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International Parliamentary Conference

Parliaments, minorities and indigenous peoples: Effective participation in politics

31 October - 3 November 2010, Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas (Mexico)

Geneva, 7 July 2010

Dear Madam President,
Dear Mr. President,

I am pleased to invite your Parliament to take part in the International Parliamentary Conference which we are convening to discuss the participation in politics of minorities and indigenous peoples.

The Conference will be held in Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas (Mexico), from 31 October to 3 November 2010.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union is working closely with the United Nations to promote inclusive parliaments. As part of this effort, the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the United Nations Development Programme are carrying out a survey of the level of representation and participation of minorities and indigenous communities in parliaments and in political processes.

The Conference will provide an opportunity for members of parliament to review the findings of this survey together with experts and representatives of minorities and indigenous peoples. The discussions should lead to the adoption of a plan of action to improve the participation of minorities and indigenous communities in politics.

The Conference will be jointly organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Mexican Congress of the Union and the Government of the State of Chiapas, in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme; the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights; the United Nations Independent Expert on minority issues; and the Minority Rights Group International.

I would be very grateful if you could ensure that your Parliament sends a delegation to this important Conference. To this end, I would like to encourage you to share a copy of the invitation and background documents with members of your Parliament who identify themselves as belonging to a minority or indigenous group, as well as to members of those parliamentary committees that deal with matters relevant to the theme of the Conference. We are thinking in particular of committees on human rights, minority and indigenous questions, constitutional, legal and electoral affairs.

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I am pleased to enclose a draft agenda and programme of work for the Conference, as well as a document providing practical information regarding transportation, hotel accommodation, etc. I also enclose a registration form, which we invite your Parliament to complete and return to the IPU Secretariat no later than **1 October 2010**. All documents relating to the Conference can be found on the IPU website at <http://www.ipu.org/minorities-e>.

I wish to thank you in advance for making sure that your Parliament takes part in this unique Parliamentary Conference and contributes to the formulation of a comprehensive plan for enhancing the participation of minorities and indigenous peoples in politics.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anders B. Johnsson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Anders B. Johnsson
Secretary General