



**INTERIM REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL ON THE ACTIVITIES OF
THE UNION SINCE THE 188th SESSION OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL**

ANNUAL REPORTING EXERCISE BY IPU MEMBERS

The 2010 reporting exercise saw a significant increase in the number of Member Parliaments fulfilling their statutory obligation to submit an annual report, with almost 80 Members (49.03%) sending information. The number of responses on parliamentary follow-up of resolutions adopted by the Organization also rose considerably, with 56 substantive reports, in comparison to the 39 sent last year. In addition, 45 Member Parliaments completed the questionnaire on how IPU Member Parliaments organize their participation in the work and activities of the IPU.

The present document contains a summary of the reports submitted by IPU Members¹ on how their parliaments have followed up and implemented the recommendations made in the three resolutions adopted at the 122nd Assembly, namely: (i) cooperation and shared responsibility in the global fight against organized crime, in particular drug trafficking, trafficking in persons and cross-border terrorism; (ii) developing South-South and Triangular cooperation with a view to accelerating achievement of the Millennium Development Goals; and (iii) youth participation in the democratic process.

¹ Algeria, Andorra, Austria, Bahrain, Belarus, Benin, Burundi, Canada, Chile, China, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Hungary, Indonesia, Ireland, Japan, Jordan, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Maldives, Mali, Mexico, Monaco, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Norway, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Rwanda, Senegal, Singapore, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Ukraine, Uruguay, Viet Nam, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
Reports from the Parliaments of Burkina Faso and the Republic of Korea were received after going to print and, regrettably, could not be included.

Introduction

The reports differ considerably in style, length and detail. The parliaments of countries such as **Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Finland, Japan, Nicaragua, Slovenia** and **Togo** submitted comprehensive reports on action taken in parliament on all or some of the resolutions. Some of the reports (e.g. from **Ghana** and **Indonesia**) also indicate whether IPU resolutions have initiated or otherwise prompted action. The parliaments of **Bahrain, Burundi, Congo, Ireland, Lebanon, Mexico, the Philippines, Rwanda, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** and **Togo** detail each piece of legislation and votes related to one or more recommendations contained in the resolutions. The Parliament of **Uruguay** provided information on laws related to the subject matter of the resolutions, as well as the links to where copies of the laws can be obtained on its website.

Some parliaments reported that IPU resolutions were always transmitted to the ministries concerned by the subject matter (e.g. **Denmark**), and others that they were always submitted as official papers to parliament (e.g. **Germany**).

Other IPU Members (**Algeria, Greece, Maldives** and **Switzerland**) reported generally on their activities within the framework of the IPU, including transmission of the resolutions to the relevant parliamentary committees and ministries. The report of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of **China** provided detailed information on the activities it carried out during 2010, including strengthening its legislative and oversight work.

In **Benin**, the President of the National Assembly sent the resolutions adopted in Bangkok to the head of State, with a view to the measures to be taken by the ministries concerned. The resolutions were also widely disseminated among parliamentarians. As a result, budget funds were more specifically allocated for national policies to combat organized crime and trafficking in drugs and arms during the vote on the 2011 general State budget.

The **Hungarian** National Assembly reported that delegations to IPU meetings submitted reports to it and that IPU resolutions (translated into Hungarian) were conveyed to the head of State, the Prime Minister and relevant government ministries. Moreover, the public and media were informed of the outcome of IPU meetings and the Organization's activities through reports submitted to the National Assembly's Press Office and information posted on the homepage of its website. The National Assembly has also set up a large number of bi- and multilateral friendship groups in which more than 75 per cent of IPU Member Parliaments have participated.

The General Council of **Andorra** reported that, in December 2010, the Andorran IPU group presented the annual report on its activities within the Organization during the year in plenary and in the presence of the members of the Government. The report, of which every member of parliament also received an electronic copy, included all the resolutions adopted by the Assembly. The General Council systematically informs the media of all Assemblies and their results, notably by issuing press releases.

The **Costa Rican** delegation to each IPU Assembly subsequently submits a mission report to the Legislative Assembly and the resolutions are systematically transmitted to the parliamentary Committee on International Relations and Foreign Trade. Moreover, depending on the topic, the resolutions are transmitted to the relevant parliamentary committee, to ministries, and to public and autonomous institutions.

Other parliaments (e.g. **Jordan** and **Ukraine**) reported that all of the resolutions in question had either been brought to the attention of parliament, through various media, or transmitted to the relevant government ministries - but without providing details on the follow-up steps taken in response to the three resolutions covered by the 2010 report. **Spain's**

Cortes provided details on the number of written and oral questions raised in plenary and committee on the three subject matters, as well as information on draft legislation considered during the review period.

Sweden reported that it was standard procedure, after each Assembly, to submit a report on its participation in the work of the Organization to the Riksdag Board, the highest parliamentary decision-making body, and that the resolutions adopted are forwarded to the parliamentary committees and government ministries concerned. Moreover, the Swedish delegation to IPU Assemblies includes, in addition to its regular members, MPs with expert knowledge of the subject matter being discussed by the Standing Committees.

It is very welcome and encouraging that the National Assembly of **Djibouti**, which rejoined the Organization in 2010, sent in a report for that year. Another Member Parliament, **Colombia**, returned a questionnaire, for the first time, on how its participation in the work of the IPU is organized. Over the past ten years, six IPU Member Parliaments (**Belarus, Japan, Philippines, Poland, Romania** and **Slovenia**) have never failed to meet their statutory obligation, while nine (**Albania, Armenia, Brazil, El Salvador, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Malta, Panama** and **Papua New Guinea**) have never submitted an annual report.

It is hoped that the 2011 reporting exercise will see an even larger number of IPU Members sending information on steps taken within their national parliaments to implement, follow up and report on the recommendations contained in the resolutions adopted by the IPU Assembly.

1. COOPERATION AND SHARED RESPONSIBILITY IN THE GLOBAL FIGHT AGAINST ORGANIZED CRIME, IN PARTICULAR DRUG TRAFFICKING, TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS AND CROSS-BORDER TERRORISM

This resolution was adopted by consensus in April 2010 at the 122nd IPU Assembly in Bangkok, Thailand. It focuses on shared responsibility and the need for collaborative action to tackle the four main evils of organized crime: drug trafficking, the illegal arms trade, human trafficking and cross-border terrorism. The resolution also recommends that the fight against transnational organized crime be strengthened and intensified so as to foster lasting solutions through the promotion of human rights and equitable socio-economic conditions.

