



Inter-Parliamentary Union  
For democracy. For everyone.

# 133<sup>rd</sup> IPU ASSEMBLY AND RELATED MEETINGS

Geneva, 17 – 21.10.2015

Assembly  
Item 2

A/133/2-P.1  
9 October 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 133<sup>rd</sup> Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union submitted by the delegation of the United Arab Emirates

On 8 October 2015, the Secretary General received from the Secretary General of the Federal National Council of the United Arab Emirates a request and accompanying documents for the inclusion in the agenda of the 133<sup>rd</sup> Assembly of an emergency item entitled:

"Strengthening the role of parliamentarians in the effective implementation of the principles of international humanitarian law and international conventions on the protection of refugees".

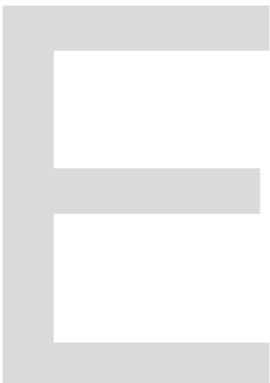
Delegates to the 133<sup>rd</sup> Assembly will find attached the text of the communication submitting the request (Annex I), as well as an explanatory memorandum (Annex II) and a draft resolution (Annex III) in support thereof.

The 133<sup>rd</sup> Assembly will be required to take a decision on the request of the delegation of United Arab Emirates on Sunday, 18 October 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  
SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE FEDERAL NATIONAL COUNCIL  
OF THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**

21 September 2015

Dear Mr. Secretary General,

The delegation of the United Arab Emirates would like to propose an emergency item entitled:

"Strengthening the role of parliamentarians in the effective implementation of the  
principles of international humanitarian law and international conventions  
on the protection of refugees"

on the agenda of the 133<sup>rd</sup> IPU Assembly.

An explanatory note and resolution draft will be sent later.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed)

Mohammed Salem AL-MAZROUI  
Secretary General of the Federal National  
Council of the United Arab Emirates

**STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS IN THE EFFECTIVE  
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN  
LAW AND INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS ON THE PROTECTION OF REFUGEES**

***Explanatory memorandum submitted by the delegation of the United Arab Emirates***

The delegation of the United Arab Emirates would like to present this emergency item entitled *Strengthening the role of parliamentarians in the effective implementation of the principles of international humanitarian law and international conventions on the protection of refugees*. It focuses on the tragedies that have arisen from the sharp rise in numbers of migrants and refugees, particularly from some Middle Eastern and North African countries, where military conflicts and political and sectarian tensions prevail. This situation has led to a loss of human dignity and human rights, as well as to violations of international humanitarian law and international conventions on the protection of refugees including the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) and its Protocol (1967).

The delegation of the United Arab Emirates considers that the deteriorating refugee situation represents a major violation of human rights in countries of origin and an imminent threat to the political, economic and social stability of host countries. According to a report from the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, the rate of asylum claims has increased by 23 per cent during 2015, bringing the total number of refugees across the world to more than 30 million.

Furthermore, according to the United Nations Secretary-General, conflicts in some Middle Eastern and North African countries with major military, political, religious or sectarian tensions, generate one refugee every four seconds. Currently, half the population of Syria is at risk of becoming a migrant. For the last six months, tens of thousands in Yemen, Iraq and Libya have been emigrating every day. More than 2,000 migrants have died from either being drowned at sea or from exposure to severe weather conditions. There are currently around 30 countries around the world considered to generate the most refugees.

**In view of the above, the delegation of the United Arab Emirates would like to present the said emergency item for the following reasons:**

1. It is important to advocate and confirm an active role for parliamentarians in maintaining the right to asylum as an internationally recognized human right and ensuring the protection of millions of those whose rights have been violated or have been subject to threats due to military, political and religious conflicts. The delegation of the United Arab Emirates hereby stresses that many countries of the world, whether countries of origin or host countries, do not attach importance to the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) and its Protocol (1967). Moreover, those same countries do not respect refugee-related international law: that law aims to provide safe shelter for refugees and to create appropriate living conditions that take account of human dignity, particularly with respect to needy, vulnerable, homeless and elderly people.
2. It is important to advocate the active involvement of parliamentarians in the enforcement of international humanitarian law: that requires the joint efforts of those in the international community, and cooperation among rich countries, poor countries and international organizations, particularly the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees. The involvement of parliamentarians will reduce the risks associated with military, sectarian, religious and political hotspots, in terms of controlling immigration waves, refugee resettlement and internationally mandated intervention for the purposes of accomplishing political and military stability in countries of origin. The bloody events in Syria, Yemen, Libya and other countries have proved the inability of the international community to implement its commitments: that has led to the hegemony of illegal groups, threats to populations and the spread of waves of violence and fanaticism that could demolish all areas of civilian life. This has led some countries to intervene in order to protect their national security without a United Nations mandate, which in turn, has led to a reconsideration of the consistency of international norms on the protection of humankind, particularly the homeless.

