

CL/189/SR.1
10 January 2012

SUMMARY RECORDS

OF THE

GOVERNING COUNCIL

(189th SESSION)

17 and 19 October 2011

BERN (*BERNEXPO*)

Participation

President: T.-B. Gurirab (Namibia)

Members and substitutes: M.N. Akbary, S.I. Gailani and M.I. Monshi (Afghanistan); Ms. R. Bulku, Ms. A. Bushati, E. Ruka and Ms. J. Topalli (Albania); A. Bensalah, B. Boutouiga and Ms. Z. Drif Bitat (Algeria); Ms. M. Bonell and Ms. M. Mateu (Andorra); R. Danda, Ms. B. Henriques Da Silva and J.F. Tuta (Angola); Ms. S.M. Escudero, R. Giustiniani and J.C. Romero (Argentina); Ms. A. Bakhshyan, Ms. H. Bisharyan and M. Vardanyan (Armenia); D. Adams, Ms. S. Boyce and Ms. U. Stephens (Australia); M. Graf, Ms. B. Prammer and Ms. H. Silhavy (Austria); I. Aliyev, Ms. G. Mammadova and F. Muradov (Azerbaijan); Ms. L. Al-Gaoud, A.A.R. Al Moawda and Ms. S. Rajab (Bahrain); S. Ali, M.F. Azim and Md. M. Hoque (Bangladesh); V. Baykov and Ms. N. Mazai (Belarus); F.-X. de Donnea, P. Mahoux, Ms. V. Matz and Ms. M. Temmermann (Belgium); Ms. F. Assogba, O.D. Gonroudobou, M. Nago, E. Quenum and E. Zinsou (Benin); D. Becirović, D. Kalabić and O. Tadić (Bosnia and Herzegovina); P. Maele, P. Moathodi, B. Ntuane and S. Tsogwane (Botswana); E. Braga, A. Lins and H. Napoleão (Brazil); D.R. Bado, Ms. A. Kaboré-Koala and S.T. Ouedraogo (Burkina Faso); Ms. G. Berahino, F. Kabura and C. Nditije (Burundi); V. Chheang, Ms. S. Khuon, T. Nhem, Ms. S. Tioulong and S. Yang (Cambodia); B. Abdoulaye, V. Emah Etoundi and Ms. J. Fotso (Cameroon); S. Armstrong, Ms. C. Charlton and D. Oliver (Canada); J.A. Coloma, Ms. M.A. Cristi and J.P. Letelier (Chile); He Keng, Ms. Ma Li, Wu Xiaohua and Zha Peixin (China); J.M. Corzo Román, J.M. Galán and Ms. K. Mota Y Morad (Colombia); J. Kignoumbi Kia-Boungou, J.M. Mavoungou-N'Got and F. Sabaye (Congo); Ms. M. Lugarić (Croatia); R. Pez Ferro and Ms. Y. Regueiferos Linares (Cuba); M. Garoyian, Ms. S. Koukouma Koutra and G. Varnava (Cyprus); P. Guziana, Ms. V. Parkanová and J. Pospíšil (Czech Republic); Ms. E. Bazaïba, A. Kabamba and E. Mokolo (Democratic Republic of the Congo); K.P. Lorentzen and O. Hav (Denmark); F. Bustamante and H. Cuji (Ecuador); A.S.S. Dougan Malabo and B. Ekuia Esono Abe (Equatorial Guinea); T. Kõiv, E. Nool and Ms. M. Tuus-Laul (Estonia); Y. Buayalew, M. Lemma and K.G. Tekeleberhan (Ethiopia); P. Hemmilä, Ms. M. Lohela and Ms. A. Thors (Finland); Ms. C. Bourragué, R. del Picchia, R. Hue and P. Martin-Lalande (France); Ms. S. Moulengui-Mouele, D. Ona Ondo and F. Owono Nguema (Gabon); N. Lammert, T. Silberhorn and A. Ulrich (Germany); C.A. Avoka, O. Kyei-Mensah-Bonsu and L. Tawiah (Ghana); K. Aivaliotis, D. Papadimoulis and S. Taliadouros (Greece); A. Gruber, M. Gyöngyösi, J. Horváth, Ms. A. Magyar and L. Mandur (Hungary); K.R. Khan, Ms. K. Kumar and U. Singh (India); Ms. N. Ali Assegaf, M. Assegaf and Ms. M.V. Hafid (Indonesia); G. Alikhani, J. Jahangirzadeh and K. Jalali (Iran, Islamic Republic of); R. Al-Azzawi, S. Aljumaili, S.H. Hamoudi and Ms. A. Talbani (Iraq); J. Bannon, Ms. A. Hayden, M. McGrath and D. O'Donovan (Ireland); P.F. Casini, Ms. B. Contini and R. Migliori (Italy); Y. Fujimoto, C. Nishimura, S. Ohsaka and M. Yunoki (Japan); Ms. A. Al-Farhan, J. Al-Nimri and F. El-Fayez (Jordan); Ms. S. Abdalla, F.M. Maalim and N. M'Mithiaru (Kenya); Ms. A. Al-Awadhi, M. Al-Ghanim and A. Al-Omair (Kuwait); Ms. B. Boupfa, D. Outhachak and X. Phomvihane (Lao People's Democratic Republic); K. Mathaba, L. Moeketsi and Ms. N. Motsamai (Lesotho); J. Beck and Ms. D. Frommelt (Liechtenstein); Ms. D. Bekintiene and G. Kirkilas (Lithuania); M. Wolter (Luxembourg); M.N. Abdul Aziz, R.R. Jaem and K.S. Wee (Malaysia); V. Ali, A. Nazim and M. Zameer (Maldives); J. Falzon and A. Zammit (Malta); Ms. E. Abdel Malek and M. Z'Nagui Sidiya (Mauritania); A. Contreras, A. García, Ms. M. Guerra, J.E. Ibarra Pedroza, Ms. L. Menchaca Castellanos, and Ms. M.T. Ortuño (Mexico); Ms. N. Manzone-Saquet and F. Notari (Monaco); O. Benabdallah, A. Radi and Ms. K. Zoumi (Morocco); J.M. Katupha (Mozambique); M. Amweelo, H. Lucks and Ms. M. Mensah-Williams (Namibia); K. Putters and

Ms. A. van Miltenburg (Netherlands); A. Djibo, Ms. A. Habibou and L.A. Maïzoumbou (Niger); Ms. H. Esuene, E.N. Ihedioha and D. Mark (Nigeria); Ms. I. Heggø, O. Vaksdal and T. Wickholm (Norway); S.N.H. Bukhary, Ms. B. Gohar and S.M.A. Khan (Pakistan); A. Al-Ahmad, Ms. I. Al-Wazir and T. Quba'a (Palestine); L. Àvila and F. Brea (Panama); S. Kuli and M. Manwau (Papua New Guinea); F. Drilon, V. Ortega and V. Sotto (Philippines); Ms. B. Mazurek, J. Rzymelka and M. Ziolkowski (Poland); Ms. R.M. Albernaz, D. Pacheco and G. Silva (Portugal); I.B.R. Al-Kawari and R.H. Al-Medadai (Qatar); Y. Chin, Ms. H.-H. Jeon and M.-S. Park (Republic of Korea); T. Günthner, Ms. O. Manolescu and I. Palar (Romania); N. Frolov, S. Gavrilov, Ms. V. Oskina and Ms. L. Sliska (Russian Federation); Ms. A. Mukarugema (Rwanda); G. Sansovini and G. Terenzi (San Marino); S. Al-Husseini and S. Fadel (Saudi Arabia); A.N. Lo and Ms. N.B. Ndiongue Diouf (Senegal); Ms. V. Pesić and Z. Tomić (Serbia); A.N. Bankole Stronge and M. Betts-Priddy (Sierra Leone); A. Fong and Ms. I. Ng (Singapore); Ms. M. Kubayi, S. Mokgalapa, Ms. N. Ntwanambi and M.V. Sisulu (South Africa); I. Anasagasti and Ms. M.V. Monteserín (Spain); N.S. de Silva, M. Samarasinghe and C. Weerakkody (Sri Lanka); E.-S. El Siddiq, M. Ibrahim Mohamed and Ms. M. Osman Gaknoun (Sudan); M. Bee and R.W. Panka (Suriname); A. Avsan, Ms. U. Karlsson and K. Örnfjäder (Sweden); E. David, Ms. B.M. Gadiant, F. Gutzwiller and Ms. D. Stump (Switzerland); Ms. T. Boontong, Ms. P. Krairiksh, P. Tanbanjong and Ms. P. Tamthai (Thailand); Ms. S. Boneva, J. Makraduli and T. Xhaferi (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia); Ms. F. Dağci Cigliç, H. Güneş, S. Korkmaz and Ms. N. Serter (Turkey); M. Bayigga, Ms. R. Kadaga and R.R. Okumu (Uganda); V. Hrytsak, O. Skybinetskyi and Ms. K. Vashchuk (Ukraine); Ms. A. Clwyd, Lord Rennard and R. Walter (United Kingdom); D. Kafulila, Ms. J.A. Kairuki and Ms. A. Makinda (United Republic of Tanzania); L.A. Heber, Ms. I. Passada and Ms. M. Xavier (Uruguay); E. Amoroso, Ms. G. Requena and R.D. Vivas (Venezuela); Hang Tran Van, Ms. H'Yim K'Doh and Thong Ha Huy (Viet Nam); J.J. Mwiimbu and Ms. S. Sayifwanda (Zambia); B. Gaule, W. Madzimure and Ms. V. Muchenje (Zimbabwe)

Observers: Ms. N. Mazai and I. Savvidi (Parliamentary Assembly of the Union of Belarus and the Russian Federation)

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

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FIRST SITTING

Monday, 17 October 2011

The meeting was called to order at 9.15 a.m. with the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Dr. T.-B. Gurirab (Namibia), in the Chair.

Item 1 of the agenda

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA
(CL/189/A.1)

The agenda was adopted by the Governing Council without amendment.

**APPOINTMENT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE 125th ASSEMBLY OF
THE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION**

Mr. F. Drilon (Philippines) proposed that Mr. J.-R. Germanier (Switzerland) should serve as President of the 125th Assembly.

It was so decided.

Item 2 of the agenda

**APPROVAL OF THE SUMMARY RECORDS OF THE 188th SESSION OF
THE GOVERNING COUNCIL**
(CL/188/SR.1)

The President announced that the Japanese delegation wished to add Ms. Chinami Nihimura to the list of participants at the 188th session of the Governing Council.

The summary records of the 188th session of the Governing Council, as amended, were approved.

Item 3 of the agenda

QUESTIONS RELATING TO IPU MEMBERSHIP AND OBSERVER STATUS

(a) Requests for affiliation and reaffiliation to the IPU
(CL/189/3(a)-R.1)

The President announced that requests for reaffiliation to the IPU had been received from the Parliaments of Equatorial Guinea and Niger and the Executive Committee's recommendation on those requests was contained in document CL/189/3(a)-R.1. In the absence of any comments or objections, he would take it that the Council approved the two requests for membership.

It was so decided.

Mr. A.S.S. Dougan Malabo (Equatorial Guinea) expressed his delegation's gratitude to the Council for having approved his Parliament's request for reaffiliation to the IPU.

Mr. A. Djibo (Niger) thanked the Council for having accepted his Parliament's request to resume its membership after an unexpected interruption in Niger's democratic processes. He expressed his delegation's gratitude for the support shown to Niger during that difficult period, and reaffirmed his parliament's determination to meet the objectives of the IPU.

(b) Situation of certain Members
(CL/189/3(b)-R.1)

The President announced that the Executive Committee had examined the situation of two parliaments that were defaulting in their payments to the IPU. The Parliaments of Comoros and Liberia were liable for suspension under Article 5.3 of the Statutes. The Executive Committee recommended that, in line with the statutory requirements, if steps had not been taken to redress their financial situation, both Parliaments should be suspended from the Organization at the final sitting of the current session of the Governing Council on Wednesday, 19 October 2011.

As was customary, the situation of a number of parliaments that were Members of the IPU had also been discussed. At its 188th session in Panama, the Council had decided to maintain the membership of the Parliaments of Egypt and Tunisia, despite those institutions having ceased to function. The Council had applauded the people of both countries in their struggle to achieve the goals of democratization. The Executive Committee had taken note of the support that the IPU had been providing to both countries since that time, and encouraged the continuation of that support during the transition process, in order to assist in the building of strong and fully representative parliamentary institutions in both countries. The Executive Committee had been pleased to note that elections were due to be held in Tunisia on 23 October 2011 and that elections to the People's Assembly in Egypt had been announced, beginning on 28 November 2011.

In a number of other countries in the Arab region, people were clamouring for democracy and a greater say in public affairs. The Executive Committee urged those countries to resolve their difficulties through dialogue. The Committee condemned the violent repression that was being witnessed in several places, and called on the IPU to support the building of strong democratic institutions in those countries, and to take note of the fact that in the case of Libya, the IPU was already in contact with the transitional authorities to that end. The Executive Committee would continue to monitor those countries and would undertake a thorough review of their situation at the 126th Assembly in Kampala, Uganda, in 2012.