Some Member Parliaments sent information on their ratification of UN conventions linked to the subject matter. For example, in February 2010 **Bahrain** ratified the UN Convention Against Corruption, which **Cyprus** and **Viet Nam** ratified in 2009. The House of Peoples' Representatives in Ethiopia recently ratified the Protocol to the Organization of African Union Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism. **Cuba**, **Slovenia** and **Uruguay** confirmed that they have signed all of the major UN international treaties relating to this subject. **Japan** reported that the Diet has approved accession to the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, as have the parliaments of **Algeria**, **Andorra**, **Ghana** and **the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**. In this connection, the Parliament of **Senegal** authorized the President of the Republic, in Law No. 2006-06, to ratify the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, which supplements the UN Convention.

Reports from several IPU Members that are also European Union (EU) Member States (e.g. **Czech Republic**, **Luxembourg**, **Romania** and **Slovenia**) underscore that they are committed to fulfilling all obligations with regard to cooperation in the areas of justice, freedom and security, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Lisbon Treaty.

Algeria declared it was a stakeholder in a new global strategy aimed at enabling an effective response, in appropriate reference frames, to the underlying causes of terrorism and the manifold problems associated with it, and at avoiding all risks that the issue will be blurred or misused, while opening fresh perspectives for cooperation at all levels in the anti-terrorist struggle.

In December 2010, the General Council of **Andorra** inter alia approved ratification of the Convention of 25 October 1980 on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction.

Austria, acknowledging the need to prepare a comprehensive international instrument focusing on the prevention, protection and criminal law aspects of the fight against all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children and to set up a specific monitoring mechanism, said that its Parliament had unanimously approved, in December 2010, the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse. The National Council also passed two motions urging the government to take further action against child slavery (805/A (E)) and to combat all forms of "cyber grooming" (123/E), respectively. Under the latter, contacting minors via chat rooms for the purpose of sexual exploitation is a criminal offence leading to arrest.

Bahrain reported that, following lengthy debate in both chambers, the National Assembly issued Law No. 32 on financial disclosure in July 2010. The Law provides for "financial disclosure by State officials ... and sanctions in case of non-disclosure", in keeping with operative paragraph 29 of the resolution.

Belarus ratified the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its three Protocols, the norms of which were incorporated into national legislation. Moreover, in January 2011 Belarus became a member of the Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption.

In July 2010, **Canada** adopted Bill C-9, which provides inter alia that, when the Financial Action Task Force calls on its members to take action in respect of another State or a foreign entity on the grounds that the anti-money laundering measures taken by that State or entity are ineffective or inappropriate, Finance Canada can issue instructions to the effect that Canadian financial entities or intermediaries shall take additional measures to protect the integrity of the Canadian financial system. In addition, in March 2011, in its report on the state of the terrorist threat, the Special Senate Committee on Anti-terrorism recommended that priority be given to heightening parliamentary oversight of government national security activities.

Chile has ratified the main relevant international treaties and is working to adopt legislation for implementation of their principles and norms. To that end, it is conducting a detailed analysis of the legislation pertaining to the various aspects concerned: organized transnational crime, drug trafficking, corruption, the illegal arms trade, trafficking in human beings and terrorism. In keeping with operative paragraph 13 of the resolution, the National Congress, after several years of discussion, approved Law No. 20.507, which was published in the *Diario Oficial* in April 2011 and which defines the crimes of unlawful smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons and establishes rules for their prevention and criminal prosecution.

The Parliament of **Croatia** sent a detailed report on action taken in the fight against organized crime, including details on the information campaign launched by the Ministry of the Interior, in the summer of 2010, to raise public awareness, through the publication and distribution of posters and brochures, of all forms of trafficking in persons and their potential consequences. Moreover, in April 2011 the Croatian Government adopted the Action Plan to Prevent and Combat Terrorism, which defines and describes the role of the government authorities in preventing and combating terrorism and sets out concrete operational procedures.

In **Djibouti**, the National Assembly has approved the ratification of several international anti-organized crime treaties, including the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Maritime Navigation. Djibouti has also drawn up a new regional anti-piracy mechanism, the Djibouti Code of Conduct, which has already been signed by eight countries in the region.

On the issue of combating trafficking in persons, the Government of **Finland** adopted a resolution on the Revised Plan of Action against Trafficking in Human Beings in June 2008. The Ministry of the Interior then set up a Steering Group to monitor the Plan's implementation. One of the Group's main recommendations was that a working group be set up in the second half of 2011 to draft a proposal for a comprehensive special act on trafficking in human beings, which should include more careful regulation of the system for victims of human trafficking.

Since the 122nd Assembly, the **French** Parliament has examined several bilateral anti-terrorist and anti-transnational organized crime agreements, subsequently signing agreements with Saudi Arabia and Greece. In addition, in January 2011 the National Assembly adopted a draft law on the establishment of simplified preventive measures for modern weapons control. A law on internal security guidelines and programming was also adopted, on 14 March 2011. The law comprises several provisions aimed at reinforcing anti-terrorist and anti-organized crime activities.

According to **Ghana**, "for West African States, one of the most serious challenges to State survival is the influx of narcotics and their impact on society. The emerging culture of quick

and easy acquisition of money threatens the basic principles and foundation of democracy". Pursuant to the resolution, Ghana reaffirmed its commitment to the fight against organized crime and the Government directed that the Interministerial Committee on Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Financing of Terrorism be reactivated to that end. The Committee ensures the implementation of the National strategy and action plan on the elimination of money laundering and financing. Its reactivation confirms the Government's commitment to ensuring that money laundering and terrorist financing are eliminated in Ghana.

The **Hungarian** National Assembly has enacted 15 legal resolutions since the resolution's adoption in April 2010. Two of them concern international agreements adopted by the Council of Europe and the United Nations respectively, namely the 2005 Warsaw Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism (T/2206) and the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (T/2486).

The House of Representatives of **Indonesia** reports that it issued the Law on the Prevention and Elimination of Money-Laundering Practices. The aim of the Law is to prevent and eliminate money laundering, which in most cases facilitates transnational organized crime. In accordance with the Law, Indonesia established the Centre for Reporting and Analysing Monetary Transactions, an independent State institution that makes it mandatory to trace monetary transactions suspected of originating in criminal activities, including corruption, bribery, drug trafficking and human trafficking.

