



INTERNATIONAL PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE ON: PARLIAMENTS AND THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Jointly organized by the Plurinational Legislative Assembly of Bolivia
and the Inter-Parliamentary Union

7 - 9 April 2014 - Santa Cruz de la Sierra (Bolivia)

Geneva, 27 February 2014

Madam President / Madam Speaker,
Mr. President / Mr. Speaker,

We are pleased to invite your Parliament to take part in the International Parliamentary Conference on “**Parliaments and the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples**”, to be held from 7 to 9 April 2014 in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia.

This Conference, organized jointly by the Plurinational Legislative Assembly of Bolivia and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), has two important goals. The first long-term one is to underscore the pivotal role of parliaments in the realization of the rights of indigenous peoples.

The second, more strategic one is to prepare guidelines for preparing a parliamentary contribution to the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples. This World Conference, convened by the United Nations General Assembly, will be held in September 2014 in New York. It will provide a unique opportunity to better understand indigenous peoples, the difficulties they have faced historically and the ones they are currently facing. It will also provide an opportunity to share best practices on the realization of their rights.

From the parliamentary perspective, we are aware of the many efforts being deployed to improve the political representation of indigenous peoples and ensure the effective protection of their rights. In this context, we believe that this parliamentary event in Bolivia will offer parliaments a golden opportunity to exchange lessons learned and work on a substantive contribution to the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples.

The Parliamentary Conference will highlight the role of parliaments in the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007), review observance of the Chiapas Declaration and discuss specific issues, such as the formalization and implementation of the right to free, prior and informed consent.

./.

We would be very grateful if you could ensure that your Parliament sends a delegation to this important event. To this end, we would like to encourage you to share a copy of the invitation and background documents (see attachments) with the relevant parliamentary committees and with indigenous members of parliament.

We are pleased to enclose a draft agenda for the Conference, as well as a practical information document on transportation, hotel accommodation and other useful information on the Conference venue. Please also find attached a registration form, which we invite your Parliament to complete and return to the IPU Secretariat no later than 15 March 2014.

We wish to thank you in advance for making sure that your Parliament takes part in this important Parliamentary Conference and contributes to enhancing the participation of indigenous peoples in political life and the effective protection of their rights.

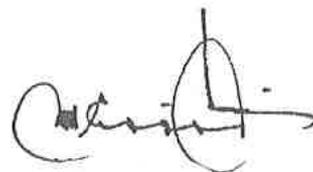
Yours sincerely,



Anders B. Johnsson
Secretary General of the
Inter-Parliamentary Union



Eugenio Rojas Apaza
President of the Senate



Marcelo W. Elío Chávez
Speaker of the
Chamber of Deputies