



**CONSIDERATION OF 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 129th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union
submitted by the delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic**

On 3 October 2013, the Secretary General of the IPU received from the delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic a request for the inclusion in the agenda of the 129th Assembly of an emergency item entitled:

"Enhancing the role of parliaments in maintaining international peace and security through
support for a political settlement:

- (1) by refusing any manner of aggression, or threat of aggression, violation of State sovereignty and interference in Syria's affairs that exceeds the framework of international legitimacy;
- (2) by applying all international community resolutions on the fight against terrorism".

Delegates to the 129th 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 129th Assembly will be required to take a decision on the request of the delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic on Monday, 7 October 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- (d) The subject of a proposal that has been withdrawn by its authors or rejected by the Assembly cannot be included in the draft resolution submitted on the emergency item, unless it is clearly referred to in the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 OF THE IPU BY THE
SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY OF THE SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC**

Damascus, 3 October 2013

Dear Mr. Secretary General,

The People's Assembly of Syria encloses a request to include on the agenda of the 129th IPU Assembly, which will be held in Geneva (Switzerland) from 7 to 9 October 2013, an emergency item entitled:

"Enhancing the role of parliaments in maintaining international peace and security
through support for a political settlement:

- (1) by refusing any manner of aggression, or threat of aggression, violation of State sovereignty and interference in Syria's affairs that exceeds the framework of the international community;
- (2) by applying all international community resolutions on the fight against terrorism".

We would like this emergency item to be included on the agenda of the 129th IPU Assembly in accordance with the Assembly's Rules of Procedure, in particular the first two paragraphs of Rule 11.

We enclose with this request:

- (1) a six-page explanatory memorandum (pages 1-6);
- (2) a four-page draft resolution (pages 7-10).

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) Mr. Mohammed Eid AL-HAMMAL
Secretary General of the People's Assembly
Syrian Arab Republic

**ENHANCING THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENTS IN MAINTAINING INTERNATIONAL PEACE
AND SECURITY THROUGH SUPPORT FOR A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT:**

- (1) by refusing any manner of aggression, or threat of aggression, violation of State sovereignty and interference in Syria's affairs that exceeds the framework of the international community;**
- (2) by applying all the international community's resolutions on the fight against terrorism**

Explanatory memorandum submitted by the delegation of the SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

The People's Assembly of the Syrian Arab Republic hopes that the IPU Member Parliaments will approve its request to include on the agenda of the 129th IPU Assembly an emergency item entitled:

"Enhancing the role of parliaments in maintaining international peace and security
through support for a political settlement:

- (1) by refusing any manner of aggression, or threat of aggression, violation of State sovereignty and interference in Syria's affairs that exceeds the framework of the international community;
- (2) by applying all international community resolutions on the fight against terrorism".

For over two years now, events on Syrian territory have been a source of interest to all the world's people and required Member Parliaments to respond in order to limit the serious harm suffered by our people as a result of the behaviour and practices of forces and governments which, contrary to the Union's principles, its Statutes and its purpose, pose an almost direct threat to Syria, on weak pretexts that do not conform with the principles of the international community and threaten global peace and security.

Since the start of the crisis, the Syrian Government has met the people's legitimate demands by cancelling the state of emergency, adopting a new Constitution and enacting several pieces of legislation, including on political parties and elections. This has fostered a climate conducive to a comprehensive national dialogue in which all national forces participate and to the planning of the future for a united Syria.

The continued crisis is the result of direct and indirect interference by certain governments and regional forces in the internal affairs of Syria. Their aim is to scupper a political solution by impeding reform, stoking armed violence against the institutions of the legitimate State, opening the borders of neighbouring countries to weapons and armies from more than 80 nationalities, affording all kinds of logistical support, and opening training camps for fighters, contrary to the international responsibility and commitment to control borders and engage in good relations between neighbours. In addition, some countries in the region are sponsoring opposition groups that have no true popular backing, with a view to replacing the legitimate and democratic institutions of the Syrian State, driving them to take extremist stances that reject peaceful national, regional and international dialogue and initiatives for the purpose of sparking external intervention on a humanitarian pretext, bearing in mind that those States set up refugee camps four months before the onset of the crisis.

