



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

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

7 - 9 April 2014 – Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia

DRAFT EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Plurinational Legislative Assembly of Bolivia will jointly hold an International Parliamentary Conference from 16 to 18 April 2014, in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia. Their aim is to elicit a contribution from parliaments to the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, to be held from 21 to 22 September 2014, in New York.

1. Context

The United Nations General Assembly has convened a high-level plenary meeting, to be held in September 2014 and to be called the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, for the purpose of sharing perspectives and best practices on the realization of the rights of indigenous peoples. The World Conference represents a unique opportunity to highlight the situation of indigenous peoples and the historic and current difficulties they face.

Since 2007, IPU has conducted a program of research and analysis on the parliamentary representation of indigenous peoples, with the aim of encouraging their participation in public affairs. In 2010 an International Parliamentary Conference was convened in Chiapas, Mexico, and resulted in the Declaration of Chiapas, containing recommendations as to how parliaments can become truly representative, guarantee the effective political participation of indigenous peoples and raise their own awareness about the situation of indigenous peoples.

In recognition of these efforts, the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (12th session) entrusted IPU with organizing regional and local meetings among parliaments for the purposes of promoting legislative and administrative measures to protect the rights of indigenous peoples and of encouraging parliaments to get involved in the preparations for the World Conference.

In this context, the parliamentary conference to be held in Bolivia will permit us to highlight the role of parliaments in the realization of the rights of indigenous peoples, and in particular in the implementation of the United Nations Declaration of 2007. This can provide a basis for the contribution of parliaments to preparations for the World Conference.

2. Objectives

The objective of the conference is for participants to exchange information about the experiences, good practices and challenges encountered by parliaments in their efforts to guarantee the political representation of indigenous peoples and the effective protection of their rights.

On the basis of these exchanges, the conference is intended to generate positive contributions from parliaments to the World Conference and to promote their adherence to and interest in the United Nations Declaration and the World Conference.

3. Issues for discussion

The conference will address the following issues:

- ∅ The participation of indigenous peoples IN public affairs, their parliamentary representation and the recommendations contained in the Declaration of Chiapas.¹
- ∅ The role of parliaments in implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.²
- ∅ The right to free, prior and informed consultations. Interaction between parliaments and indigenous institutions. Challenges in implementing the right to consultations.
- ∅ The role of parliaments in educating citizens and empowering the indigenous peoples.
- ∅ The protection of indigenous women against gender-based violence and multiple forms of discrimination.
- ∅ Promotion of the rights of indigenous peoples in connection with the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

¹ <http://www.ipu.org/splz-e/chiapas10/declaration-s.pdf>

² <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N06/512/10/PDF/N0651210.pdf?OpenElement>