

Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia



**Delegation Report
on the
110th Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly
Mexico City
and the
ANZAC Day Ceremony, Mexico City**

(15 to 25 April 2004)

June 2004

© Copyright Commonwealth of Australia 2004

ISBN 0 642 71383 9

This report was printed by the Senate Printing Unit, Parliament House, Canberra

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface		iii
Chapter 1	Inter-Parliamentary Union	1
Chapter 2	110th IPU Assembly	5
Chapter 3	174th Session of the Governing Council	19
Chapter 4	242nd Session of the Executive committee	25
Chapter 5	Meeting of Women Parliamentarians	27
Chapter 6	Subsidiary bodies and committees	33
Chapter 7	ANZAC Day Ceremony	41
Chapter 8	Association of Secretary-Generals of Parliaments	43

Appendices can be accessed at <http://www.ipu.org/conf-e/110/110.pdf>

Appendices

Appendix 1 **Result of the roll call vote on inclusion in the agenda of an emergency item**

Appendix 2 **IPU resolution on:**

Promoting international reconciliation, helping to bring stability to regions of conflict, and assisting with post-conflict reconstruction

Appendix 3 **IPU resolution on:**

Working towards an equitable environment for international commerce: the issues of trade in agricultural products and the access to basic medicines

Appendix 4 **IPU resolution on:**

Furthering parliamentary democracy in order to protect human rights and encourage reconciliation among peoples and partnership among nations

Appendix 5 **IPU resolution on the emergency item:**

The role of parliaments in stopping acts of violence, and the building of a separation wall, in order to create conditions conducive to peace and a lasting solution to the Palestinian–Israeli conflict

Appendix 6 **Report of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians**

PREFACE

Membership of the Delegation

Leader	Senator Grant Chapman South Australia, Liberal Party
Deputy Leader	The Hon. Con Sciacca, MP Member for Bowman Queensland, Australian Labor Party
Members	Senator Jeannie Ferris South Australia, Liberal Party Ms Maria Vamvakinou, MP Member for Calwell Victoria, Australian Labor Party

The Delegation was accompanied by:

Mr Neil Bessell, Secretary to the Delegation, Department of the Senate

Mr Douglas Foskett, Adviser, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Briefings and assistance

The delegation received a brief from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) on Mexico prior to its departure.

DFAT also provided comments on the draft resolutions to be considered by the three IPU standing committees and these proved invaluable during the course of the Assembly, particularly those relating to the work of the Second Committee. The delegation thanks Mr Doug Foskett and his colleagues at DFAT for providing this useful advice.

The delegation also thanks Ms Brenda Herd, Parliamentary Relations Office, for her excellent organisational assistance, the staff at Synergy Travel, Parliament House and Ms Della McCay and Mr Michael Griffiths (Senior Clerk's Office) and Mr Tony Styles (Finance Section) Department of the Senate.

Chapter 1

Inter-Parliamentary Union

IPU Council and Assembly

1.1 The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) is the international organisation that brings together representatives of the Parliaments of sovereign states.

1.2 At its Assemblies, which are held twice a year, members of national delegations participate in the following:

- The Assembly itself, being a focal point for worldwide parliamentary dialogue on political, economic, social and cultural issues of international significance;
- The Inter-Parliamentary Council, comprising three delegates from each affiliated group; and
- Three specialist committees established by the IPU and specific meetings such as the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians, the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians and the Committee on Middle East Questions.

1.3 A 15-member Executive Committee administers the Union and supervises its annual program and budget.

Geo-political meetings

1.4 The recently amended rules of the IPU specifically recognise the role and function of the geo-political groups. These groups are as follows: Africa, Arab, Asia-Pacific, Eurasia, Latin America and the Twelve Plus.

1.5 The Australian delegation participates in the meetings of the Twelve Plus Group (the geo-political group centred originally on European Union membership but now including several other countries) and also the Asia-Pacific Group. In accordance with the new rules, the Australian Group has resolved that it will seek election to any position in the IPU, including participation on drafting committees and specifically the Executive Committee of the IPU, under the auspices of the Asia-Pacific group.

1.6 Nevertheless, the delegation attends and participates actively in the work of the Twelve Plus Group.

1.7 The meetings of the Twelve Plus and Asia-Pacific foster multilateral contact and provide the delegation with an important opportunity to put its point of view in a relatively informal atmosphere, and to cement friendships with other countries.

Membership of the Union

1.8 The 140 members of the IPU are as follows:

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

1.9 The five Associate Members of the IPU are as follows:

Andean Parliament, Central American Parliament, European Parliament, Latin American Parliament, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

Delegation report

1.10 This report is based on the official *Results of the IPU Assembly in Mexico City*, produced by the IPU Secretariat.

Acknowledgements

1.11 The delegation records its sincere appreciation of the staff at the Australian Embassy in Mexico and in particular His Excellency Mr Graeme Wilson, Ambassador, Mr Peter Rennert, First Secretary and Mr Chris Munn, First Secretary and Consul.

Highlights of the Delegation's work at the Assembly

Senator Chapman was elected as a Vice-President of the Second Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade

Senator Ferris was elected to the Co-ordinating Committee of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians

Ms Vamvakinou made a significant contribution to the drafting of a final resolution on the emergency agenda item on:

The role of parliaments in stopping acts of violence, and the building of the separation wall, in order to create conditions conducive to peace and a lasting solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Senator Ferris contributed to the Second Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade consideration of:

Working towards an equitable environment for international commerce: the issues of trade in agricultural products and the access to basic medicines

and her intervention in the plenary session's consideration of the final resolution on this matter in order to explain Australia's position on free, just and multilateral trade

Mr Sciacca contributed to the Third Committee on Democracy and Human Rights consideration of:

Furthering parliamentary democracy in order to protect human rights and encourage reconciliation among peoples and partnership among nations

Senator Chapman spoke at the General Debate on the political, economic and social situation in the world with particular reference to Reconciliation and Partnership

Senator Ferris and Ms Vamvakinou participated in principal Meeting of Women Parliamentarians and a further meeting held later in the week

Delegates attended the panel discussion on the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children

Delegates attended four meetings of the Twelve Plus Group and the meeting of the Asia/Pacific Group



The Australian Delegation to the 110th IPU Assembly

*(Senator Grant Chapman and Mr Con Sciacca and
Ms Maria Vamvakinou and Senator Jeannie Ferris)*

Chapter 2

110th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Inaugural Ceremony

2.1 The 110th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union was inaugurated on 18 April at a ceremony in the Teatro de la Ciudad in the presence of His Excellency the President of the United States of Mexico, Mr. Vicente Fox Quesada.

2.2 Inaugural addresses were delivered by Mr. Enrique Jackson Ramírez, President of the Mexican Senate, Mr. Danilo Türk, Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs, and Mr. Sergio Páez, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. The ceremony concluded with an address by the President of the Republic, who declared the 110th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union officially open.