These governments and forces have waged a systematic campaign of disinformation that does not reflect, either impartially or professionally, the truth about events in Syria. They have adopted and sponsored certain media that have played a destructive part, in order to incite violence, sectarianism and religious and doctrinal disputes, distorting the truth and encouraging extremist *fatwas* (religious edicts issued by a mufti) that justify murder and slaughter. At the same time, they have had Syrian public and private television stations jammed, flouting contracts, charters, commitments and freedom of information, and continue to mislead global public opinion about the truth of what is happening in Syria.

The most striking effects of the interference in Syria's internal affairs are described below.

It has been made easier for armed terrorist groups, most of which are made up of foreign extremists and mercenaries and a number of which have ties to Al-Qaida, to enter the country. The groups are waging a proxy war on Syrian territory, their goal being to disrupt and destabilize the country and undermine its integrity.

In the various countries in which it operates, Al-Qaida has set up new terrorist organizations such as the Al-Nusra Front and the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. Al-Qaida commanders have been urged to call for jihad in Syria, where there are other organizations linked to Al-Qaida, and Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey have officially and publicly pledged to arm these terrorist organizations and groups, to provide them with conventional and non-conventional weapons, to furnish them with logistical and technological support, and to train them in specific camps on the pretext that they are arming a moderate opposition. So-called non-lethal weapons have been sent by countries previously targeted by terrorism.

These terrorist organizations have conducted over 600 destructive suicide attacks against civilians, public and private property, hospitals, universities and teaching facilities, which as a result have been destroyed or transformed into military centres. More than 4,000 schools have been transformed in this way. They have robbed factories, stolen strategic harvests, sold them abroad, destroyed infrastructure, industrial zones, crucial economic establishments, oil refineries, water and electricity-generating stations; they have also destroyed Muslim and Christian places of worship and archaeological monuments, most recently in the town of Maaloula, where they destroyed and pillaged churches and mosques that are the world's oldest monuments. The inhabitants of Maaloula were exposed to murder, had their throats slit and were driven out. Maaloula is the only town in which the inhabitants still speak Aramaic, the language of Christ. The attack followed immediately on the appeal by His Holiness the Pope for prayers and fasting for peace in Syria.

All of this clearly demonstrates that the intention is to harm the Syrian people and their State, on the pretext of supporting the opposition and on other bogus humanitarian pretexts. In short, what is happening in Syria is a war between the secular State and the epidemic of global terrorist jihad.

The fight against terrorism and the struggle to eradicate it - it is a crime against humanity, a crime that crosses borders and threatens the peace, stability and integrity of the people who suffer it - is an international responsibility borne largely by Syria, and this is just not fair. Those supporting terrorism, by all means, in order to serve their current interests, using strategies aimed at overthrowing political regimes to create global or regional situations in keeping with their interests, while mobilizing to confront terrorism elsewhere, risk losing the security and stability of a strategic region. This will have an impact on international peace and security.

What is being inflicted on Syria is the outcome of complicity between certain regional and international Arab regimes aimed at weakening Syria, threatening its unity, its integrity and its civilization, as an example of a secular State, of cohabitation among the Syrian people for thousands of years, with their unique religious and racial diversity. This implies that the international community has to shoulder its legitimate moral, humanitarian and legal responsibilities, fight terrorism from all angles, and adopt a peaceful settlement to the Syrian crisis, so as to halt the worst suffering, the insecurity, in the face of the destructive operations, murders, kidnappings and pillaging that have driven some of the country's sons to emigrate even though Syria is one of the world's safest countries.

The strangest thing is that the suffering of the Syrian people is being compounded by an economic blockade and unfair sanctions - the direct explanation for the deterioration in the day-to-day economic, health, educational and humanitarian situation - rather than the international community providing the humanitarian support that could put a halt to the suffering, cancelling the sanctions and the blockade. This would have positive repercussions on Syria, its people and its neighbours in the region.

The aggression or threat of aggression against Syria, on weak pretexts that have nothing to do with truth and reality, especially the pretext of the use of chemical weapons, constitutes interference, by the possession of force, in the affairs of an independent sovereign State; it is the imposition of a will grounded in contradictory criteria serving the interests of international terrorism, impeding steps towards a peaceful political settlement and aggravating the suffering of the Syrian people. This is both old and new; it existed even before the provocation of the question of the use of chemical weapons and ignores what led to the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya, on false pretexts.

