



## Report on the UNDP -IPU Consultation on Minority Representation in Parliament

(Geneva, 19-20 March 2007)

This document summarizes the main conclusions and recommendations of the consultation on minority representation in parliament that took place at IPU headquarters, Geneva, on 19 and 20 March 2007. The consultation, which was a joint initiative of the United Nations Development Programme and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, brought together representatives of parliaments, international organizations, NGOs and academia. The recommendations are meant to assist IPU and UNDP in planning data collection and advocacy work on minority representation.

### I. Overview

#### A. Overview of the Consultation

A key requirement of a democratic parliament is that it should be socially and politically representative. Parliament should reflect the social diversity of the population, including ethnic, religious and linguistic groups that are often marginalized. Political participation is a central pillar of minority rights, and fostering a sense of inclusion is in the critical interest of stable societies. Yet it is important to recognise the complexity of the notion of 'minorities', and to avoid locking people into a category or an identity that is determined by others. People are both individuals and members of a group, and these identities can change over time.

Building on their successful work on women's representation, IPU and UNDP wish to collaborate on the issue of minority representation by focusing on data collection and advocacy. To this end, UNDP and IPU organized a consultation on March 19 and 20<sup>th</sup> at the IPU Headquarters in Geneva that brought together representatives of parliaments, international organizations, NGOs and academia to make initial recommendations about the best way to move forward. A list of the participants in the consultation is attached as an Annex A to this document; Annex B contains the agenda for the consultation.

## B. Regional Perspectives on Minority Issues

The members of parliament at the meeting were particularly useful in providing a sense of the political sensitivities around the issue of minority rights, as well as the variety of dynamics surrounding the issue of minority representation. One session during the consultation was dedicated to providing a series of country examples on the issue of minority representation in a variety of countries. This brief summary report is not intended to provide a detailed restatement of the presentations that were made, but rather simply to indicate the diversity of minority representation issues faced in different contexts.

Honorable Catalina Soberanis described the situation in Guatemala, where the 1996 Peace Agreements specifically addressed women's and minority political representation. Census data from 2004, based on self-identification, states that 40% of Guatemala's population is indigenous. The previous census, where indigenous people were identified by the census officer, gave a much higher figure of 56%. The large gap suggests that many people do not wish to self-identify as indigenous, for fear of social exclusion. 11% of parliamentarians were found to be indigenous, when the question was asked for the first time in 2005. There is a clear case of under representation in comparison with their numbers in the population.

In Ukraine, 134 minority groups have been identified, as indicated by Honorable Hennadiy Udovenko with problems including the lack of official recognition for some groups (Crimean Tartars) and geographical disparity of the minority groups throughout the country. Questions about the future political development of the country have heightened tensions and politicized some issues relating to minorities, particularly the use of Ukrainian and Russian languages, sometimes at the expense of attention to improving the political participation of smaller national minorities.

Honorable Liberate Nicayenzi described the situation of the Batwa community in Burundi. The Batwa represent 1% of the population, and the Constitution provides 6 reserved seats for this group at the National Assembly and Senate. While this constitutional provision numerically over-represents the population in parliament, this representation has not always translated to greater inclusion of the Batwa community. The example was given of the limited number of Batwa in the public service.

In Lebanon, official recognition of the country's religious communities dates from the 1930s, explained Honorable Nabil de Freige. The distribution of seats within the Parliaments is allocated on the basis of religious affiliation, between Christian and Muslims but also further sub-divided within these two groups among various sects. The equal distribution of reserved seats between Christian and Muslim communities in the parliament has been done as a political settlement and does not necessarily reflect the percentage the respective communities in the population.

In addition to the interventions by members of parliament, Dr. Martin Kovats discussed the situation of Roma/Sinti populations in Central and Eastern Europe – noting the importance given to the issue in the European Union Enlargement process. He referred to the current "Decade of Roma Inclusion" initiative, from 2005-2015, and noted the variety of approaches to the Roma issue taken by countries in Central and Eastern Europe. He noted, for example, that the relatively favourable position of Hungary on minority issues is influenced by the presence of Hungarian minorities in many neighbouring countries.

