

IPU E-BULLETIN

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Concern for Syria High as IPU Marks International Day of Democracy - IPU has urged all concerned parties both inside and out of Syria to respect political differences and to genuinely commit to using dialogue to end the crisis that has left thousands of people dead and hundreds of thousands more as refugees. [In a statement](#) released to mark International Day of Democracy, IPU President Abdelwahad Radi said the Arab Spring underscored “the critical importance of political diversity and dialogue to both peace and to the concept of democracy.” The Organization also urged those in Syria and the international community to put aside individual political interests for the sake of the Syrian people and for peace. The statement reiterated [a call](#) made late August to the Syrian parliament to take a lead in ending the conflict in the country.

Meanwhile, IPU members around the world have begun to mark International Day of Democracy with a range of activities. Details of many of these can be found at: <http://www.ipu.org/idd/> Parliaments, MPs and all those interested in democracy are encouraged to participate in a twitter event using #IDD2012 as a hash tag and to follow IPU on twitter @IPUparliament

MPs Meeting to Focus on Access to Justice and Rule of Law at UN General Assembly – The details of a Declaration to be adopted at the end of a UN High-Level Meeting on the Rule of Law in New York on 24th September, will be examined at a parliamentary meeting with special focus being given to the question of access to justice for all. The parliamentary meeting, organized by IPU and the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) and sponsored by the Italian Mission to the UN, takes place on 26th September. It will provide MPs with an opportunity to discuss key aspects of the Rule of Law and the essential role parliaments play in ensuring its application. The UN High-Level Meeting and ensuing Declaration are aimed at discussing and agreeing on a forward-looking agenda on strengthening the rule of law. A new publication *Rule of Law – A Guide for Politicians* which provides important information on the basic elements of the subject, is now available in English to help all MPs on this issue at: <http://rwi.lu.se/what-we-do/academic-activities/pub/rule-of-law-a-guide-for-politicians/>

Togolese MPs Take Another Step Forward in Countering Child Trafficking and Labour –Togolese MPs will be taking another step towards effectively fighting child trafficking and child labour in their country when they participate in training on how to ensure more of the national budget is allocated to the protection of children. The training, organized by the NGO Forum des Organisations de Défense des Droits de l’Enfant (FODDET), is primarily aimed at ensuring greater civil society involvement in the national budget process, which despite national commitment to such initiatives, have so far yielded little progress. The involvement of MPs in this training will provide political support and follow-up on budget implementation. The Togolese parliament was among West African parliaments that agreed to intensify national and regional efforts to counter child trafficking and labour at an IPU, Sahel and West Africa Club and ECOWAS parliament meeting in Abuja in June 2012. To view the Abuja Declaration and other commitments, please go to: <http://www.ipu.org/splz-e/cotonou10/declaration.pdf> and <http://www.ipu.org/splz-e/abuja12/declaration.pdf>

IPU Assesses Infrastructure Needs of Palestinian Legislative Council – IPU is due to begin a needs assessment of the facilities and infrastructure of the Palestinian Legislative Council building in Ramallah. It is the latest mission in a joint IPU-UNDP initiative to help the body resume parliamentary work in the future. The detention of a significant number of Palestinian MPs by Israel and divisions between Hamas and the Fatah, have paralysed the Palestinian legislative body since 2007, leaving only a Secretariat that is functioning as best it can.

The needs assessment will review the provisional facilities that the PLC and its Secretariat currently have in addition to looking at the specific needs of a parliament once a permanent location for the PLC has been agreed on. The review will help identify ways to upgrade the facilities so as to better meet the current needs of MPs, parliamentary staff, media and public. The initiative is part of a broader support programme funded by the European Union. A total of 20 IPU expert missions to Ramallah which began in April 2012, will have been carried out over an 18- month period as part of the programme. Initial missions reviewed the structure of the PLC's Secretariat and the research and library capacity so that MPs would have better access information to do their work. An expert mission that began in late August is currently reviewing standing orders and other legislative procedures of the PLC.