The Syrian Government has not and never will use chemical weapons, and considers that the investigation into the circumstances of that use is a matter of national interest. It issued several warnings over a year ago about the risk that chemical weapons would be used by terrorist groups, following their declarations that they intended to use such weapons and the threat of that use.

The allegations of the Governments of the United States, France and the United Kingdom about a massacre alleged to have been perpetrated near Damascus by the Syrian Arab Army on 21 August have no basis in truth and are refuted by official documents of the governments of those countries.

There are large discrepancies in the numbers of victims, estimated on the basis of video films at between 1,429, according to the United States, and 281, according to the French administration. Médecins sans frontières, for its part, estimates that the number of victims does not exceed 355, proving that the sources lack credibility and that the aim is to incriminate Syria on any pretext.

- Certain videos uploaded to YouTube are dated 20 August, i.e. one day before the incident of 21 August, proving the preparation and falsification that preceded the incident.
- Most of the victims shown on the videos are children of similar ages and there are no women, as though the gas killed only children and men.
- The fact that the victims' families do not appear in the videos is abnormal, because it would be irrational for them to abandon the bodies of their children; the truth is that the

- victims are children kidnapped from neighbourhoods in the town of Latakia after a massacre in which terrorists killed over one thousand people; the survivors recognized their children and filed suit after having seen the videos.
- According to the declaration by the Governments of the United States, France and the United Kingdom on the results of the analysis of specific samples, sarin gas, or a mixture containing sarin gas, was used; this was before the results of the United Nations mission of investigation, which declared that it needed at least ten days to complete its investigation.
 - The strangest thing is to be found in the memorandum from CIA Director James Clapper. He states that the United States had observed four days before the massacre that the Syrian Arab Army was preparing a sarin mixture for immediate use. It is incomprehensible that the United States should not have announced that immediately and should not have called for action against such a dangerous act; this proves that the information was fabricated for wartime propaganda. Under international law, this is considered one of most serious crimes against peace.

The important question is: who benefits from the use of chemical weapons?

The Government is perfectly aware that chemical weapons are internationally prohibited and that their use serves as a pretext for direct external intervention, if one ignores the fact that it cannot be reasonably believed that a government that asked the United Nations to send a mission of investigation would use such weapons while the mission was in the country, on a site on which its own army was stationed and only a few kilometres from the place where the mission was staying.

On 6 May 2013, Carla del Ponte, former Chief Prosecutor of the international criminal law tribunal and a member of the independent mission delegated by the United Nations to investigate the use of sarin gas in Syria, said that it was the armed rebels that used sarin gas, not Syrian government forces.

In addition, the Russian Government has declared that the chemical weapons used in Syria came from Libya, which is not the case of the chemical weapons in the Syrian Government's possession.

Everything we have expounded shows that those who have an interest in being provocative on the subject of chemical weapons are those with an interest in an external intervention, in aggression against Syria on the pretext that it used such weapons; this is illustrated by the scant attention paid to all the evidence and the rush to accuse the Syrian Government before the results showing which party used such weapons made public.

The Syrian Government has demonstrated, by accepting international monitoring and by adhering to the Chemical Weapons Convention, that it is firmly committed to the region's security and integrity and that it does not intend to draw the region into a conflict or war over the use of weapons of mass destruction, be they nuclear, chemical or biological. Israel possesses an amount the destructive capacity of which exceeds the boundaries of the region. The Syrian Government's attitude does not represent a sudden shift or result from the present circumstances. Indeed, Syria submitted a draft resolution to the Security Council in 2003 calling for the Middle East to eliminate all weapons of mass destruction; its efforts were stymied by the refusal of Israel and its protectors to accept that noble goal. That was not the first time the Syrian Government showed its good intentions and presented initiatives to rid the region of all weapons of mass destruction, first and foremost Israeli nuclear weapons.

