



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



Assembly
Item 2

A/118/2-P.8
13 April 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 New Zealand**

On 13 April 2008, the Secretary General received from the Head of the New Zealand delegation a request for the inclusion in the agenda of the 118th Assembly of an emergency item entitled:

"The situation in Zimbabwe following the recent elections".

Delegates to the 118th Assembly will find attached the text of the communication submitting the request (Annex I), as well as an explanatory memorandum (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 New Zealand 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- (d) The subject of a proposal that has been withdrawn by its authors or rejected by the Assembly cannot be included in the draft resolution submitted on the emergency item, unless it is clearly referred to in the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 LEADER OF THE DELEGATION OF NEW ZEALAND**

Cape Town, 13 April 2008

Dear Mr. Secretary General,

The New Zealand delegation to the 118th Inter-Parliamentary Assembly in Cape Town wishes to submit the following proposal for an emergency item:

"The situation in Zimbabwe following the recent elections".

Please find enclosed the text of an explanatory memorandum and a draft resolution for consideration by the Assembly.

Yours sincerely,

(signed)

John CARTER
Head of the New Zealand delegation

THE SITUATION IN ZIMBABWE FOLLOWING THE RECENT ELECTIONS

Explanatory memorandum submitted by the delegation of New Zealand

In accordance with Assembly Rules 11.1 and 11.2 and with Article 14.2 of the IPU Statutes, the delegation of New Zealand requests the inclusion of an emergency item in the 118th Assembly agenda entitled "The situation in Zimbabwe following the recent elections".

Zimbabwe held general and presidential elections on 29 March 2008. Now, two weeks later, no official result has been declared for the presidential poll. President Robert Mugabe's ZANU-PF party is pushing for a second presidential ballot to be held in the absence of a declaration, while the main opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), believes its leader, Morgan Tsvangirai, has won the election outright.

The MDC has requested the High Court to order the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) to release the results immediately. In the meantime, ZEC officials are maintaining silence on the results while waiting for the court's judgment, and have ended operations at the ZEC command centre.

The MDC has been banned from political demonstrations, and there are fears that Zanu-PF is engaging in violent retribution against known or suspected MDC supporters.

An emergency summit of the South African Development Community is being held in Zambia this weekend, 12 and 13 April, to try to resolve the stalemate. President Mugabe has refused to attend.

It would be intolerable for the IPU to ignore this situation as it unfolds during the 118th Assembly. The IPU claims to work for peace and cooperation among peoples and for the firm establishment of representative democracy, and states that one of its roles is to contribute "to the defence and promotion of human rights - an essential factor of parliamentary democracy and development". Members of the IPU should debate this matter and call on the ZEC to release the results of the presidential poll as a matter of urgency. The results, no matter what they are, should be announced without delay and the democratic will of the people of Zimbabwe must be respected.

THE SITUATION IN ZIMBABWE FOLLOWING THE RECENT ELECTIONS

Draft resolution submitted by the delegation of NEW ZEALAND

The 118th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

- (1) *Concerned* about the situation unfolding in Zimbabwe following the elections held there on 29 March 2008,
- (2) *Reaffirming* the role of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in the firm establishment of representative democracy,
- (3) *Deploring* any action that might undermine the democratic process in Zimbabwe,
- (4) *Acknowledging* that where there is a threat to an open democratic process, this often leads to violations of human rights,
 1. *Calls for* the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission to release the results of the presidential poll held on 29 March 2008 as a matter of urgency;
 2. *Calls for* restrictions on freedom of assembly and speech in Zimbabwe to be lifted immediately;
 3. *Endorses* the efforts made by the Southern African Development Community at its emergency summit in Zambia on 12 and 13 April to resolve the electoral stalemate in Zimbabwe.