3. It is important to advocate the active involvement of parliamentarians in maintaining compliance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, particularly Article 14, which stipulates that "Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from oppression..." Therefore, the delegation of the United Arab Emirates considers that the right to asylum is a right which applies to the individual as soon as their rights and principal freedom are subject to grave violation, whether within the country of their citizenship or in another country. Furthermore, this right is regulated in conformity with international humanitarian law and is thus not granted by the host country. Host countries must not impose on refugees provisions which do not appear in international conventions or the rules of international legitimacy; host countries must not force refugees to waive some or all of the rights granted to them under the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951).
4. One of the fundamental reasons that caused the delegation of the United Arab Emirates to present this item was its recognition of the gross violations committed in countries where military, political or sectarian conflicts have broken out. It also recognises the duties of other countries to host refugees under the Geneva Convention (IV) (1949), particularly Article 44, which concerns the protection of civilians in wartime and confirms that all the countries of the world are responsible for the protection of human safety and the provision of appropriate conditions, including shelter, housing, health and food, to those who have been deported from their countries.
5. The delegation of the United Arab Emirates considers that international organizations, including the Inter-Parliamentary Union, should assume basic responsibilities to document and enhance respect for refugee rights, maintain their legal position, and provide the necessary protection through the provisions of international humanitarian law and international conventions on the protection of refugees.
6. The delegation of the United Arab Emirates notes that currently, refugees' rights continue to be violated, while host countries are taking in increasing numbers of refugees. The delegation considers that those factors might represent a threat to international peace and security, and might impact political, social and economic situations, particularly if the host country population experiences increased unemployment, a housing crisis, sectarianism or religious fanaticism at the same time as refugee numbers increase. Their countries could also become a fertile environment for terrorists and extremist groups, as well as for sectarian and religious extremist groups; in turn, this could lead to a deterioration in severe international terrorism issues.
7. The delegation of the United Arab Emirates would like to call attention to the need to advocate the active involvement of parliamentarians in tackling refugee-related issues, not as a political problem (the circumstances of which might become more complicated), but first and foremost as a social and humanitarian issue, so that such situations in the future do not lead to more casualties or drowned refugees.

Ultimately, the delegation of the United Arab Emirates would like to underline how much the refugee crisis has escalated and its serious consequences. It is no longer possible to postpone tackling such issues, or procrastinate about how to reconcile competing wills and interests across the international community: an urgent solution is now required in which parliaments and governments across the world cooperate, in line with the principles of international humanitarian law and international conventions on the protection of refugees.

**STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS IN THE EFFECTIVE  
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN  
LAW AND INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS ON THE PROTECTION OF REFUGEES**

***Draft resolution submitted by the delegation of the UNITED ARAB EMIRATES***

The 133<sup>rd</sup> Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

- (1) *Expressing its utmost concern* about the terrible humanitarian tragedies caused by the recent worsening of the refugee crisis which has itself led to a rise in the number of refugees to over 30 million – an increase of 23 per cent in the last three months of this year – and which makes this migrant and refugee crisis, in the wake of the deterioration of the political and military situations in some Middle Eastern and North African countries, the worst refugee crisis since World War II,
- (2) *Being deeply troubled* by the suffering and death recently endured by thousands of migrants and refugees from some Middle Eastern and North African countries, who died by drowning, exposure to severe weather or lack of food or shelter,
- (3) *Noting with unease* that the United Nations estimates that over 3,000 refugees and migrants from some Middle Eastern and North African countries have been registered daily over the last three months of this year and that more than half the population of those countries are at risk of becoming migrants or refugees, particularly in Syria, Yemen and Libya, a situation which exacerbates the humanitarian aspect for refugees still further,
- (4) *Underlining* the seriousness of the conditions reported by the International Labour Organization with respect to the social and economic pressures arising from the deterioration of the refugee crisis over the last three months in host countries -- particularly European countries – and in view of rising levels of unemployment in those countries, of refugee child labour, of the lower chances of benefiting from public services, and of their worsening quality, as well as lower social cohesion between refugees and local communities, all of which are factors which threaten European stability and security and hence affect international peace and security,
- (5) *Taking into consideration* the United Nations Charter and Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which acknowledge that all people, without discrimination, should be able to enjoy their basic rights and freedoms, and which advocates the enhancement of international cooperation for the resolution of problems of a humanitarian nature,
- (6) *Recalling* the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) and its Protocol (1967), which provides that refugees shall enjoy their basic rights and freedoms, and which emphasizes the social and humanitarian nature of issues relating to refugees, without any discrimination based on ethnicity, religion or country of origin,
- (7) *Also recalling* the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their additional protocols of 1977, particularly as regards the preferential treatment of refugees and the need to protect refugees from persecution and fear as well as to provide the necessary protection to child refugees below the age of fifteen and to other vulnerable groups,
- (8) *Referring* to the Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (1950) and United Nations General Assembly resolution 51/73 (1996), particularly as regards the condemnation of the exploitation of child refugees and their use as soldiers or human shields in armed conflicts, as well as of other actions which endanger their safety or threaten their personal security,
- (9) *Renewing* its commitment to the principles of international humanitarian law, international law on refugees and international human rights law as regards the duty to ensure international protection for refugees, whether through provisional or permanent measures, so as to safeguard their legal and social rights,

