



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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136th IPU Assembly

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

Resolution adopted by consensus by the 136th IPU Assembly (Dhaka, 4 April 2017)*

The 136th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

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,

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,

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,

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,

Mindful of 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 or at risk of famine, which followed an earlier call for decisive action by the UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, on 22 February 2017,

Deeply alarmed that the UN Under-Secretary-General observed that, since the start of 2017, the international community "is facing the largest humanitarian crisis since the creation of the United Nations"; and *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,

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,

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,

* The delegation of India expressed a reservation on preambular paragraphs 5 and 6, and operative paragraphs 6 and 11.

Considering the importance of the right to food, which is implicitly included in the UN 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, including access to clean water, is guaranteed,

Mindful of the commitments made by leaders of all UN Member States in September 2015 to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, including, in particular, Goal 2 on zero hunger and Goal 6 on clean water and sanitation,

Welcoming the measures taken and efforts made by the 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,

Obligated by the IPU's own commitments in the Hanoi Declaration (2015) to advance the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 to ensure parliaments hold governments to account in turning words into action by implementing effective measures that will achieve such goals and leave no one behind,

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

1. *Appeals for* immediate action by the international community to support the appropriate global humanitarian bodies in taking urgent steps that will address the current famine crisis affecting millions of people in East Africa, the Horn of Africa, Nigeria 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 parts of Africa and Yemen, as well as long-term development assistance;
3. *Also calls on* Members of the IPU that have not already done so to exert influence, as appropriate, on their governments so that the latter commit to funding voluntary humanitarian aid contributions to address this crisis;
4. *Invites* IPU Member Parliaments to encourage their governments to contribute to the extensive international campaign of the United Nations to raise funds in order to finance the fight against the famine; one of the possibilities for raising these funds is through voluntary means, using the funding model followed by UNITAID;
5. *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 elderly;
6. *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 employment prospects, and strengthening their capacity to care for their families, so as to enable them to regain their health;
7. *Also urges* the global community to assist the affected countries in developing comprehensive national resilience mechanisms, including by addressing the root causes of famine and drought;
8. *Further urges* the global community to step up climate change mitigation and adaptation interventions aimed at curbing global warming and invest in measures that support vulnerable countries in addressing climate change;

9. *Calls in particular* on governments to take appropriate and immediate actions to end conflict and hostilities and remove anything that hinders humanitarian access in parts of Africa and Yemen;
10. *Urges* national authorities to ensure the safety of the staff and activities of humanitarian organizations, as well as operational health-care infrastructure and health-care staff in the regions affected by famine and drought, especially if they are also affected by conflict;
11. *Also urges* governments, relevant international and regional organizations, and the IPU Secretariat to support countries in strengthening their democratic institutions, including by paying close attention to the rule of law;
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; famine must never be used as a weapon of war and those who use it in this way should be brought to justice;
13. *Calls on* parliamentarians of IPU Member Parliaments to prioritize legislation that promotes food security and proper mitigation measures against famine and drought.