



3rd WORLD CONFERENCE OF SPEAKERS OF PARLIAMENT

United Nations, Geneva, 19-21 July 2010

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EXPLANATORY NOTE

The 3rd World Conference of Speakers of Parliament will be held in the Assembly Hall of the United Nations in Geneva from 19 to 21 July 2010. The overall theme of the Conference is *Parliaments in a world of crisis: securing global democratic accountability for the common good*.

The Conference is convened by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and will be chaired by its President, Dr. Theo-Ben Gurirab. All arrangements relating to the holding of the event are being made under the direction of a Preparatory Committee composed of Speakers of Parliament and members of the IPU Executive Committee.

This Note is intended to provide a preliminary overview of the general rules and conditions of the event. It is accompanied by a preliminary draft agenda, a registration form for delegations and a form to indicate speaking preferences. Further more detailed information will be provided in due course.

Schedule of meetings

On Monday 19 July, the Conference will meet from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 to 6 p.m. The proceedings will begin with an opening ceremony, in the presence of the United Nations Secretary-General. A group photo of the Speakers will be taken at 2.45 p.m.

On Tuesday, 20 July, the Speakers will convene from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 to 6 p.m.

On Wednesday, 21 July, they will convene from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and, if necessary, from 3 to 6 p.m.

Two panel discussions will be held on 20 July, respectively from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. They will address subjects that are linked to the overall theme of the Conference.

Receptions

There will be two receptions on Monday, 19 July.

The President of the IPU will host a luncheon for Speakers and Heads of delegations at the United Nations.

Switzerland will host an evening reception for Speakers and the members of their delegations.

Participation

The Conference will include the following categories of participants, observers, and guest speakers:

Participants

Speakers of all national parliaments are invited, including in the case of bicameral parliaments the Speakers of both chambers. The Speaker of the Parliament of Palestine is also invited to participate in the Conference.

Observers

- Presidents of international parliamentary assemblies that are Associate Members of the IPU or that enjoy observer status at IPU meetings;
- Heads of Programmes and Agencies of the United Nations system and the WTO;
- Permanent Representatives to the United Nations in Geneva.

Guest speakers

High-ranking officials of the United Nations and other international figures will be invited to address the meeting.

Size and composition of delegations

The size of the delegation from each Parliament and Associate Member should in principle not exceed six persons (ten persons in the case of bicameral parliaments). Each delegation will be allotted four seats (two at desks and two behind) in the Assembly Hall. Delegations composed of both Speakers from bicameral parliaments will be allotted eight seats (four at desks and four behind). Additional seating is available in the room and the galleries of the Assembly Hall for persons accompanying parliamentary delegations.

Observer delegations, which should be composed of no more than two persons, will be allotted one seat at a desk and one seat behind.

Speaking rights

Only Speakers of parliaments (and in the case of bicameral parliaments, the Speakers of both chambers), Presidents of the official parliamentary assemblies that are Associate Members of the IPU and guest speakers will be invited to address the meeting.

Each Speaker of parliament shall be entitled to five minutes' speaking time. In instances where both Speakers from a bicameral parliament wish to address the Conference, each of them will be entitled to speak for four minutes. The Presidents of official parliamentary assemblies shall be entitled to three minutes' speaking time.

A speaker's registration form is attached to this note. Each Parliament is requested to indicate in writing to the IPU Secretariat, by 7 June 2010, at which sitting the Speaker would like to take the floor. The IPU Secretariat will establish the order of the speakers by taking into account, as far as possible and on a "first-come, first-served" basis, the preferences that have been indicated.

Outcome Document

At the end of the Conference, participants will be invited to adopt an Outcome Document, which will have been drafted by the Preparatory Committee and will be submitted for the consideration of delegations well in advance. An advance draft of this document will be sent to all Speakers in early March for their comments and suggestions before it is finalized by the Preparatory Committee.

Languages

The plenary meetings of the Conference will take place in the Assembly Hall. There will be interpretation in all six official languages of the United Nations (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish); a booth has also been reserved for Japanese as is customary at IPU Meetings. Speakers addressing the Conference in any other language will need to have their individual statements translated into one of the six official languages and should provide his or her own interpreter. Two interpretation booths will be available, on a rotating basis, for the interpretation of individual statements from any other language. The interpreter should contact the Conference Officer inside the Assembly Hall 30 minutes before the beginning of the sitting in order to receive appropriate instructions.

