



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

136th IPU Assembly

Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1- 5 April 2017



Assembly
Item 2

A/136/2-P.6
2 April 2017

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 136th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union submitted by the delegations of Belgium, Kenya and the United Kingdom

On 2 April 2017, the Secretary General received from the delegations of Belgium, Kenya and the United Kingdom a request and accompanying documents for the inclusion in the agenda of the 136th Assembly of an emergency item entitled:

"Urgent international action to save millions of people from famine and drought in parts of Africa and Yemen".

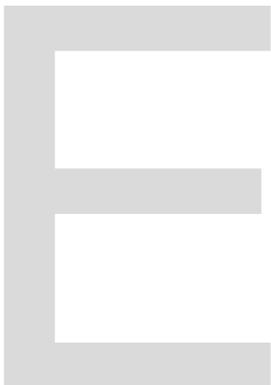
Delegates to the 136th Assembly will find attached a draft resolution (Annex) in support thereof.

The 136th Assembly will be required to take a decision on the request of the delegations of Belgium, Kenya and the United Kingdom on Sunday, 2 April 2017.

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- (d) The subject of a proposal that has been withdrawn by its authors or rejected by the Assembly cannot be included in the draft resolution submitted on the emergency item, unless it is clearly referred to in the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



#IPU136

**URGENT INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO SAVE MILLIONS OF PEOPLE FROM
FAMINE AND DROUGHT IN PARTS OF AFRICA AND YEMEN**

Draft resolution submitted by the delegations of BELGIUM, KENYA and the UNITED KINGDOM

The 136th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

- (1) *Gravely concerned* about the humanitarian situation in East Africa, the Horn of Africa, Nigeria and Yemen, where millions of people are facing the real threat of starvation due to famine and drought, and dire circumstances of food insecurity,
- (2) *Recognizing* that some of these nations are facing the third consecutive year of drought causing thirst and hunger, decimating livestock, destroying livelihoods, spreading disease and triggering large-scale population movements,
- (3) *Noting* that Ethiopia and Kenya are among the world's top 10 refugee host countries and that refugees are especially vulnerable in the current crisis,
- (4) *Appreciating* the UN call for urgent international action to address the situation affecting more than 20 million people, and *recognizing* that other parts of Africa face food insecurity and drought,
- (5) *Recalling* the call for concerted global action issued during a report to the UN Security Council by the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Stephen O'Brien, on 10 March 2017 after visiting countries facing famine or at risk of famine, which followed an earlier call for urgent action by the UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, on 22 February 2017,
- (6) *Deeply alarmed* that the UN Under-Secretary-General observed that, from the start of 2017 the international community "is facing the largest humanitarian crisis since the creation of the United Nations", *fully recognizing* that the disastrous impacts of violent conflict in creating famine should be a matter for global concern, not just for those countries directly affected,
- (7) *Expressing deep concern* about the slow response of the global community in addressing the humanitarian situation in the nations affected by famine and drought, in terms of mobilizing resources to offer relief aid and other forms of assistance to the affected populations and nations,
- (8) *Acknowledging* that failed rains and changing weather phenomena largely caused by global warming have contributed to the drought in East Africa and the Horn of Africa,
- (9) *Considering* the importance of the right to food, which is implicitly included in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and that the right to life and the right to health can only be enjoyed if the right to food is guaranteed,
- (10) *Mindful* of the commitments made by leaders of all UN Member States in September 2015 to advance the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, including, in particular, Global Goal 2 on zero hunger and Global Goal 6 on clean water and sanitation,
- (11) *Welcoming* the measures taken and the efforts of governments of countries affected by famine and drought, UN specialized agencies, the European Union and non-governmental organizations to mitigate and combat famine in several areas of East Africa, the Horn of Africa and Nigeria,
- (12) *Obligated* by the IPU's own commitments in the Hanoi Declaration to advance the Global Goals by 2030 to ensure parliaments hold governments to account in turning words into action in implementing effective measures to achieve such goals, leaving no one behind,

(13) *Recognizing* that it is only through concerted international action that this potentially unprecedented famine and the looming humanitarian catastrophe facing many parts of Africa can be averted,

1. *Calls for* immediate action by the international community in support of the appropriate global humanitarian bodies to take urgent steps to address the current famine crisis affecting millions of people in Africa and Yemen, including by ensuring that adequate human and financial resources are dedicated to this effort;
2. *Calls on* the United Nations to commit the resources necessary to provide humanitarian support and nutritional relief to the critically affected areas in the Horn of Africa, as well as long-term development assistance;
3. *Also calls on* Members of the IPU who have not already done so to exert influence as appropriate on their governments so that they commit to funding voluntary humanitarian aid contributions to address this crisis;
4. *Further calls on* the United Nations and the international community to remain focused on those most vulnerable to the current drought and famine conditions, especially women, children and the aged;
5. *Urges* the Women, Gender and Development directorate of the African Union, the Pan-African Women's Organization (PAWO), UN Women, the IPU Bureau of Women Parliamentarians and other relevant international organizations to support the affected populations, especially women and children, in rebuilding their livelihoods and strengthening their capacity to care for their families, so as to enable them to regain their health;
6. *Also urges* the global community to assist the affected countries in developing drought resilience mechanisms, including by eliminating the root causes of famine and drought;
7. *Further urges* the global community to step up climate change mitigation interventions aimed at curbing global warming and invest in measures that support vulnerable countries in adapting to climate change;
8. *Calls* in particular on governments to end hostilities and immediately remove anything that hinders humanitarian access;
9. *Urges* national authorities to ensure the safety of the staff and activities of humanitarian organizations, as well as operational healthcare infrastructure and its staff in the regions affected by famine and drought;
10. *Also urges* governments, relevant international and regional organizations and *calls upon* the IPU Secretariat to support countries in strengthening their democratic institutions, including close attention to the rule of law;
11. *Further urges* the global community to assist the affected countries in developing comprehensive national resilience mechanisms, including by addressing root causes of famine and drought;
12. *Reaffirms* that, beyond this call for immediate global action to address the current famine and drought crisis, access to food and water is a basic human right and famine must never be used as a weapon of war;
13. *Calls on* parliamentarians of IPU Member Parliaments to prioritize legislation that promotes food sufficiency and proper mitigation measures against famine and drought.