



INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION
124th Assembly and related meetings
Panama City (Panama), 15 – 20 April 2011



Assembly
Item 2

A/124/2-P.1
31 March 2011

**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 124th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union
submitted by the delegation of Pakistan**

On 17 March 2011, the Secretary General received from the delegation of Pakistan a request for the inclusion in the agenda of the 124th Assembly of an emergency item entitled:

"Call for urgent global action to assist earthquake- and tsunami-hit Japan
and to prevent the impact of the disaster on the region as a whole".

Delegates to the 124th 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 124th Assembly will be required to take a decision on the request of the delegation of Pakistan, on Saturday, 16 April 2011.

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- (d) The subject of a proposal that has been withdrawn by its authors or rejected by the Assembly cannot be included in the draft resolution submitted on the emergency item, unless it is clearly referred to in the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
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY GROUP OF PAKISTAN**

Islamabad, 16 March 2011

Dear Mr. Secretary General,

The Pakistan National Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union proposes the following emergency item for consideration and inclusion in the agenda of the 124th IPU Assembly, to be held in Panama City:

"Call for urgent global action to assist earthquake- and tsunami-hit Japan
and to prevent the impact of the disaster on the region as a whole".

An explanatory memorandum is enclosed and will be followed shortly by a draft resolution.

The request has met with the approval of the President of the Pakistan National Group of the IPU, the Honourable Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan, Dr. Fehmida Mirza.

You are kindly requested to circulate the proposed emergency item along with the explanatory memorandum to IPU Member Parliaments.

Yours sincerely,

(signed)

FEROZ KHAN
Director General
Inter-Parliamentary Group of Pakistan

CALL FOR URGENT GLOBAL ACTION TO ASSIST EARTHQUAKE- AND TSUNAMI-HIT JAPAN AND TO PREVENT THE IMPACT OF THE DISASTER ON THE REGION AS A WHOLE

Explanatory memorandum submitted by the Inter-Parliamentary Group of Pakistan

The world has experienced natural calamities that have had a devastating impact on people and their overall development. In spite of scientific development, these disasters have been beyond human control. If anything, these tragedies have proved that they have the unquestionable power to destroy physical infrastructure, public and private property as well as human lives, ruthlessly displacing millions of people. Some recent examples are the earthquakes in Pakistan, Chile, Islamic Republic of Iran and Haiti.

Japan has been hit by one of the largest earthquakes ever recorded. Measuring 9 on the Richter Scale, it generated a deadly tsunami that slammed into the country's east coast, leaving a huge swathe of devastation in its wake. Thousands of people have perished and many more are still missing or injured.

The world has reeled images from the earthquake and ensuing tsunami devastation in Japan. People everywhere are deeply affected by the unprecedented devastation and suffering. The world has to work for the families of those who have died and assist those who are still suffering. This is by no means an easy task and nothing one can say seems quite appropriate.

Initial information received described losses exceeding billions of dollars. The financial losses in Japan will probably fall most heavily on the Japanese Government once it tallies the damage caused by the tsunami and the nuclear radiation risks.

Japan has always stood with the world during such calamities and donated generously whenever countries have experienced natural disasters. The world community, therefore, owes Japan a similar response in the wake of its own calamity, which is to date one of the most cataclysmic and one that requires international support.

International conscience urges the global community to shun indifference during critical periods in the life of nations and to come forward in the face of such a calamity, which requires urgent humanitarian assistance. The world community has to prove in letter and in spirit that it stands side by side with the Japanese people and Government and is committed to assisting them in their hour of need. We are convinced that the concerns and sufferings of the people of Japan are shared by all human beings wherever they live, and that the IPU Assembly is a well-suited forum for expressing the opinion of the global parliamentary community on this matter of international concern.

The people, Parliament and Government of Pakistan are overwhelmed with emotion by the destruction and suffering caused by Japan's most devastating earthquake in recorded history. The Inter-Parliamentary Group of Pakistan, therefore, proposes the above-mentioned emergency item for consideration and inclusion in the agenda of the 124th IPU Assembly, and urges the IPU to call on the international community to take urgent action by way of relief efforts in Japan, whose Parliament is a Member of the IPU.

CALL FOR URGENT GLOBAL ACTION TO ASSIST EARTHQUAKE- AND TSUNAMI-HIT JAPAN AND TO PREVENT THE IMPACT OF THE DISASTER ON THE REGION AS A WHOLE