Agenda

2.3 The agenda of the Assembly was as follows:

1. Election of President of the Assembly
2. Request for inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda
3. General debate
4. First committee agenda item
5. Second committee agenda item
6. Third committee agenda item
7. Amendments to the statutes and rules
8. Agenda of the 111th Assembly
9. Emergency agenda item

Agenda item 1: Meeting and election of President

2.4 The 110th Assembly opened at the Centro de Convenciones Sheraton Centro Histórico in Mexico City on Monday, 19 April, with the election by acclamation of Mr. Enrique Jackson Ramírez, President of the Senate of Mexico, as President of the Assembly.

2.5 On Tuesday, 20 April, during the General Debate on the political, economic and social situation in the world, the Assembly heard an address by Ms. Jessica Lange, UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador, who highlighted the role of parliamentarians in the protection of children and recalled their duties in the fields of legislative oversight and advocacy to prevent the abuse and exploitation of children. On the same occasion, the IPU and UNICEF launched a joint Handbook for Parliamentarians on

Child Protection and invited Members to make use of the Handbook and ensure follow-up with concrete action at the national level.

2.6 Later in the day, the Assembly was addressed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mexico, Mr. Luis Ernesto Derbez, who emphasized that the Federal Government of Mexico shared the concerns of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in its work to promote dialogue and cooperation in the search for peace and security. He presented six pillars of the diplomatic strategy of the Government of President Fox, namely, protecting human rights, defending Mexicans living abroad, upholding multilateralism and international law, disseminating the culture of Mexico, promoting Mexico economically and commercially, and, lastly, giving priority to relations with the country's principal strategic allies.

Participation

2.7 Delegations of the Parliaments of the following 122 countries took part in the work of the Assembly:

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

2.8 The following Associate Members also took part in the Assembly:

the Andean Parliament, the Central American Parliament, the European Parliament, the Latin American Parliament, and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

2.9 Observers included representatives of:

(i) Palestine; (ii) the United Nations system: United Nations, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Volunteers (UNV), International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations Educational,

Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), World Health Organization (WHO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD); (iii) Council of Europe, League of Arab States; (iv) African Parliamentary Union (APU), Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union, Assembly of the Western European Union (WEU), Confederation of Parliaments of the Americas, Association of European Parliamentarians for Africa (AWEPA), Indigenous Parliament of the Americas, Interparliamentary Assembly of the Eurasian Economic Commission, Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Maghreb Consultative Council, Nordic Council, Parliament of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC), Parliamentary Assembly of the Union of Belarus and the Russian Federation, Parliamentary Union of the Organization of Islamic Conference Members (PUOICM); (v) Amnesty International, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC); (vi) International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA).

2.10 Of the 1,197 delegates who attended the Assembly, 616 were members of national parliaments. The parliamentarians included 31 presiding officers of parliaments, 37 deputy presiding officers and 162 women parliamentarians (26.3 per cent).

Agenda item 2: Choice of an Emergency Agenda Item

2.11 The Assembly had before it two requests for the inclusion of an emergency item to its agenda. The first proposal was submitted by the delegations of Indonesia and Lebanon, with the support of the Arab Groups, under the title:

The role of parliaments in stopping acts of violence, and the building of the separation wall, in order to create conditions conducive to peace and a lasting solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

2.12 The second proposal was presented by the Twelve Plus Group and the Latin American Group under the title:

The role of parliaments in the fight against terrorism: promoting a peaceful dialogue among cultures and civilisations.

2.13 A third proposal on respect for international law and the decisions of international institutions was presented by the delegation of Mexico. In presenting the item, the delegate of Mexico drew attention to the need to respect the findings of the International Court of Justice which had recently called for a review of the death sentences handed down by US courts on 51 Mexican citizens. The IPU had repeatedly called for respect for international law and taken a position against the death penalty. The Steering Committee had ruled that the proposal was not admissible under the stringent rules governing the emergency item.

2.14 Following statements by the delegations of Indonesia and Spain on behalf of the authors of the two proposals, a vote was taken by roll-call with the following outcome:

1st proposal (Indonesia and Lebanon, on behalf of the Arab Groups):
810 votes to 252, with 223 abstentions;

2nd proposal (Twelve Plus Group and the Latin American Group): 732 votes
to 364, with 186 abstentions.

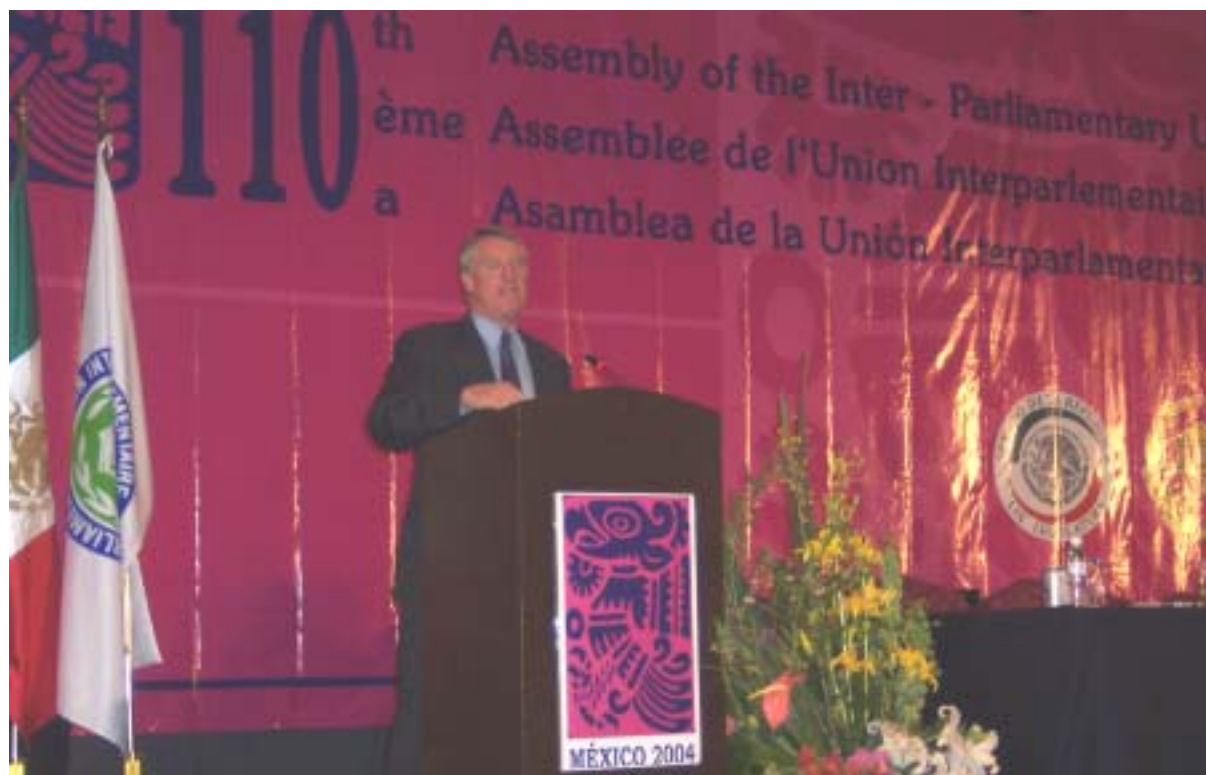
2.15 The result of the vote by roll-call appears at Appendix 1.

