



INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION
118th Assembly and related meetings
Cape Town (South Africa), 13 – 18 April 2008



Assembly
Item 2

A/118/2-P.2
20 March 2008

**CONSIDERATION OF POSSIBLE REQUESTS FOR THE
INCLUSION OF AN EMERGENCY ITEM IN THE ASSEMBLY AGENDA**

**Request for the inclusion of an emergency item
in the agenda of the 118th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union
submitted by the delegation of Greece**

On 18 March 2008, the Secretary General received from the Vice-President of the Hellenic Parliament a request for the inclusion in the agenda of the 118th Assembly of an emergency item entitled:

"Climate Change".

Delegates to the 118th Assembly will find attached the text of the communication submitting the request (Annex I), as well as an explanatory note (Annex II) and a draft resolution (Annex III) in support thereof.

The 118th Assembly will be required to take a decision on the request of the delegation of Greece on Monday, 14 April 2008.

Under the terms of Assembly Rule 11.1, any Member of the Union may request the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda. Such a request must be accompanied by a brief explanatory memorandum and a draft resolution which clearly define the scope of the subject covered by the request. The Secretariat shall communicate the request and any such documents immediately to all Members.

Furthermore, Assembly Rule 11.2 stipulates that:

- (a) A request for the inclusion of an emergency item must relate to a major event of international concern on which it appears necessary for the IPU to express its opinion. Such a request must receive a two-thirds majority of the votes cast in order to be accepted;
- (b) The Assembly may place only one emergency item on its agenda. Should several requests obtain the requisite majority, the one having received the largest number of positive votes shall be accepted;
- (c) The authors of two or more requests for the inclusion of an emergency item may combine their proposals to present a joint one, provided that each of the original proposals relates to the same subject;
- (d) The subject of a proposal that has been withdrawn by its authors or rejected by the Assembly cannot be included in the draft resolution submitted on the emergency item, unless it is clearly referred to in the request and title of the subject adopted by the Assembly.

**COMMUNICATION ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL
BY THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE HELLENIC PARLIAMENT AND
LEADER OF THE GREEK DELEGATION**

Athens, 18 March 2008

With reference to the 118th IPU Assembly scheduled to be held in Cape Town from 13 to 18 April 2008, I wish to submit to you my delegation's proposal for an emergency item on:

"Climate Change".

This an urgent and central issue for our Organization which has spearheaded, and still does today, many efforts similar to those undertaken by the United Nations and which should, once more, take on a leadership role on giving the issue priority on the international agenda.

Please find enclosed the text of an explanatory memorandum and a draft resolution on the proposed item for your kind consideration and action.

Yours sincerely,

(signed)

Elsa PAPANIMITRIOU (Mrs.)
Vice-President of the Hellenic Parliament and
Leader of the Greek delegation

CLIMATE CHANGE

Explanatory memorandum submitted by the delegation of Greece

According to the Assembly Rules 11.1 and 11.2 and Article 14.2 of the IPU Statutes, the delegation of Greece requests the inclusion of an emergency item in the 118th Assembly agenda entitled "Climate Change".

Climate change is any long-term significant change in the average weather that a given region experiences. In the context of this memorandum, climate change refers to global warming. Although the causes of the phenomenon are multiple, it is suggested that the focus be placed on the effect of human activity.

Climate change threatens the life of both human populations and ecosystems. The world has been facing natural disasters such as droughts, floods, fires, heat waves, glacier melting, rising sea levels etc., as a result of global warming.

Addressing the above-mentioned issue falls within the scope of IPU, an organization fully committed to the achievement of sustainable development, the protection of human rights and the preservation of international peace and security - principles that are jeopardized by the effect of climate change.

