



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- (d) The subject of a proposal that has been withdrawn by its authors or rejected by the Assembly cannot be included in the draft resolution submitted on the emergency item, unless it is clearly referred to in the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