2.16 Having received both the required two-thirds majority and the highest number of affirmative votes, the proposal submitted by Indonesia and Lebanon, on behalf of the Arab Groups, was added to the agenda as item 9.

Agenda item 3: General Debate on the political, economic and social situation in the world

2.17 The General Debate on the political, economic and social situation in the world, under the overall theme of Reconciliation and Partnership, took place at various times on Monday, 19 April, Tuesday, 20 April, and Thursday, 22 April. A total of 119 speakers from 110 delegations took part in the debate, which was chaired by the President or Vice-Presidents of the Assembly.

2.18 Senator Chapman participated in this debate, applying the theme of the debate on reconciliation and partnership to Australian society and culture.



Senator Chapman addressing the 110th Assembly of the IPU

2.19 He emphasised that Australia is made up of people who have their origins in virtually every country represented at the IPU, some of which are suffering internal or external conflict. In Australia, these people live in harmony with each other. Senator Chapman spoke about the evolution of multicultural policies and the goal of building a culturally diverse accepting and open society.

Agenda item 4: First Standing Committee: Peace and International Security: *Promoting international reconciliation, helping to bring stability to regions of conflict, and assisting with post-conflict reconstruction*

2.20 The item was considered on 19 April by the First Standing Committee (Peace and International Security), with the Committee President, Mr. E. Menem (Argentina), in the chair. In addition to hearing a report and preliminary draft resolution prepared by the co-rapporteurs, Senator R. del Picchia (France) and Mr. R. V. Mongbé (Benin), the Committee was presented with amendments to the draft resolution submitted by the delegations of Belarus, Cuba, Germany, India, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Romania, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Sub-amendments were later received from the delegation of Slovenia.

2.21 During the debate on the item, a total of 56 speakers took the floor, including representatives from 52 countries, the European Parliament, United Nations Volunteers, Amnesty International, and Ms. S. Damen-Masri (Jordan), speaking on behalf of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians.

2.22 The Committee appointed a drafting committee composed of representatives of Algeria, Argentina, Belgium, Colombia, Gabon, Germany, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Morocco, Netherlands and Nigeria. The two co-rapporteurs of the First Standing Committee were invited to participate as advisers in the work of the drafting committee.

2.23 The drafting committee met on 20 April and began by appointing Mr. P. Moriau (Belgium) as its president and Mr. B. Shehu (Nigeria) as rapporteur. It examined over 75 amendments and sub-amendments to the preliminary draft resolution. At the end of the deliberations, the drafting committee adopted the consolidated draft as a whole, by consensus. On 21 April, the First Standing Committee considered the draft and made one further sub-amendment to it. Several delegations took the floor to express their views on some of the issues raised in the resolution and, subsequently, the draft resolution as a whole was adopted by consensus by the First Standing Committee.

2.24 On 23 April, the text of the resolution was presented to the Assembly by the designated rapporteur, Mr. P. Moriau (Belgium). Following the adoption of the resolution by consensus, two delegations expressed reservations concerning certain paragraphs of the resolution. The delegation of the United Kingdom expressed its reservation with respect to the wording of the second paragraph of the preamble, in which it would have liked to see the exceptionally grave cases of humanitarian catastrophe or genocide included as a further exception to the exclusive power of the

Security Council to decide on measures involving the use of armed force as defined in Chapter VII of the Charter. The delegation of India expressed a reservation to operative paragraphs 15 and 26. The delegations of Guatemala and Belgium sought clarifications regarding the meaning of operative paragraph 33, which called upon the IPU to play a more meaningful part in debates, forms of concerted action and negotiations involving peace and security through its Permanent Observer. The President of the First Standing Committee as well as the President of the Assembly confirmed that the intention was for the full membership of the institution and all its organs to make a concerted effort to that end.

2.25 The text of the final resolution appears at Appendix 2.

2.26 Following a recommendation from its Bureau, the Committee decided to propose to the Assembly to include in the agenda of the 111th Assembly a subject item entitled:

The role of parliaments in strengthening multilateral regimes for non-proliferation of weapons and for disarmament, in the light of new security challenges.

2.27 It also approved the nomination of Mr. J. Wilkinson (United Kingdom) as a co-rapporteur on the item. The item and the nomination were subsequently approved by the Assembly, which also appointed Ms. S. Damen-Masri (Jordan) as co-rapporteur.

Agenda item 5: Second Standing Committee: Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade: *Working towards an equitable environment for international commerce: the issues of trade in agricultural products and the access to basic medicines*

2.28 The Committee held two sittings on 20 and 22 April with its President, Mr. E. Gudfinnsson (Iceland), in the chair. In addition to a report and preliminary draft resolution prepared by the co-rapporteurs, Ms. O.A. Tamboura (Mali) and Mr. T. Colman (United Kingdom), the Committee had before it amendments to the draft resolution submitted by the delegations of Belarus, Belgium, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Philippines and Sweden, as well as a sub-amendment submitted by Cameroon.

2.29 A total of 49 speakers from 43 countries and the World Health Organization took the floor during the debate.

2.30 Senator Ferris attended and participated in the debate on the agenda item. In congratulating the co-rapporteurs for their work, Senator Ferris emphasised that Australia is strongly committed to free, just and multilateral trade and promotes trade liberalisation as critical to global economic development. Accordingly, in some areas the draft resolution did not go far enough and could be stronger in its advocacy of these goals. The Senator told the committee that Australia considers that the resolution should address all subsidies, not just some and specifically, a sectoral initiative will

only succeed in the context of an overall ambitious outcome on market access for all products in the Doha Round. Senator Ferris commended these and other comments on the draft resolution to the drafting committee.

2.31 Following the debate, the Committee appointed a drafting committee composed of representatives of Belgium, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chile, China, Ecuador, Egypt, Japan, Switzerland, Russian Federation, Uganda and the United Kingdom. Five of the 12 members of the drafting committee were women parliamentarians.