At a meeting in June 2010, the Joint Committee on Justice, Equality, Defence and Women's Rights of the **Irish** Parliament considered a motion on human trafficking. The meeting was attended by the Minister for Justice, and the point was made in the course of the debate that it might not be appropriate for people who had been trafficked to be placed back in asylum accommodation by the Reception and Integration Agency, given the existence of evidence that women were being groomed in those facilities in the first instance to become involved in the sex and trafficking industries.

With regard to operative paragraphs 16 to 20 of the resolution, at a meeting of the **Japanese** House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs in June 2010, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs explained that Japan was further tightening visa inspections as a border control measure, in line with the Action Plan of Measures to Combat Trafficking in Persons, and promoting cooperation with other countries by dispatching government survey teams. It further stated that Japan was implementing projects to combat trafficking in persons through the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for the purpose of helping to protect and reintegrate victims in south-east Asian countries.

Moreover, pursuant to operative paragraph 17, both Houses were engaged in discussions on expanding the number of women in leadership positions and other topics relating to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. The Government formulated its Third Basic Plan for Gender Equality in December 2010 and was taking steps to promote women's participation in the political, economic, and social fields. Furthermore, in the area of human rights protection, the Diet was engaged in discussions on the advisability of introducing an individual complaints system and on legislation for the redress of human rights violations.

In **Lebanon**, the National Assembly adopted Law No. 85 on 30 June 2010, authorizing the Government to ratify the International Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation. In addition, a new draft law on the crime of people trafficking was submitted to the session of parliament that opened in early August 2011.

Luxembourg's Chamber of Deputies recently enacted several anti-organized crime statutes that had first been debated in committee; some are based on UN and EU texts. The statutes include the Law of 27 October 2010 on strengthening the legal framework to fight money laundering and terrorist financing, on the organization of checks of physical transports of cash entering, transiting through or leaving the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, on the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions and EU acts placing financial prohibitions and restrictions on certain persons, entities and groups in the struggle to combat terrorist financing.

According to the report submitted by the National Assembly of **Mali**, organized crime has become a global scourge that individual States have neither the capacity nor the power to fight. Cooperation and shared responsibility remain the best means of thwarting this constant danger, which is undermining development efforts. Mali has lived with terrorism for some time, following the emergence of the Al-Qaeda Organization in the Islamic Maghreb in the Sahel-Sahara strip, in the form of abductions, narcotics trafficking and arms trafficking. It therefore considers that it cannot stay on the sidelines of the struggle, and the National Assembly has authorized the Government to ratify all the international anti-organized crime protocols and treaties.

With regard to operative paragraph 16 of the resolution, the **Mexican** Congress approved a draft decree supplementing the provisions of Articles 5 and 13 of the Law to Prevent and Repress Trafficking in Persons in a roll-call vote and submitted it to the Executive.

The Government of **Monaco** replied as follows to the questions of the parliamentary External Relations Committee in May 2011: *In the Principality of Monaco, trafficking in human beings is fought by means of an active normative approach at multiple levels. From the constitutional point of view, all the repressive rules in force in the Principality are issued and implemented with due regard for the fundamental rights and liberties set out in the Constitution. Indeed, Article 20 of the Constitution stipulates, "Criminal law must ensure respect for individual personality and dignity. No one may be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment."*

In the **Netherlands**, in the beginning of 2005 the Government started informing the House of Representatives in writing of initiatives and activities undertaken to combat (transnational) terrorism. In December 2010 and June 2011, the House received follow-up reports providing an overview of the progress made in developing an anti-terrorist policy. The main points concern combating radicalization, international cooperation, implementation of effective instruments, the establishment of efficient organizations, human rights and the adoption of security measures.

The Penal Code of the Netherlands does not provide for penalization of terrorist financing. The Government has nevertheless announced a draft law on the matter. The draft law will be sent to the House before the end of the year.

In the spirit of the resolutions of the 122nd Assembly, the National Assembly of **Nicaragua** pursued its ongoing work and approved a series of laws to fight drug trafficking locally and regionally. One such law, Law No. 721, on the sale of medicines, was approved on 6 May 2010. It aims to promote the supply of, access to and appropriate use of effective and safe medicines, made available at an affordable price in pharmaceutical establishments authorized for the purpose.

Moreover, on 8 July 2011, the Meeting of Legislators on Municipal Affairs in the Central American Region, Belize and the Caribbean took place at the National Assembly, in order to examine the Central American Charter on Local Self-government. During this event, the municipal legislators expressed concern at the levels of insecurity and violence in Central

America, the outcome of organized crime activities. They pledged to fight this scourge together.

On 17 December 2010, the Ministry of Justice and the Police submitted to the Storting of **Norway** the white paper, "The fight against organized crime – a common effort". The purpose was to present an overall strategy for how Norway should deal with the challenges posed by organized crime. Key issues addressed were more coordination between the police, the prosecution, the courts and other relevant institutions, the need for continuous assessment of criminal law so that it can be adjusted to cope with any challenges that arise, and further improvement of the relevant international legal instruments.

The white paper and its proposed measures were discussed in depth by the Standing Committee on Justice. The final recommendation to the Storting was submitted on 12 April 2011. The Committee agreed with the majority of the measures but underlined that some areas, such as money laundering, trafficking and cybercrime, needed more attention and efforts.

One form of organized crime about which many Norwegian parliamentarians feel particularly strongly is trafficking. During the reporting period, trafficking was the subject of several debates and statements, and on 25 May 2011 the President of the Norwegian IPU group headed a meeting between parliamentarians and the leader of a Romanian anti-trafficking organization. The purpose was to obtain input on how parliamentarians can help combat this serious problem. In recent years, members of parliament have also presented draft legislation with the aim of strengthening Norway's anti-trafficking laws.

The **Philippines** reported on a number of committee and plenary discussions and resolutions in both Houses on the problem of "drug mules" and other forms of drug trafficking, including a call from one Senator to investigate the increase in the number of cases of Filipinos, most of them women, being victimized by international drug syndicates and used as mules. The Senator then filed Senate Resolution No. 282 directing the appropriate Senate committees to look into the matter seriously.