The panel discussions will take place in a separate room. There will be interpretation in the four languages customarily used at IPU meetings, namely Arabic, English, French and Spanish. An interpretation booth will also be available, on a rotating basis, for the interpretation of individual statements from any other language. Interpreters wishing to use this booth should contact the Conference Officer inside the meeting room 30 minutes before the beginning of the panel in order to receive appropriate instructions.

Registration and accommodation of delegations

Participants and observers are urged to complete the enclosed registration form and return it to the IPU Secretariat by 7 June at the latest. The form may be submitted by fax or e-mail, as follows:

Fax: +41 22 919 41 60

e-mail: postbox@mail.ipu.org

Delegations are advised to contact their Permanent Missions in Geneva as soon as possible in regard to travel and accommodation needs. They are accustomed to handling hotel reservations and other requirements on behalf of national delegations to United Nations meetings.

Delegations from countries that do not have a diplomatic representation in Geneva may wish to reserve their rooms through the Geneva Tourist Office:

Fax: +41 22 909 70 21

e-mail: reservation@geneve-tourisme.ch

It is also possible to make reservations on-line via the Tourist Office's website:

http://www.geneve-tourisme.ch/?rubrique=0000000253&lang=_eng.

In keeping with the practice of all hotels in Geneva, only reservations made with details of a credit card as a guarantee will be confirmed. Since July is a very busy period for Geneva hotels, it is highly recommended that hotel reservations be made as soon as possible.

Entry passes into the United Nations compound

Due to strict security measures in effect at the United Nations, every delegate to the Conference will need a special United Nations identification pass in order to enter the Secretariat building and must also carry, at all times, some form of official identification (passport, national identity card, etc.) when entering the UN grounds. Full details on the exact procedure to be followed will be provided in due course.

Welcome service

The Permanent Missions in Geneva and, where necessary, the Embassies in Bern, are advised to request welcome facilities for Speakers of Parliament (high-ranking personalities or VIPs) upon arrival and departure, in keeping with usual practice. Welcome facilities will be limited to one or two high-ranking personalities and five accompanying persons. The diplomatic representations are kindly invited to liaise with the welcome service at the Geneva and Zurich airports in order to finalize arrival and departure details.

Participants from States which do not have diplomatic representation in Switzerland are asked to contact the representation accredited to the Swiss authorities or the Swiss Embassy accredited to the authorities of their respective State.

Transport

The Permanent Missions and, where necessary, the Embassies in Bern, are kindly requested to take care of welcoming their respective delegations and providing them with ground transfers. Those States that do not have diplomatic representation in Switzerland are kindly asked to notify the IPU Secretariat.

Immigration formalities - visas

Switzerland is an associate member of the Schengen Agreement and is part of the Schengen area. For those persons who require a visa, the Swiss authorities can issue a visa for a maximum stay of three months, which is generally valid for the entire Schengen area.

Schengen regulations impose longer deadlines for the issuance of a visa. That is why delegations are requested to submit their applications before 7 June 2010, the deadline for registering for the Conference.

The Swiss authorities will endeavour to process applications as soon as possible but cannot guarantee that visas will be issued in cases of late applications.

Security

Security at United Nations Headquarters is the responsibility of the United Nations, which will apply its own regulations.

Security outside the United Nations falls within the purview of the competent federal and cantonal authorities in charge of security.

Persons accompanied by armed security detail are kindly asked to apply for a permit to carry weapons in keeping with the usual procedure. The Swiss authorities have informed us that a maximum of five handguns per delegation may be authorized.

IPU contact persons

- (a) For matters relating to protocol, Mr. Marcelo Bustos Letelier, Director of Assembly Affairs (tel. +41 22 919 41 37, fax +41 919 41 60, e-mail: mbl@mail.ipu.org)
- (b) For enquiries directed to the President and Secretary General of the IPU, Ms. Jill Toedtli (tel. +41 22 919 41 11, fax +41 22 919 41 60, e-mail: jt@mail.ipu.org)
- (c) For practical arrangements, Ms. Sally-Anne Sader (tel. +41 22 919 41 14, fax +41 22 919 41 60, e-mail: sas@mail.ipu.org).