## II. Data Collection

### A. Current State of Data Collection on Minority Representation

Participants agreed that additional data was potentially very valuable in supporting evidence-based advocacy to increase minority representation. They underlined that obtaining this data would not necessarily be easy. It was also agreed that the data may not be easily compared across countries, since minority issues tend to be very country-specific.

The most complete data set on minority representation in parliament is found in the publication by the Minority Rights Group International (MRG) entitled, *Electoral Systems and the Protection and Participation of Minorities*. This publication was prepared by Andrew Reynolds and covers some 50 countries. Some participants in the consultation took issue with some of the data for their countries – commenting on the minority groups that were included and excluded, or on the accuracy of figures. Their comments focused less on the minority representatives in parliament than on the data on the percentage of the minority group in the country's population.

### B. Challenges

Three particularly problematic areas were identified:

- Defining minority groups. There is no settled definition of minorities under international law. United Nations documents refer to 'ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities', without seeking further precision. This is perhaps not a bad thing, since minority identities involve self-identification and can be fluid over time. In some countries, minority groups are fairly well defined and may be entitled to special protections under national law. It was generally considered good practice to consider how minorities themselves wish to be defined or categorized. Although the United Nations considers indigenous peoples and minorities separately, the political participation of both groups has a lot in common, in that both are often marginalized, even though indigenous peoples in many countries may in fact constitute the majority group. A distinction may exist between what may be considered national minorities, which may have a long standing presence in the community, and more recent immigrant populations which may not always be recognized by the state as a minority group, but may be even more excluded from the political process.
- Counting minorities. This element involves both identifying minority representatives in parliament, as well as the percentage of the minority community in the broader population. Figures for the population of minority groups can be both highly contentious and highly political, and conducting a census on the basis of minority identity can be a controversial act in itself. Estimates of minority communities in the population may be underplay the size of minority communities, while minority communities may overestimate their size.
- The nature of minority representation. Should only parliamentarians from ethnic parties be counted, as they are specifically elected to represent the interests of that community? Or should all parliamentarians of minority background be counted, even where they may not be perceived by segments of the minority population as representing the community? How are individuals who may identify with multiple groups categorized? It was agreed that it is important to go "beyond the numbers" and

look at whether representation translates into power and what actions could be taken to create a more inclusive political system.

### C. Recommendations

A number of recommendations were made as IPU and UNDP approach the issue of collecting data on minority representation:

- Data collection must go beyond head-counting (i.e. knowing how many minority representatives there are in parliament). It should also focus on how minority representatives are able to make an effective and meaningful contribution to parliamentary work.
- Parliaments should be the primary source of data. A questionnaire should be prepared for parliaments that would include, but not be limited to, questions about the number of minority representatives and information related to their proportion in the population.
- It is not necessary to seek to pin down a legal definition of minorities for the purposes of the questionnaire. It should simply refer to 'ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities', in the same way as international conventions. This politically sensitive approach would leave it up to parliaments to respond in the manner that they are most comfortable with, but would not limit the kind of answers they may give. Participants in the consultation recognized that allowing parliaments to self-define minority status would limit the ability to compare data across country.
- It is important to frame the questionnaire in a sensitive way, to use appropriate language and to explain the broad understanding on the definition of minorities. The minority rights community has a lot of experience to share in this respect, and a number of the participants volunteered to review and comment on proposed language for the questionnaire.
- In addition to assessing numerical representation in parliament, participants suggested collecting information on a range of other issues: 1) provisions on the representation of minorities in electoral laws, 2) what affirmative action parliaments are taking to promote minority representation (outreach to minority communities, use of minority languages in parliamentary proceedings, etc.), 3) whether a particular committee has a remit to address minority issues, 4) the existence of other mechanisms to promote minority interests (minority caucuses),
- Data collection should encompass people from minority communities as well as indigenous communities.
- Parliaments should be encouraged to provide sex-disaggregated data in order to be able to better understand the representation of minority women.
- Data collected from parliaments should be cross-checked with other sources.