Moreover, pursuant to operative paragraph 24 of the resolution, the Anti-money Laundering Act was filed in the Senate in March 2011. The Act seeks to strengthen and update the current Anti-money Laundering Law so as to address the new strategies being employed by money launderers and current financial developments. Early passage of this bill would ensure recognition of the role played by the Philippines in global efforts to fight money laundering.

All forms of human trafficking are prohibited in **Poland**. In 2004, the interministerial Committee for Combating and Preventing Trafficking in Human Beings was set up by the Council of Ministers. Moreover, trafficking in human beings is specifically prosecuted under Article 253 of the Polish Penal Code. The Law on the Amendment of the Penal Code, which includes the definition of trafficking in persons, was adopted in May 2010. As part of the fight against human trafficking, the Polish police have signed special bilateral agreements on operational information-sharing with almost every European country and work with platforms such as Interpol and Europol.

In December 2010, **Romania** ratified the *Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse*. Its legislation was brought in line with the latest legislative developments regarding the sexual exploitation of children online, including the Convention's provisions on the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) knowingly to obtain access to child pornography or to solicit children for sexual purposes. These provisions were included in the new Penal Code, which criminalizes illegal access to pornographic materials involving minors using computer systems and the recruitment of minors for sexual purposes.

Moreover, a legislative proposal to amend Law 115/1999 on ministerial accountability ,

adopted by the Senate in May 2011 and currently being examined by the Chamber of Deputies, aims to criminalize the use by members of government of their position to influence the awarding of contracts, illegally issue authorizations or illicitly provide certain facilities with a view to receiving undue advantages.

The Parliament of **Rwanda** adopted Law No. 46/2010 on the competences, attributes, organization and functioning of the National Police, abrogating Law No 9/2000. The new law stipulates that the activities of the National Police include cooperation with the police forces of other countries to combat cross-border crime (Article 8) and terrorism (Article 7).

According to the report from **Senegal**, cross-border terrorism is usually linked to money laundering, and therefore, following in the footsteps of other countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Parliament has integrated the struggle against both phenomena by adopting various laws, including Law 2009-16 of March 2009 against terrorist financing.

In 2010, the **Singapore** Parliament passed a Statutes (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill amending the Corruption, Drug Trafficking and Other Serious Crimes (Confiscation of Benefits) Act, in order to enhance Singapore's anti-money laundering regime and bring Singapore into greater compliance with the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force. The Task Force sets international standards to combat money laundering and terrorist financing. Singapore has been a member since 1991.

The National Assembly of **Slovenia** is currently in the process of adopting a draft act supplementing the Prevention of Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Act of 2007. It is also debating a draft act on the confiscation of illicitly obtained property.

Slovenia has an interministerial working group for combating trafficking in human beings, one member of which is a representative of the National Assembly. The working group directs and coordinates the activities of individual State institutions and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). It acts as a platform for the direct exchange of information on current anti-trafficking developments. One of its basic activities is to support projects that raise awareness among the public and individual target groups of issues pertaining to trafficking in human beings.

The main theme of the recent report by the Committee on Justice of the **Swedish** Parliament was the necessity to increase criminal law protection against human trafficking. After a vote in plenary on the report, *the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings* was ratified, in line with operative paragraph 15 of the IPU resolution (harmonizing laws on trafficking in persons). In the report's background documentation, references are made to the IPU resolution, as one of the Committee members was part of the Swedish IPU group in Bangkok and especially emphasized the importance of caring for trafficking victims, as encouraged in operative paragraph 20.

Thailand reports that it has sought cooperation with the competent authorities on the issue of labour migration and human trafficking along its borders with neighbouring countries.

In October 2010, the Assembly of **the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** amended the Law on Prevention of Corruption. Its Committee on the Political System and Inter-Ethnic Relations organized a public discussion of the draft Law on Criminal Procedure at its 58th Meeting, on 12 October 2010. Citizens, public institutions, NGOs, political parties, trade unions and other interested parties were invited to submit their opinions and suggestions on the draft law to the Committee. The Committee followed the public discussion, collected and collated the suggestions and opinions made and presented a report on the results at the draft law's second reading by the Assembly. The conclusions and the draft law were published in three daily newspapers and on the Assembly's website.

As part of the struggle against transnational crime, on 22 June 2010 the National Assembly of **Togo** adopted legislation authorizing the ratification of the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, which supplements the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. The Protocol's purpose is to prevent, combat and punish migrant smuggling, to promote cooperation between the States parties and to protect the rights of smuggled migrants. To that end, the States must work together and act as required.

In addition, in order to build their capacities with regard to trafficking in persons, Togolese parliamentarians benefited from a workshop organized by the IPU in November 2010 for the purpose of heightening their awareness of the consequences of trafficking in children and strengthening their involvement in the fight against this scourge by enhancing their knowledge of the international and regional rules governing the protection of children and child labour.

In 2011, the National Assembly of **Viet Nam** adopted the Law on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Persons, which contains detailed provisions on preventing and combating trafficking in persons, the responsibilities of individuals, families and organizations in the prevention of trafficking in persons, investigations, victim adoption, protection and support, and international cooperation to prevent and combat trafficking in persons. The Law's provisions are in line with Viet Nam's regional and international bilateral and multilateral commitments and with other relevant UN conventions.

In its report, **Zimbabwe** explains that budgetary constraints in the face of dwindling resources make it difficult to build the capacity of the national drug enforcement agency. Parliament has established the Anti-Corruption Commission, an independent body supplementing police operations to fight corruption and other illicit dealings, and hence supporting implementation of the UN Convention against Corruption.

2. DEVELOPING SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION WITH A VIEW TO ACCELERATING ACHIEVEMENT OF THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGs)

This resolution was also adopted by consensus at the 122nd IPU Assembly and calls on parliaments and governments of the North and South to *support and develop South-South and triangular cooperation as an important tool to achieve the MDGs*. It urges donor and beneficiary country parliaments and governments to *put in place consistent and transparent accounting of both North-South and South-South ODA flows, and of other forms of cooperation, including in-kind contributions and shared natural and knowledge resources*. It urges parliaments to oversee governmental action to implement the recommendations of the United Nations High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation.

Algeria is participating in South-South cooperation programmes such as the South-South Health Care Delivery Programme, as recommended by the first South Summit (Havana). It is also helping to finance the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund for Economic and Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries.