The Executive Committee had considered the feasibility of charging meeting attendance fees to observer organizations. After careful consideration, however, it had concluded that a fee for observers would present a number of difficulties and the relatively small income that it would bring to the Organization would be diminished by administrative costs. Other ways of raising funds should be considered. Some host parliaments sought sponsors for IPU Assemblies, who met some of the costs of the meetings in return for publicity. The IPU should explore the possibility of attracting sponsors for its major events on a similar basis.

(c) Requests for observer status
(CL/189/3(c)-P.1)

The President announced that three applications for observer status had been received from Penal Reform International, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries and the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health. The

Executive Committee had examined those requests and recommended that all three institutions should be granted observer status.

It was so decided.

The President said that the Executive Committee also recommended that the parliamentary network Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (PNND) should be invited to follow the work of the 125th Assembly as an observer. PNND had a close working relationship with the IPU and had been helping in the preparations for the panel discussion on nuclear weapons that would be held during the present Assembly.

It was so decided.

Item 4 of the agenda

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

(a) On his activities since the 188th session of the Governing Council
(CL/189/4(a)-R.1)

The President drew attention to his report on his activities since the 188th session of the Governing Council, contained in document CL/189/4(a)-R.1.

(b) On the activities of the Executive Committee

The President, reporting on the activities of the Executive Committee, said that the Executive Committee had held two full days of discussions. Most of the subjects that had been discussed were on the Council's agenda and the Committee would report on those matters as the Council reached the relevant items.

At its past two sessions, the Executive Committee had discussed financial and budgetary matters in considerable depth. It had approved an amendment to the Rules of the Executive Committee for the establishment of a Sub-committee on Finance, and had also approved the Sub-committee's terms of reference and appointed six members to the Sub-committee: Mr. Vardanyan (Armenia), Mr. Nhem Thavy (Cambodia), Ms. Moulengui-Mouélé (Gabon), Mr. Al-Ghanim (Kuwait), Mr. Alonso Díaz-Caneja (Mexico) and Mr. Örnfjäder (Sweden). The Sub-committee would serve as an advisory body on financial, budgeting and auditing matters.

The Executive Committee had heard a detailed report from the President of the Association of Secretaries General of Parliament. It had been informed of the names of the six Vice-Presidents appointed by the geopolitical groups for the coming year: Mr. Vardanyan (Armenia), Mr. Nhem Thavy (Cambodia), Ms. Moulengui-Mouélé (Gabon), Mr. Al-Ghanim (Kuwait), Mr. Alonso Díaz-Caneja (Mexico) and Mr. Örnfjäder (Sweden). One of them would be appointed Vice-President of the Executive Committee.

Item 5 of the agenda

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

**(a) Oral report of the Secretary General on the activities of the Union
since the 188th session of the Governing Council**

The Secretary General, reporting on the activities of the Union since the 188th session of the Governing Council in Panama, said that the main activities had focussed on the draft IPU strategy and the finances and budget of the Union. The draft strategy had been the subject of extensive consultations with Members, and a meeting of the Executive Committee had been held in September 2011 to discuss Members' proposals for improving it. The draft had been finalized and distributed among all Members.

Much time had been spent considering financial and budgetary matters. During the previous session of the Governing Council, several Members had made proposals on how to lower spending and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of IPU operations. Since that time, consideration had been given to which of those proposals might be implemented and to how to reorganize the Union's work to ensure that the Secretariat would be ready and able to implement the new Strategy, once it had been adopted.

2011 was a year for staff turnover at the IPU. He drew the Council's attention to the fact that two members of the Secretariat would be leaving the Organization at the end of the present Assembly after a long and faithful service. Marcelo Bustos Letelier had served the IPU for 35 years and provided steadfast support to Members throughout that period. Ingeborg Schwarz had served as the Secretary of the IPU Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians and as the Manager of the IPU Human Rights Programme. Her work was of sterling quality and he called on the Council to express its recognition of the dedication shown by both outgoing members of the Secretariat.

(b) Annual reporting exercise by IPU Members
(CL/189/5(b)-R.1)

The Secretary General, introducing his report on the annual reporting exercise by IPU Members (CL/189/5(b)-R.1), said that each Member Parliament had a statutory obligation to present an annual report on its work as a Member of the IPU. In 2011, Members had been asked to report on follow-up to the three resolutions adopted at the 122nd Assembly, held in Bangkok, Thailand, in 2010. Document CL/189/5(b)-R.1 contained reports from 56 member parliaments. Namibia and the United Kingdom had subsequently also submitted reports. Although that was an improvement on previous years, the Secretariat looked forward to receiving a greater number of reports in future.

He had been particularly impressed by the quality of reporting and the wealth of information that Members had provided on their activities. The report gave examples of parliaments having conducted detailed analyses of existing legislation in order to identify loopholes and gaps to be addressed with regard to the subjects under consideration. Some parliaments had made efforts to speed up and complete ratification of international instruments relating to organized crime. Others had taken measures to ensure greater transparency of State officials in financial processes. The reports submitted by Members could serve as useful examples to others.

On South-South and triangular cooperation, information had been provided on how parliaments were working to ensure better accountability and greater cooperation between countries of the South to advance attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

With regard to youth participation in democratic processes, the report contained a list of measures taken by Member Parliaments, including the use of blogs and social media to provide an opportunity for young people to interact directly with parliamentarians. Many Members had established youth parliaments and parliamentary committees on youth affairs and, in some countries, steps had been taken to lower the minimum age for voting and eligibility for election. Some Members had increased public access to parliamentary proceedings, and were making efforts to develop national youth policies and youth engagement programmes. Some parliaments had also developed micro-websites to increase parliamentary access for young people and provide a means of enabling them to learn about law-making processes. In Japan, for example, 500 000 students had participated in an education programme on lawmaking in the Japanese Parliament.

(c) International day of Democracy

(CL/189/5(c)-R.1)

The Secretary General said that the International Day of Democracy had been instituted in November 2007, largely at the instigation of the IPU, on the suggestion that one day each year should be dedicated to celebrating democracy worldwide. The Day was celebrated each year on 15 September, the anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Democracy. Parliaments around the world used that day to organize activities to encourage the public to consider democracy. The theme of the International Day of Democracy 2011 had been citizens and democracy. That had been a very topical choice, given that citizens' involvement in Arab countries had played a prominent role in asking for greater democracy in public decision-making. Many IPU Member Parliaments had provided information on the activities they had undertaken to mark 15 September 2011. Descriptions of all those activities were annexed to the report. A public statement had been made on 15 September by the President of the IPU, in India, where he had been opening a regional seminar on the role of parliaments in preventing violence against women. Plans had been made to conduct celebratory activities in the Arab world, and particularly in Egypt, but events in the region had led to the deferral of those activities until a later date.

INTRODUCTION OF THE HANDBOOK ON CHILD PARTICIPATION IN PARLIAMENT

The President said that a joint initiative had been conducted with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to draft a handbook on child participation in parliament.

Ms. K. Madi (Deputy Regional Director, UNICEF), introducing the joint IPU – UNICEF Handbook on Child Participation in Parliament, said that, through a common vision, shared goals and partnership for humanity, UNICEF and the IPU could contribute to a better world for the future. UNICEF was proud of its partnership with the IPU and the world's parliamentarians. That partnership dated back many years, to when the IPU had supported the adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The new Handbook on Child Participation in Parliament suggested ways of ensuring that children's voices, interests and concerns received sufficient parliamentary attention. Children should be entitled to participate in decisions that affected them, not only within their family, but also at the national, regional and global levels. Although some children were exercising their rights and becoming agents of change, many remained unheard and their interests forgotten or ignored. As the main representatives of their constituents, parliamentarians were uniquely placed to give a platform for children, particularly the most vulnerable, to testify in committees. By listening to children in their constituencies and taking children's issues into account in budgetary processes, they could ensure that children's opinions had an impact on

policies, laws and budgets. Interaction with parliamentarians would give children the opportunity to learn about democratic decision-making, and about their rights and powers as citizens.

The Handbook aimed to provide parliamentarians with information on a variety of mechanisms to ensure that children's participation in parliament was meaningful and contributed to reducing disparities and inequities that affected their wellbeing. By listening to children, parliaments could be more inclusive, craft more effective policies and secure respect for children's rights. Children had views, interests and concerns that should be heard. They shared the planet with adults, and were citizens who had a role to play in society now, since they would become the voters and decision-makers of the future.

UNICEF was aware of the essential role that parliaments could play in ensuring that children had the best start in life, with regard to health, protection, education, HIV/AIDS and nutrition. Parliamentarians had the unique power and responsibility to improve the lives of children. Acts of law and leadership were required: parliaments were responsible for debating, shaping and enacting the laws that protected children, and allocating resources from national budgets to shape policy directions. Parliamentarians could demand accountability, and their voices resonated when they spoke on behalf of children.

The President said that in one particular poor neighbourhood, decision-makers had decided to transform a concrete playground into a grassy garden. The decision had been taken with good intentions, to offer the children a more agreeable environment to play in. When the transformation had been finished, the children were asked if they were happy. They had answered that they had preferred the concrete playground, because in the grass it was more difficult to see the needles and pieces of glass that were thrown on the ground and they had to play more carefully in order not to cut themselves.

One of the biggest challenges for the world's parliamentarians was to understand the realities that their constituents faced and to respond to those realities appropriately. Parliaments therefore had a duty to open the doors of parliament, reach out, ask, listen and hear. Of all people, parliamentarians should be the first to reach out to children. The Handbook sent the message that parliaments would function better if they listened to children and included them in the life of parliament. He urged all Members to make good use of the Handbook.

Ms. M. Lugarić (Croatia) said that she had been the Rapporteur on youth participation in the democratic process for the Third Standing Committee at the 122nd IPU Assembly. She welcomed the cooperation between the IPU and UNICEF and particularly commended the publication of the Handbook. Parliaments could only be considered democratic if they were truly representative and participative. Children's participation was crucial, not only because they were the future, but also because they lived in the present, and deserved to have their problems addressed today. She urged all parliamentarians to not only read the Handbook, but also to implement the advice and recommendations it contained.

PRESENTATION OF THE IPU SURVEY AND REPORT ON GENDER SENSITIVE PARLIAMENTS

The Secretary General said that the IPU survey and report on gender sensitive parliaments were the culmination of three years of research, in which many parliaments and parliamentarians had participated. The survey had begun in 2008, and one of the first issues it had brought to light was that women themselves were the drivers of change with regard to gender equality in parliament. The survey had shown that it was time for parliaments themselves to take responsibility. The IPU had therefore decided to investigate the measures

being taken and whether existing parliamentary structures were ready to meet the challenge. 150 parliamentarians from 73 countries had participated in the survey. Interviews had taken place, five regional reports had been produced and 17 national case studies had been conducted, 5 in Latin America, 4 in the Asia Pacific region, 3 in sub-Saharan Africa, 2 in Europe and 3 in the Arab region.

The concept of a gender sensitive parliament was based on the principle of gender equality, by which men and women had an equal right to participate in decision-making processes, without restriction or recrimination. The survey had identified five areas for consideration: the composition of parliaments; legal frameworks; working modalities, structures and mechanisms; culture and environment; and strategic partners. On the question of the composition of parliaments, the survey had identified the need to facilitate women's access to leadership positions, increase the number of women in parliament, and increase the number of female presiding officers. There were currently 40 female Speakers of parliament in the world, which, although an improvement on the past, was still far from parity.

With regard to legal frameworks, the survey had identified a need for national laws on gender equality. Policies, objectives and plans of action on gender equality were required at the parliament level. Good examples of such policies and plans had been provided by the parliaments of Finland and Sweden. Policies must also be put in place to ensure that parliaments were gender sensitive workplaces. Some countries had codes of conduct for members of parliament, and others had sexual harassment policies in place to ensure that both sexes were treated with the respect they deserved.

With regard to how to achieve gender mainstreaming, the survey had shown that several steps should be taken: firstly, an assessment of current practices should be conducted, such as the gender audit that had been carried out in the Parliament of Rwanda; second, adequate structures should be established to oversee gender mainstreaming, such as a gender equality committee or a women's caucus; and third, measures must be taken to ensure that those structures had the capacity to deliver. Parliaments should draw inspiration from the example set by Rwanda.

Parliamentary structures debated the content of bills and created networks to reach out to those outside parliament, such as NGOs. They examined how ministries functioned and ensured that international obligations, such as those under the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, were respected. The parliaments of Costa Rica and Mexico had technical units to provide information on how to improve gender mainstreaming in every area of parliament.

Regarding the working culture and environment in parliament, efforts should be made to overcome the institutional norms in parliament that made women feel uncomfortable, such as sexual harassment and sexist language. Policies must be in place to address that. Efforts should be made to ensure that working conditions in parliament were suitable for women who had domestic responsibilities. On building strategic partnerships, it was essential to bear in mind that gender equality was not simply an issue for women to address: it was equally the responsibility of men, who must participate in efforts to ensure gender sensitive policies. Political parties must also become more gender sensitive.