It is probable that there would not be a universal response to any data collection initiative. An initial reservoir of data should be collected that will be built up over time. It is also possible that a range of additional data could be collected at a later point in time. For example, collecting information from minority MPs on what things helped them become engaged in politics and helped them get elected. The interaction between political parties and minorities – including

both minority and non-minority based parties – was also identified as a topic for later exploration.

### III. Advocacy

#### A. Current Status

A number of the participants provided an overview of their current work on the issue of advocacy for greater minority political inclusion. Many, but not all, of the advocacy strategies are linked to international instruments on minority representation. While there is a lot of activity on minority issues, there was a unanimous view that a focus on political representation was important and that greater work with parliamentarians was extremely useful. It was also felt that, since much of the work on minority issues comes from the human rights community – which tends to focus on the rights of individuals – an approach that focuses more proactively on political inclusion was also welcome. Advocacy efforts of the following groups were reviewed:

Minority Rights Group International (MRG). Mark Lattimer (MRG's Executive Director) explained that MRG works to secure the rights of ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and indigenous people worldwide and promotes cooperation and understanding between communities. Their advocacy efforts have generally taken the following forms:

- Establishing partnerships with national organizations representing minorities in order to support dialogue and ensure impact at the national level;
- Organizing training to support minority groups' advocacy work on civil rights, access to the benefits of development processes and political inclusion (for example during peace negotiations);
- Holding activities aimed at developing the new generation of leaders and human rights activists and leaders (for example building communication skills, capacity building of mentors, training on human rights);
- Supporting advocacy efforts at the international level (by helping communities to attend meetings at the European Union, United Nations, African Commission levels) and therefore raise international awareness and lobby at the international level;
- Supporting the development and formulation of national development strategies (on poverty eradication, land issues, education);
- Facilitating meetings between government representatives and minority communities (by organizing round tables);
- Facilitating the creation of regional networks at the parliamentary level by supporting the creation of parliamentary caucuses (for example the national parliamentary caucuses on pastoralist issues in some East African States and the development of a regional network of MPs involved on pastoralist issues) together with the support to lobbying activities at the regional level.
- Strengthening parliaments' role in conflict prevention, for example resolving pastoralist conflicts

The OSCE High Commissioner for National Minorities. Prof. Krzysztof Drzewicki (Legal Advisor at the OSCE HCNM) highlighted that the OSCE has developed specific tools for minorities as its

core responsibilities in terms of conflict prevention. While the OSCE HCNM is not a supervisory mechanism, it does refer to international standards to which each State has agreed, as its principal framework for analysis and the foundation of its specific recommendations. Based on the assumption that integration should respect diversity, the Lund Recommendations on the Effective Participation of National Minorities in Public Life detail how to support effective participation and representation on the basis of international law. The purpose of the Lund Recommendation is to encourage and facilitate the adoption by States of specific measures to alleviate tensions related to national minorities. This set of 24 recommendations and explanatory note provide a strong normative framework on the question of representation. The OSCE Guidelines to Assist National Minority Participation in the Electoral Process (the Warsaw Guidelines) is another tool developed by the OSCE that supports minority political participation.