The North-South Dialogue is a project of **Austrian** Development Cooperation; its main objective is to strengthen political and societal support for development politics and international cooperation. The project is backed by the Austrian Parliament's Conference of Presidents, the parliamentary political party spokespersons on development policy and Parliament's International Department. Successful measures involve new forms of cooperation and exchange, such as the so-called *Twinning Partnerships* currently promoted by the European Union. One such partnership was established between the Austrian Parliament and Mozambique's Assembly of the Republic. Thanks to the constant bilateral exchange of both

knowledge and experience, this partnership contributes, in many ways, to the attainment of international goals and commitments in development cooperation, in particular with regard to the eight MDGs.

The North-South Dialogue seeks to foster Austrian development aid policy and to promote democratic policy know-how and institution-building; it is based on events, bilateral contacts, capacity-building and the development of an IT strategy for the Mozambican parliament. For example, the Austrian Parliament received the Secretary General of the Mozambican parliament in February 2010 and introduced the E-Law System to its twinning partner. Following this visit, an Austrian team travelled to Mozambique to further develop IT structures, which significantly improved the working conditions of Mozambican members of parliament.

The National Assembly of **Burundi** has enacted legislation on the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP I and II) and the vision for 2020-2025, and information has been transmitted on the awareness-raising programme being conducted in the field by the parliamentary Social Affairs Committee to fight HIV/AIDS.

Following a visit to West Africa in January 2011, a Canadian parliamentary delegation from the Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association reaffirmed its support for a Canadian programme financed by ECOWAS.

The South-South cooperation activities, both horizontal and triangular, developed by **Chile** are guided by the principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action, as recommended in operative paragraph 12 of the IPU resolution. In keeping with the resolution's recommendations that South-South cooperation programmes be aligned with the MDGs, Chile has concentrated its cooperation activities on areas of great significance for social development. Indeed, Chilean cooperation has centred, in accordance with national capacity and the needs and priorities of the recipient, on poverty reduction programmes and other policies in social sectors such as education and health.

During the reporting period, a loan agreement was signed between the Government of **Costa Rica** and the Inter-American Development Bank to finance a tourism programme in protected wildlife areas.

In its report, **Cuba** states that it is cooperating, on a non-exclusive, unconditional basis, with over 150 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, not only in the health sector but also in areas such as literacy and media education. The Cuban method, *Yo sí puedo* (Yes I can), has been made available to UNESCO. It is grounded in solidarity and in absolute respect for national cultural identity and the traditional languages and customs of each country.

According to the information received from **Cyprus**, it channels the official development assistance (ODA) it receives directly to areas related to the MDGs, in particular to social and service sectors, infrastructure development and the environment.

The **Czech** Government has adopted Resolution No. 407/2011, on the implementation and financing of the development cooperation priorities of the Czech Republic up to 2014.

In April 2011, with a view to South-South cooperation, the National Assembly of **Djibouti** examined and ratified Law No. 31/AN/11/6th L on the *Convention Creating the Panafrican Agency for the Great Green Wall*. The Great Green Wall, a transcontinental project initiated by the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States and implemented by the African Union, aims to remedy, insofar as possible, the unforeseen consequences of climate change, which is caused chiefly by the industrialized countries.

The Great Green Wall, a multispecies, 15 km-wide belt of vegetation running approximately 7,000 km from Dakar to Djibouti, is the African States' response to the

environmental upheaval they suffer (the drought currently affecting the Horn of Africa is the worst in the past 60 years).

Estonian parliamentarians participate in the "Let's Do It World!" initiative, which began in Estonia in 2008 as an annual event and in which more than 50,000 volunteers, including MPs, help collect illegally dumped rubbish from forests, ditches and elsewhere.

The **Finnish** Parliament reported that, while IPU resolutions had not been explicitly mentioned in Foreign Affairs Committee meetings, the substance of the resolution had been part of the discussion when the Committee scrutinized government policies.

France aligns its cooperation activities on the MDGs. In a June 2010 report, the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee underscored that France should maintain the MDGs as a top development policy priority. In this regard, the Minister in charge of cooperation informed the Foreign Affairs Committees of both houses that, in spite of its budget difficulties, the French Government intended to maintain its development capacity.

In addition, the French Government established a framework document in 2010 for its cooperation and development policy. The document emphasizes in particular the need to modernize relations with partner countries. It observes that aid effectiveness requires a partnership approach based on equality between the partners, a common and shared diagnostic of needs and contractual reciprocal undertakings. It notes that the emergence of balanced international cooperation requires that developing countries have the capacity to identify their interests and put them across to the relevant bodies, on an equal footing that also presupposes accountability and reciprocity.

During the period under review, a number of bilateral and multilateral organizations were involved in efforts to strengthen and support **Ghana's** Parliament. These organizations sought to narrow the gap between Parliament's potential contribution to poverty reduction and good governance and its performance in practice. Donor interest in parliaments was informed by a renewed emphasis on country ownership and domestic accountability, and by the donors' enthusiasm for ensuring that spending decisions are scrutinized and that aid is spent effectively.

The **Indonesian** House of Representatives is committed to supporting the achievement of the MDGs by 2015, and consequently renewed the mandate of its Working Group for the MDGs. The Working Group submitted recommendations for accelerating achievement of the MDGs in Indonesia to the Government and the House. It also produced an MDG Checklist/Handbook for Parliamentarians to be used by MPs to follow up on progress towards the MDGs at regional level. The Working Group's other activities include conducting hearings with government institutions and NGOs, and holding seminars to raise public and government awareness of the MDGs.

From the standpoint of human security, the Diet engages in active discussions on the contributions **Japan** can make toward achievement of the MDGs. The Japanese Government has also stated that it will make every effort to carry through the Prime Minister's declaration at the UN MDG Summit (September 2010) in support of health care and education and to maintain the pledge it made at the Fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (May 2008) to double ODA for Africa.

With regard to operative paragraph 6 of the resolution, Japan provides support for the South-South cooperation promoted by UNDP - the UN body with the central support role for South-South cooperation - through the Partnership Fund it set up within UNDP. In fiscal 2010, Japan contributed US\$ 63,841 to the Fund to support South-South cooperation, bringing Japan's cumulative contribution since fiscal 1996 to US\$ 333.3 million.

In its report, the National Assembly of **Lebanon** mentions various parliamentary activities undertaken during the period under review, including a regional seminar on strengthening the

role of parliaments in crisis prevention and in rebuilding the countries in the Arab region, which was held in November 2010 in Jordan and organized jointly by UNDP and the IPU.