The survey was the beginning of the process. All parliaments could benefit from assessing gender equality and sensitivity in their activities and working environment. They should ask themselves how many women were present in parliament, where they sat, what responsibilities they had, whether the correct legislation was in place to support gender equality in parliament, whether gender equalities projects and action plans were in place, how well gender issues were integrated into parliament's work, whether parliament was a sexist workplace, whether appropriate facilities were available in parliament for men and women alike, and whether men were shouldering their responsibility with regard to gender equality. Political parties should be encouraged to conduct similar self-assessment activities.

The survey suggested that the IPU could mainstream gender in its own activities, and could play an important role in ensuring that parliaments were a gender sensitive workplace. The IPU was developing a methodology to be used by its Members to assess their level of gender sensitivity, and would provide support for self-assessment, capacity building and oversight of obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The IPU was currently working with the United Nations Development Programme to produce a global report on parliamentary development, which would focus on the relationship between parliaments and citizens. An advisory board had been established to advise on the content of the report, and steps had been taken to ensure that consideration was given to how well each chapter of the report took account of gender equality issues. That sort of consideration should become standard practice.

Ms. M. Mensah-Williams (Namibia) commended the findings and said that the survey should be compulsory for all IPU Member parliaments, which should report back to the IPU on their findings. Gender sensitivity was the responsibility of men and women alike. She hoped that the survey would continue to be used, in order for parliaments to remain accountable on the issue of gender equality.

Ms. A. Mukarugema (Rwanda) said that she was proud to be a member of a gender sensitive parliament, in which 47 out of 80 deputies were women. That proportion of female representation in parliament had been achieved through political will and the determination of women. Appropriate mechanisms had been established: a Ministry for Gender Issues, a national council for women and a gender observatory. With women in power, societies benefitted from greater peace and stability.

Ms. G. Requena (Venezuela) said that in Venezuela, several parliamentary committees were chaired by women. Discussions were currently under way on drafting legislation to regulate gender equality in parliament. Legislation was already in place to address violence against women. Venezuela was a vanguard country in respect of women's participation: the Prosecutor General, Ombudsman and Chair of the Supreme Court were all women, and efforts were being made to ensure that all political leaders were aware of gender issues. The survey had her delegation's full support.

Ms. M.T. Ortuño (Mexico) said that Mexico had an increasing number of women legislators. Women's participation in parliament was being promoted, but although the number of women parliamentarians was increasing, there were still very few female presidents of parliamentary committees or female speakers of parliament. Her delegation welcomed the findings of the survey. Any activities to promote the family, women and children would always be beneficial to democracy. Greater efforts were required to increase the number of female parliamentarians, and to promote the rights of all women to education and healthcare, among others.

Mr. E. Mokolo (Democratic Republic of the Congo) said that lack of female participation was a problem that remained to be overcome in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where only five per cent of parliamentarians were women. The most recent elections had shown that female voters were voting for male candidates. Measures were therefore required to raise awareness among female voters of the importance of gender equality.

Mr. E. Quenum (Benin) said that over the past few years in Benin, efforts had been made to give women more prominent roles in the executive and in parliament. The Parliament of Benin had a law committee, which was chaired by a woman. Measures had been taken to

sanction sexual harassment in parliament, and a gender equality bill was currently under consideration, which, when adopted, could result in more women being elected to parliament in forthcoming elections. With more women in administrative and decision-making positions, democracy would be more transparent. His delegation supported the efforts of the IPU in that regard.

Ms. R. Kadaga (Uganda) said that East Africa was making considerable progress with regard to women's participation in parliament. Of the five countries in the region, three had female speakers of parliament. Women accounted for 22 per cent of Uganda's Cabinet ministers. She had proposed a review of gender equality standards in parliament, which she hoped would be implemented in the near future. Although progress had been made, many African countries still had far to go. Her delegation congratulated Saudi Arabia on having granted women the right to vote.

Ms. M. Bonell (Andorra) said that without having adopted legislation or positive discrimination measures, there were more female than male parliamentarians in Andorra, and several women held positions of responsibility.

Ms. M. Kumar (India) commended the excellent work done to produce the report on gender sensitive parliaments. India was committed to establishing a gender-sensitive legal environment. India had a female Speaker of the Lower House, who had been unanimously elected. The leader of the opposition was a woman, and India also had a parliamentary committee for empowerment of women. Legislation had been enacted to protect the interests and welfare of women, including a law on the prevention and elimination of domestic violence. A regional IPU seminar had recently been held on preventing and responding to violence against women and girls, which India had hosted. Efforts were being made to increase the percentage of women parliamentarians, and to that end legislation had been passed in the Upper House, which provided for a 33 per cent minimum representation of women in parliament and in the state assemblies. That bill must still be passed by the Lower House. Although there were still hurdles to ensuring women's full participation, there were constant efforts under way to ensure that women were properly represented in parliament.

Ms. I. Al-Wazir (Palestine) said that although Palestine was still suffering under occupation, women continued to strive for their rights and for sustainable peace. Women had obtained 20 per cent representation in the National Council, and it was hoped that that figure would increase. Women occupied positions of responsibility, and maximum efforts were being made to promote women's participation in decision-making.

Mr. D. Mark (Nigeria) said that the results of the survey had been very revealing and demonstrated that much greater efforts needed to be made to ensure women's participation in parliament. Considerable progress had been made in that regard in Nigeria, which now had a female Speaker in the House of Representatives, and several women in positions of authority. Oil and gas were particularly important industries in Nigeria, and the chair of the parliamentary committee on oil and gas was a woman. Similar progress had been made in the executive: the Ministers responsible for petroleum, finance and education were all women. Parliaments should encourage women to participate and to vote for each other.

Mr. C. Weerakkody (Sri Lanka) said that female representation was increasing in the Sri Lankan Parliament, where there was a female Prime Minister. There were currently three female ministers in the Cabinet and the Chief Justice and Attorney General were both female. There were several female judges in the Sri Lankan judiciary. More than 50 per cent of

undergraduate students in Sri Lanka were female. Despite that progress, there was still a tendency for female voters to vote for male candidates. Awareness-raising measures were therefore required.

Ms. M. Osman Gaknoun (Sudan) said that women's participation in the Sudanese elections in 2010 had reached 25 per cent, which had been an improvement on previous elections. Local parliaments had achieved 25 per cent female representation. The Deputy Speaker of the Sudanese Parliament was a woman and several women chaired parliamentary committees. Women's groups were active in training female parliamentarians in Sudan. Women were also represented in the executive and the judiciary, and men supported female participation in politics. Women had been voting and participating in politics in Sudan since 1953.

Ms. L. Menchaca Castellanos (Mexico) said that there was considerable support for gender equality in the Mexican Senate. A gender equality committee had been established, with male and female committee members. Although efforts had been made, much remained to be done to increase women's representation in parliament. The Mexican delegation had offered to have the report of the IPU Meeting of Women Parliamentarians translated into Spanish, for distribution among the Spanish-speaking Members of the Union.

Ms. Z. Drif Bitat (Algeria) congratulated the IPU on its work to promote gender equality as a fundamental principle necessary for the evolution of society, and for having emphasized that gender sensitivity was not just the responsibility of women, but rather of the whole of society. The survey and report had raised some important issues, such as the fact that social development depended on the integration of women in different spheres, and that women often tended to vote for male candidates. In Algeria, the principle of parity had been included in the Constitution at its most recent revision. The Government was due to present a bill to parliament on setting a 30 per cent quota for women's representation in all decision-making institutions. The situation for women was therefore hopeful.

Mr. S.N.H. Bukhary (Pakistan) said that the former leader of his political party had been a woman, Benazir Bhutto, who had struggled for 30 years for the rights of people in Pakistan. Her party was now in power and working to continue her vision. Women accounted for 22 per cent of Pakistan's parliamentarians. The speaker of the National Assembly, the Information Minister and the Foreign Minister were women. Parliament had passed several laws for the protection of women and to eliminate sexual harassment in the workplace. Measures were also being taken to ensure that all political parties allocated a certain number of candidacies to women during general elections.

Mr. A. Radi (Morocco) said that the proportion of women currently sitting in the Moroccan Parliament was 10 per cent. The new Constitution of Morocco provided for parity, and at the next elections, a minimum of 15 per cent of seats would be allocated to women. The Constitution also provided for 30 per cent representation of women in local government. Morocco respected all international instruments on the elimination of discrimination and the protection of children's rights and human rights in general.

Ms. S. Khuon (Cambodia) congratulated the IPU on the survey and report on gender sensitive parliaments. Her delegation supported the IPU's commitment to the promotion of gender equality and gender sensitivity. The Cambodian National Assembly had been formed in 1993. Of the 123 members of the National Assembly, 27 were women, and there were nine female Senators. The Government and Parliament of Cambodia, as well as Cambodian civil

society, were committed to supporting gender mainstreaming in all sectors. Success in that regard would depend on political will and public commitment.

Mr. C.A. Avoka (Ghana) commended the survey and the report, and said he hoped that the delegations present would bring pressure to bear on their national governments to implement the results of the IPU's research. The Government of Ghana was taking affirmative action for gender equality, and to that end had stipulated that 40 per cent of public office positions should be allocated to women. The Speaker of Parliament, the Commissioner for Human Rights and Administration of Justice, and the Chief Justice were women. There were also several female government ministers and directors of government ministries and agencies. Efforts were being made to ensure a level playing field for women's participation in national governance and development. One of Ghana's main political parties had elected a woman as its President. Those developments notwithstanding, many challenges remained. His delegation called on the international community to support Ghana's efforts to increase women's participation in politics.

Mr. A.A.R. Al Moawda (Bahrain) said that Bahrain had a high level of development and paid considerable attention to the role of women, both in law and in practice. Women's contribution to society must be real and serious. Women currently accounted for 19 per cent of seats in the Legislative Council. There was no discrimination whatsoever against women, and in some institutions there were more women than men. That development had occurred naturally, without the imposition of quotas for participation. Women's rights were protected through legislation, and the Parliament of Bahrain was proud of the contribution made by its female parliamentarians.

Ms. S. Abdalla (Kenya) welcomed the survey and report and said that 20 per cent of parliamentarians in Kenya were women. A new legal enactment had been passed in 2010, which offered substantial opportunities to women. She paid tribute to Wangari Maathai, a Kenyan political activist and champion of gender issues, who had recently passed away. Kenya was a gender sensitive country which had the political will to ensure the equitable participation of women in all spheres.

Ms. M.A. Saa (Chile) said that the participation of women in politics was a question of democracy. Parliaments must be inclusive, and women should occupy 50 per cent of decision-making roles.

Ms. B. Boupha (Lao People's Democratic Republic) said that the promotion of women's empowerment would be an effective means of meeting the third MDG. In recent general elections in the LAO People's Democratic Republic, of the 132 parliamentarians elected, 33 were women. The Speaker of Parliament was a woman and the first female Speaker in countries of the Associations of South East Asian Nations. Further efforts would be made in the Lao People's Democratic Republic to strengthen gender mainstreaming through the Lao Caucus of Women Parliamentarians.

Mr. J.R. Joazile (Observer for Haiti) said that fighting for women's rights to assume high-level decision-making positions was a global challenge. Expressions of goodwill in international forums must be translated into action. In Haiti considerable efforts had been made in Parliament to promote women's participation: a law had recently been enacted pursuant to which women must account for 30 per cent of the membership of political parties to enable them to participate in elections.

The Secretary General pointed out that the survey had five elements, of which women's representation in parliament was only one. The IPU looked forward to working with its Members to promote gender-sensitivity in parliaments.

The quorum for the Governing Council at the present session was 108 parliamentarians.

The meeting rose at 11.35 a.m.

SECOND SITTING

Wednesday, 19 October 2011

(Morning)

The meeting was called to order at 9.40 a.m. with the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Dr. T.-B. Gurirab (Namibia), in the Chair.

Item 3 of the agenda

(continued)

QUESTIONS RELATING TO IPU MEMBERSHIP AND OBSERVER STATUS

(a) **Requests for affiliation and reaffiliation to the IPU**

(CL/189/3(a)-R.2)

The President said that since the first meeting of the present session of the Council, applications for membership had been received from the parliaments of Chad and Honduras. The Executive Committee recommended that the Governing Council affiliate the Parliament of Chad. In the absence of any comments or objections, he would take it that the Council approved the Executive Committee's recommendation, contained in document CL/189/3(a)-R.2.

It was so decided.

The President informed the Council that the Executive Committee recommended that it reaffiliate the Parliament of Honduras. In the absence of any comments or objections he would take it that the Council approved the Executive Committee's recommendation, also contained in document CL/189/3(a)-R.2.

It was so decided.

(b) **Situation of certain Members**

(CL/189/3(b)-R.1)

The President recalled that, at its previous meeting, he had informed the Governing Council that the parliaments of Comoros and Liberia were defaulting in their payments to the IPU, and their membership was therefore liable for suspension under article 5.3 of the Statutes. That situation had not changed, and the Executive Committee thus recommended the suspension of their membership. In the absence of any comments or objections, he would take it that the Governing Council would adopt the draft resolutions contained in document CL/189/3(b)-R.1.