The United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNOHCHR). Gay McDougall (UN Independent Expert on Minority Issues) described that in on 10 December 1948 States pledged that the UN can not remain indifferent to the Fate of Minorities. The responsibility of the UN specialized agencies and bodies to promote and protect minority rights, in accordance with their mandate, was reaffirmed in article 9 of the 1992 UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (UN Minorities Declaration). In that Declaration, States also pledged to protect the existence and identity of minorities within their territory, to establish conditions of equality and non-discrimination and to ensure effective participation of minorities in public life. States obligations towards the rights of persons belonging to minorities have also been laid down in Article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1996 as well as the Millennium Declaration of 2000, para 25, where States resolved “to strengthen the capacity of all our countries to implement the principles and practices of democracy and respect for human rights, including minority rights”. In 1995, the UN Working Group on Minorities was created as a subsidiary organ of the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights. The Working Group aims at being a forum for dialogue. Firstly, it facilitates greater awareness of the differing perspectives on minority issues and, consequently, to seek better understanding and mutual respect among minorities and between minorities and Governments. Secondly, it can act as a mechanism for hearing suggestions and making recommendations for the peaceful and constructive solution to problems involving minorities, through the promotion and protection of their rights. The Working Group has considered good and less good experiences in considering the participation of minorities in public life in different countries and has created various tools to understand better minority rights and obligations of States and the UN to promote and protect those rights, such as the Commentary on the UN Minorities Declaration, the Minority Profile and Matrix and a guidance note on actions to be taken to improve the representation, responsiveness and accountability of policing and other public services to minorities and communities' concerns within different countries.

As explained by Fiona Blyth-Kubota, the Minority Fellowship Programme which began in 2005 offers the opportunity for minority representatives to be trained to understand better how to use the international human rights protection system. As part of the follow-up to this programme, OHCHR has supported community led training workshops with a view to facilitating discussions and negotiations between minorities and local authorities on ensuring the effective participation of minorities in decisions affecting them at the local level. In 2005 the new mandate of the Independent Expert on Minority Issues was also established which provides opportunities for minority representatives the UN system and Governments to cooperate further with a human rights mechanism.

The Council of Europe. Honorable Marieke Sanders ten-Holte explained that advocacy efforts within the Council of Europe have benefited from the Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, as well as the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, both of which have been useful tools for advancing the rights of minority groups. The Charter for

Regional or Minority Languages has been effective thanks to its monitoring system and ongoing dialogue between parliamentarians, governments and ombudsmen.

## B. Challenges

In discussing ongoing advocacy efforts, there was a feeling that a focus on inclusive parliaments, as well as the rights of individual minority groups, was extremely welcome and had the potential to be done in a way that eased, rather than increased, tensions between minority and majority communities. Nonetheless, the consultation focused on a number of challenges in designing advocacy programs that would promote more inclusive political representation of minority groups.

The challenges discussed included the following:

- How do numbers of minority parliamentarians translate into power? Individual minority parliamentarians would likely not have the power to bring about changes on their own. They need to be part of a critical mass. With women's political participation, this can be achieved by reaching participation above particular thresholds. For minority groups, this can only likely happen if non-minority groups become effective allies for minority communities. Advocacy needs to be designed with this in mind.
- Political mobilisation along ethnic lines can be a force for division, which entrenches differences between communities rather than promoting inclusion. Reserved seats or quotas can be a useful means of ensuring representation of marginalized minorities, but where these techniques are applied to most or all seats in parliament this can entrench the ethnic divide, even as populations and identities shift over time. Bosnia and Lebanon were discussed as examples where the use of parliamentary and political quotas have entrenched ethnic or sectarian identities and, to some extent, the separation of different communities.
- Some members of parliament may be from a minority background, but may in no way consider themselves as representatives of that particular community. How are these issues addressed in the context of advocacy?
- Minority or indigenous groups may not want to get involved in political parties, as association with one or other of the parties could create tensions when dealing with another party.
- Generic appellations such as 'Roma' may cover a huge diversity of cultures. In addition, there is a fear that politicisation of Roma participation may increase their social exclusion. It is important to distinguish between the objective of the empowerment of Roma people, on one hand, and their political representation, on the other.
- Minority communities find it difficult to have a voice at the international level, as the marginalization is even greater at that level than at the national level. Some of the existing protection mechanisms and normative framework apply only at regional levels and the universality of such mechanisms is difficult to promote.

