



**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 128th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union
submitted by the delegation of the United Kingdom**

On 22 March 2013, the Secretary General received from the Chairman of the British Inter-Parliamentary Group a request for the inclusion in the agenda of the 128th Assembly of an emergency item entitled:

"The security and humanitarian impacts of the crisis in Syria,
including in neighbouring countries".

Delegates to the 128th 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).

The 128th Assembly will be required to take a decision on the request of the delegation of the United Kingdom on Saturday, 23 March 2013.

Under the terms of Assembly Rule 11.1, any Member of the IPU 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- (d) The subject of a proposal that has been withdrawn by its authors or rejected by the Assembly cannot be included in the draft resolution submitted on the emergency item, unless it is clearly referred to in the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 CHAIRMAN OF THE BRITISH INTER-PARLIAMENTARY GROUP**

22 March 2013

Dear Mr. Secretary General,

The UK delegation wishes to propose an emergency item entitled:

"The security and humanitarian impacts of the crisis in Syria,
including in neighbouring countries"

for inclusion in the agenda of the 128th IPU Assembly.

Please find attached an explanatory memorandum and a draft resolution in support of this request.

Yours sincerely,

(signed)

Robert WALTER, MP
Chairman of the British
Inter-Parliamentary Group

**THE SECURITY AND HUMANITARIAN IMPACTS OF THE CRISIS IN SYRIA,
INCLUDING IN NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES**

Explanatory memorandum submitted by the delegation of the United Kingdom

The violent conflict in Syria poses an increasing threat to regional stability and has created an escalating humanitarian crisis, which is a cause for grave concern for the entire international community. Ongoing military action is affecting neighbouring countries and contributing to an overall deterioration of the situation, which provides clear evidence that the conflict poses a real threat to international peace and security. As such, it requires a comprehensive and coordinated response by all nations in support of the efforts of the Arab League and the United Nations, through their Special Representative for Syria, to find a sustainable settlement to the conflict, including an immediate ceasefire by all parties involved.

International efforts, including practical assistance to address the humanitarian situation in Syria and the serious impact and burdens being placed on neighbouring countries to deal with the plight of persons seeking refuge from the violence, are urgently required. There are important international principles at stake, including our collective responsibility to protect civilian populations and the abiding need to stop and hold to account those responsible for grave human rights violations.

The entire membership of the IPU has an obligation to support peace efforts in Syria and engage with all parties in finding a sustainable solution, which is a necessary precondition for establishing a representative system of government able to address the needs and concerns of the Syrian people. In this regard, the IPU could also have an important role to play in the post-conflict process.

**THE SECURITY AND HUMANITARIAN IMPACTS OF THE CRISIS IN SYRIA,
INCLUDING IN NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES**

Draft resolution submitted by the delegation of the UNITED KINGDOM

The 128th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

- (1) *Recalling* the resolution on "Inter-Parliamentary Union initiative for an immediate halt to the bloodshed and human rights violations in Syria, and the need to ensure access to humanitarian aid for all persons in need and to support implementation of all relevant Arab League and United Nations resolutions and peace efforts" adopted by consensus by the 126th IPU Assembly (Kampala, 2012), and *acknowledging* the report provided by the IPU President,
- (2) *Underscoring* its respect for the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic, and *rejecting* resort to any external military intervention or efforts to overthrow the country's ruling authorities by violent means,
- (3) *Acknowledging* growing international recognition of the principle of the international community's responsibility to protect civilian populations from violent conflict, and *expressing* its solidarity with and sympathy for the Syrian people, whose democratic freedoms and human rights are being systematically and brutally disregarded by their own government,
- (4) *Deeply concerned* that sustained and unjustified violence continues to be perpetrated against the Syrian people, including the killing and persecution of protestors, human rights defenders and journalists, denial of access to medical treatment, and the torture of men, women and children,
- (5) *Alarmed* by the use of heavy military equipment, including artillery and combat tanks, against towns and other population centres and reports of mass murder, arbitrary detentions, forced disappearances, torture and ill-treatment of detained persons, including women and children,
- (6) *Mindful* of the applicable international obligations for holding to account any perpetrators of human rights violations, in particular those who commit acts that may amount to crimes against humanity,
- (7) *Recognizing* that, since the beginning of the conflict in Syria, large numbers of the civilian population have found themselves in peril and deprived of basic necessities, around 4 million people have been displaced in the country and over 1.1 million people have taken refuge in neighbouring countries to escape the violence,
- (8) *Disturbed* by the increasingly grave risk to regional stability and security posed by the continuing violence in Syria, including recent cross-border incidents, and their harmful effects on previously peaceful and cordial relations with neighbouring countries,