It was so decided.

Item 4 of the agenda

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

(continued)

(a) On the activities of the Executive Committee

The President said that the Executive Committee had completed its agenda the previous evening, and had decided to accept the offer from the Swiss Federal Audit Office to serve as the external auditor of the Union's accounts for a three-year term. The Committee had appointed Mr. Alonso Díaz-Caneja to serve as its Vice-President.

Item 6 of the agenda

FINANCIAL SITUATION OF THE IPU

(CL/189/6-R.1 and R.1.rev)

The Secretary General, introducing the report on the financial situation of the IPU at 30 September 2011, contained in documents CL/189/6-R.1 and R.1.rev, said that the report included the assessed contributions as received in full at the beginning of the year. In 2011, that amount had totalled CHF 12,080,700. Trinidad and Tobago and the Federated States of Micronesia had been admitted to the Union at the 124th Assembly, and had been assessed at a total of CHF 35,300.

Internal assessment on staff salaries had decreased owing to staff turnover. Where possible, new staff had been recruited at a more junior level than their outgoing predecessors, and the internal assessment was prorated on staff income. Income tax payments for staff living in France were also being paid, which had resulted in a net deficit under staff assessment of CHF 137,000.

For 2011, voluntary funding requirements had totalled CHF 4.5 million. An opening balance of CHF 1.3 million had been available at 1 January 2011. Spending was only ever based on actual contributions received. Swiss Franc interest rates were currently at historic lows, which meant that the IPU could not gain earnings on its deposits.

On spending, he said that travel expenses related to the 124th Assembly in Panama had been greater than foreseen. However, the overall funds for the Division of Members and External Relations showed a surplus of CHF 224,000 owing to the favourable exchange rate with the United States dollar and one frozen position within the Division. On programme expenditure, he said that activities on democracy, human rights, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and peace and reconciliation accounted for 82 per cent of the budget. It was expected that expenditure on regular budgets would be within target levels by the end of the year.

Programme expenditure on voluntary funding had reached 40 per cent. The level of expected income had, however, been higher than the funds received, and spending had therefore been adjusted downwards. Spending in the Support Services Division was below budget due to staff turnover in the Division resulting in savings on salaries.

With regard to receipts, CHF 8.9 million had been received by 30 September in assessed contributions, with an outstanding balance of CHF 3.2 million. A further CHF 600,000 had been received against prior years' assessed contributions, with CHF 400,000 still outstanding. The report contained a list of assessed contributions outstanding for 2011 and previous years. He would encourage all Members who were in arrears to pay their assessed contributions as soon as possible. The balance of the Working Capital Fund had been CHF 4.9 million,

and balances of cash and short-term deposits had amounted to CHF 7.2 million at 30 September 2011, 77 per cent of which was held in Swiss francs, 5 per cent in United States dollars and 18 per cent in euros. In the first nine months of 2011, CHF 40,115 had been spent on renewing one of the two IPU vehicles, and CHF 31,654 on replacing outdated IT equipment.

In 2005 the IPU had been transferred to the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, to which it paid a regular contribution. The Pension Fund currently did not have any actuarial deficit. The Legacy Pension Fund remained for former staff members who had already retired when the IPU had joined the United Nations Fund. At 30 September 2011, the Legacy Pension Fund had assets of CHF 9.4 million to meet its commitments to 11 former employees and the residual benefits of 10 current employees. The year-to-date performance of the Fund was negatively affected by the uncertainty in the equity markets. The situation of the Fund was thoroughly reviewed at the end of each year.

In conclusion, he said that the IPU was expecting a surplus at the end of 2011 of just over CHF 400,000, mostly owing to benefits from the exchange rate between the Swiss franc and the United States dollar, and staffing changes in the Secretariat.

Item 7 of the agenda

DRAFT PROGRAMME AND BUDGET FOR 2012

(CL/189/7-P.1 and P.2)

The Secretary General said that when the Governing Council had discussed IPU accounts at its 188th session in Panama, Members had emphasized their desire to see a real reduction in the budget. The Secretariat had made efforts to accomplish that, bearing in mind the need to implement the programme and strategy of the IPU. A number of Members had recommended measures for savings, and the African Group had produced a list of proposals, all of which had been examined and their potential implementation and results had been considered.

Travel budgets had been reduced, and efforts would be made to use alternative means of communication rather than travelling to meet face-to-face. The observer office in New York was being moved to smaller and less expensive premises. The costs incurred when holding meetings were being trimmed through reducing the number of meetings and holding them in more convenient locations, in order to ease the costs of attendance. Steps were also being taken to reduce staff costs, by ensuring that when staff members left the Organization they were not automatically replaced. A review of their functions would be conducted to establish whether their post remained essential. All vacancies that had occurred during 2011 had been evaluated, tasks had been reassigned and recruitment had taken place at a more junior level than that of the outgoing staff member.

Some investments were being made in new IT equipment, which, while they might not result in immediate savings, would result in savings in the long term. The Swiss franc was particularly strong, which had resulted in savings on spending in other currencies.

The draft budget anticipated the forthcoming decision of the Governing Council to adopt the draft IPU strategy and had therefore been set out in line with the objectives set out in the strategy, with a breakdown of the sources of revenue. The budget for most activities had been reduced in comparison with previous years. Although an overall two-figure reduction had not been achieved, a reduction of around five per cent had been possible.

The budget, as presented, would enable the IPU to conduct its normal work programme, including two Assemblies, meetings of the Standing Committees, continuing the work of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians, implementing the Gender Programme,

and continuing work on research, standards and capacity-building. It did not, however, provide for additional activities, such as participation in the two major international meetings that would take place in 2012, the first of which would be the Thirteenth United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, which took place every four years, and the second of which would be the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20). At previous conferences such as those, the IPU had mobilized members of parliament and held parallel parliamentary meetings. It would not do so in 2012. Although the Brazilian authorities and parliament were considering providing assistance for such a meeting parallel to Rio +20, that potential assistance had not been included in the draft budget.

Ms. D. Stump (Switzerland), *Rapporteur for the Executive Committee*, presenting the draft programme and budget for 2012, contained in documents CL/189/7-P.1 and P.2, said that the Executive Committee had reviewed the draft programme and budget for 2012 and the proposals to reduce the budget while maintaining the effectiveness and efficiency of the Secretariat. Some of those proposals could be implemented with immediate effect, while others would require further debate. After deliberation, the Executive Committee recommended that the Council should adopt an amended and reduced budget for 2012, along with an updated scale of contributions.

The new scale of contributions, contained in document CL/189/7-P.2, had been established by a working group on the scale of assessed contributions. The Executive Committee had approved the working group's recommendations that the assessed contributions from Members to the budget for 2012 should be based on the most recently updated United Nations scale of contributions. In future, the IPU scale would be adjusted automatically, in line with the United Nations scale, which was periodically updated to reflect the economic reality of Member States and their ability to pay. While the scale of contributions set out the percentage that each Member had to pay, the actual amount due depended on the budget.

The Executive Committee had acknowledged the efforts that had been made to achieve a seven per cent reduction in the regular budget, as proposed by the Secretariat. Although voluntary contributions had also been budgeted at a lower level than previously, since they were difficult to obtain, the Secretariat was making efforts to obtain as many voluntary contributions as possible, in order to be able to undertake the greatest possible number of activities. Given the difficult financial situation of many Members, the Executive Committee had further requested that the Secretary General propose ways to achieve a further three per cent reduction in the regular budget, in order to arrive at a total reduction of 10 per cent. Several possible measures had been discussed: reducing the area of programme activities; reducing the meeting time of the Assembly by one day; requiring host parliaments to pay Secretariat travel expenses when travelling to Assemblies; and using the forecast 2011 budget surplus for 2012 budget expenditures.

The Executive Committee had decided not to change the activities of the IPU, but rather to cut the budget for assessed contributions. Changes of programmes or activities would require further discussions in the Executive Committee and with the countries concerned. The Executive Committee had noted that the level of funding for core activities also had an impact on the IPU's ability to generate additional voluntary funding from sources outside the membership. If the IPU did not invest in its own core activities it was unlikely that donors would be forthcoming with additional programme funding. The Executive Committee had therefore decided to reduce contributions, which would be replaced using funds from the Working Capital Fund. The Executive Committee therefore recommended that the 2012 budget should be balanced using the anticipated surplus from the 2011 budget and monies from the Working Capital Fund up to a combined total of CHF 409,800. The Committee also recommended that further discussions should be held before the 126th Assembly in Uganda on

areas of programmes and activities that could be reduced further in order to ensure additional savings in the 2012 and 2013 budgets and beyond. Unfortunately the Secretary General had decided not to include the Executive Committee's recommendation in the consolidated budget. The Executive Committee believed that savings should begin in 2012. The 2012 consolidated budget should therefore be amended to reflect a total amount of CHF 13.7 million.

Mr. J. Horváth (Hungary) expressed his delegation's appreciation for the efforts made to reduce the budget. He requested clarification on the procedures for obtaining voluntary contributions, and asked whether private sector funding had been sought, since that could be a very useful resource for the IPU.

Mr. R. Walter (United Kingdom) said that his delegation appreciated the many efforts that had been made to reduce the budget for 2012, and congratulated the Secretary General on his vigilance in reducing the overhead costs of the Organization. The 10 per cent reduction in the budget must become the new baseline. Parliaments were facing long-term cuts in their own budgets: the United Kingdom was facing a 17 per cent cut for the coming four years. The 10 per cent reduction in the IPU budget should therefore be frozen for the coming years.

Mr. Y. Fujimoto (Japan) said that Japan paid the largest contribution of all IPU Member Parliaments. His delegation appreciated the efforts being made to find means of cutting the budget for 2012. Japan's financial situation was particularly serious given the considerable costs of reconstruction in the wake of the earthquake and tsunami that had struck earlier in 2011, and the Government was therefore taking measures to reduce spending. Budgets must be transparent and parliamentarians must be able to explain their budgetary planning to the public, in a spirit of transparency. The Japanese Parliament was under pressure to explain to the people of Japan whether IPU membership warranted the costs incurred. His delegation therefore welcomed the transparent explanation of the draft budget for 2012. His delegation welcomed the proposal to adjust the scale of contributions in line with the United Nations scale, which was calculated on the basis of countries' financial situations. Regarding IPU spending, his delegation welcomed the proposals to reduce spending and called for further efforts to save costs and restrain expansion using a "scrap and build" approach.

Mr. R. del Picchia (France), speaking on behalf of the Twelve Plus Group, said that it was the first time that the Governing Council had been presented with a reduced budget. Reductions in spending were crucial, not because Members were unwilling to pay, but rather because they were indebted and being forced to reduce their own national budgets. In reducing its budget for 2012, the IPU was setting an example for national parliaments. The reduced budget was not necessarily the best solution, but it would be an effective one. The savings proposed would be a good start, and further ways of saving might yet be identified for the future. He called on the Council to adopt the draft budget, as amended by the Executive Committee.

Mr. K. Putters (Netherlands) said that his delegation supported the statement made by the Representative of the United Kingdom: the need for a reduced budget was not a matter of member parliaments not being willing to pay greater contributions, but rather the fact that they were unable to do so. He agreed that the 10 per cent budget cut for 2012 must not be a one-off reduction. His delegation expressed its gratitude to the Secretariat for its efforts to reduce the budget, and requested more information about the structural nature of the cuts identified. His delegation asked the Executive Committee to make efforts to seek further areas for budget reductions in future.

Ms. M. Kubayi (South Africa), speaking on behalf of the African Group, thanked the Executive Committee for having taken account of the suggestions for budget cuts that had been presented by the African Group at the 124th Assembly in Panama. The 2012 budget had been developed on the basis of the draft IPU strategy for 2012 to 2017. That strategy provided a common vision for the IPU, while directing the Union's annual and operational activities. The strategy also provided Members with a tool to measure the achievements of the IPU. Given the current financial climate, however, it would not be possible to implement the strategy in full. The budget should accommodate existing programmes, while savings would be made by reducing travel costs, trimming the budget for certain specialized meetings and discontinuing the production of hard copies of the summary records of the Assembly, as well as reducing the number of staff and redistributing functions within the Secretariat.

Against the backdrop of contemporary global challenges, she noted with concern that the reduced budget could affect the work of the IPU in support of international development goals, peace building and conflict prevention. Consideration should be given to innovative ways in which the IPU could continue that work. Such ways could include the secondment of staff from national parliaments to the Secretariat for periods of between six months and a year; holding smaller regional meetings focussed on the specific needs of the region; exploring video conferencing as a means of holding small-scale meetings; and reducing the amount of paper documentation produced and distributed at meetings. Members should continue to assess how effectively and efficiently the IPU used its budget, by linking specific outcomes with the strategic objectives of the IPU strategy. The African Group would support the budget.