## C. Recommendations

The participants discussed several suggestions in order to promote and advocate for a better representation of minorities in parliaments. It is important to focus not only on the participation of minorities, but on their effective and meaningful participation. On a general note, 'One size fits all' prescriptions are to be avoided because of the diversity of minority situations. They

would not necessarily work across different countries, or at different stages of the same country's development. Whether mainstream political parties or ethnic parties form a better vehicle for ensuring minority representation is a fundamentally political question that is very country specific and may not be an area on which advocacy efforts should focus.

Despite the country-specific nature of issues of minority inclusion, the participants in the consultation did have recommendations in three main areas:

- 1) Building on the Lessons Learned from Advocacy Efforts on Women's Political Representation. Minority representation faces some, but not all, of the same challenges as women's representation. Minority communities can learn from women's political advancement, particularly in how they have used international normative frameworks (such as CEDAW) as an effective advocacy tool for addressing broader issues of political participation. Mechanisms such as status reports on the state of minorities in a country could be useful in stimulating dialogue about reform in a particular country. Special measures in Parliament could also be promoted, such as the use of specific parliamentary committees on minority issues. Disaggregated indicators are necessary for both along with an enhanced commitment of MPs. Some of the IPU's advocacy activities for women, such as the meeting of Women Speakers of Parliament or campaigning around International Women's Day, could usefully be adapted to the context of minority representation.
  
- 2) Awareness-Raising Activities. Even though the IPU and UNDP project will focus only at the parliamentary level, awareness raising needs to be promoted at local, national and international levels, together with specific activities addressing the lack of knowledge or information on minority issues and the need to engage with civil society:
  - Awareness raising for MPs and political parties on minority issues and the positive and enriching aspects of diversity.
  - More support to parliamentary committees and caucuses that are addressing minority issues or working on issues of promoting political inclusion. Under the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination as well as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (articles 25 and 27) Governments are required to report on minority participation. Reporting obligations under UN Human Rights Treaties and addressing minority participation can be used as an occasion for parliamentary hearings to evaluate progress on minority inclusion.
  - More information should be provided to parliamentarians on effective reporting to international UN bodies, treaties and other human rights monitoring systems. One avenue is a closer collaboration between the UN human rights bodies and the network of parliamentary human rights committees that is being developed by IPU. Follow-up on the recommendations of the UN Conference against Racism (Durban) and its reference to parliamentary committees could be another entry point for awareness-raising.
  - Support for the establishment of or work of the ombudsman on minority issues
  
- 3) Development of a Toolkit on Promoting Inclusive Parliaments. It would be helpful to have a toolkit focusing on good practice that parliaments can draw on in promoting greater political inclusion of minorities. A very broad range of topics could be incorporated in the toolkit, including the data collected by the UNDP and the IPU under this initiative. In addition, it would be useful to focus on good practice in the following areas:



- Use of minority languages in parliament
- Parliamentary committees on political inclusion or minority issues
- Minority caucuses and support by parliament to such caucuses
  
- Access to the press

Role of parliament in preparing and following up on national reports to UN treaty bodies

- An overview of the international normative framework on minority issues
- Ombudsmen on minority rights
- Inclusion of minority community members in the staff of parliaments
- Efforts by political parties to be inclusive of minority groups
- Outreach to minority communities.
- Options in electoral reform to improve minority political inclusion
- Key legislation that parliaments should enact to protect minority groups

An advisory committee should be established to assist in the preparation of the toolkit and to facilitate its acceptance by the IPU and key UNDP stakeholders. It would be helpful to launch such a toolkit by 10 December 2008, which will be the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UN Declaration of Human Rights.