The European Union remains far and away the world's biggest donor of ODA and has promised to contribute 0.7 per cent of gross national income (GNI) by 2015. **Luxembourg**, for its part, has already reached the threshold of 1 per cent of GNI, but other EU Member States are lagging behind. Luxembourg considers that special emphasis must be placed on Africa, which is progressing less rapidly than Asia and South America. Indeed, 17 African countries will soon be celebrating the 50th anniversary of their independence, but have not made substantial progress.

In order to catch up in terms of MDG implementation, the Government of **Mali** has drawn up a programme to accelerate achievement of the MDGs in the 166 most vulnerable *communes*. The aim is to satisfy the basic needs of the target population through a series of multisector activities decided on by the communities themselves. The programme consists of innovative investment in agriculture and nutrition, mother and child health, food production, education, access to drinking water and basic infrastructure, so that the villages can move out of extreme poverty.

In addition, in its report the National Assembly salutes the IPU's initiative to associate national parliaments in the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Istanbul, so as to implicate them in the preparation and follow-up of bilateral or multilateral aid to combat poverty. Parliament can now take part in the planning and evaluation of development initiatives, in particular those financed by aid.

In **Mexico**, the draft decree promulgating the Law on International Development Cooperation was adopted at first reading by 99 votes with 3 abstentions. The Law's objective is to give the Executive the tools it needs to programme, promote, concert, foster, coordinate, execute, quantify, evaluate and budget international development cooperation between the United States of Mexico, on the one hand, and the governments of other countries and international bodies, on the other, with regard to the transfer, reception and exchange of resources, goods, knowledge and educational, cultural, technical, scientific, economic and financial experiences.

A few months after coming to power, the new Government of the **Netherlands** announced that it had re-oriented the policy on cooperation with the Third World. The priority is henceforth on the economic rather than the social sectors. The accent is on developing country autonomy, with more space for private initiative. In addition, the Netherlands wish to play an appropriate role on the global issues of security, migration, climate change, financial stability, food crises and water shortages.

The Government of the Netherlands is attentive to the developing countries' legitimate interests and continues to attach great importance to international solidarity and the MDGs.

The policy on cooperation with developing countries will nevertheless feel the effects of the budget cuts set out in the agreement between the parties making up the governing coalition. ODA will fall to 0.7 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2012, from 0.75 per cent in 2011.

In **Poland**, the Sejm is currently working on the draft Act on Development Aid, submitted by the Government, which will allow financing and implementation of long-term aid projects and improve the coordination and management of such aid.

In accordance with MDG 2, and contrary to ancestral culture, the education of girls is not just a right but also a factor of progress. In 2010, **Rwanda** had almost attained universal education, with 98 per cent of girls and 97 per cent of boys enrolled in primary school, among the highest rates in Africa.

The progress made by Rwanda is underscored in the UN *Millennium Development Goals Report 2011*, which indicates, *Burundi, Madagascar, Rwanda, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Togo and the United Republic of Tanzania have achieved or are nearing the goal of universal primary education (with an adjusted net enrolment ratio above 95 per cent)*. Today, in its education-for-all programme, the Rwandan Government has opted for school reform that extends school attendance for all to nine instead of six years, the better to prepare children for the outside world. Education is therefore free not only at primary level but also for the first three years of secondary school (core curriculum), the gateway to various sections.

In addition, the child mortality rate fell considerably in the past decade. According to Rwanda's 2010 health and demographic census, child mortality for those up to the age of 4 fell from 152 per 1,000 live births in 2005 to 76 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2010.

The Committee on Foreign Affairs of the **Swedish** Parliament gave its opinion on the EU development policy following a December 2010 report stating that further efforts are needed to ensure that ODA commitments are honoured, as urged in operative paragraph 30 of the resolution.

The **Togolese report** recalls that climate change is forcing the entire world to consider new, notably renewable, sources of energy, in order to meet the challenge of energy security, preserve the environment and combat poverty. By authorizing ratification of the Statute of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) on 7 June 2011, the National Assembly strengthened Togo's position in terms of sustainable development, especially as concerns energy and environmental cooperation, at the subregional and international levels.

With regard to MDG 3, an awareness-raising workshop was organized jointly by the IPU and the National Assembly in May 2010. Termed a public consultation on violence against women and girls, the workshop was intended for members of parliament and parliamentary staff. Its objective, in the short term, was the establishment of a legal reference frame to combat violence against women.

In 2011, a number of laws were enacted by the **Uruguayan General Assembly** with regard to bilateral cooperation agreements, including with Turkey and Israel.

Zambia reports that, with regard to MDG 8, it has liberalized its trade and financial system in order to improve economic growth and contribute to poverty reduction in the country. The easing of regional and global trade barriers, through common agreements, is paramount for the formation of a more robust and open trading regime that spurs balanced growth. Zambia has initiated arrangements to facilitate trade within regional groupings, establishing One Stop Border Posts with neighbouring countries. The aim is to enhance trade between two countries through expeditious and effective border controls and simplified border control documents and procedures.

According to the World Bank publication *Doing Business 2011*, Zambia's regulatory reforms have improved its ranking on the ease of doing business, moving it up to a spot among the world's top ten reformers.

3. YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS

This resolution was also adopted by consensus at the 122nd IPU Assembly in April 2010. It calls upon parliaments to develop practical measures to increase the participation of young people in parliament and other representative bodies. It welcomes the participation of young members of parliament in national parliamentary delegations and urges IPU Member Parliaments to systematically include young MPs in their delegations to IPU Assemblies. Finally, the resolution requests “the IPU to incorporate youth participation into its activities along the lines of the measures that have been taken to promote women's participation”.

In several Members' reports, particular attention is drawn to the fact that their countries have annual children's/youth parliaments (e.g. **Djibouti**, **France** and **Luxembourg**).

The General Council of **Andorra** has started a blog, open to all, in order to spur discussion of democracy and strengthen ties between parliament and the people. In the spring of 2011, it organized the 9th Youth Parliament, an educational programme providing secondary school students with social and civic skills and knowledge of parliament, the democratic process and Andorra's political system.