Ms. D. Stump (Switzerland), *Rapporteur for the Executive Committee*, said that the Executive Committee understood that all parliaments were currently facing financial difficulties and that its careful efforts to find means of saving costs in the 2012 were therefore appreciated. She agreed that increasing voluntary contributions would be an ideal way to fund activities. The draft IPU strategy was an excellent document outlining the IPU's intended spheres of activity. Funding was, however, essential, and priorities must therefore be set according to the Organization's financial situation. The draft strategy should be reconsidered in that light in the coming year, in order to identify areas of priority and areas where cuts could be made.

The Secretary General said that when Mr. Casini had assumed the presidency of the IPU, he had submitted a proposal to the Governing Council to increase the Organization's income through voluntary contributions. The Council had approved the proposal for a process in which the IPU would enlist the support of donor agencies, countries, foundations and individuals to provide funding for IPU programmes and projects. The Council had set out basic criteria for the use of voluntary contributions, one of which had been that the funding had to be used for activities that the Governing Council had approved. On the basis of that development, the Secretariat had begun to submit to the Governing Council a consolidated budget, containing activities funded both from the core budget as well as those for which the IPU was seeking voluntary funding.

Canada, Ireland and Sweden had all provided voluntary funding through their international development agencies, for a period of three years. Those commitments had expired at the beginning of 2011. The Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) had offered to continue, and increase its funding by over 50 per cent for the coming three years. Irish Aid had also offered to continue its support for the coming 18 months, and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) was also considering continuing its support. Support for specific technical assistance and capacity-building activities had also been received from the European Commission and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The 2012 budget had not been presented as a list of activities that could be conducted if voluntary funding was received, but rather as an account of the funding already secured and

the activities that could definitely be implemented. More voluntary funds were still required, and consideration was being given to how to raise funds, particularly given that national development aid budgets were being reduced in many countries. Governments' funding for development was not static: priorities changed and developed. In May 2011, Turkey had hosted the fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, during which a Programme of Action had been adopted, which identified the action that should be taken by the international community, LDCs and their partners, in order to achieve real development. It also identified measures that should be taken to support parliament and the steps that the IPU should take. A small part of governments' development aid for the implementation of that plan could be used to fund IPU activities.

He pointed out that the conditions that would allow for money to be saved in 2012, such as the US dollar and Swiss franc exchange rate, and surplus funds from the 2011 budget, were not likely to be repeated in 2013. If the budget cuts were to be maintained beyond 2012, consideration must be given to other ways of making savings, without taking money from the Working Capital Fund. Consideration must be given to which activities could be cut. The Secretariat was making an effort to establish a system for evaluating the attainment of the strategic objectives set out in the draft strategy. Members would be informed about progress and gaps in attainment in 2012. Consideration was still being given to how the budget reduction recommendations made by the African Group during the 124th Assembly that had not yet been implemented could be translated into action.

The President invited the Governing Council to adopt the draft budget as amended by the Executive Committee.

The Governing Council adopted the draft budget unanimously.

The President invited the Governing Council to adopt the updated scale of contributions as presented by the Executive Committee.

The Governing Council adopted the updated scale of contributions unanimously.

The President said that in the absence of any comments or objections, he would take it that the future scale of contributions could be adjusted automatically in line with the United Nations scale.

It was so decided.

Item 8 of the agenda

COOPERATION WITH THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

(CL/189/8-R.1)

The Secretary General presented the checklist of activities undertaken in cooperation with the United Nations system since the 124th Assembly (CL/189/8-R.1). Preparations for the annual joint Parliamentary Hearing were underway in cooperation with the new President of the UN General Assembly. The Hearing would take place at UN Headquarters in New York on 28 and 29 November under the theme of *Strengthening political accountability for a more peaceful and prosperous world*. The Committee on United Nations Affairs was considering how parliaments could work more closely with the United Nations and how they could hold the United Nations to account, particularly with regard to United Nations operations at country level. Parliamentarians should have a say in how development aid was used. In that regard, a

number of activities were under way to foster cooperation with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNAIDS and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women).

Item 9 of the agenda

STRATEGY FOR THE IPU 2012-2017

Mr. M. Nago (Benin), presenting the draft strategy for the IPU for 2012–2017, said that the draft was the culmination of two years of debate and consultations and a scrupulous analysis of the development of the IPU over recent years, the challenges it faced and its comparative advantages. The Executive Committee had held two special sessions to draft and finalize the strategy. The first meeting had taken place in February 2011, the outcome of which had been a draft that had been presented to the Governing Council at its 188th session. At its second meeting, the Executive Committee had incorporated some of the amendments proposed in Panama, and had arrived at a consensual text, which was currently before the Council.

The draft contained a visionary strategy that put inter-parliamentary cooperation through the vehicle of the IPU at the service of parliaments, democracy and international cooperation. The strategy was based on three strategic objectives for the development of the IPU over the coming five years. The first was to strengthen parliaments through research, standard-setting activities, technical assistance, gender equality and human rights. The second was to contribute to overcoming the democratic deficit in international relations by developing a parliamentary dimension in the work of the United Nations and strengthening parliamentary support for the internationally agreed development objectives. Such activities would contribute to efforts to consolidate peace and prevent conflicts. The third strategic objective was to make the IPU a more effective instrument for parliamentary cooperation. To that end, efforts would be made to strengthen the Organization and improve its structures and working methods, and to increase its visibility through a modern communications strategy, while improving its operational management, governance and internal regulation.

The strategy would help build a universal, dynamic and efficient IPU, in order to promote a culture of democracy in the world. Parliaments would remain the key actors in implementing the strategy, and in that regard the participation of Member Parliaments in IPU activities would become more efficient. The strategy had been inspired by the belief that better parliaments strengthened democracy. He would encourage all Member Parliaments to unite in support of the strategy.

Mr. I.B.R. Al-Kawari (Qatar) said that his delegation wished to request more time to consider the amended version of the strategy.

Mr. K. Putters (Netherlands) commended the draft strategy, which was a starting point for the development of the IPU. Although in principle the budget should be developed on the basis of the strategy, given the current financial climate and the discussion that had taken place on the budget under item 7 of the agenda, priorities should be set within the strategy.

Mr. K. Örnfjäder (Sweden) said that the draft strategy had been under discussion for 18 months and there had been ample time for Members to make known their views. The strategy was crucial to show potential donor agencies how their funding would be used. Its adoption was therefore essential if the IPU wished to seek more voluntary funding contributions.

The President said that the Council had taken note of the reservations expressed by the delegation of Qatar. In the absence of any further comments or objections, he would take it that the draft strategy for the IPU for 2012–2017 could be adopted.

It was so decided.

Item 10 of the agenda

REPORTS ON SPECIALIZED MEETINGS

(a) Parliamentary forum on the occasion of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDCIV)
(CL/189/10(a)-R.1)

Mr. S. Yang (Cambodia), reporting on the parliamentary forum held on the occasion of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDCIV), said that the forum had been convened by the IPU and the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, in cooperation with the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Countries and Small Island States. The Speaker of the Grand National Assembly, the Secretary General of the IPU, the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Prime Minister of Nepal had welcomed the participants. Their introductory remarks had underscored the importance of involving parliaments in the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action.

The forum had addressed four topics: looking at LDCs today – progress and setbacks; overview of the Istanbul Programme of Action; a parliamentary action plan; and the proposal for a joint project between the IPU and the United Nations. Participants had been encouraged to take home and share with colleagues the main messages of the meeting.

(b) Parliamentary briefing at the 2011 UN General Assembly High Level Meeting on AIDS
(CL/189/10(b)-R.1)

The Secretary General said that the IPU Advisory Group on HIV/AIDS had organized a parliamentary briefing on the eve of the United Nations High Level Meeting on AIDS, which had taken place in New York. The report contained in document CL/189/10(b)-R.1 described the meeting that had taken place and listed the recommendations that had been made.

(c) Regional seminar on child rights for parliaments of the CEE-CIS region
(CL/189/10(c)-R.1)

The Secretary General drew the Governing Council's attention to the report on the regional seminar on child rights for parliaments of the Central and Eastern European region and the Commonwealth of Independent States, contained in document CL/189/10(c)-R.1.

(d) Regional seminar for Asian parliaments: Preventing and responding to violence against women and girls – from legislation to effective enforcement
(CL/189/10(d)-R.1)

Mr. R.K. Khan (India), reporting on the Regional seminar for Asian parliaments on preventing and responding to violence against women and girls, said that violence against

women continued to be one of the most entrenched forms of discrimination worldwide. Statistics published by UN Women showed that seven out of ten women experienced sexual and physical violence during their lifetime. More than 40 parliamentarians from 11 Asian countries had met in New Delhi, with representatives of international organizations, to attend the fifth in a series of regional seminars, organized as part of the IPU programme to support parliaments in their efforts to end violence against women.

The participants had taken stock of the situation of violence against women and girls in Asia and had discussed strategic approaches to addressing its prevalence, forms, causes and consequences. They had held workshops to examine targeted responses to the specific forms violence could take in the region, such as domestic violence, sexual violence and harassment, and harmful practices against women. They learned about new laws that had recently been adopted or were under discussion in several Asian countries to tackle the scourge of violence against women, and had recognized that enforcement of those laws presented a challenge. Consideration had been given to the role that could be played by parliaments, particularly through their oversight and budgetary powers and their ability to monitor and facilitate law enforcement.

Particular emphasis had been placed on analysing and addressing the root causes of violence against women and girls, and attention had been drawn to the fact that it was often justified and rendered acceptable by established social and cultural patterns. The participants had resolved to strengthen prevention and foster a change in attitude through intensive media campaigns targeting the public, the clergy, youth and local grass-roots leaders. They had also underscored the crucial role of men, in particular male parliamentarians and opinion leaders, in finding solutions.

The seminar had culminated in the endorsement of a set of priorities for securing a more robust response to violence against women. The participants had resolved to evaluate the cost of implementing legislation on combating violence against women and to allocate budgetary resources accordingly. They would request their respective governments to formulate and adopt a national action plan to curb violence against women, and promote changes in attitude among men.

(e) Fourth parliamentary forum on shaping the information society

(CL/189/10(e)-R.1)

Mr. P. Martin-Lalande (France), reporting on the fourth parliamentary forum on shaping the information society, said that a total of 135 people had participated in the forum, including 53 parliamentarians from 37 different parliaments. Cyber security was one of the fundamental elements in the information society. It affected national and international security, and some countries had been victims of systematic attacks. Cyber-security had implications for freedom of information and economic rights and personal freedoms. Parliamentarians had a role to play in ensuring that a balance was struck between control of information flows and freedom of expression and information. Legislation in that regard must set out general principles, without entering into excessively restrictive detail. Proper implementation of the law must be monitored and self-regulation should also be promoted. The Internet was a borderless global network, which posed security challenges for the international community, particularly since organized crime networks could use the Internet in countries where regulation was lax. Definitions of criminal activity should be harmonized and coordinated between countries in order to build a united front against cybercrime. More time was still needed before the United Nations would be in a position to adopt a treaty on cybercrime. The forum had culminated in the adoption of a declaration on the triple challenge of cyber security, which called for the establishment of a parliamentary working group to study ways of harmonizing laws on cyber-security.

(f) Parliamentary panel within the framework of the annual WTO Public Forum
(CL/189/10(f)-R.1)

Mr. D. Oliver (Canada) said that a parliamentary panel had been held in the framework of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Public Forum, in Geneva in September 2011. A parliamentary conference on the WTO, which was a partnership between the WTO, the IPU and the European Parliament, had been established as a mechanism for parliamentary interaction with the WTO. The theme of the parliamentary panel's discussion had been "Trade in natural resources – a curse or a blessing? A parliamentary perspective". The panel had been well attended, and the discussion had been spirited and informative. It had been chaired by a journalist with very broad experience, and the panellists had been a parliamentarian from Namibia, a member of the European Parliament and an expert from the WTO. The panel had been one of the best attended events at the WTO Public Forum, and had increased awareness of the invaluable role of parliamentarians in the WTO through a rich and interactive debate, and had been a valuable addition to the programme of the Public Forum.

Item 11 of the agenda

ACTIVITIES OF COMMITTEES AND OTHER BODIES

(e) Advisory Group on HIV/AIDS

Ms. M. Temmermann (Belgium), *President of the Advisory Group on HIV/AIDS*, reporting on the work of the Advisory Group on HIV/AIDS, said that the Advisory Group had begun its work in 2006, and served as a focal point for legislative work in the field of HIV/AIDS. It had 12 members, appointed by the President of the IPU on the basis of their attested experience in the field of HIV/AIDS. The Advisory Group's work was funded by external sources, including the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and UNAIDS. The Group's activities included providing guidance to parliamentarians on the implementation of international commitments on HIV/AIDS; designing information and training materials for parliamentarians; organizing field missions and visits to share best practices on responses to HIV/AIDS in different countries; working with the organizing committee of the inter-parliamentary conference on HIV/AIDS; and encouraging parliamentarians to assume positions of leadership in the field of HIV/AIDS, particularly with regard to regulatory and legal issues and access to care.