Annex A:  
List of Consultation Participants

Julie Ballington	Programme Officer, Partnership between Men and Women, Inter-Parliamentary Union
Fiona Blyth-Kubota	Senior Human Rights Officer, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
Martin Chungong	Director, Division for the Promotion of Democracy, Inter-Parliamentary Union
Prof. Krzysztof Drzewicki	Legal Advisor, OSCE Office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities
Graham Fox	Human Rights Officer for the UN Independent Expert on Minority Issues
Hon. Nabil de Freige	President of the Parliamentary Committee on National Economy, Trade and Industry, Member of the Majlis al-Nuwwab, Lebanon
K. Scott Hubli	Parliamentary Development Policy Adviser, Democratic Governance Group, United Nations Development Programme
Zanofer Ismalebbe	Programme Officer – Human Rights Strengthening Programme (HURIST) and Human Rights Focal Point (UNDP Geneva) Programme Officer
Kareen Jabre	Programme Manager, Partnership between Men and Women, Inter-Parliamentary Union
Anders Johnsson	Secretary General, Inter-Parliamentary Union
Prof. Saskia Keuzenkamp	Head of the Research Group on Women, Family and Youth, Social and Cultural Planning Office (The Netherlands)
Dr. Martin Kovats	Lecturer at Birkbeck, University of London, expert on Roma and Sinti Issues
Mark Lattimer	Director, Minority Rights Group International
Gay McDougall	UN Independent Expert on Minority Issues
Soetkin Meertens	International Advocacy Team, Minority Rights Group International
Jakob Th. Möller	Alternate Member of the UN Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights

Hon. Liberate Nicayenzi	Member of the National Assembly, Burundi, President of the association "Unissons-nous pour la promotion des Batwas" (UNIPROBA)
Andy Richardson	Information Specialist, Inter-Parliamentary Union
Hon. Marieke Sanders-ten-Holte	Member of the Committee of Experts monitoring the Charter of Minority Languages of the Council of Europe; former Member of the European Parliament
Ingeborg Schwarz	Programme Manager, Human Rights, Inter-Parliamentary Union
Diane Sheinberg	Parliamentary Programme Officer, Democratic Governance Group, UNDP
Hon. Catalina Soberanis	Technical High Functionary in the Central American Program for the Strengthening of the Democratic Dialogue of the Organization of the American States, Former President of the Congress of the Republic of Guatemala
Hon. Hennadiy Udovenko	Former Ukrainian Foreign Minister; Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada Sub-Committee on Human Rights

Annex B:

Consultation on Minority Representation in Parliaments

Inter-Parliamentary Union  
 5, chemin du Pommier  
 CH-1218 Le Grand-Saconnex  
 Geneva Switzerland

Monday, March 19

9:00 -10:00

Welcome – Overview and Introductions

- Anders Johnsson, Secretary General, IPU
- Martin Chungong, Director, Division for the Promotion of Democracy, IPU
- Scott Hubli, Parliamentary Development Policy Adviser, UNDP

10:00 – 11:00

Background Discussion on Minority Representation

The session is intended to provide an overview of recent development with respect to minority representation. It is also intended to provide information on IPU's programs relating to the representation of women in parliament, in order to stimulate discussion on the possible role of the IPU in promoting greater inclusion of underrepresented minorities.

- Overview of developments in the field of Minority Rights, Gay McDougall, Independent Expert on Minority Issues, Graham Fox, Human Rights Officer for the Independent Expert on Minority Issues
- Presentation on the IPU's work on Data Collection and Advocacy on Women's Representation in Parliaments  
 Kareen Jabre, Programme for Partnership between Men and Men, IPU  
 Julie Ballington, Programme for Partnership between Men and Men, IPU

11:00 -11:15

Break

11:15 – 13:00

Country and Regional Perspectives on Parliamentary Representation of Minorities

The issue of minority representation varies widely by country and region. This session is intended to provide the consultation with a series of experiences and perspectives based on how the issue of minority representation in parliaments is perceived and handled in a variety of country and regional contexts. The session will provide an opportunity to share from good practice in a range of countries and regions. After initial presentations by the panelists, there will be an

opportunity for questions and discussion regarding the different regional perspectives on minority representation.