In 2010, the **Austrian** Youth Parliament met twice, in May and November and at the invitation of the President of the National Council, in the parliament buildings in Vienna. The young people's task was to campaign for their own position in the parliamentary group, seek compromises, prepare speeches and finally vote on a draft bill. For an entire day, the young people had the opportunity to find out for themselves, in committee and plenary sessions, what it is like to be a politician and how political decisions are made. The objective was to kindle an interest in democratic policy-making processes and to convey a greater understanding of parliamentary procedures to young people.

The Shura Council in **Bahrain** is considering the possibility of setting up a permanent committee on youth affairs. In addition, Bahraini students have the possibility to visit parliament and observe the legislative process.

After the adoption of the IPU resolution, in December 2010 the National Assembly of **Belarus** approved amendments to the Law on the Principles of State Youth Policy, which includes inter alia young people's rights to establish youth public organizations. Moreover, the budget allocated to youth policy has been increased from Rbl 13 billion to Rbl 20 billion for 2011. At the international level, during the 65th Session of the UN General Assembly, Belarus put forward an initiative to “Help Future Generations Prosper”, the essence of which is to establish a new global partnership for the defence and promotion of young people's interests.

In the context of **Burundi's** recent adherence to the East African Community (EAC), four young Burundians participated in the deliberations of the EAC Forum, organized in April 2011 with a view to promoting a culture of good governance and human rights practice as an essential component of the socio-economic betterment of the EAC's young people.

Elections **Canada** counts young people as being among the target groups likely to experience barriers of access (physical and informational barriers to voting which can lessen or interfere with electors' opportunities to participate in elections) and motivation (in terms of the perception of the value of voting, groups that accord only minimal value to voting and the relevance of voting in their lives). Elections Canada's Strategic Plan 2008-2013 has therefore made youth engagement one of its three strategic objectives (along with trust and accessibility). Specifically, the plan aims to increase young Canadians' understanding of the importance of voting and becoming candidates in elections. Its four strategies are consistent with the four recommendations contained in the IPU resolution, including operative paragraphs 20 and 21, “developing tools and partnerships to support civic education”.

Since the adoption of this resolution, Canada held general elections in May 2011 which resulted in an unprecedented influx of young MPs: three of the five youngest MPs in Canadian history were elected, including the youngest MP ever, aged 20 years.

In June 2010, **Chile's** Chamber of Deputies received a motion to amend the Constitution with a view to giving the right to vote to 16-year-olds. The motion is currently being examined by the relevant Chamber committee. Another motion, presented in the Chamber in January 2011, proposes to modify various statutes in order to promote youth participation in national public life and the process of political renewal. This motion, which was also sent to the corresponding committee for examination, proposes the establishment of a law setting a minimum quota of 20 per cent of young people (under the age of 30) on the lists for municipal and legislative elections. The motion, which is the subject of debate, is in line with the general recommendation made in operative paragraph 13 of the IPU resolution.

Congo has a youth parliament intended inter alia to develop young people's civic training by introducing them to parliamentary life and fostering their sense of the values of peace and tolerance. The parliament is a platform for engaging in dialogue and exchanging views in the course of democratic discussion.

The Public Relations Department of the **Croatian** Parliament is actively engaged in developing projects and seeking ways to introduce young people, in particular secondary school and university students, to the democratic process and encourage them to take an active part therein. It also endeavours to make the most of modern ICTs to reach out to young people. This area is regulated by its Standing Orders and the Rules on Public Access to Proceedings in the Croatian Parliament and its Working Bodies, which provide for modern, multidimensional and multichannel communication between Parliament and the public. Indeed, the school-age population accounts for a considerable number of hits on the Croatian Parliament's website, which it consults in the classroom. The Public Relations Department also publishes informative leaflets, using an approach tailor-made for young people, on basic concepts related to the work of Parliament.

The **Cyprus** Children's Parliament meets regularly and is chaired by the President of the House of Representatives. It is an innovative means of interesting school children in the democratic process. Its proceedings follow rules similar to those of the House, and its reports deal with a variety of issues, such as health and safety, youth crime, drug-related problems, employment, matters related to children with special needs, etc. The resolutions and minutes of each session are circulated to the relevant officials at ministry level.

The Chamber of Deputies of the **Czech Republic** organized, through the Parliamentary Institute (research service), special seminars for pupils and students. The focus was on the work of parliament and democratic processes in politics. Advanced level seminars are available for secondary school teachers.

For almost ten years, **Djibouti** has had a youth parliament that meets in ordinary session. The parliament's goal is to familiarize young people with the world of parliament and the democratic system in Djibouti, and it is intended to enhance their knowledge of this aspect of citizen participation in public life.

Concretely, over 50 young people, elected by Djibouti's secondary school and college students, meet on the National Assembly's premises, deliberate on a subject chosen previously by them and draw up relevant recommendations or a resolution subsequently sent to the National Assembly and the President of the Republic. The 2010 session debated violence in schools.

A ministry for women, children and youth affairs has been established in **Ethiopia**. Its aim is to *create youth that are mentally and physically developed, that know and respect the*

cultural values of their people and are proud of their country, encourage youth to be creative and industrious, and empower them to participate widely and consciously in the development and democratization process of the country (...).

The Government of **Finland** adopted a programme for child and youth policy at the end of 2007. The programme is organized very much along the lines called for in the resolution, and defines aims, focus areas and practical measures to improve the well-being of children and young people during the current government term. Moreover, the Youth Act requires that children and young people must be heard on matters concerning them.

The eDemocracy project uses new technology in children and young people's democracy education and allows children and young people to have an impact and be heard. eDemocracy follows the new trend of working as web communities. The Ministry of Education has supported the development of a counselling and listening channel to provide young people with information and advice.

The **French** Parliament adopted the organic law of 14 April 2011 relating to elections to the National Assembly and the Senate. The law lowers the age of eligibility for election to the National Assembly from 23 to 18 years (the minimum age is thus aligned on the voting age) and to the Senate from 30 to 24 years. It thereby serves to promote youth participation in parliament.

Furthermore, in keeping with the IPU recommendation that parliaments enhance young people's knowledge of the democratic process and increase their participation, the National Assembly and the Senate created websites targeting group in particular, respectively the "Children's Parliament website" and "Senate Junior".

In October 2010, the **Hungarian** National Assembly adopted Parliamentary Resolution H/368, proclaiming a day of national interdependence in schools. The aim is to forge and strengthen contacts between Hungarian young people living in Hungary and abroad as part of a wider public education campaign to promote inter alia the representation of Hungarian minorities living abroad. The National Assembly also has a youth parliamentary page on its website.