Parliamentarians' role in the field of HIV/AIDS was to reform laws and improve access to vulnerable populations, in particular by reforming healthcare systems to strengthen their response to HIV/AIDS. Parliaments should work to promote prevention and treatment, and to ensure that people living with HIV/AIDS were brought to the forefront of political debates. In that regard, the Advisory Group had organized a number of regional and global seminars to encourage parliamentarians to stand up and speak out for the most disadvantaged groups. The Advisory Group was developing tools to assist policy-makers and those responsible for drafting legislation. It had also issued a statement on HIV-related restrictions on entry, stay and residence, in response to the imposition of requirements for HIV testing before travel to certain countries. The Group had also been involved in a joint project with UNAIDS and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to draft a handbook for parliamentarians on taking action for HIV/AIDS. It had also established a web-based database of parliamentary bodies working on HIV/AIDS, and was taking measures to advocate for greater civil society involvement in parliamentary activities.

Two-thirds of countries still had punitive and discriminatory laws that impeded effective HIV interventions. Parliamentarians must consider repealing that legislation. The United Nations Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS, which had been adopted in 2011, identified a key role for parliamentarians in the fight against HIV/AIDS. The IPU Strategy for 2012–2017 committed the IPU to strengthening its role as a global leader on parliamentary work on HIV/AIDS. It was therefore particularly important to support parliamentary action. The Advisory Group would continue to help parliaments to build their capacity to respond to the pandemic, particularly through the promotion of access to care and treatment, since currently only 50 per cent of those who needed treatment were receiving it. Parliamentarians must strive to fight the stigma and discrimination associated with HIV/AIDS and to keep the pandemic high on the political agenda, both internationally and nationally. The Advisory Group advocated for a comprehensive approach to addressing HIV/AIDS in conjunction with other social, health and development issues.

(a) Coordinating Committee of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians
(CL/189/11(a)-R.1)

Ms. M. Mensah-Williams (Namibia) said that the Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians had held a lively and constructive debate. The Committee had discussed the new IPU Strategy, and had expressed satisfaction at the Organization's commitment to gender equality and gender mainstreaming in all structures, programmes and action. It had also considered the gender dimension of the reports of the three Standing Committees.

The Committee had discussed the preparations for the next Meeting of Women Parliamentarians, which would be held in Kampala on the occasion of the 126th IPU Assembly. The Meeting would debate the agenda items chosen by the Second and Third Standing Committees at that Assembly. The Meeting's afternoon dialogue sessions between men and women would be on the theme "Preparing for the next generation of women MPs". The discussion would enable the Meeting to discuss mentorship and other strategies to involve young women in politics and reach out to underrepresented women. The Committee had agreed to propose that the panel discussion on children's issues should consider the role of parliaments in tackling malnutrition in young children.

A presentation had been given on the main findings of the survey and report on gender-sensitive parliaments, and the Committee had discussed developments in women's political participation in Saudi Arabia, where the historic decision had been taken to grant women the right to vote and to stand for election. Both candidates for the position of President of the IPU had taken time to talk to the members of the Coordinating Committee. She expressed the Committee's gratitude to Ms. Doris Stump, of Switzerland, for having hosted a lunch on the theme of equal pay for work of equal value.

(b) Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians

- (i) *Election of one titular member and three substitute members*
(CL/189/11(b)-P.1-P.4 and P.6, and R.1-R.4)

The President announced that the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians had a vacancy for a titular member from the Latin American Group. The Governing Council had before it the candidature of Mr. J.P. Letelier of Chile. In the absence of any comments or objections, he would take it that the Governing Council approved that candidature.

It was so decided.

The President also announced that the Committee had vacancies for three substitute members. The Council had before it two candidates from the Twelve Plus regions, Ms. A. Clwyd of the United Kingdom and Mr. P. Martin-Lalande of France. It also had before it one candidate from the African Group, Ms. A. Kairuki of the United Republic of Tanzania. In the absence of any comments or objections, he would take it that the Governing Council also approved those candidatures.

It was so decided.

(ii) *Reports of the Committee*
(CL/189/11(b)-R.1-R.4)

Mr. P. Mahoux (Belgium), Chairperson of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians, introduced the reports of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians (CL/189/11(b)-R.1-R.4). During its session, the Committee had examined the individual situations of 392 parliamentarians in 39 countries. It had met with the parliamentarians concerned, or their representatives, in three of the cases. The resolutions submitted for the approval of the Governing Council concerned cases in 22 countries, one of which was a new case. The cases presented to the Governing Council did not include those being examined under the Committee's confidential procedure.

Bangladesh

The case concerned the grenade attacks in January 2005, which killed Mr. Shah Ams Kibria, the former Finance Minister of Bangladesh, and those in August 2004 against Ms. Sheikh Hasina, then leader of the opposition. In the case of Ms. Hasina, the perpetrators and masterminds of the crime had finally been identified: it had transpired that members of the party had acted on the orders of their superiors, with the cooperation of the police. It was crucial that the authorities did their utmost to ensure that those still at large were arrested. That would include issuing arrest warrants for two high profile suspects who were abroad.

Regarding the attacks against Mr. Kibria, unfortunately, despite many similarities with Ms. Hasina's case, many questions remained to be answered. The Committee therefore believed it was particularly important that the court should accept the no confidence motion that his wife had submitted, in order to enable a thorough and exhaustive investigation to be conducted.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolutions relating to the case of Mr. Shah Ams Kibria and to the case of Ms. Sheikh Hasina.

Belarus

Mr. Victor Gonchar and Mr Anatoly Krasovsky had disappeared in 1999. Although the Belorussian Parliament communicated regularly with the Committee in writing, its letters had not addressed the concerns that the Committee had expressed on several occasions, and showed no signs that the authorities were seriously investigating the disappearances. The Parliament must be able to exercise its authority to obtain information about the progress of the inquiry, in order to foster a more productive dialogue with the Committee. The Committee urged the Parliament to cooperate more fully in future.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Mr. Victor Gonchar.

Burundi

The Committee was examining several cases in Burundi, concerning the murder of six parliamentarians more than 10 years previously and the attempted murder of eight others. The common denominator in all those cases was that the crimes remained unpunished. A further case concerned criminal proceedings against four former parliamentarians. Certain that a mission would help shed light on a number of pending issues, a Committee delegation had visited Bujumbura in September, and had received the full cooperation of the authorities. The delegation had been able to meet former parliamentarians in detention. The Committee awaited the mission report, and hoped that in the meantime, the authorities would continue to work towards bringing the cases to a conclusion, particularly through the work of the national parliamentary commission on the human rights of parliamentarians.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolutions relating to the cases of 19 parliamentarians.

Cambodia

The two cases under consideration raised questions about parliamentary immunity, freedom of expression and the function of the Cambodia judicial system. Sadly there had been no positive developments in the two cases and the Committee remained deeply concerned.

With regard to the first case, pertaining to Ms. Mu Sochua, a member of the opposition party, the Committee could only reaffirm the serious concerns that it had already expressed about the defamation case against Ms. Sochua, filed by the Prime Minister, who continues to manipulate the judiciary for political gain. Despite having paid the fine she had been given in full and the case having been closed, Ms. Sochua had been informed that she must petition the court of appeal in order to regain her immunity, or she must wait 5 years to have her immunity and eligibility for election restored. The Committee trusted that the court of appeal would respond favourably and swiftly to her request, to enable her to stand for election in 2013, as was her right.

Mr. Sam Rainsy, the leader of the opposition, had been sentenced to nine years' deprivation of liberty and was being prevented from participating in the 2013 elections. He was being punished for having removed border demarcation posts from the border between Cambodia and Vietnam, after local farmers had complained that the posts encroached on their land. He had also been charged with divulging false information when he had tried to prove that the border posts had been encroaching on Cambodian territory. Meanwhile, the Prime Minister had admitted that the positioning of the posts had not been set and the border demarcation was still in progress. The Committee considered the case to be purely political, and hoped that the authorities would bring an end to it and enable Mr. Rainsy to resume his parliamentary activities as soon as possible and stand for election in 2013.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolutions relating to the case of Mr. Sam Rainsy and to the case of Ms. Mu Sochua.

Colombia

The Committee was examining a large number of cases in Colombia, on a range of subjects, including the call for justice in the case of the murders of Congress members, protection for persons under threat, and the full respect of the right of parliamentarians to a fair trial. There had been positive developments in two of the cases: In the case of the assassination of parliamentarians of the Patriotic Union, in line with the decision issued by the Inter-

American Court of Human Rights, the Colombian Congress had held a solemn ceremony in memory of Mr. Cepeda, and publically recognized its responsibility for his assassination, and had issued a public apology. The Committee believe that the ceremony had sent an essential message about impunity to society. The Committee trusted that the authorities would also show willing in respect of the inquiries into the assassinations of other parliamentarians, members of the Patriotic Union.

With regard to the case of Senator Carlos Galán Sarmiento, who had been assassinated 22 years previously during his campaign for the presidential elections, the judicial procedures had at last come to a conclusion, and the perpetrator had been identified and sentenced. In the case of members of the Democratic Alternative Pole, however, recent developments had been very concerning. Death threats against hem had increased, in particular against Mr. Iván Cepeda, who had been the target of a failed assassination attempt by two security guards during a prison visit. The Committee urged the authorities to do their utmost to identify and punish the perpetrators and instigators of the assassination attempt and death threats.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the six draft resolutions relating to the cases of seven parliamentarians, as well as the case of Mr. Luis Carlos Galan Saramiento, to the case of Mrs. Piedad Cordoba, to the case of Mr. Wilson Borja, to the case of Mr. Alvaro Araujo Castro, and to the case of a further five parliamentarians.

Ecuador

Regarding the long-standing case of Mr. Hurtado and Mr. Tapia, who had been murdered in 1999, a suspect had been caught in Colombia and extradited to Ecuador in April 2010. The Ecuadorian court had, a short while later, considered that the statute of limitations had expired and that he could not be tried. That decision had been contested, and the suspect was currently in detention in Ecuador. The Committee and the Ecuadorian Parliament considered that there were sufficient legal grounds to conduct the trial, and hoped that it would begin soon.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the cases of Mr. Jaime Ricuarte Hurtado González and Mr. Pablo Vicente Tapia Farinango.

Eritrea

A period of 10 years had passed since the beginning of the nightmare for 11 former parliamentarians in Eritrea, who had been arrested on the orders of the Head of State and President of the Parliament of Eritrea. The 11 parliamentarians in question had been stripped of their fundamental rights and had been taken into secret detention, having called for democratic reform. The Committee regretted that for seven years, despite calls for their release, they remained in detention and the authorities had not provided any information on their state of health. Unconfirmed reports had been received, stating that only two of the parliamentarians were still alive. The Committee urged the Eritrean authorities to provide information on the whereabouts and the health of the prisoners, and to release them immediately. On the tenth anniversary of their detention, the international parliamentary community should intervene to call for the release of the prisoners.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of 11 parliamentarians.

Iceland

Icelandic parliamentarian Ms. Birgitta Jónasdóttir had faced problems relating to the use of social media sites. Owing to a video that she had coproduced on operations in Iraq, which had been broadcast by Wikileaks, she had found herself the subject of a judicial procedure in the United States. Twitter had been summoned to provide information on the use of her Twitter account. She had been unaware of that injunction until Twitter obtained court authorization to inform her. A request for the cancellation of the injunction had been denied, as well as a request to find out whether other social media sites had also been summoned. The situation was such that a parliamentarian from one country was being subjected to the legal procedures of another, in a case relating to her political activity, which in her native country would have been protected by her parliamentary immunity. Such procedures rendered parliamentary immunity obsolete, had serious consequences of freedom of expression and the right to a private life. The Committee urged the Secretary General to conduct a study on the use of social networks in the exercise of a parliamentary mandate.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Ms. Birgitta Jónasdóttir.

Iraq

The Committee had met with the Iraqi delegation, which had provided important information about the case of Mr. Al-Dainy, who had been sentenced to death in 2010 on the basis of extremely serious allegations, including the planning of a suicide bombing in the Iraqi Parliament in April 2007. The Committee's belief that the accusations had been fabricated had been confirmed recently by a special parliamentary committee. It was imperative that the judgement against Mr. Al-Dainy, who was currently living in exile, be overturned immediately. His wife was present and wished to address the Governing Council.

Ms. Al-Dainy, wife of Mohammed Al-Dainy, said that her husband's parliamentary immunity had been revoked in 2009, when he had been accused of very grave crimes. He had been sentenced to death in a secret trial, without the presence of a lawyer. He had fled Iraq before the trial, in fear of his life, and in the knowledge that the trial would not be fair. She thanked the IPU for having provided her husband with international protection in good time. Members of his family had been imprisoned and tortured, and his family home had been burned down.