The obvious selectivity and double standard applied in the handling of this matter is reflected in the failure to condemn the use of internationally prohibited weapons during the Israeli aggression against Gaza, the use of depleted uranium in Iraq and the cavalier approach to all the evidence obtained by the international community and handed over to international institutions. That evidence concerns the use of such weapons by terrorists in Syria, and even the fact that a terrorist group was arrested in Turkey that possessed sarin gas.

The Syrian people have been profoundly and positively affected by the humanitarian attitudes expressed by the anti-war demonstrations targeting Syria, by regional and international Arab public opinion against the aggression or threat of aggression, by the attitudes of the parliaments expressing the will of their people, by the will to refuse aggression, the perception of its import for the Syrian people, the region's peoples, and international peace and security, by the attitude of the British House of Commons during the vote against war against Syria, and by the refusal sketched in the deliberations of the French Parliament and the United States Congress. The Syrian people believe that their rejection of war against their country has been echoed by the peoples of those countries and in their parliaments. This is a positive indication of the reactivity between members of parliament and electors, of the capacity of those parliaments, of their effective ability to influence the prohibition of the use of force, or the threat to use force, outside the framework of the international community, and of their role to protect international peace and security; it confirms the interest of the IPU's role and activities to fulfil its purpose.

**ENHANCING THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENTS IN MAINTAINING INTERNATIONAL PEACE
AND SECURITY THROUGH SUPPORT FOR A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT:**

- (1) by refusing any manner of aggression, or threat of aggression, violation of State sovereignty and interference in Syria's affairs that exceeds the framework of the international community;**
- (2) by applying all the international community's resolutions on the fight against terrorism**

Draft resolution submitted by the delegation of the SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

The 129th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

- (1) *Reaffirming* the provisions of resolution 1977 (2011), adopted by the Security Council acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations and reaffirming the need for all Member States to comply fully with their obligations and fulfil their commitments in relation to arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects of all weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, and *emphasizing* the content of resolution 1373 (2001), adopted by the Security Council acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations and deciding that all States must refrain from providing any form of support, active or passive, to entities or persons involved in terrorist acts, including by suppressing recruitment of members of terrorist groups and eliminating the supply of weapons to terrorists, take the necessary steps to prevent the commission of terrorist acts, including by provision of early warning to other States by exchange of information, and deny safe haven to those who finance, plan, support, or commit terrorist acts, or provide safe havens,
- (2) *Reaffirming* the goals and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human rights, the purpose set out in Article I of the IPU's Statutes, the resolutions adopted by the international community on the fight against terrorism and non-interference in the internal affairs of States and their respect with regard to the Syrian crisis,
- (3) *Stressing* the value of the commitment to the unity of the territory and people of the Syrian Arab Republic, its sovereignty and its independence,
- (4) *Expressing* deep concern at the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation in Syria,
- (5) *Underscoring* the importance of finding a peaceful settlement to the Syrian crisis, between Syrians themselves and under Syrian authority, through a global national dialogue, in accordance with the principles of democracy and social justice, on the right of Syria to fight terrorism in all its aspects, given that this is an inalienable right in international law,
- (6) *Considering* the other Security Council resolutions condemning terrorism, in particular resolutions 1368 (2001), 1438 (2002), 1450 (2002), 1452 (2002), 1455 (2003), 1456 (2003), adopted by the Security Council during the meeting of ministers of foreign affairs, 1516 (2003), 1989 (2011), 2082 (2012) and 2083 (2012), and others, in particular those adopted by the Security Council acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, and *affirming* that terrorism, in all its aspects, represents the gravest threat to global peace and security and that each terrorist act is an unjustifiable criminal act, no matter what the motives, that terrorism leads to crimes against humanity and war crimes against which the international community must firmly battle and which it must to all in its power to prevent,

(7) *Emphasizing* the importance of applying the Chemical Weapons Convention, which was adopted at the Conference on Disarmament held in Geneva (Switzerland) on 3 September 1993 for the purpose of eliminating and dismantling all types of weapons of mass destruction worldwide with a view to strengthening international peace and security,

(8) *Taking into account* the content of resolution 1373 (2001), which was adopted by the Security Council acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, whose application is obligatory for all United Nations Member States, and which provides that they shall:

- (a) prevent the financing of terrorist acts, criminalize the provision of funds for such acts and freeze the funds used by terrorists;
- (b) refrain from providing any form of support, be it active or passive, to entities or persons implied in terrorist acts;
- (c) take the necessary steps to prevent the commission of terrorist acts, including by provision of early warning to other States by exchange of information;
- (d) deny safe haven to those who finance terrorism, commit terrorist acts or support terrorists;
- (e) prevent the movement of terrorists or terrorist groups by effective border controls,

(9) *Recalling* United Nations General Assembly resolution 60/1 adopting the outcome of the 2005 World Summit, paragraph 138 of which asserts that each individual State has the responsibility to protect its populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, that this responsibility entails the prevention of such crimes, including their incitement, through appropriate and necessary means, and that the international community should, as appropriate, encourage States to exercise this responsibility,

(10) *Bearing in mind* the Universal Declaration on Democracy adopted by the Inter-Parliamentary Council in Cairo in 1997, which recalls that each State has the sovereign right, freely to choose and develop, in accordance with the will of its people, its own political, social, economic and cultural systems, without interference by other States, and point 12 of which confirms that the key element in the exercise of democracy is the holding of free and fair elections at regular intervals enabling the people's will to be expressed,

(11) *Also bearing in mind* the resolution adopted by the 110th IPU Assembly on promoting international reconciliation, helping to bring stability to regions of conflict, and assisting with post-conflict reconstruction, which provides that parliament is the institution *par excellence* that embodies the diverse attributes and opinions of society and reflects and channels this diversity in the political process, and that its mission is to defuse tensions and maintain a balance between rival aspirations of diversity and uniformity, and the individual and the collective, with the aim of strengthening social cohesion and solidarity,

(12) *Welcoming* the vote in the British House of Commons and the position of French members of parliament and of members of the United States Congress refusing aggression against Syria,

1. *Urges* the IPU's Member Parliaments to ensure that their respective governments undertake to apply the rules of international law and the resolutions adopted by the international community and the Security Council, to prohibit force or the threat to use force against the Syrian State, and interference in its internal affairs, except within the framework of the Security Council;
2. *Calls on* the IPU's Member Parliaments to work with their respective governments to support a peaceful political settlement as the only possible means of resolving the Syrian crisis;
3. *Calls on* the IPU's Member Parliaments to condemn all suicide, terrorist and destructive activities targeting the civilians, public and private property, infrastructure, archaeological monuments and stability of the Syrian State;
4. *Recommends* to certain Member Parliaments that they demand that their respect governments immediately stop funding, arming and training elements of terrorist groups and mercenaries and facilitating their entry onto Syrian territory;
5. *Salutes* the Syrian Government's desire to adhere to the Chemical Weapons Convention and *urges* the IPU's Member Parliaments to work with their respective governments with a view to helping the Syrian Government honour its commitments;
6. *Urges* the IPU's Member Parliaments to work with their respective governments to treat all terrorist organizations on Syrian territory, notably the Al-Nusra Front, the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, and all organizations and other groups commanded by Al-Qaeda or linked to it, as banned terrorist organizations, and to work with the Syrian Government to get rid of them;
7. *Urges* the IPU's Member Parliaments to work with their respective governments to lift the economic sanctions imposed on Syria and thus put an end to the suffering of the Syrian people;
8. *Encourages* the IPU's Member Parliaments to ask their respective governments to work for the elimination of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons in the Middle East, with a view to establishing a world free of weapons of mass destruction;
9. *Welcomes* the vote in the British House of Commons and the attitude of the French parliamentarians and the members of the United States Congress refusing aggression against Syria, a clear indication of the role of parliaments in maintaining international peace and security, in accordance with the IPU's purpose;
10. *Calls on* the IPU's Member Parliaments to work with their respective governments to strengthen their cooperation in the fight against terrorism and extremism, using all their power and bearing in mind that terrorism is a danger that can cross all borders and that threatens the security and stability of countries, with a view to the adoption of an international anti-terrorism treaty;
11. *Exhorts* all Syrians to choose dialogue as the one and only means of settling the Syrian crisis, in accordance with the aspirations of the Syrian people and their hope that they will be able to determine their future of their own volition.