In July 2011, the **Indonesian** House of Representatives held a moot parliament at a camp for junior and senior high school students from all over Indonesia, the so-called Youth Parliament. This programme will now take place on a regular basis and aims to increase young people's interest in and understanding of democratic processes, including the work of parliament.

Ireland's Parliament believes that an essential part of democracy is openness and transparency, and this is demonstrated by the ease of access to parliamentary debates and parliamentary proceedings and by the freedom of information system. An example of this is eConsultation, which uses technology to broaden participation in the parliamentary process by members of the public and other stakeholders. Moreover, Parliament decided that, in order to address the perception of politics among some of the younger generation, it needed to bring democracy and the democratic institutions out to the educational institutions in a proactive manner. The Outreach Programme was created to do just that. It has met with great success and has been actively supported by MPs, who attend schools in their constituencies.

In February 2010, the Minister of State for Youth Affairs of **Japan** met with high school students, university students and others to discuss the problems that young people face today and ways of resolving them. The meeting was held with an eye to preparing a new national youth development policy. Moreover, since April 2002 the House of Councillors has been conducting a simulation programme for elementary and junior high school students to deepen their understanding of the law-making process. So far, some 500,000 students have participated in the programme.

The National Assembly of **Lebanon** organized a two-month internship for 80 law students during the summer of 2011. With the help of legislators, the students drew up parliamentary reports and draft legislation. In addition, every year the National Assembly opens its doors on the International Day of Democracy to students wishing to familiarize themselves with the institution of parliament.

The Chamber of Deputies of **Luxembourg** attaches great importance to including young people in the democratic process, as evidenced by the establishment of the Youth National Assembly in 2008. In addition, a member of parliament has tabled two draft laws to enable young people to vote as of the age of 16.

The website of the Chamber of Deputies has a section especially for young people, allowing them to familiarize themselves with the functioning of parliament. This part of the site includes a video, a description of the legislative process and a quiz that provides an enjoyable way to learn about the workings of parliament, Luxembourg's political institutions and democracy, and informs young people about their rights and role in society.

In **Mali**, young people account for 35 per cent of the working population. Their involvement in the democratic process is therefore key to improving the country's development. This concern has been at the heart of government action since independence. Indeed, every government has had a youth ministry, and there exists a youth national council.

A **Mexican** Senator introduced a recommendation, which was sent to the Chamber of Deputies, requesting that fiscal resources be set aside in the 2011 national budget for extraordinary measures to strengthen programmes relating to education and youth employment.

Moreover, a statement was made on 11 August 2010 with a view to National Youth Day on 12 August. The members of the National Action Party caucus considered that it was important to draw up cross-cutting legislative agendas in order to counteract the various obstacles facing young people throughout the country.

In the areas of education and human rights advocacy, a number of measures continue to be implemented in the schools of the Principality of **Monaco**. For example, educational kits entitled *Cyberdodo/Edupack* and promoting the rights enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child have been distributed in schools thanks to government funding.

In the **Netherlands**, the Maison pour la Démocratie et l'État de droit (House for Democracy and the Rule of Law) organized the first ever election for children aged 11-12, an activity that already existed for secondary school students. One section of the Maison, the Institute for the Public and Politics (IPP), is concerned specifically with young people, as they are the parliamentarians and rulers of the future. The IPP is aware that young people are nevertheless not always interested in political decision-making processes or in civil society, and therefore organizes educational projects and works with youth participation projects. To that end, it cooperates with the municipalities and with civic education teachers, and conducts surveys to learn what young people consider important in the municipalities. Given that youth participation at municipal level is low and that organized civil society does not benefit enough from young people's contributions, the IPP has launched projects and methods aimed at encouraging greater participation by young people.

In June 2011, **Romania's** Senate launched an internship programme that gives students the possibility to participate in parliamentary work. The students work on one of five research projects: constitutional and parliamentary law, administrative capacity-building, history, archives, and IT and communication.

In **Rwanda**, young people make up more than half the population and are a recognized force for development. Initiatives have been launched to encourage them to be active citizens and become involved in civic life; in particular, Parliament has enacted various laws providing for

youth participation in the Advisory Councils, among them Law No. 8/2007 on the organization and functioning of districts, which stipulates that there be three advisory members from the Bureau of the National Youth Council at district level.

The **Singapore** Parliament's Education and Publicity Department runs a range of youth engagement programmes to promote young people's knowledge of and participation in the democratic process. For example, at the Moot Parliament, students role-play as speaker, prime minister and members of parliament for a day to enrich their parliamentary experience. They have fun debating in a parliamentary setting and learn about parliamentary procedures. There are also programmes that cater especially for youth during budget debates and the opening of Parliament.

Moreover, a special education microsite on Parliament was developed by tapping modern ICTs. The aim is to reach out to young people and increase access to information on the democratic process.

The Political Parties Act provides that a **Slovenian** minor of at least 15 years may become a member of a youth organization within a party; with the written agreement of a legal representative, he or she may also become a member of the party. A youth organization within a party, if it is an official national youth organization running programmes, can obtain funds for co-financing programmes and the youth organization's operations. In this way, young people are encouraged to become active in political parties and, indirectly, to participate in the democratic decision-making process.

With regard to one of the resolution's recommendations, that national parliaments include young MPs in their delegations to IPU Assemblies, **the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** reports that, in April 2011, there were 12 MPs (12.10%) under the age of 30 and 33 MPs (27.5%) between the ages of 30 and 39, and that young Assembly members are regularly included in its delegations to IPU events.

Pursuant to operative paragraph 10 of the resolution, on 26 December 2010 **Togo** enacted the law authorizing the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol. The Convention's purpose is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.

In **Uruguay**, the parliamentary website has a special microsite for young people. One page is devoted to a project to generate institutions for youth participation in Uruguay's democracy, as a means of initiating them into their future role in the political system. The aim is to work on strengthening local networks for young people's social action, which have an impact on the public agenda and the agenda of local and national lawmakers. Two of the project's objectives are to encourage young people to create spaces for citizen participation at local and national level: the aim is to create local networks for action and volunteer activities, and to forge ties between the General Assembly, departmental boards and young people.

In its report, **Viet Nam** states that just over 20 per cent of parliamentarians are under 40 years of age.