- Honorable Catalina Soberanis (chair), Former President of the Congress of the Republic of Guatemala
- Honorable Hennadiy Udovenko, Member of the Verkhovna Rada, Ukraine
- Honorable Liberate Nicayenzi, Member of the National Assembly, Burundi
- Honorable Nabil de Freige, Member of the Majlis al-Nuwwab, Lebanon
- Professor Martin Kovats, lecturing at Birkbeck, University of London, expert on Roma and Sinti Issues

13:00-14:00 Lunch at IPU

14:00- 15:00 Data Collection on Minority Representation

The presentations will discuss challenges and approaches to the gathering of data on minority representation, and positive actions to encourage more inclusive parliaments. After the initial presentations, there will an opportunity for questions and answers of the panelists.

- Presentation on Gaps in Data Collection on Minority Representation  
Mark Lattimer, Director, Minority Rights Group International
- Presentation on Issues on Collecting Data on Minorities  
Prof. Saskia Keuzenkamp, Social and Cultural Planning Office (The Netherlands)

15:00 - 15:15 Break

15:15 – 17:00 Working Session to Develop Recommendations on Data Collection Relating to Minority Representation

The participants will brainstorm during this session to suggest possible recommendations on data collection on minority representation. Among the issues to be discussed are: 1) definition of minorities for purposes of data collection (including options for allowing self-definition or developing guidelines), 2) issues on which data is to be collected (number of members, candidates, positive actions, quotas, use of minority languages, etc.), 3) methods of data collection.

Facilitator: Mark Lattimer, Director, Minority Rights Group

Tuesday, March 20

9:30 -11:00 Current Advocacy Efforts on Minority Representation

Turning from data collection to advocacy, this session surveys the work that various civil society and intergovernmental groups have undertaken on the issue of minority rights. The presentations will provide an

overview of existing global initiatives advocating for minority representation.

-- Work of Minority Rights Group International

Mark Lattimer, Director, Minority Rights Group International

-- The Lund Recommendations on the Effective Participation of National Minorities in Public Life

Prof. Krzysztof Drzewicki, OSCE Office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities

-- Presentation of OHCHR's work on Minorities

Fiona Blyth-Kubota, OHCHR Geneva

-- Presentation of Recent UNDP Consultation on Minorities

Zanofer Ismalebbe, HURIST Programme Officer

11:00 - 11:15

Break

11:15 --13:00

The Role of Parliaments in Facilitating the Participation of Minority Representatives

This session focuses more on what parliaments themselves can do in terms of helping advocate for more inclusive parliaments. After a presentation on the issue of minority languages, participants will have a chance to discuss other ways that parliaments have and could promote greater political inclusion, particularly with reference to minorities.

-- Use of Minority Languages in Parliament and the Charter of Minority Languages of the Council of Europe

Marieke Sanders-ten-Holte, Member of the Committee of Experts monitoring the Charter of Minority Languages of the Council of Europe, former Member of the European Parliament

13:00-14:00

Lunch at IPU

14:00 -15:30

Working Session on Advocacy to Develop Recommendations

This working session will seek to develop recommendations for the IPU and for UNDP on the issue of advocacy on minority representation. Among the topics to be discussed would be: 1) the nature of an advocacy campaign and the targets and purposes of this campaign, 2) whether there are particular international forums that should be used to advance inclusive parliaments, and what the strategy should be for these forums; 3) whether there is a parliamentary agenda that should be advocated on the issue of minority representation; 4) whether there are particular activities – such as a “day” on minority representation, that should be used to focus advocacy efforts.

Facilitator: Martin Chungong, IPU

15:30 – 16:30

Next Steps and Closing Session

This final session will recap the recommendations on data collection and advocacy, and finalize any additional next steps that need to be taken.

Facilitators:

Anders Johnsson, Secretary General, IPU

Scott Hubli, Parliamentary Development Advisor, UNDP