



## REPORTS ON RECENT IPU SPECIALIZED MEETINGS

### (a) PARLIAMENTARY WORKSHOP ON STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS (IPU Headquarters, Geneva, 12-13 November 2012)

A workshop on Strengthening the Role of Parliamentarians in the Implementation of Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Recommendations was held on 12 and 13 November 2012 at IPU Headquarters in Geneva. Jointly organized by the IPU and the Commonwealth Secretariat, the workshop sought to inform parliamentarians about the UPR process, a mechanism tasked with following up implementation of international human rights standards. It also sought to identify possible ways and means to ensure that members of parliament are involved in the work of this mechanism.

The participants, from 21 countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Europe, Latin America and the Pacific, were introduced to the workings of the UPR. They shared their national experiences as MPs in the area of human rights and examined the possibilities of contributing to the work of the UPR, in particular implementation of its recommendations.

At the end of the proceedings, they formulated a number of recommendations centred on two main points, namely:

1. Greater consideration given by parliament to human rights issues through:
  - Ownership by the parliament of human rights issues;
  - Establishment of a standing committee dealing specifically with human rights; and
  - Organization of regular training sessions for MPs and parliamentary staff on human rights issues.
2. Parliament's involvement in the UPR process in the mechanism's three phases, namely:
  - Preparation of the report:
    - Develop specific parliamentary mechanisms on the UPR;
  - Presentation of the report to the Human Rights Council:
    - Ensure that parliament is effectively involved in decisions to make it more effective, especially financial decisions;
    - Ensure that both the ruling and opposition parties are represented;
  - Follow-up and implementation of recommendations:
    - Take note of the main recommendations of the UPR and debate them in plenary so as to identify those which require parliamentary action;
    - Organize regular parliamentary monitoring of implementation of the recommendations;

- Organize parliamentary visits to inform and explain to the public the main measures taken to implement the UPR recommendations and encourage the public to respect them; and
- Organize regular debates with constituents with a view to gauging the impact of these measures.

The support of other stakeholders such as the executive, the national human rights commission and civil society is also required during the three phases of the process to bolster the parliamentary contribution.