1. *Calls on* parliaments (within the framework of their national constitutional role) to cooperate with national governmental and non-governmental organizations and with regional and international organizations, in order to tackle the main causes of poverty, conflict and violent extremism, and to combat ethnic and racial discrimination within the same country, as such phenomena constitute a key reason behind migration flows;
2. *Also calls on* parliaments to cooperate with the relevant national organizations and *further calls on* regional and international parliamentary organizations to cooperate with regional and international governmental organizations, in order to develop programmes and projects that aim to spread a culture of tolerance and moderation and the principles of common international values, as well to combat underdevelopment, illiteracy and fanaticism of any kind;
3. *Urges* governments across the world to comply with the principle of non-interference in the domestic affairs of other nations, of respect for national sovereignty, of peaceful settlement of disputes and of the non-use of both force and the threat of the use of force, so that the peoples of the world might avoid the horrors of conflict and war and of flows of migrants, forced to leave their home countries;
4. *Requires* the United Nations and other regional and international organizations to recognise the principle of "shared international responsibility" in order to protect refugees, to provide urgent humanitarian aid, to support host countries, to ensure that refugees enjoy their internationally recognized human rights, to expedite the implementation of the international and regional cooperation programmes which aim to strengthen sustainable economic development;
5. *Calls on* the United Nations and its respective agencies, particularly the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, to revise previous international conventions on the status of refugees, particularly the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951), so as to include the definition of a refugee, to extend the scope of applicability of such conventions and to establish binding international rules as regards the social and humanitarian aspects of refugee issues;
6. *Urges* host countries to comply with the principles of international humanitarian law and international conventions on the protection of refugees, in order to provide refugees with the care they need, to prevent attempts against their lives or dignity, to prohibit conviction without trial and to take all necessary precautionary measures to save the lives of refugees, who should, in turn, undertake to comply with both the legal obligations imposed on them in their host country and those measures designed to maintain public order;
7. *Requires* the parties to any dispute to accept immediately and unconditionally humanitarian aid operations for the civilian population, to respect and protect relief agency staff and to prohibit attacks on and the destruction or degradation of the facilities and materials which are indispensable for the survival of civilian populations, such as foodstuffs, farming areas and crops, drinking water utilities, dams, bridges, nuclear energy plants, places of worship, archaeological and cultural monuments and the protection of hospitals, ambulances, medical and religious staff, as well as to respect international relief agencies;
8. *Calls for* the necessary implementation of and respect for the principle of "international relief" highlighted by international conventions relating to the protection of refugees; those conventions are designed to provide refugees with urgent and permanent aid regarding health and food; the States or parties involved in any conflict or tensions shall undertake to ensure that they facilitate the provision of humanitarian aid without damaging relief consignments and supplies destined by aid agencies for distribution to people in need and ensure the dispatch of those supplies is not delayed;
9. *Urges* occupying countries to undertake not to expel or displace civilian populations to other territories, except for critical reasons of war and, where such action is unavoidable, to ensure that they are repatriated to their homes immediately after any critical period has ended;

10. *Recalls* that no State may expel a refugee or send them to the border of a territory where their life would be threatened because of their ethnicity, religion, nationality, membership of a social group or political views, *and also* that States are required to give refugees, in the event they are not able to obtain permanent residence, a right of temporary residence, until they are able to be resettled in another country;
11. *Calls for* cooperation with the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees and all other international and regional organizations concerned with refugee affairs, in order to facilitate the task of supervising the application of international rules in terms of protecting refugees and providing them with accommodation and in order to ensure that the rights granted to them under international conventions are guaranteed;
12. *Also calls on* the United Nations and all countries that are active at the international and regional levels both to settle military conflicts in the Middle East in compliance with resolutions adopted by the international community, particularly resolution 2216 on Yemen, resolutions 2043 and 2139 on Syria and the final communiqué of the Action Group for Syria ("Geneva I" conference, June 2012), and also to enforce the United Nations resolutions on Libya and Iraq, in order to establish political and military stability in the region and to avoid threats to international peace and security.