2.32 The drafting committee met on 21 April. At the beginning of its work, it appointed Mr. P. Sendé (Cameroon) as its president and Ms. S. Mugerwa (Uganda) as rapporteur. The committee examined over 40 amendments and sub-amendments to the preliminary draft resolution and accepted nearly half of them, fully or in part. Some ten further amendments were accepted - if not in letter then in spirit, as their content was similar to that of already adopted amendments. Having resorted to voting on three occasions, the drafting committee adopted the consolidated draft as a whole, without a vote.

2.33 On 22 April, the Second Standing Committee considered the draft and made three sub-amendments to it, including one by a vote. A further sub-amendment tabled by the delegation of China to operative paragraph 5 was rejected as a result of a vote. It was agreed, however, that the Rapporteur of the Committee would inform the Assembly of the reasons why a specific reference to China was retained in the paragraph and would also mention the fact that, according to the Chinese delegation, cotton subsidies no longer existed in China. The draft resolution as a whole was subsequently adopted by the Second Standing Committee, by consensus.

2.34 The Australian delegation was pleased to note that some of its suggested amendments had been accepted by the drafting committee but the thrust of the draft did not reflect Australia's overall view on these important issues.

2.35 On the afternoon of 23 April, the draft was submitted to the plenary sitting of the Assembly. Following the adoption of the resolution by consensus, a number of delegations expressed their reservations concerning certain paragraphs of the resolution. The delegation of China had a reservation on operative paragraph 5 in view of the fact that, following its accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO), China had already removed its cotton subsidies. The delegation of Latvia expressed its reservation on operative paragraph 7 because it considered necessary to maintain agricultural subsidies in Latvia as a transitional measure for some years to come. The delegations of Morocco and Burkina Faso expressed reservations on operative paragraph 7 on the grounds that they were in favour of the total elimination of all subsidies rather than a radical reduction of agricultural subsidies only. The delegation of Mexico also expressed its reservation on operative paragraph 7, as it believed that subsidies should be removed gradually and that countries should be free to decide how to proceed.

2.36 Finally, Senator Ferris on behalf of the Australian delegation announced that it did not wish to register a formal reservation on the text of the resolution but, by way of explanation of its vote, wished to point out that the resolution did not go far enough in the advocacy of a free, fair and equitable multilateral trading system and that, contrary to the suggestion in operative paragraph 7, all agricultural subsidies should be removed without delay.

2.37 The text of the final resolution appears at Appendix 3.

2.38 Following a recommendation of its Bureau, the Committee proposed to the Assembly to include in the agenda of the 111th Assembly an item entitled:

The role of parliaments in preserving biodiversity.

2.39 It also approved the nomination of Ms. S. Mugerwa (Uganda) and Mr. P. Günter (Switzerland) as co-rapporteurs on the item. The item and nominations were subsequently approved by the Assembly.

2.40 Having been joined by representatives of the Thai National Assembly and the Brazilian National Congress, the Bureau then acted as the Preparatory Committee for the Parliamentary Meeting on the occasion of UNCTAD XI, to be held by the IPU in São Paulo (Brazil) on 11 and 12 June 2004. In that capacity, the Bureau examined preparations for the Meeting in São Paulo, exchanged views with regard to the choice of its keynote speakers and considered the first draft of the declaration to be adopted by the Meeting at its final plenary.

Agenda item 6: Third Standing Committee: Democracy and Human Rights: *Furthering parliamentary democracy in order to protect human rights and encourage reconciliation among peoples and partnership among nations*

2.41 The item was considered on 20, 21 and 22 April by the Third Standing Committee (Democracy and Human Rights). The Committee held two sittings with its President, Ms. R. Kadaga (Uganda), in the chair. The First Vice-President of the Committee, Mr. Jay-Kun Yoo (Republic of Korea), also chaired the proceedings during the first sitting of the Committee on 20 April. The Committee had before it a report and a draft resolution prepared by the co-rapporteurs, Ms. L. Salas-Salazar (Costa Rica) and Mr. K. Chutikul (Thailand), as well as amendments to the draft resolution submitted by Andorra, Cuba, Egypt, France, Germany, Indonesia, Japan, Jordan, Romania, Sweden and the United Arab Emirates, and sub-amendments submitted by Switzerland.

2.42 A total of 45 speakers took the floor during the debate. Mr Sciacca attended the meetings of the Third Committee. Following the debate, the Committee appointed a drafting committee composed of the representatives of Algeria, Australia, India, Indonesia, Italy, Kenya, Lebanon, Nigeria, Sweden, Uruguay and Venezuela. The two co-rapporteurs assisted the drafting committee in its work. The Secretary General of International IDEA, Ms. K. Fogg, also assisted the committee as an adviser.

2.43 The drafting committee met on 21 April. At the beginning of its work, it appointed Mr. U. Chukwumerije (Nigeria) as its president and Ms. A. M. Narti (Sweden) as rapporteur. The drafting committee examined in detail the draft resolution prepared by the co-rapporteurs and enhanced it with some of the proposed amendments. On 22 April, the Third Standing Committee considered the consolidated draft resolution and adopted it, by acclamation, with minor amendments. On the afternoon of 23 April, the decision was endorsed by consensus by the plenary sitting of the Assembly. In so doing, the Assembly approved the recommendation by the Third Standing Committee to encourage the IPU and International IDEA to strengthen their cooperation, especially as it related to the conclusions of the 110th Assembly. Following adoption of the resolution, the delegation of India expressed reservations regarding operative paragraph C.9 on the International Criminal Court. Although it supported the whole resolution, it was not in a position to support that particular paragraph, since the jurisdiction of the Court did not cover terrorism.

2.44 The text of the final resolution appears at Appendix 4.

2.45 Acting on a recommendation of its Bureau, the Committee decided to propose to the Assembly the inclusion on the agenda of the 111th Assembly of a subject item entitled:

Beijing +10: an evaluation from a parliamentary perspective.

2.46 It further approved the nomination of Ms. M. Mensah-Williams (Namibia) and Mr. J. Winkler (Germany) as co-rapporteurs on the item. The item and nominations were subsequently approved by the Assembly.

2.47 The Bureau of the Third Standing Committee discussed issues relating to child protection. The Bureau welcomed the production and launch of the IPU/UNICEF Handbook for Parliamentarians on Child Protection which had been developed with its input. It recommended that Members ensure adequate follow-up to the Handbook by (a) ensuring its dissemination in all parliaments; (b) translating the Handbook into the national languages; (c) organising a launch of the Handbook; and (d) developing a timetable for child protection legislation and oversight.

2.48 The Bureau also suggested that the IPU regularly monitor progress made in the field of child protection legislation. It discussed the idea of setting up an online resource centre on child protection that could form an integral part of the IPU Web site, and could feature an inventory of legislation and oversight work in different countries, and best practices for child protection.

