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 delegations of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden

On 4 October 2013, the Secretary General of the IPU received from the President of the Finnish Inter-Parliamentary Group, on behalf of the delegations of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, a request for the inclusion in the agenda of the 129th Assembly of an emergency item entitled:

"The role of parliaments in supervising the ban on the use and the destruction of chemical weapons".

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 delegations of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden 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(d) The subject of a proposal that has been withdrawn by its authors or rejected by the Assembly cannot be included in the draft resolution submitted on the emergency item, unless it is clearly referred to in the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 BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE FINNISH INTER-PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

Helsinki, 4 October 2013

Dear Mr. Secretary General,

In accordance with the relevant provisions of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, in particular Assembly Rule 11.1, the delegations of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden request the inclusion on the agenda of the 129th IPU Assembly, to be held in Geneva, Switzerland, from 7 to 9 October 2013, of an emergency item entitled:

"The role of parliaments in supervising the ban on the use and the destruction of chemical weapons".

A brief explanatory memorandum and a draft resolution in support of this request are appended.

On behalf of the delegations of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, please accept, Mr. Secretary General, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(Signed) Maria LOHELA (Ms.)
President of the Finnish Inter-Parliamentary Group
THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENTS IN SUPERVISING THE BAN ON THE USE
AND THE DESTRUCTION OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS

Explanatory memorandum submitted by the delegations of Denmark, Finland,
Iceland, Norway and Sweden

The delegations of the Nordic countries wish to suggest that the agenda of the 129th IPU
Assembly include an emergency item entitled "The role of parliaments in supervising the ban
on the use and the destruction of chemical weapons".

The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and
Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, or Chemical Weapons Convention,
enjoys practically universal support. It has 189 States Parties representing 98 per cent of the
world’s population. The Geneva Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use of Asphyxiating,
Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, prohibited the use of
biological and chemical weapons in international conflicts as early as 1925. Despite the
support for the ban on chemical weapons, the United Nations has found that such weapons
were used in the Syrian Arab Republic in August 2013.

The delegations of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden deplore and
condemn the confirmed use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic, which
provided gruesome confirmation that there continue to exist stockpiles of chemical weapons
that some parties are still willing to use. They ask: What can parliaments do to support and
guarantee the goals of the Chemical Weapons Convention and ultimately to completely
eliminate chemical weapons?

At the 128th IPU Assembly (Quito, March 2013), the Member Parliaments adopted the
resolution entitled Enforcing the responsibility to protect: The role of parliament in safeguarding
civilians’ lives. They have therefore already pledged to fulfil their responsibility to protect.
Compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention can be seen as one component of this
responsibility.

The delegations of the Nordic countries wish to use the platform afforded by the
129th IPU Assembly to draw the attention of the world’s parliaments to the fact that a large
number of declared stockpiles of chemical weapons still exist. According to the Organization
for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, 81.1 per cent of declared stockpiles have been
destroyed but more than 13,000 metric tonnes of chemical weapons remain. Destroying old
stockpiles of these horrific weapons is a time-consuming and costly, but nonetheless necessary
process to which the parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention have agreed.

Clearly, the current focus on getting rid of chemical weapons does not justify the use of
other weapons to commit crimes.

As stated by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons: “Parliaments
can play a crucial role in the implementation of the [Chemical Weapons Convention] by
considering and approving comprehensive national legislation, thereby allowing the authorities
in the Member State to implement the provisions of the Convention fully and effectively." The
delegations of the Nordic countries invite the IPU’s Member Parliaments to use their legislative
powers to eliminate the use of chemical weapons.
THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENTS IN SUPERVISING THE BAN ON THE USE AND THE DESTRUCTION OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS

Draft resolution submitted by the delegations of DENMARK, FINLAND, ICELAND, NORWAY and SWEDEN

The 129th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

(1) Saddened by the latest use of chemical weapons claiming hundreds of lives,

(2) Condemning the use of chemical weapons,

(3) Welcoming the constant hard work done by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons to administer the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (Chemical Weapons Convention),

(4) Concerned by the continued existence of declared stockpiles amounting to more than 13,000 metric tonnes of chemical weapons,

(5) Stressing the universality of the ban on the use of chemical weapons,

(6) Recalling the Chemical Weapons Convention, to which 189 States are party, and the 1925 Geneva Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare,

(7) Noting the IPU resolution entitled Enforcing the responsibility to protect: The role of parliament in safeguarding civilians’ lives,

(8) Welcoming the accession by the Syrian Arab Republic to the Chemical Weapons Convention,

1. Calls upon all parliaments to condemn the use of chemical weapons and contribute to an environment of zero tolerance towards the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons;

2. Urges parliamentarians to request status reports from their national authorities responsible for the administration of the Chemical Weapons Convention;

3. Also urges parliamentarians to check their national legislation concerning chemical weapons and to exercise their oversight powers so as to ensure effective implementation;

4. Encourages parliaments to demand that their respective governments act to sign and ratify the Chemical Weapons Convention;

5. Calls upon parliaments to demand the speedy destruction of any existing stockpiles of chemical weapons;

6. Requests parliaments to support and full comply with the invaluable work being done by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons;

7. Encourages the international community to look for sources of funding to be used for the safe destruction of stockpiles of chemical weapons.