(9) *Aware* that the situation in the refugee camps in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq is dire, owing to shortages of food, supplies, hygiene products and lack of shelter, as in certain areas of Syria itself,

(10) *Acknowledging* with deep appreciation the efforts of neighbouring countries, including Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq, to provide refuge for those fleeing the violence, despite the difficult organizational and security problems associated with this task,

(11) *Recognizing* that any sustainable effort to address the situation regarding refugees and displaced persons in Syria and in neighbouring countries requires greatly improved prospects for peace through diplomatic initiatives aimed at identifying a peaceful and just political solution to the conflict,

(12) *Frustrated* by the continued failure of the Syrian Government to respond to or implement the decisions and resolutions of international and regional bodies,

1. *Calls* for an immediate cessation of the violence and human rights violations in Syria and full compliance by all parties with international human rights and international humanitarian law obligations;
2. *Calls* on all parties involved in and affected by the conflict to exercise restraint;
3. *Urges* the United Nations and the League of Arab States to do all within their respective powers to bringing about an end to the armed violence in Syria and to address the current humanitarian crisis, including arresting the destabilizing impact on neighbouring countries;
4. *Encourages* Syria and all other parties to maintain effective and open channels for dialogue and to make full and effective use of the good offices of the Special Representative for Syria, Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi;
5. *Calls* on the Syrian Government to withdraw all military personnel from cities, end the use of heavy weapons, release political prisoners and cooperate fully and immediately with the United Nations and humanitarian agencies to facilitate the unhindered and safe provision of humanitarian assistance and to allow the evacuation of the wounded from affected areas;
6. *Calls* on the Syrian authorities, in addressing the humanitarian crisis in the country, to:
 - allow international humanitarian agencies and relevant non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to help displaced persons in Syria and accordingly to abide by the international rules governing the access of humanitarian workers;
 - make serious efforts to ensure that those who have fled their homes can benefit from housing and adequate medical care;
 - permit the establishment of humanitarian corridors or buffer zones to let convoys deliver whatever humanitarian aid is necessary for the survival of the displaced population;

7. *Calls* on all countries, particularly Syria's neighbours, in addressing the refugee situation:
 - not to send asylum-seekers back to Syria, in compliance with the fundamental principle of non-refoulement, and ensure that pushbacks do not take place at their borders;
 - to open all border crossings to refugees from Syria and provide proper facilities for the reception of refugees and provide them with all necessary assistance;
 - to enable all asylum-seekers to obtain international protection, in the form of temporary, subsidiary or full refugee status under the United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees;
 - to take the requisite measures to facilitate and shorten the procedures for obtaining asylum;
 - to ensure that appropriate assistance is provided to refugees previously living in Syria seeking protection a second time, or third-country nationals having fled Syria wishing to return to their home countries;
 - to develop an action plan providing in particular for a programme of resettlement operating from the host countries;
 - to recognize the immediate need to provide vital supplies, including food, clothing, medical aid and temporary shelter, both to displaced persons in Syria and to Syrian refugees in bordering countries, in particular in view of the hardships faced during the winter;
8. *Urges* the international community to make generous and urgent funding commitments to assist refugees from Syria and those neighbouring countries which have received them, as requested by the United Nations;
9. *Reiterates* its call for the commencement of an inclusive political process in Syria to address the legitimate democratic aspirations and concerns of the Syrian people, underscoring that such a process must be conducted in an environment free of violence, torture, fear, intimidation, discrimination and extremism;
10. *Expresses* the hope that such a process could lead to an all-inclusive democratic political system, in which all citizens would be equal;
11. *Underscores* the pivotal role the IPU can play in coming to the assistance of emerging democracies, fostering political reconciliation and the peaceful settlement of conflicts, and in upholding and protecting the principles of representative democracy, human rights and gender equality;
12. *Supports* the continuation of diplomatic and economic sanctions against the Syrian Government until such a time as the situation improves significantly;
13. *Requests* the IPU President to report on the implementation of this resolution at the 129th IPU Assembly and at the United Nations.