2.49 Lastly, the Bureau expressed the wish that IPU Standing Committees consider addressing child protection issues at future Assemblies. The Australian delegation strongly endorses the recommendations of the Third Committee and have taken actions to give effect to them.

Agenda item 7: Amendments to the Statutes and Rules

2.50 On Friday, 23 April, and in keeping with Article 28.1 of the Statutes, the Assembly unanimously approved the proposal to modify Articles 10.3 and 15.2(c) of the Statutes following the favourable opinion expressed by the IPU Governing Council. The amendments were necessary to adapt the terms of those Articles to the interpretative clauses regarding the question of gender distribution within delegations to the Assembly.

Agenda item 8: Agenda for the 111th Assembly

2.51 The assembly approved the agenda for the 111th Assembly to be held in Geneva in September/October 2004.

Agenda item 9: Emergency Item: *The role of parliaments in stopping acts of violence, and the building of a separation wall, in order to create conditions conducive to peace and a lasting solution to the Palestinian–Israeli conflict*

2.52 On Tuesday, 21 April, the Assembly decided to include the topic on its agenda. It then decided to refer it to a drafting committee.

2.53 The drafting committee appointed Mr. J.E. Bermúdez-Méndez (Mexico) as its president and Ms. S. Carstairs (Canada) as rapporteur. It was composed of representatives of the delegations of Australia, Canada, Egypt, Indonesia, Israel, Mexico, Morocco, Namibia and Sudan. Ms Vamvakinou was the Australian delegate on the drafting committee. The drafting committee met on Wednesday, 21 April. After several hours of deliberation, it adopted a draft resolution by consensus, with the exception of one paragraph referring to targeted assassinations and suicide bombings, on which Israel expressed a reservation.

2.54 On Friday 23 April, the draft resolution was adopted by consensus by the Assembly. The delegation of Israel expressed a reservation regarding the wording of operative paragraph 2. The delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran expressed reservations on those parts of the text which might be construed to imply recognition of Israel, and the delegation of Sudan expressed a general reservation regarding the resolution. The observer delegation of Palestine expressed concern regarding the wording of operative paragraph 3, requesting that the word "walls" be replaced by the words "the separation wall", and that a reference be included regarding attacks against Palestinian civilians.

2.55 Delegates from several countries approached Ms Vamvakinou following the adoption of the resolution, expressing their thanks for her constructive contribution to the work of the drafting committee.

2.56 The text of the final resolution appears at Appendix 5.

Elections to the Bureaus of the Standing Committees

2.57 The following office holders were elected to the Bureau of the three Standing Committees of the IPU

Standing Committee on Peace and International Security

President

Mr. Eduardo Menem (Argentina) (Latin American Group)

First Vice-President

Ms. Houda Al-Homsi (Syrian Arab Republic) (Arab Group)

Vice-Presidents

African Group

Mr. Albert Ndjavé-Djoye (Gabon) – titular member

Mr. Thiémelé Boa (Côte d’Ivoire) – substitute member

Arab Group

Ms. Zahra Bitat (Algeria) – substitute member

Asia-Pacific Group

Ms. Khunying Jintana Sookmark (Thailand) – titular member

Mr. Simon Patrice Morin (Indonesia) – substitute member

Twelve Plus Group

Mr. John Wilkinson (United Kingdom) – titular member

Mr. Csaba Tiberiu Kovacs (Romania) – substitute member

Eurasia Group

Mr. Vladimir Bavlov (Russian Federation) – titular member

Mr. Bato-Zhargal Zhambalnimbuev (Russian Federation) – substitute member

Latin American Group

Mr. Luis Fernando Duque García (Colombia) – substitute member

Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade

President

Twelve Plus Group

Mr. Einar K. Gudfinnsson (Iceland)

First Vice-President

Eurasia Group

Ms. Natalia Narochnitskaya (Russian Federation)

Vice-Presidents*African Group*

Ms. Nora Schimming-Chase (Namibia) – titular member

Mr. Tierno Aliou Baniré Diallo (Guinea) – substitute member

Arab Group

Mr. Fawwaz Abulghanam (Jordan) – titular member

Mr. Abdulmuhsin Al Akkas (Saudi Arabia) – substitute member

Asia-Pacific Group

Mr. Eduardo K. Veloso (Philippines) – titular member

Mr. Grant Chapman (Australia) – substitute member

Twelve Plus Group

Ms. Ingrida Udre (Latvia) – substitute member

Eurasia Group

Mr. Vadim Popov (Belarus) – substitute member

Latin American Group

Mr. Luis Alberto Heber (Uruguay) – titular member

Mr. Ramón Darío Vivas (Venezuela) – substitute member

Standing Committee on Democracy and Human RightsPresident*African Group*

Ms. Rebecca A. Kadaga (Uganda)

First Vice-President*Asia-Pacific Group*

Mr. Jay-Kun Yoo (Republic of Korea)

Vice-Presidents*African Group*

Mr. Alban Baghin (Ghana) – substitute member

Arab Group

Mr. Abdelahad Gamal El Din (Egypt) – titular member

Mr. Ahmed El-Kadiri (Morocco) – substitute member

Asia-Pacific Group

Mr. Prem Chand Gupta (India) – substitute member

Twelve Plus Group

Ms. Brigitta Gadiant (Switzerland) – titular member

Mr. Henrik S. Järrel (Sweden) – substitute member

Eurasia Group

Mr. Sergey Zhalybin (Kazakhstan) – titular member

Mr. Tolib Nabiev (Tajikistan) – substitute member

Latin American Group

Mr. José Machuca (El Salvador) – titular member

Ms. Addy Joaquín Coldwell (Mexico) – substitute member

2.58 The Australian delegation is pleased to report the election of Senator Chapman to the position of a Vice-President of the Committee.

Rapporteurs of the Standing Committees at the 111th Assembly

2.59 The following rapporteurs were elected for agenda items to be considered at the 111th Assembly:

Standing Committee on Peace and International Security

Mr. J. Wilkinson (United Kingdom)

Ms. S. Damen-Masri (Jordan)

Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade

Ms. S. Mugerwa (Uganda)

Mr. P. Günter (Switzerland)

Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights

Ms. M. Mensah-Williams (Namibia)

Mr. J.P. Winkler (Germany)

Chapter 3

174th Session of the Governing Council

Agenda

3.1 The Governing Council considered the following agenda items:

1. Membership
2. Financial Results for 2003
3. Financial Situation
4. Amendments to the Statutes and Rules
5. Cooperation with the United Nations System
6. Second World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments
7. Inter-Parliamentary Foundation for Democracy
8. Democracy and Strengthening Parliaments
9. Recent Specialized Conferences and Meetings
10. Reports of Plenary Bodies and Specialised Committees
11. Future Inter-Parliamentary Meetings

Agenda item 1: Membership

3.2 At its sitting on 19 April, the Governing Council approved requests for reaffiliation from the Parliaments of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Liberia, bringing the total IPU membership to 140.

