the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homeland. Indeed, the Committee should use the means at its disposal to accelerate the construction of a road map for the implementation of those resolutions.

Mr. P. Muñoz-Ledo (Mexico) said that the Committee should adopt a more imaginative approach to its work that took into account the international legal framework.

Commentaire [A5] : See above comment.

Mr. S. Janquin (France) said that the remark concerning the unacceptability of language contained in the report was unclear, as input from members had been taken into account during the drafting process. As to the follow-up of IPU resolutions, the Committee should be more demanding in seeking their implementation. A rethink to that end would therefore be beneficial. Furthermore, the Committee's aims were to be pursued through parliamentary - not State - diplomacy in which the sovereign will of the people was paramount. In that context, political party issues were irrelevant to the aim of achieving results as soon as possible.

Mr. F.M. Maalim expressed his support for the report and the need to exercise parliamentary diplomacy by ensuring that the proposed mission to Palestine met with both sides. Utmost efforts must be made to secure the resources needed for that purpose.

The President said that it was for the Committee to reflect on the comments expressed and exercise its collective judgement as to how it would act on them.

The Governing Council took note of the Committee's report.

(d) Group of Facilitators for Cyprus (CL/188/13(d)-R.1)

Mr. M. Sheehrit (Israel), *Facilitator for Cyprus*, read out the Group's report contained in document (CL/188/13(d)-R.1). Insofar as there were as yet no common threads of agreement between the two parties, he was not optimistic of an early solution. He nonetheless stood ready to continue as a member of the Group of Facilitators.

The Governing Council took note of the Committee's report.

(e) Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law (CL/188/13(e)-R.1)

Ms. B.M. Gadiant (Switzerland), *President of the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law*, presenting the report of the Committee, highlighted its main substance, which focused on discussions conducted at its meeting of 18 April 2011 on issues relating to refugee protection, nationality and statelessness, internally displaced persons and cluster munitions. At an open session on the role of parliaments, participants had also debated

the theme of *Twentieth-century norms and twenty-first century realities: Protecting the stateless, refugees and civilians today*. Lastly, the Committee had discussed ways of enhancing its functioning, to which end it had made recommendations, including that it meet at each IPU Assembly in order to ensure the sustainability of its work. It looked forward to implementation of that recommendation from the time of the Bern Assembly.

The Governing Council took note of the Committee's report.

(f) Gender Partnership Group
(CL/188/13(f)-R.1)

Mr. R. del Picchia (France), *Rapporteur of the Gender Partnership Group*, presenting the Group's report, reviewed the figures and other information it provided on the composition of delegations at the present Assembly, which had been considered by the Group on 14 and 19 April 2011. He also detailed its full contents concerning the Group's discussion of gender-mainstreaming within the IPU; its consideration of a status report on activities conducted under the Gender Partnership Programme; its examination of the situation of the nine parliaments with no women members in one chamber; and its meeting with the delegation of Saudi Arabia in order to discuss the situation of women in that country.

The Governing Council took note of the Committee's report.

Item 14 of the agenda

125th IPU ASSEMBLY (BERN, 16-19 OCTOBER 2011)
(CL/188/14-P.1)

The President said that he looked forward to the 125th IPU Assembly in Bern and drew attention to the list of international organizations and other bodies invited to follow the work of that Assembly as observers, contained in document CL/188/14-P.1. He took it that the Governing Council wished to approve that list.

It was so decided.

Item 15 of the agenda

FUTURE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY MEETINGS

(a) Statutory meetings
(CL/188/15-P.1)

The Secretary General said that the 126th and 127th Assemblies, as approved by the Council, were to be held in Kampala and Quebec City, respectively. A decision concerning an invitation received from the Ecuadorian Parliament to host the 128th Assembly in Quito could be taken, perhaps at the Bern Assembly, once the necessary formalities had been completed. The five specialized and other meetings now submitted for approval by the Council had no financial implications, as they were funded from either the regular budget or external sources.

The President said he took it that the Council wished to approve the future inter-parliamentary meetings listed in document CL/188/15-P.1.

It was so decided.

(b) Specialized meetings and other events

(CL/188/15(b)-P.1 and P.2)

The President said he took it that the Council wished to approve the specialized meeting detailed in document CL/188/15(b)-P.1.

It was so decided.

The President said he also took it that the Council wished to endorse the recommendation of the Executive Committee, set out in document CL/188/15(b)-P.2, to use funds accumulated from offsetting carbon dioxide emissions to cover part of the costs of the Parliamentary Meeting on the occasion of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP17/CMP7), to be held in Durban in December 2011, and the climate-related event for meeting for Pacific Island parliaments to be held in August 2011.

It was so agreed.

Item 16 of the agenda

ELECTIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

(CL/188/16-P.1)

The Secretary General said that, in accordance with the decision of the Council in its earlier morning session, the current item had been added to the agenda with a view to electing a member from the Arab Group to the Executive Committee to replace Mr. R.M.K. Al Shariqi from the United Arab Emirates, who was no longer a member of parliament. For that purpose, the Arab Group had submitted the candidature of Mr. M.A.M. Al-Ghanim from Kuwait, whose curriculum vitae was annexed to document CL/188/16-P.1.

The President said he took it that the Council wished to elect Mr. Al-Ghanim as a member of the Executive Committee.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 5.20 p.m.