



C-III/2003/C.2

24 July 2003

CONVOCAATION

STANDING COMMITTEE III - DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Geneva, 1st, 2nd and 3rd October 2003

1. In conformity with the decision taken by the Governing Council at its 172nd Session, the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights will meet during the 109th IPU Assembly.

Dates and place of meetings

2. The Committee will meet at **the Centre international de Conférences de Genève (CICG)**, the venue of the 109th Assembly and all other related meetings.

3. The Committee will meet on Wednesday, 1st October from 4.30 p.m. to 6.30 p.m., and Thursday, 2nd October from 4 to 6.30 p.m. to debate the report and draft resolution prepared by the co-rapporteurs. During its meeting on Thursday, 2nd October, the Committee may choose to appoint a drafting committee which can use part of that sitting to prepare a final version of the draft resolution. The Bureau of the Standing Committee will meet between 3 p.m. and 4 p.m. on the same day. The full Standing Committee will meet on Friday 3rd, from 9 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. to adopt the draft resolution.

Agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. The contribution of new information and communication technologies to good governance, the improvement of parliamentary democracy and the management of globalisation
 - (a) Debate
 - (b) Preparation and adoption of draft resolution
 - (c) Appointment of a Rapporteur to the 109th Assembly
3. Preparation of the 110th Assembly
 - (a) Proposals for subject item to be considered by the Committee

(b) Proposals for two co-rapporteurs

4. Any other business

Representation and voting rights

4. In conformity with Rule 2 of the Rules of the Standing Committees, the Members of the Union shall be represented on each Standing Committee by one member and one substitute.

5. The substitute shall have the same speaking rights as the titular member, but shall only vote in the latter's absence (cf. Rule 29.1).

Organisation of the debate

6. The Union's governing bodies have decided to make a determined effort to ensure an interactive debate in the Standing Committees. The reading of prepared speeches is therefore discouraged. There will be no registration of speakers. Instead, the President of the Standing Committee will recognise speakers requesting the floor once the debate has begun. In order to gain time, speakers will address the Committee from their seats.

Speaking time

7. The Union's governing bodies have also decided that delegates may take the floor several times but that no statement should exceed a maximum of four minutes. According to the provisions of Standing Committee Rule 24, the President may review this question and take the necessary measures to ensure the smooth running of the debates, particularly since the President may have to restrict the speaking time in view of the number of speakers and length of the session.

Documents

8. Under the new working procedures, both the report of the Standing Committee and the draft resolution are prepared by the co-rapporteurs. However, the introduction of this new system requires a period of adaptation both for the rapporteurs and the Secretariat, and we regret the delay that this has caused in sending the attached draft report. Please note that consequently the deadline for suggestions or comments to the draft report has now been set at 30th August.

9. The draft resolution will be sent to participants as soon as it has been finalised by the co-rapporteurs.

10. Arrangements for the preparation and finalisation of the report and the draft resolution are contained in the document adopted by the Governing Council in Santiago de Chile (see Annex). Please note that in accordance with Rule 17.1 of the Rules of the Assembly, amendments to the draft resolution shall be deposited with the Secretariat of the Assembly no later than one week before the opening of the Assembly, i.e. Wednesday, 24 September. Sub-amendments may be submitted up until the Standing Committee adopts the draft resolution intended for the Assembly (cf. Assembly Rule 17.2).

ROLE OF THE RAPPOREURS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES

*Recommendations endorsed by the IPU Council at its 172nd session
(Santiago de Chile, 12 April 2003)*

1. Parliamentary rapporteurs will be called upon to play a pivotal role in preparing the work of the new Standing Committees. It is therefore important that the rapporteurs:

- Are well versed in the subjects that have been chosen for study by the Standing Committee,
- Have sufficient time at their disposal to perform the task within a reasonable and agreed timeframe,
- Are able to communicate in the same language, and
- Are able to prepare together a report that reflects the realities and views of developing and industrialised countries whenever relevant to the subject matter.

2. The drafting of the reports is a process driven by the rapporteurs themselves. At the initial stage, the two rapporteurs for each Committee independently draft their version of the report. Once this process is completed, and it is foreseen that this stage may take some two months, the rapporteurs are invited to meet in Geneva or elsewhere for the purpose of merging their two texts into a single report. Alternatively, this can be done through the Internet. The IPU Secretariat is available to provide assistance at this stage.

3. Once a preliminary draft of the report has been prepared with the assistance of the IPU Secretariat, it is sent to the full membership for their comments. The same process applies to the draft resolutions which will have been prepared independently by each rapporteur and then merged into a single document. An effort will be made to ensure that these documents reach delegates some three months before the Standing Committees meet.

4. The rapporteurs themselves are exclusively responsible for the contents of the report. It is the expression of their personal judgement on the subject in question, although they are of course free to avail themselves of the services of the research departments of their parliaments. Moreover, while the two rapporteurs are encouraged to align their views in the form of a single cohesive document, the report may nonetheless reflect divergent opinions in areas where the two rapporteurs do not agree.

5. The rapporteurs are thus entirely free to accept or reject any input they receive from the members for the report. Once the report has been amended to incorporate points submitted by the IPU membership, it is once again sent to the full membership, this time in its final form. As such, it has the status of a background paper designed to enrich the discussions to be held in the Standing Committee. It does not represent the collective view of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

6. The above principle does not apply to the draft resolution, since the final resolution to be adopted by the Assembly is a vehicle for the views of the full membership. The rapporteurs will therefore use their best judgment to incorporate, as they see fit, the substance of all of the suggestions for its content submitted by the membership. The amended draft resolution should be sent to the IPU membership sufficiently in advance to allow delegates to study the revised draft before leaving to attend the Assembly.

7. It will be the responsibility of the Standing Committee itself to decide whether the draft resolution should be finalised in the full Committee or in a drafting committee. When taking a decision on this matter, the Standing Committee will take into account the number of additional amendments that have been received.

8. Finally, the task of the rapporteurs does not end once the report is adopted, since they are responsible for monitoring the implementation of the recommendations contained in the resolution and reporting to the Committee on such follow-up activities. They will therefore be asked to assist in designing questionnaires, analysing responses and drafting progress reports.