3.3 The Governing Council heard a report of the Executive Committee on the structure and functioning of IPU Members and their participation in the Organisation's work, and endorsed its conclusions.

Agenda item 2: Financial Results for 2003

3.4 The Governing Council considered the Annual Financial Report and Audited Financial Statements for 2003, along with the report of the External Auditor, and a progress report on the implementation of the audit recommendations from the previous year. The Financial Statements showed that the IPU had an operating surplus of CHF 106,823 in 2003 and had underspent the budget under most headings.

3.5 Ms. I. Udre (Latvia) presented the report of the Internal Auditors. The Internal Auditors commended the financial performance of the IPU in 2003 and the presentation of the Financial Statements. Ms Udre addressed three issues of minor non-compliance with International Public Sector Accounting Standards and drew the

attention of the Governing Council to the major issue of the Pension Fund. The Internal Auditors endorsed the decision of the Executive Committee for the IPU to apply for membership in the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, and suggested that any residual actuarial deficit of the Pension Fund at the end of 2004 should be reported in the following year's Financial Statements.

3.6 On the recommendation of the Internal Auditors, the Governing Council approved the Financial Statements, approved the transfer of the operating surplus to the Working Capital Fund, approved the write-off of the accounts receivable from Georgia, Liberia, Marshall Islands, Malawi, Paraguay and the United States to the amount of CHF 6,991,269 in accordance with Rule 10.2 of the Financial Regulations, and sanctioned the Secretary-General's financial administration of the IPU in 2003.

Agenda item 3: Financial Situation

3.7 The Governing Council was given an overview of the current financial situation of the IPU. Expenditures during the first three months of the year were over budget on account of the first Assembly being held in Mexico rather than in London. The Secretary-General said that he would endeavour to make savings in other areas to achieve a balanced budget at the end of the year. With respect to the decision to extend the second Assembly of the year from three days to four, the Governing Council approved the payment of the additional expense through a supplementary appropriation in the amount of CHF 66,135 being the amount of contributions and payments received from the two newly affiliated Members of the IPU.

Agenda item 4: Amendments to the Statutes and Rules

3.8 The Governing Council formally approved the amendments to Articles 10.3 and 15.2(c) of the Statutes that were necessary to adapt the terms of those Articles to the interpretative clauses regarding the question of gender distribution within delegations to the Assembly. It also gave its approval in principle to amendments to Assembly Rule 17.1 and Standing Committee Rule 12.2 to make it possible for the meeting of Women Parliamentarians or its Coordinating Committee to submit amendments to the draft resolutions debated in the Standing Committees. The latter amendments would be submitted to the 175th session of the Council and to the 111th Assembly for formal approval and adoption.

Agenda item 5: Cooperation with the United Nations System

3.9 The Governing Council was provided with an overview of cooperation between the IPU and the United Nations and its different departments, programmes and agencies. It commended the many joint activities that had been carried out in recent months with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Volunteers (UNV), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR), the Office of the United

Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO).

3.10 The Governing Council took note of the Executive Committee's recommendation that negotiations be pursued with UNAIDS and UNICEF to strengthen the IPU's capacity to address issues relating to HIV/AIDS and child protection in a more systematic fashion. That would include the possibility of establishing parliamentary sub-committees within the IPU.

3.11 The Governing Council was also informed of the efforts deployed by the IPU to provide concrete support to the United Nations in the context of the Union's offer to provide assistance for the building of democratic institutions in Iraq. The Council approved plans made by the IPU to convene a meeting of Speakers of Parliaments of the countries neighbouring Iraq in Amman, Jordan, on 12 and 13 May 2004 at the invitation of the Speaker of the House of Representatives of Jordan.

3.12 The Council discussed a report submitted by the Executive Committee on the forthcoming report of the United Nations High Level Panel on relations between the United Nations and civil society, including parliamentarians and the private sector (the Cardoso Panel). Many delegates expressed serious misgivings about the approach and recommendations of the Panel because in seeking to establish parliamentary committees that would be subordinate to the authority of an inter-governmental organisation such as the United Nations, it did not respect the elementary principles of the separation and independence of powers, and fair representation and democratic legitimacy. Moreover, the proposal put forward parliamentary mechanisms within the United Nations that were almost identical to ones already existing within the IPU.

3.13 At the end of the debate, the Governing Council endorsed the report of the Executive Committee. It requested the President and the Secretary-General to seek a meeting with the Secretary-General of the United Nations to convey to him the concerns of the Union. It thanked the Brazilian representative on the Executive Committee for his offer to approach the panel President, former President Cardoso of Brazil. Finally, the Council also called on all Members to make their concerns known to the United Nations through their country's representatives at the United Nations.

Agenda item 6: Second World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments

3.14 The Council noted the report of the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the Second World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments in 2005, which had met in Geneva on 26 and 27 January 2004. The Committee had reviewed the background to the Conference, noting that the declaration adopted by the Speakers at their first Conference in 2000 had marked a significant turning point in parliamentary involvement in multilateral relations. Nevertheless, it remained to be seen how deeply its intent had percolated through to the day-to-day business of national parliaments. It had decided that a questionnaire would be sent to all Speakers of Parliaments to evaluate progress achieved on the basis of the commitments made by the Speakers attending the First Conference. The questionnaire would also include

a section on legislative and oversight steps taken in national parliaments to promote both the knowledge and attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. Members were encouraged to submit their completed questionnaires as soon as possible.

3.15 The Committee had also decided to explore the possibility of establishing indicators relating to parliamentary democracy. The IPU Secretariat had been asked to seek the assistance of experts in preparing a comprehensive information document which the Committee would examine at its next meeting, to be held in Budapest on 2 and 3 September 2004.

Agenda item 7: Inter-Parliamentary Foundation for Democracy

3.16 The Governing Council heard a report from the Secretary-General on progress in the establishment of the Inter-Parliamentary Foundation for Democracy. Pursuant to the decision taken by the Council at its 173rd session, the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union had appointed the members of the Board of the Foundation. Senator Chapman was invited by the President of the IPU to join the Board of the Foundation and he attended meetings of the Board in Mexico City, including those on the by-laws of the Foundation. The Secretary-General had worked with a Swiss lawyer to draft the by-laws of the Foundation, and during their meeting in Mexico City, the members of the Board had reviewed and amended the by-laws. The Secretary-General would now begin negotiations with the Swiss authorities with a view to registering the Foundation under Swiss law, whereupon it would become operational.

