



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

132nd IPU Assembly

Hanoi (Viet Nam), 28 March - 1 April 2015



Assembly
Item 2

A/132/2-P.9
27 March 2015

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 132nd Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union submitted by the delegation of Kenya

On 27 March 2015, the Secretary General of the IPU received from the Speaker of the Senate of Kenya a request for the inclusion in the agenda of the 132nd Assembly of an emergency item entitled:

“The role of parliaments in combating the negative effects of climate change”.

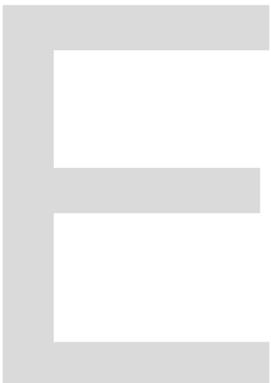
Delegates to the 132nd Assembly will find attached the text of the communication submitting the request ([Annex I](#)), as well as an explanatory memorandum ([Annex II](#)) and a draft resolution ([Annex III](#)) in support thereof.

The 132nd Assembly will be required to take a decision on the request of the delegation of Kenya on Sunday, 29 March 2015.

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- (d) The subject of a proposal that has been withdrawn by its authors or rejected by the Assembly cannot be included in the draft resolution submitted on the emergency item, unless it is clearly referred to in the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 ADRESSED TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL
BY THE SPEAKER OF THE SENATE OF KENYA**

25 March 2015
Ref: COS/IPU/GEN-CORR/VOL.1/46

Dear Mr. Secretary General,

In accordance with Article 14.2 of the IPU Statutes and Assembly Rule 11.1, I have the honour to request the inclusion of an emergency item in the agenda of the 132nd IPU Assembly, scheduled to take place in Hanoi, Viet Nam, from 28 March to 1 April 2015, entitled:

“The role of parliaments in combating the negative effects of climate change”.

I enclose a brief explanatory memorandum and a draft resolution outlining the scope of our request.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed)

David EKWEE ETHURO
Speaker of the Senate of Kenya

THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENTS IN COMBATING THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Explanatory memorandum submitted by the delegation of Kenya

Climate change is one of the cardinal environmental issues of our time. Defined as a shift in the statistical distribution of weather patterns over an extended period of time, climate change is a gathering storm that will affect the economy, health, safety, food production and food security, sustainability and development.

Observations show that global average air and ocean temperatures are rising, accompanied by widespread snow and ice melt. Across the continents, many natural systems are being altered by regional climate changes, particularly temperature increases. Observations since 1961 reveal an increase in global average ocean temperatures to depths of at least 3000 metres, with the oceans absorbing more than 80 per cent of the heat being pumped into the climate system (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change).

Changes in atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases (water vapour, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, ozone and chlorofluorocarbons), land cover and solar radiation alter the energy balance of the climate system. Greenhouse gas emissions resulting from human activity have risen steadily since preindustrial times. Over the last decade or so, there has been a notable increase in the amounts of nitrous oxide and methane owing to synthetic agricultural inputs and fossil fuel use.

The effects of climate change in developing countries, particularly Africa, include but are not limited to the following:

- (i) More frequent heavy rainfall over most land areas, consistent with warming and increased atmospheric vapour, coupled, at the other extreme, with more intense and longer droughts over large swaths of the tropics;
- (ii) Ecosystem degradation and the consequent lack of future sustainable development capacity;
- (iii) Climate-related conflicts and regional humanitarian disasters;
- (iv) Increased desertification and a rise in the proportion of arid and semi-arid lands from 5 to 8 per cent, affecting 60 million hectares (Ministry of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, Kenya);
- (v) A probable drop in net crop revenues of up to 90 per cent by 2100, with small-scale farms being most affected; this has the potential to cause agricultural losses of up to 7 per cent of gross domestic product (Ministry of Environment, Water and Natural Resources Kenya);
- (vi) Extreme wind and turbulence that could reduce fisheries output by up to 60 per cent;
- (vii) An anticipated increase in temperature in the next 50 years of between 2°C and 3°C in East Africa, which is likely to have a negative impact on coffee and tea production and indeed may result in the disappearance of coffee- and tea-growing areas in Kenya, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania (Ministry of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, Kenya);

- (viii) Exacerbation of the already bad water situation if the current trend continues unchecked; climate change puts additional pressure on water availability, accessibility and demand in Africa;
- (ix) A continued decline in the volume of water stored in glaciers and snow, thereby reducing river flows; this in turn has an impact on natural ecosystems and exposes up to 30 per cent of species to the risk of irreversible extinction (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change).

Climate change is expected to have an adverse impact on coastal areas and installations, as coral reefs, ports and harbours are destroyed and the potential for tourism reduced. If the seas rise, millions of people living in coastal areas will be affected by flooding, and industries and human settlements located in coastal areas will be negatively affected.

Climate change will also continue to have a negative impact on the health of people living in areas with little capacity to adapt in the face of the anticipated increase in the incidence of infectious diseases and malaria. Global warming is likely to see malaria arrive in areas that were previously malaria-free because of their altitude.

Climate change-related resource conflicts are bound to prompt more population movements within and across borders as people search for water, pastures and arable land.

THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENTS IN COMBATING THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Draft resolution submitted by the delegation of KENYA

The 132nd Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

- (1) *Acknowledging* that climate change knows no boundaries and affects populations indiscriminately,
- (2) *Aware* that the worsening problems of social justice, equity and human rights brought about by climate change compromise the achievement of the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals,
- (3) *Also aware* that parliamentarians, together with other stakeholders, bear responsibility for identifying and effectively overseeing the implementation of a common response to the challenges of climate change,
- (4) *Determined* to take up that responsibility and provide the required leadership,
- (5) *Further aware* that national parliaments believe that the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change will provide a framework for securing future agreements on climate change,
 1. *Urges* parliaments vigorously to exercise their constitutional authority to press forward with national commitments by developed countries and actions by developing countries to minimize greenhouse gas emissions and strengthen mitigation measures;
 2. *Appeals* to the international community to strengthen global cooperation and partnership so as to help developing and least developed countries bolster their resilience to climate change-related disasters;
 3. *Urges* parliaments to remain committed to assisting their respective national governments to implement existing conventions and agreements with a view to building sustainable prosperity in each of their countries;
 4. *Also urges* parliaments to play a leading role in the preparation and approval of climate change-related national budgets and the development of legislation targeting issues such as emission reduction, adaptation strategies, gender-based development programmes and the development of early warning capabilities.