She insisted on her husband's innocence and said that any person in Iraq who denounced corruption received similar treatment. An ad hoc inquiry had been conducted, and had established that the revocation of Mr. Al-Dainy's parliamentary immunity had been unfounded and that the accusations levelled against him had been wholly unfounded. The inquiry had proven that Mr Al-Dainy's family had made confessions under torture. Despite the proof of his innocence, Mr. Al-Dainy could not return to Iraq for fear that he would be assassinated. He could not request a review of his trial in a fair and independent court because, in reality, the Iraqi judiciary was under the power of the executive, and the Iraqi authorities had taken no measures whatsoever to implement the decisions of the IPU. The conclusions of the inquiry had proven the involvement of the executive and the judiciary in the falsification of accusations and the unfair trial. She urged the IPU to bring pressure to bear on the Iraqi authorities and call for the total rehabilitation of Mr. Al-Dainy and bring to trial those guilty of the offences against him and members of his family.

Mr. S.H. Hamoudi (Iraq) said that measures had been taken to rectify the situation of Mr. Al-Dainy. An ad hoc committee had been established to consider the case and its conclusions had been transmitted in writing to the IPU. The Supreme Court had overturned

the verdict and the death sentence that had been handed down to Mr. Al-Dainy, and had cancelled the convictions of others who had been involved in similar cases. Those measures proved the independence of the Iraqi judiciary. Justice had been rendered, and Mr. Al-Dainy was free to return to Iraq for retrial. It was no longer appropriate for the IPU Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians to be dealing with the case. His delegation wished to register its reservations against the draft resolution on the case of Mr. Al-Dainy. It was not in the Committee's remit to launch accusations against the Iraqi judiciary.

Mr. P. Mahoux (Belgium), Chairperson of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians, said that the Committee's position had been based largely on its hearing with the Iraqi delegation. The questions of the political nature of the accusations against Mr. Al-Dainy had been confirmed by the Iraqi parliamentary ad hoc committee of inquiry. The Committee had welcomed the cooperation of the Iraqi delegation. He took note of the Iraqi delegation's reservations.

The Governing Council adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Mr. Mohammed Al-Dainy.

Lebanon

Although the Special Tribunal for Lebanon had begun work to dispense justice in the case of the murder of former Prime Minister Hariri, and it was possible that in future it might also address one or more of the four cases of murdered parliamentarians before the Committee, the Lebanese authorities were currently solely responsible for the procedures under way. Although the General Prosecutor of Lebanon had informed the Committee that measures were being taken, it seemed that there had still been no progress, six years after the first murder. The Committee was particularly concerned that the Lebanese authorities had not followed up on the arrest warrants issued by the Special Tribunal. The Committee trusted that the authorities would do their utmost to shed light on the crimes and bring the perpetrators to justice. The Committee was urgently awaiting information on the progress of the inquiries under way. The Committee also particularly insisted on the responsibility of the National Assembly in that regard, which must fulfil its monitoring role and ensure that the investigations were conducted properly.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Mr. Gibran Tueni, the case of Mr. Walid Eido, the case of Mr. Antoine Ghanem and the case of Mr. Pierre Gemayal.

Madagascar

Since the coup d'état in March 2009, Madagascar had been through a period of instability, the consequences of which had even affected parliamentarians. The case before the Committee addressed the situation of 12 parliamentarians, supporters of the deposed President, who were being investigated for crimes of breaching public order. They were, however, at large, and some were sitting in the transitional parliament. The roadmap adopted in September 2011, as those adopted previously, provided for amnesty measures, and the Committee wished to know what was the likelihood of an amnesty being granted for the victims of political events that had taken place over recent years.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of 12 parliamentarians.

Malaysia

An observer had informed the Committee about the developments in the new trial of Anwar Ibrahim, who was being tried for sodomy. The Committee's concerns were the same as during his first trial several years previously. The Committee had reason to believe that the charges against Mr. Ibrahim were politically motivated. Those suspicions were supported by the fact that Mr. Ibrahim, who was leader of the opposition, had been suspended from Parliament for six months as a result of opinions he had expressed in Parliament, which should have been protected by his parliamentary immunity. Such decisions restricted parliamentary freedom of expression, and compromised the essential function of parliament as a place of debate.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Mr. Anwar Ibrahim.

Mr. K.S. Wee (Malaysia) said that his delegation had explained to the Committee that it would be best to allow the court proceedings to take their course without interference by Parliament, in order to maintain respect for the separation of powers. The case was still being addressed in court. He therefore wished to express his delegation's reservations against the resolution.

Mongolia

Solving a murder that had taken place 13 years previously was not an easy task, and even less so when serious errors had been committed at the time of securing the location of the crime, as had occurred in the case of Mr. Zorig. There was, however, still hope that the case could be solved. The National Security Council of Mongolia had recently taken responsibility for the case, which could lead to a new investigation.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Mr. Zorig Sanjasuuren.

Myanmar

The establishment of a Parliament in Myanmar was an important step towards democratization. There was an opposition party in Parliament, which had frequently requested the release of political prisoners. At the beginning of October 2011 the Government had announced an amnesty, which had resulted in the release of three parliamentarians and 200 other political prisoners. The Committee recalled that there were eight more former parliamentarians who were languishing in jail, with many other political prisoners. The Committee requested their release, in order to enable them to participate fully in the transition to democracy and in the process of national reconciliation. The Committee also considered that it would be timely to conduct the mission that it had been requesting for some time.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of 21 parliamentarians.

Palestine

The situation of Mr. Marwan Barghouti and Mr. Admad Sa'adat remained unchanged. They were serving prison sentences of five life sentences and thirty years respectively. The hope that they could be included on the list of prisoners to be released in return for the release of an Israeli soldier had not been realized. In the case of 30 parliamentarians from the Change

and Reform group, the Israeli authorities had provided information about the legal context of their administrative detention. While the Committee recognised that regarding the relevant standards of jurisprudence of the Israeli Supreme Court, guarantees were provided to prevent abusive recourse to administrative detention, it regretted that in reality, the detainees did not have access to legal defence. The Committee deeply regretted that three of the Palestinian parliamentarians had lost their right to residence in Jerusalem. One had already been expelled, and another had been arrested at the Red Cross premises in Jerusalem.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolutions relating to the case of Mr. Marwan Barghouti, the case of Mr. Ahmad Sa'adat and the case of 39 parliamentarians.

Philippines

There had been no progress in the cases relating to the Philippines. The legal cases against the parliamentarians concerned remained at a stalemate. The Committee recalled that the right to be tried in reasonable time was one of the elements of a fair trial. That right was particularly important in the case of parliamentarians, since it affected their ability to exercise their mandate.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Mr. Saturnino Ocampo, the case of Mr. Teodoro Casiño, the case of Ms. Liza Maza and the case of Mr. Rafael Mariano.

Russian Federation

The decision issued by the Saint Petersburg court in June 2005 on the murder of Ms. Galina Starovoitova had concluded that her murder had been politically motivated. Unfortunately, 13 years later, the perpetrators had still not been identified. As had been demonstrated by the subsequent murder of journalists and human rights defenders, impunity in similar cases has resulted in repression of freedom. The Committee hoped to renew dialogue with the new Parliament, which would be elected in December 2011.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Ms. Galina Starovoitova.

Rwanda

In June 2011 two members of the Committee had conducted a mission Rwanda to discuss the disappearance of Mr. Leonard Hitimana in 2003. The Committee expressed its gratitude to the presidents of both chambers of the Rwandan Parliament for their full cooperation during the visit. The mission had collected important information on the case, and would emphasize that the Minister of Justice had undertaken to explore all avenues of inquiry, including an assassination in Rwanda. Thus far, the authorities had insisted that Mr. Hitimana had been abroad at the time of his disappearance.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Mr. Leonard Hitimana.

Sri Lanka

The Committee was considering the cases of four parliamentarians who had been assassinated. In two of the cases, suspects had been identified and the cases were progressing, albeit slowly. In the other two cases, however, the investigations were blocked. The Committee

was struggling to understand how, in a case such as that of Mr. Pararajasingham, who had been murdered on 24 December during a Christmas mass in front of some 300 people, the authorities could explain the lack of progress in the case as owing to a lack of witnesses. The Committee concluded that those who had been present were afraid to come forward as witnesses.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolutions relating to the case of Mr. Joseph Pararajasingham, the case of Mr. Nadarajah Raviraj, the case of Thiagarajah Maheswaran, and the case of Mr. D. M. Dassanayake.

Thailand

The military coup d'état that had taken place in 2006 had resulted in legal enactments that had stripped the parliamentarians concerned of their parliamentary mandate and prevented them from participating in the July 2011 elections. The Committee reaffirmed its condemnation of the provisions in question, which were incompatible with Thailand's international human rights obligations. The Committee however proposed that the case be closed, since the parliamentarians' exclusion from the 2011 elections meant that a fully effective remedy was no longer available. The Thai delegation had submitted a note to the Committee, which had stated clearly that during the revision of the Constitution, which was currently under way, particular attention would be paid to sections on the dissolution of political parties and loss of parliamentary mandate.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of LT. DR. Thaksin Shinawatra and 179 other parliamentarians.

Ms. P. Tamthai (Thailand) said she wished to point out that the closure of the case had been at the request of the Thai delegation in light of the current political circumstances in Thailand.

Turkey

Mr. Sinçar had been killed in September 1993 in circumstances that could indicate that he had been the victim of an extrajudicial execution. For a long time the Committee had been unable to find out whether an investigation had been carried out or not. Eventually, the IPU had been informed that the suspects were undergoing trial. The IPU had informed Mr. Sinçar's family. On 1 October 2010, two suspects had been charged with the murder and sentences to life imprisonment. Mr. Sinçar's family had appealed the judgement, since it had not identified those who had ordered the murder. The court had accepted that request. The Committee hoped that the procedure under way would afford a real opportunity to solve clearly the murder of Mr. Sinçar.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Mr. Mehmet Sinçar.

Zimbabwe

The Committee continued to be concerned by the impunity that reigned in the case of Mr. Sikhala and Mr. Madzore, both victims of torture, and Mr. Chamisa, who had been beaten up in full view of the police who had not intervened. Despite clear evidence of torture the complaints filed had not been followed up. The Committee considered that such a denial of

justice should raise serious concerns in Parliament, and urged the Zimbabwean Parliament to fulfil its monitoring role and ensure that the authorities took the necessary measures to enable justice to be done.

The Governing Council unanimously adopted the draft resolution relating to the case of Mr. Job Sikhala, the case of Mr. Paul Madzore and the case of the Mr. Nelson Chamisa.

The Committee wished to pay tribute to Ms. Ingeborg Schwarz, the Secretary of the Committee, who was due to leave the IPU after many years of loyal service, particularly to the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

(c) Committee on Middle East questions

*(i) Election of two titular members and one substitute member
(CL/189/11(c)-P.1-P.5)*

The President said that the Council was called on to elect two titular members and one substitute member to the Committee. Since there were four candidates for the two titular posts, Ms. S. Ebrahim Rajab of Bahrain, Ms. M. A. Cristi of Chile, Ms. F. Ajorlou of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Ms. M. Green of Sweden, the Council must proceed to a vote by show of hands.

Following a vote by show of hands, Ms. Monica Green of Sweden and Ms. María Angélica Cristi of Chile were elected titular members of the Committee.

The President announced that for the position of substitute member, the Committee had before it the candidature of Lord Frank Judd of the United Kingdom. In the absence of any comments or objections, he said he would take it that the candidature of Lord Judd was approved.

It was so decided.

*(ii) Reports of the Committee
(CL/189/11(c)-R.1)*

Ms. A. Clwyd (United Kingdom), Chairperson of the Committee on Middle East Affairs, said that the Committee had met on 16 and 17 October. It had received delegations from Israel, Jordan and Palestine for an exchange of views on the Arab peace plan. The meetings had taken place in a constructive atmosphere, which the Committee hoped could be built on in future. The IPU was a good forum for continued dialogue, and the Committee had therefore requested that a follow-up meeting be scheduled early in 2012 to hold discussions with Israeli, Palestinian and other Arab legislators. Those discussions would continue to focus on the Arab peace initiative. She asked the Secretariat to finalize arrangements for a mission to Israel and Palestine in early 2012.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

THIRD SITTING

Wednesday, 19 October 2011
(Afternoon)

The meeting was called to order at 2.35 p.m. with the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Dr. T.-B. Gurirab (Namibia), in the Chair.

Item 16 of the agenda

ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION (CL/189/16-P.1, P.2 and Inf.1)

The President said that at the statutory deadline of Tuesday 18 October 2011 at 2.30 p.m., the IPU Secretariat had received the candidatures of Mr. Abdelwahad Radi of Morocco and Ms. Nurhayati Ali Assegaf of Indonesia for the position of President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. He announced that a vote would be held by secret ballot.

The Secretary General explained the voting procedure and said that Ms. M. Xavier (Uruguay) and Mr. A. Nazim (Maldives) had been appointed by the two candidates to act as tellers to oversee the counting of the votes.

Mr. A. Radi (Morocco) said that if he were elected President he would serve with devotion to fulfil the noble mission for which the IPU had been founded. He would do his utmost to attain the objectives and serve the causes enumerated in the IPU Strategy 2012-2017. Efforts must be made improve the management of IPU finances. Under his leadership the IPU would focus on quality, rather than quantity, of activities, and would seek to increase the quality of its human resources. He welcomed the efforts that had been made to streamline the activities of the IPU and to balance income and spending in the 2012 budget.