Agenda item 8: Democracy and Strengthening Parliaments

3.17 The Governing Council heard a progress report on recent activities of the IPU intended to promote democracy. The Union is increasingly adopting an integrated approach to democracy through strengthening the capacity of parliaments to ensure that members of parliament could perform their role of legislating, overseeing the government and representing the people. It sought to ensure that parliaments could play a more prominent role in protecting and promoting human rights as well as fostering policies enabling men and women to participate equally in decision-making processes. Furthermore, during the past year, the Union has been active in supporting parliaments in conflict and post-conflict situations.

Agenda item 9: Recent Specialized Conferences and Meetings

3.18 The Governing Council took note of the results of the Parliamentary Panel within the framework of the World Summit on the Information Society that took place in Geneva on 11 December 2003. It also heard a report on the Seminar for Chairpersons and Members of Parliamentary Human Rights Bodies, which took place in Geneva from 15 to 17 March 2004.

Agenda item 10: Reports of Plenary Bodies and Specialised Committees

3.19 At its sitting on 23 April, the Governing Council took note of the following reports: Meeting of Women Parliamentarians and its Coordinating Committee, the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians, the meeting of Representatives of Parties to the CSCM process, the Committee on Middle East Questions, the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law, and the Gender Partnership Group.

3.20 The Governing Council also filled vacant positions on the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians, the Committee on Middle East Questions, and the Group of Facilitators for Cyprus.

Agenda item 11: Future Inter-Parliamentary Meetings

3.21 The Governing Council approved the dates for the 111th and 112th Assemblies, the latter to be held in Manila, Philippines. In addition to the meetings listed as previously approved, the Council approved the Meeting of Speakers of Parliaments of the countries neighbouring Iraq on the constitutional process in Iraq, to be held on 12 and 13 May in Amman, Jordan, and the second Meeting of the Preparatory Committee of the Second World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments, to be held in Budapest, Hungary, on 2 and 3 September 2004.

Chapter 4

242nd Session of the Executive Committee

Work of the Executive

4.1 The Executive Committee held its 242nd session in Mexico City on 15, 16, 17 and 22 April. The President of the IPU chaired the meetings. The following members and substitutes took part in the session: Mr. J. Jorge (Brazil), Mr. Lü Congmin (China), Ms. P. Larsen (Denmark), Mr. R. Salles (France), Ms. Z. Rios-Montt (Guatemala), Mr. Y. Yatsu (replacing Mr. T. Kawara) (Japan), Mr. F. Ole Kaparo (Kenya), Ms. M. Mensah-Williams (Namibia), Mr. P. Rattanapian (Thailand), Mr. O. Natchaba (Togo), replaced on 22 April by Mr. K. Gbetogbe, Mr. I. Ostash (Ukraine), and Mr. J. Austin (United Kingdom). Mr. M. Al-Saqer (Kuwait), Mr. H. Al-Hadi (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Mr. S. Fazakas (Hungary) and Ms. G. Mahlangu (South Africa) were absent. Mr. Fazakas was replaced on 22 April by Mr. Z. Rockenbauer.

4.2 The proceedings of the Executive Committee were devoted to discussing and making recommendations on agenda items to be addressed by the Governing Council. The other matters considered by the Committee are summarised below.

4.3 The Committee reviewed the situation of the transitional parliaments in Angola, Burundi and Rwanda. Following elections in Rwanda, which brought an end to the transition period, it decided to cease its review of the Rwandan Parliament.

4.4 The Committee discussed the need to increase the membership of the Union in order to make it a truly universal body. It reviewed a list of non-member parliaments and the members agreed on which parliaments they would target in an endeavour to convince them of the benefits of membership.

4.5 The Committee reviewed the progress in the implementation of the IPU reforms, focusing its attention on the functioning of the Standing Committees. On Thursday, 22 April, it held a sitting with the leaders of the geopolitical groups and the Presidents of the Standing Committees to discuss the matter. At both sittings, the delegates expressed satisfaction with the outcome of the reforms. They also emphasised that it was too early to come to any definitive conclusions on the functioning of the new structures, while stressing the need for the co-rapporteurs to be experts on their assigned subjects, for the deadlines to be scrupulously respected and for the Bureau to assume a more active role.

4.6 The Committee was updated on the proposal by the Secretary-General for the Union's Secretariat to join the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund (UNJSPF). It authorised the Secretary-General to submit a formal request for membership of the Fund with a view to joining on 1 January 2005.

4.7 Noting that the IPU scale of contributions no longer corresponded to the United Nations scale on which it was originally based, it established a working group composed of members from Brazil, France, Japan, Namibia, and the United Kingdom to review the scale and report to its next session.

4.8 The Secretary-General informed the Committee that he had appointed two new staff members, an Information Systems Officer and an English Language Translator-Reviser.

Executive Committee Elections

4.9 The Committee elected Mr. R. Salles (France) as Vice-President until the end of 2004.

4.10 The Governing Council elected Ms. K. Komi (Finland) as member of the Executive Committee for a four-year term expiring in April 2008.

4.11 Lastly, Ms. J. Fraser (Canada) became an ex officio member of the Executive Committee, in her capacity as President of the Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians.

Chapter 5

Meeting of Women Parliamentarians

Meeting and participation

5.1 The Ninth Meeting of Women Parliamentarians took place on 18 April 2004 and brought together 103 women MPs from the following 70 countries:

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Denmark, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Mali, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Slovakia, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Uganda, the United Kingdom, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

5.2 Some men parliamentarians also took part. Observers from the Andean Parliament, Palestine, UNESCO, WHO, ECOWAS, UNICEF and UNHCR also attended the proceedings.

5.3 Senator Ferris and Ms Vamvakinou attended the meetings of women parliamentarians.

5.4 In the absence of Ms. G. Malhangu (South Africa), President of the Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians, the meeting was opened by the First Vice-President of the Committee, Ms. Y. Kamikawa (Japan). The Meeting began its work by electing Ms. D.M. Sauri Riancho (Mexico) as President. Ms. Sauri's opening statement was followed by speeches by the President of the Assembly, and the President of the IPU.

5.5 Ms. M. Xavier (Uruguay) presented a brief report on the Coordinating Committee's previous two sessions, in which she reviewed the work achieved by the Committee. Mr. R. Salles (France) then presented his report on the work of the Gender Partnership Group. Mr. Salles drew attention to the problems inherent in ensuring that there were at least three women members of the Executive Committee in keeping with Article 23.2 of the IPU Statutes.

5.6 As in previous years, the Meeting discussed its contribution to the work of the Assembly. It was decided that the women MPs would discuss the item before the First Standing Committee (Peace and International Security), entitled *Promoting international reconciliation, helping to bring stability to regions of conflict, and assisting with post-conflict reconstruction*. Ms. S. Damen-Masri (Jordan) was asked to report on the Meeting's debate to the Standing Committee. Her summary was

approved by the Meeting and subsequently presented orally to the First Standing Committee.

