



CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES
ROMANIA

Translating international human rights commitments into national realities: The contribution of parliaments to the work of the United Nations Human Rights Council



Seminar for parliaments from Central and Eastern Europe
organized jointly by the Chamber of Deputies of the Romanian Parliament and the
Inter-Parliamentary Union

17-18 February 2014 - Bucharest (Romania)

Geneva, 20 November 2013

Madam Speaker,
Mr. Speaker

We are pleased to invite you to the first regional seminar on *Translating international human rights commitments into national realities: The contribution of parliaments to the work of the United Nations Human Rights Council*, organized jointly by the Chamber of Deputies of the Romanian Parliament and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in Bucharest on 17 and 18 February 2014.

Parliaments undoubtedly have a critical role to play in promoting human rights. They can help the UN Human Rights Council translate international human rights norms into national realities. Without parliamentary action - be it passing laws or overseeing government action - very few recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) - the procedure whereby the Human Rights Council examines the human rights situation in all countries of the world - would actually be put into practice. Yet parliaments are still often unaware of the work of the Council and have little direct involvement in it, although it has been noticed that the tide is slowly turning.

The Bucharest Seminar is part of a series of regional events designed to enhance the contribution of parliaments to the work of the Human Rights Council. It aims at informing participants about how the Council functions and prompting them to become more involved. It also aims at identifying good parliamentary practices in working with the Council and in promoting human rights in general, inter alia by engaging effectively with other stakeholders such as civil society.

As you will see from the programme the debates will be devoted to various aspects of the main theme and the conclusions will be summed up by the Rapporteur of our seminar, Mr. Borbély László, Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Romanian Chamber of Deputies.

We sincerely hope that your parliament will be present at this seminar and that you will nominate a delegation of four members at most. As is usual practice with the IPU, each delegation should include women as well as men MPs and reflect the political spectrum represented in the parliament. It is recommended that the members of the delegation should be directly involved in human rights issues in your parliament. The working languages of the seminar will be English, French and Romanian.

All practical details concerning participation can be found in the General information document. You are kindly asked to complete and return the attached registration form by **16 December 2013**.

We wish to draw your attention to the fact that, in keeping with usual IPU practice, all matters relating to visas, hotel accommodation and travel must be dealt with by the participants themselves. In order to facilitate hotel reservations, please find attached a general information document with the different categories of proposed hotels and a reservation form which participants may wish to use.

We sincerely hope that your parliament will be able to take part in this event.

Yours sincerely,



Valeriu Stefan Zgonea
President of the Chamber of Deputies



Anders B. Johnsson
Secretary General
Inter-Parliamentary Union