The year 2007 was a crucial one for decision-making worldwide. The governments of more than 150 developed and developing countries agreed last December in Bali, a roadmap which consists of a number of decisions on a secure climate future, the world's future in the post-Kyoto era (2013 and beyond). The Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was released last November in Valencia, putting an end to scientists' disputes, pointing to the clear effect of gas emissions on climate change. The Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the IPCC for their efforts to disseminating knowledge about man-made climate change, and for suggesting measures to counteract such change. The G8 Summit reaffirmed last June in Heiligendamm its commitment to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), taking into account the scientific knowledge represented in the IPCC reports. The European Commission launched, last January, a package of measures (20 per cent cut of CO₂ emissions or 30 per cent cut if global targets can be agreed on, and a 20 per cent target for the use of renewable energy sources by 2020) on tackling climate change, with a view to their adoption at the end of 2008.

It is clear that year 2007 was a turning point for the world, given the momentous decisions that were taken by world leaders. It was also the warmest year on record due to increasing green house gas (GHG) emissions.

Bearing these two facts in mind, we should ensure that 2008 will also be a turning point in history in terms of action.

The purpose of an emergency item and a resolution on climate change is to mobilize all parliamentarians to react to the phenomenon, as every year of delay implies a greater effort in the future, and perhaps reaching a point of no return beyond which nothing can be achieved.

The response must be the result of international coordination and actions undertaken should be concrete and effective in the framework of a long-term strategy.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Draft resolution submitted by the delegation of GREECE

The 118th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

- (1) *Reiterating* the Parliamentary Declaration on Climate Change issued at the 116th IPU Assembly (Nusa Dua, Bali) of 4 May 2007,
- (2) *Recalling* the Fourth IPCC Assessment Report, released in November 2007, which confirms the threats posed by climate change,
- (3) *Welcoming* the Bali Roadmap as the outcome of the United Nations Climate Change Conference held in Bali in December 2007,
- (4) *Applauding* the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol by Australia and regretting inaction of the US in this respect,
- (5) *Appreciating* the efforts of several East Asian countries, particularly China, to address climate change,
- (6) *Having high expectations* of the results of the negotiations on the Bali Action Plan, starting at the end of March 2008 in Bangkok,
- (7) *Welcoming* the Conclusions of the Spring European Council, drafted on 13 and 14 March 2008, which focus on climate change and energy, halting biodiversity loss, on environmental technologies, sustainable consumption and production, and on better regulation,
- (8) *Encouraging* the European Commission's initiative to launch in January 2007 a package of environmental policies, leading to the reduction of CO₂ emissions and an increase of the use of renewable energy, as well as the political will expressed by the European Council in March 2007, to commit to an environment-friendly Europe,
- (9) *Recognizing* the different circumstances and potentials of countries to address climate change,
- (10) *Considering* the importance of reducing emissions without threatening the growth of the world's economies,
- (11) *Reaffirming* the Stern Review on the economic impact of climate change, which warns of an annual loss of global GDP of between 5 and 20 per cent if no action is taken,

(12) *Assessing* immigration policies as failing to take into consideration the new reality of environmental refugees and threats of environmental conflicts or wars,

1. *Calls* for the immediate ratification of the Kyoto Protocol by all Parties to the UNFCCC, including the US;
2. *Appeals to* all parliaments to develop environmental legislation to reinforce a long-term climate change policy;
3. *Calls* for the implementation of monitoring and assessment mechanisms and the adoption of severe measures to deal with negative country reports;
4. *Encourages* the use of technologies that contribute to carbon capture and fuel conservation;
5. *Calls* for the use of clean energy for the generation of electricity and fuel for industry and transport;
6. *Underscores* the commitment that the least developed countries should undertake, as they will be the highest emitters over the next 50 years;
7. *Supports* the provision of assistance to developing countries for both mitigation and adaptation measures;
8. *Supports* also research on clean fuels and gas-cleaning technologies, on hydrogen production and storage, on biomass conversion and on carbon sequestration;
9. *Encourages* the exchange of scientific and technical expertise and the conduct of joint studies with a view to creating important synergies;
10. *Supports* cooperation among governments, parliamentarians, local authorities, NGOs, civil society, private corporations and financial institutions;
11. *Suggests* that parliaments consider climate change when legislating on related issues;
12. *Promotes* environmental education, so as to raise public awareness on climate change;
13. *Underscores* the responsibility of parliamentarians to mainstream climate change into the school curricula of all countries.