Draft resolution submitted by the Inter-Parliamentary Group of PAKISTAN

The 124th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

- (1) *Expressing* deep concern at the recurrence of natural disasters and their increasing impact in recent years, which have resulted in massive loss of life and long-term adverse social, economic and environmental consequences throughout the world,
- (2) *Recalling* the resolution on the earthquakes in Haiti and Chile adopted by the 122nd IPU Assembly (Bangkok, 2010) and the resolution on the flooding disaster in Pakistan adopted by the 123rd IPU Assembly (Geneva, 2010); and *acknowledging* the growing frequency, intensity and impact of disasters that pose a significant threat to people's lives and infrastructure, thereby hindering achievement of the Millennium Development Goals,
- (3) *Further recalling* previous United Nations General Assembly resolutions on enhancing humanitarian aid in natural disasters,
- (4) *Aware* that it is essential to ensure human safety, and that there is an urgent need to continue developing and using existing scientific and technical knowledge to reduce vulnerability to natural disasters, and *underscoring* the need for developing countries to have access to related technologies so that they are able to deal effectively with natural disasters, thereby guarding against nuclear radiation,
- (5) *Noting* that the massive scale of destruction and loss of life caused by the unprecedented earthquake and tsunami, triggered by the high magnitude of the quake, reflects the adverse impact of climate change and the growing vulnerability of countries to such change,
- (6) *Considering* that thousands of lives having been lost in the earthquake, and millions of persons displaced in Japan, with physical damage resulting in huge economic losses along with the reported destruction of nuclear plants and resultant radiation,
- (7) *Noting* the warning issued over the deteriorating conditions at the Fukushima nuclear power plant in the north-east of Japan, which is compelling people to move to shelters,
- (8) *Underscoring* the importance of the Hyogo Declaration and Framework for Action 2005-2015, adopted by the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, held in Kobe, Japan, in 2005, in developing effective disaster-reduction strategies at the national level; and *also underscoring* of importance of capacity-building to achieve this objective,
- (9) *Recognizing* that women, children and other vulnerable groups are seriously affected by natural disasters, and that it is necessary to pay special attention to alleviating their pain and suffering in post-disaster situations,
- (10) *Underscoring* the need for counselling to deal with mental trauma, particularly among children affected by natural disasters, through various kinds of support provided by governments, the World Health Organization, UNICEF and non-governmental organizations,

(11) *Endorsing* the call made by the Japanese authorities to advanced nuclear countries for a team of experts to be dispatched to assist with the current nuclear radiation crisis, which was generated by the powerful earthquake and devastating tsunami, triggering a tragedy of cataclysmic proportions,

(12) *Expressing* its sincere condolences to the bereaved families and to the people, Parliament and Government of Japan,

(13) *Appreciating* the efforts made by the Japanese authorities to respond to the destruction caused by the earthquake and tsunami, and the cooperation extended by the international community in relief and rescue efforts,

(14) *Underscoring* that disaster preparedness and management, including the reduction of vulnerability to natural calamities, is vital to achieving sustainable development,

(15) *Noting* the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) and the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015, which were the main outcomes of the 2005 World Conference on Disaster Reduction,

(16) *Underscoring* the importance of global inter-parliamentary cooperation in natural disaster mitigation given the growing role played by international and regional inter-parliamentary organizations in related social and humanitarian areas,

(17) *Noting* the growing number and complexity of human catastrophes and natural disasters, whose impact exceeds the disaster-response capacity of many affected countries, in particular their ability to provide food, medicine, shelter and health care to the victims, exposing humanity to threats that require the collective efforts of all humankind on humanitarian grounds,

(18) *Expressing* its sincere sympathy and solidarity with the people and communities affected by disasters, particularly those in earthquake- and tsunami hit-Japan, in the wake of the extensive damage, loss of life and property and the collective suffering bravely borne by the people of Japan,

(19) *Praising* the untiring efforts of the Government and people of Japan to mitigate the dangerous effects of the disaster that has shaken the people of Japan and compelled them to endure numerous hardships,

1. *Urges* the international community, particularly the International Atomic Energy Agency and the developed nuclear countries to come forward and help repair the damage caused to the nuclear reactor with a view to preventing further nuclear radiation; and *appeals* to international agencies and all international organizations to extend their full support and assistance to Japan in order to mitigate the adverse impact of the disaster by taking swift measures for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of damaged projects;
2. *Appeals* to international and regional parliamentary organizations, UN agencies and relevant regional and international organizations to redouble their efforts and develop programmes aimed at heightening awareness of the damage caused and potential risks involved, and to increase their cooperation with Japan with a view to overcoming this disaster;

3. *Underscores* the importance of a rapid response by the international community, in particular the United Nations, to meet the needs of people affected by natural disasters, in particular the people of Japan, who have sustained heavy losses as a result of the recent tsunami; and *urges* all potential stakeholders to extend humanitarian aid to those affected by the calamity;
4. *Calls upon* parliaments to urge their governments to prioritize compliance with international commitments such as the Kyoto Protocol and other agreements dealing with climate change;
5. *Also calls upon* governments to provide adequate and accessible resources to UN agencies involved in funding and providing disaster assistance, and *appeals* to the IPU to support UN efforts in this area by developing a parliamentary programme on disaster-risk reduction that encompasses mitigation, prevention and preparedness;
6. *Encourages* all governments to further coordinate their international relief, reconstruction and recovery activities, among themselves and with humanitarian agencies, and to take concrete action to enhance people's understanding of the need for disaster-risk reduction through public awareness, education and training;
7. *Underscores* that international assistance can effectively supplement national resources in rehabilitation, reconstruction and development efforts in disaster-affected areas;
8. *Calls upon* parliaments to urge their governments - through their legislative and oversight roles - the United Nations and its specialized agencies and all relevant regional and international organizations to develop disaster-risk-reduction strategies, facilitate the exchange of relevant technology, establish early warning systems, and develop rapid response mechanisms, in particular under the Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative (CADRI) launched by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNDP and ISDR;
9. *Issues* an urgent call for all nations, acting within the framework of a strategy to manage unforeseen events, and in view of the need to ensure global security, to establish a global fund to tackle unanticipated disasters and phenomena immediately; and *urges* the IPU to set up a committee to follow up this important issue and to promote and monitor the establishment of such a fund;
10. *Appeals* to the United Nations to hold an international conference on the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the earthquake- and tsunami-affected areas in Japan, including by devoting special IPU and UN meetings to the tragedy in Japan;
11. *Requests* the IPU Secretary General to report on implementation of this resolution at the 125th IPU Assembly.