All Members of the IPU must work together to ensure that the IPU was the principal forum for cooperation between parliaments, for the promotion of gender equality, human rights, building peace and stability, conflict resolution, and to strengthen partnerships with the United Nations and increase the involvement of parliamentarians in international efforts. The IPU Strategy was crucial in that regard. The strategy was a major endeavour, which could not be carried out by the President alone, but rather would require the close cooperation of the Executive Committee and the Secretariat. Efforts must be made to enable the geopolitical groups' greater involvement in the work of the Union. The President would play the role of the engine of growth to ensure that the IPU was a model international organization, respected in all spheres.

Ms. N. Ali Assegaf (Indonesia) said that her candidature for the presidency of the IPU had received the full support of her parliament. In a changing world, parliamentarians must strive to meet the demands of the people to improve their standard of living through united and concerted measures, in order to overcome the deficit of trust. Parliamentarians must be the voice of their people, guided by the noble vision vested in them. As mandated by the IPU Strategy 2012–2017, the IPU should respond to global challenges and become the global catalyst for parliamentary cooperation.

Recent events such as the global economic and financial crisis and the humanitarian crisis in the Horn of Africa had affected the whole world. Particular attention should be paid to the need to attain the Millennium Development Goals by the target date of 2015. Child mortality, maternal health and HIV/AIDS were priority issues that must be addressed. With

good governance, the IPU would be able to identify a priority agenda, which would ensure the financial efficiency of the Organization. The Sub-committee on Finance should be given space to work effectively and proactively. The second objective of the IPU Strategy 2012–2017 would enable the IPU to work closely with other international organizations, in particular the United Nations, to meet global challenges.

Indonesia was part of the Asia-Pacific region, an economically emerging continent, which strongly believed in the role of the IPU to promote democracy worldwide. In the past decade of reform, the young democracy in Indonesia had been strengthened, in order to ensure that it could deliver the best possible results. The rotation of the IPU Presidency should include rotation between male and female Presidents. Women accounted for half of the world's population. After a decade of male IPU Presidents, it was high time that a woman be elected to the presidency. Electing a woman President would attest to the IPU's commitment to gender mainstreaming. The term of the presidency coincided with her term of office as a member of the Indonesian Parliament, and the continuity of her tenure could therefore be guaranteed, if she were to be elected President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. The new President should not be from the same continent as the outgoing President.

A vote was held by secret ballot.

The President announced that the consideration of agenda item 16 would be suspended while the votes were being counted.

Presentation by Mr. Bernard Piccard on the environment and renewable energy

Mr. B. Piccard, Guest speaker, Chairperson of Solar Impulse, introduced video footage of the first 24-hour flight by a solar powered aircraft. The technologies that had been used to build the aircraft were readily available, and if they could be used on a global scale they would enable humankind to save 50 per cent of the fossil fuel energy that was currently being consumed. Those technologies were the only real solution to climate change.

There was a considerable misunderstanding with regard to the relationship between the price and cost of renewable energies. Although renewables were more expensive than fossil fuels in terms of price, their costs in terms of pollution and conflict were minimal, which meant that they were in fact cheaper than fossil fuels. Urgent action must therefore be taken to promote the use of renewable energy technologies. Parliaments and governments must establish a legal framework for the use of those technologies, and must set ambitious targets for energy saving and emissions reduction. Such measures would promote the use of renewable energy technologies, which would ultimately result in economic growth and environmental recovery. If parliamentarians demonstrated a pioneering spirit with regard to renewables, positive change could be achieved.

Item 11 of the agenda

(continued)

ACTIVITIES OF COMMITTEES AND OTHER BODIES

(continued)

(d) Gender Partnership Group

(CL/189/11(d)-R.1)

Mr. R. del Picchia (France), Rapporteur for the Gender Partnership Group, presenting the report of the Gender Partnership Group (CL/189/11(d)-R.1), said that the Group had met on 15 and 18 October 2011. It had compared the composition of the delegations present at the 125th Assembly with that of previous statutory meetings. At 18 October, 159 of

the 529 delegates present were women, which was a significantly smaller proportion than at the 124th Assembly in Panama. Of the 126 delegations present at the 125th Assembly, 117 comprised at least two delegates. Of those, 15 were composed exclusively of men, and one delegation was composed exclusively of women. The delegations of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Denmark, Malta, Papua New Guinea, Qatar and Saudi Arabia had been subject to sanctions for having been represented exclusively by parliamentarians of the same sex at three consecutive Assemblies.

The Group had examined the situation of parliaments with no women members, which were found mainly among the Pacific Island States and the Gulf Cooperation Council States. The Group had applauded the recent developments in Saudi Arabia, which had allowed women to vote and stand for election. It had welcomed the messages of support and congratulations from the IPU to the Saudi authorities and to Saudi women. In the case of Oman, the Group considered that the large number of female candidates running for the elections on 15 October 2011 was an encouraging sign. The Group had met with the Lebanese delegation on 18 October 2011. There were only four women members of parliament in Lebanon. The next legislative elections would be held in 2013. The delegation informed the Group that the difficulties encountered by women in politics resulted from sociocultural resistance, a complex electoral system and very specific political circumstances.

(f) Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law

(i) Election of one substitute member
(CL/189/11(f)-P.1)

The President announced that the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law had a vacancy for one substitute member to replace Mr. A. Kurt of Turkey. The Governing Council had before it the candidature of Ms. U. Karlsson of Sweden. In the absence of any comments or objections he would take it that the Council approved that candidature.

It was so decided.

(ii) Reports of the Committee
(CL/189/11(f)-R.1)

Ms. B.M. Gadiant (Switzerland) *President of the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law*, introducing the report of the Committee's recent informal meeting (CL/189/11(f)-R.1), said that the objective of the meeting had been to brainstorm on the functioning and objectives of the Committee, in order to enhance its work. Members had suggested that the Committee should meet during each IPU Assembly to ensure the sustainability of its work. There had been support for continuing the practice of holding an annual open session on an international humanitarian law issue during the IPU Assembly. The Committee had recommended adopting a rule pursuant to which members who did not attend several consecutive meetings should be replaced. It had been decided that the IPU Secretariat should give the Committee greater visibility on the IPU website, with links to the websites and databases of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The Committee had recommended that field missions be conducted, and that Committee members make contact with ICRC representatives in their countries in order to support their work. Greater synergy was required between the Committee's activities and the work done by the IPU in other areas, such as trafficking in persons.

With regard to the Committee's objectives, members had recommended focusing on the question of domestication of international humanitarian law. The Committee had welcomed the idea of working on a relevant tool for parliamentarians and members had agreed to identify priorities for their region to be presented for discussion at the next meeting on the occasion of the 126th IPU Assembly in Kampala, Uganda.

(g) Group of Facilitators for Cyprus

(i) Election of one Facilitator
(CL/189/11(g)-P.1)

The President announced that the Governing Council was required to elect one Facilitator for Cyprus. It had before it the candidature of Ms. Rosa Maria da Silva Bastos of Portugal. He asked if the Council wished to approve that candidature.

It was so decided.

Item 12 of the agenda

126th IPU ASSEMBLY
(CL/189/12-P.1)

A video was screened, showing a message of welcome from the Parliament of Uganda, host of the 126th IPU Assembly.

Ms. R. Kadaga (Uganda) expressed her delegation's thanks to the Parliament of Switzerland for its hospitality at the 125th IPU Assembly, and said she was looking forward to welcoming the IPU to Kampala in April 2012 for the 126th Assembly.

The President asked whether the Governing Council could adopt the list of observers to the 126th IPU Assembly, contained in document CL/189/12-P.1.

It was so decided.

Item 13 of the agenda

FUTURE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY MEETINGS

(a) Statutory meetings
(CL/189/13-P.1)

The Secretary General drew attention to the list of forthcoming statutory meetings contained in document CL/189/13-P.1 and said that an invitation had been received from the Parliament of Ecuador, offering to host the 128th Assembly and related meetings in Quito.

The Governing Council took note of the list of forthcoming statutory inter-parliamentary meetings.

(b) Specialized and other meetings

(CL/189/13(b)-P.1)

The Secretary General drew attention to the request for IPU sponsorship of the tenth Workshop of Parliamentary Scholars and Parliamentarians. The IPU provided that sponsorship annually. It had no budgetary implications.

The President said that in the absence of any objections he would take it that the Governing Council approved the request for sponsorship of the tenth Workshop of Parliamentary Scholars and Parliamentarians.

It was so decided.

Item 14 of the agenda

APPOINTMENT OF TWO AUDITORS FOR THE 2012 ACCOUNTS

(CL/189/14-P.1)

The President announced that the Council had before it only one candidature, that of Mr. M. Sheerit of Israel. In the absence of any comments or objections he would take it that the Governing Council approved that candidature.

It was so decided.

Item 15 of the agenda

AMENDMENTS TO THE STATUTES AND RULES

(CL/189/15-P.1)

The President announced that document CL/189/15-P.1 contained amendments to Articles 5.2 and 5.3 of the Statutes. Those amendments foresaw statutory sanctions for Associate Members in arrears of payment of their contributions. He asked whether the Council would agree to adopt those amendments.

It was so decided.

Item 17 of the agenda

ELECTIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

(CL/189/17-P.1-P.5)

The President announced that the Governing Council was required to elect seven members to the Executive Committee. There were three vacancies for the African Group, two for the Asia-Pacific Group, one for the Latin American Group and one for the Twelve Plus Group. At least one woman should be elected in order to meet the statutory requirement of at least three women members of the Executive Committee.

The Council had before it, for the African Group, the candidatures of Ms. Rebecca Kadaga of Uganda, Ms. Ntlhoi Motsamai of Lesotho and Ms. Aline Kabore Koala of Burkina

Faso. For the Asia-Pacific Group it had before it the candidatures of Mr. Faisal Karim Kundi of Pakistan and Mr. Franklin M. Drilon of the Philippines. The Latin American Group had submitted the candidature of Ms. Ivonne Passada of Uruguay and the Twelve Plus Group had presented the candidature of Mr. Josef Winkler of Germany.

In the absence of any comments or objections he would take it that the Governing Council could approve all seven of those candidatures.

It was so decided.

Item 16 of the agenda
(continued)

ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION

The President, presenting the results of the election of the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, said that a total of 268 votes had been cast, with one invalid ballot. The absolute majority required had therefore been 134. Mr. Radi had received 137 votes, while Ms. Asegaf had received 130.

Mr. Radi was elected President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Mr. D. Oliver (Canada), speaking on behalf of the Executive Committee, paid tribute to Dr. Theo-Ben Gurirab, outgoing President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and commended his considerable contributions to the Union during his presidency. Dr. Gurirab had been the epitome of a successful leader, promoting others and bringing diverse forces together, and taking the lead when necessary. His political career had been long and distinguished, and he had been instrumental in driving the United Nations reform process, and had presided over the drafting of the United Nations Millennium Declaration in 2000. As President of the IPU he had used that valuable experience to advance the shared interests of the world's parliamentarians in order to enhance the stability and relevance of the IPU.

Dr. Gurirab's election to the IPU presidency had coincided with the emerging global economic and financial crisis. Under his leadership the IPU had played a leading role in debating that crisis and considered the role that parliamentarians could play in mitigating its effects.

The third World Conference of Speakers had been held during Dr. Gurirab's mandate, at which more than 130 Speakers of Parliament had approved a text that had affirmed how accountability and representation lay at the heart of democracy, and had voiced the common concern that politics could become a closed space with insufficient room for opposing opinions and consideration of alternative policies. The Conference had called for greater parliamentary involvement in international cooperation and had affirmed that the IPU was the international body best suited to build the relationship between parliaments and the United Nations. In response to that, Dr. Gurirab had recognized the urgent need for the IPU to reposition itself in an evolving world, by strengthening its structure and working methods. The adoption of the IPU Strategy 2012–2017 represented the successful culmination of his vision in that regard. The Strategy gave the IPU a clear sense of direction and consolidated the IPU as a global forum for parliamentary dialogue and cooperation. It would help enhance the IPU's ability to advance democracy and assist parliaments and parliamentarians in fulfilling their mandates. It also expressed a clear vision that would assist the parliamentary community around the world to articulate and respond effectively to the needs of the people and their aspirations for peace, human rights, gender equality and development.

Dr. Gurirab had worked closely with the Secretariat to establish new internal management structures. He had been sensitive to the realities of current budgetary constraints, and had been a champion of gender mainstreaming. The austerity budget that had been adopted for 2012 was testament to his commitment to ensuring the responsible financial stewardship of the Organization. During his mandate, the Union's membership had grown, thanks to his tireless outreach initiatives. In short, the IPU was stronger, more agile and better equipped to meet the challenges of the coming years as a result of Dr. Gurirab's leadership. He thanked Dr. Gurirab for his leadership, and said that the IPU would look forward to working with him in future as it strove to realize his vision.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.