5.7 There followed a dialogue between men and women on gender-sensitive budgets. The session was introduced by two panellists, Ms. W. Byanyima (Uganda) and Mr. C. Jiménez Macías (Mexico). The lively debate afforded valuable insights into the budget experience in various parliaments, and provided an opportunity to present and distribute the Handbook for Parliamentarians on Parliament, the Budget and Gender, jointly produced by the IPU, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank Institute (WBI), and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

5.8 The Meeting was briefed on the IPU's latest analysis of the situation of women in parliament after elections held in 2003. A number of interesting ideas were put forward on strategies to facilitate women's entry into politics, including from a delegate of Rwanda, where women now accounted for 48.8 per cent of all parliamentarians, the highest proportion reached to date.

5.9 The Meeting went on to discuss cooperation with the United Nations on gender issues and stressed the importance of follow-up to the IPU/UN Handbook for Parliamentarians on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol and enhancing the role of Parliament in the implementation of the Convention.

5.10 The Meeting of Women Parliamentarians met again on 22 April to elect the regional representatives and the Bureau of the Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians.

5.11 The Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians met on 18, 22 and 23 April. The sitting of 18 April served to prepare the work of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians. The Committee also agreed that the IPU should contribute to the review of progress made in the area of women's rights, 10 years after the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing. The Coordinating Committee submitted a proposal for the item to be debated at the 111th Assembly in the Third Standing Committee. The proposal, entitled Beijing +10: An evaluation from a parliamentary perspective was subsequently proposed by the German delegation and later endorsed by the Assembly.

5.12 Further to the elections held on 22 April, the new Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians met briefly that same day. It elected Senator Joan Fraser (Canada) as President, and Ms. S. Damen-Masri (Jordan) and Ms. L. Madero (Mexico) as First and Second Vice-Presidents respectively. The proposals were later endorsed by the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians.

5.13 Under the chairmanship of its new President, the sitting on 23 April addressed the work of women MPs during the 110th Assembly and debated a future work plan. Concern was raised with respect to attendance levels at the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians, particularly toward the end of the afternoon when geopolitical

groups also met, and it was suggested that the IPU address that problem. The Committee agreed that the panel on the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children had been particularly successful, generating lively discussion and specific recommendations. The Committee reiterated its support for the IPU – Meeting and Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians establishment of a sub-committee on the question of child protection, and urged the IPU Executive Committee to give serious consideration to the proposal. It was also suggested that a panel be organised for the 112th Assembly on the subject of Violence against Women and Children.



*Senator Ferris and Ms Vamvakinou
with Canadian IPU delegates - Senators Joan Fraser and Sharon Carstairs
at the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians*

5.14 Finally, the Committee considered draft amendments to the IPU Statutes which would allow the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians, or its Coordinating Committee, to have a bearing on the work of the Standing Committees. The Committee appointed two members to prepare brief reports on the gender aspects of the items to be considered by the First and Second Standing Committees at the 111th Assembly in September 2004. It also began coordinating women's input into the Third Standing Committee's item on Beijing +10.

Elections

5.15 Following elections, the Coordinating Committee of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians is as follows:

Bureau

President and ex officio member of the IPU Executive Committee

Ms. J. Fraser (Canada) April 2006

First Vice-President

Ms. S. Damen-Masri (Jordan) April 2006

Second Vice-President

Ms. L. Madero García (Mexico) April 2006

Members of the Executive Committee (ex officio, for the duration of their term on the Executive Committee)

Ms. K. Komi (Finland) April 2008

Ms. N.S. Mensah-Williams (Namibia) September 2007

Ms. Z. Ríos-Montt (Guatemala) October 2004

President of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians (ex officio for two years)

Ms. D.M. Sauri Riancho (Mexico) April 2006

Regional representatives (elected for two years)

Group of African countries

Titular representatives

Ms. B. Henrique da Silva (Angola) - April 2006

Ms. E. Beyene (Ethiopia) - April 2006

Substitute representatives

Ms. O.A. Tamboura (Mali) - April 2006

Ms. S. Moulengui-Mouele (Gabon) - April 2006

Group of Arab countries

Titular representatives

Ms. S. Damen-Masri (Jordan) - April 2006

Ms. K. Kaâbi (Tunisia) April - 2006

Substitute representatives

Ms. K. Al-Nattah (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) - April 2006

Ms. M. Osman Gaknoun (Sudan) - April 2006

Group of Asia and Pacific countriesTitular representatives

Ms. M. Singh (India) April - 2006

Ms. A. Aminy (Indonesia) - April 2006

Substitute representatives

Ms. D. Altai (Mongolia) - April 2006

Ms. J. Ferris (Australia) - April 2006

Eurasia groupTitular representatives

Ms. H. Hakobian (Armenia) - April 2006

Ms. Y. Grigorovich (Belarus) - April 2006

Substitute representatives

Ms. S. Kaldygalova (Kazakhstan) - April 2006

Ms. N. Narochnitskaya (Russian Federation) - April 2006

Group of Latin American countriesTitular representatives

Ms. L. Madero García (Mexico) - April 2006

Ms. I. Allende (Chile) - April 2006

Substitute representatives

Ms. V. Mata (Venezuela) - April 2006

Ms. M. Müller (Argentina) - April 2006

Twelve Plus groupTitular representatives

Ms. P. Ernstberger (Germany) - April 2006

Ms. J. Fraser (Canada) - April 2006

Substitute representatives

Ms. G. Gautier (France) - April 2006

Ms. D. Stump (Switzerland) - April 2006

5.16 The Australian delegation is pleased to report the election of Senator Ferris as a member of the Co-ordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians.

Chapter 6

Subsidiary Bodies and Committees of the Governing Council of the IPU

Introduction

6.1 In this chapter, the Delegation records the work of the following subsidiary bodies and committees:

- Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians
- Meeting of Representatives of the Parties to the CSCM Process
- Committee on Middle East Questions
- Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law
- Gender Partnership Group
- Panel on the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children
- Panel on Human Rights: a casualty of the fight against terrorism?

Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians

6.2 The Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians held its 105th Session from 18 to 22 April 2004. The following titular members participated in its work: Ms. A. Clwyd (United Kingdom), Mr. L. Hierro López (Uruguay), Ms. V. Nedvedova (Czech Republic) and Mr. M. Ousmane (Niger). Ms. M. J. Laloy (Belgium) attended in her capacity as substitute member.

6.3 Mr. J.P. Letelier (Chile), former President of the Committee and leader of the Committee's delegation which visited Zimbabwe from 28 March to 2 April 2004, was invited to submit an oral mission report to the members of the Committee.

6.4 The Committee conducted 11 hearings with delegations from countries in which it was examining cases, and with representatives of the sources.

6.5 The Committee examined a total of 50 cases concerning 163 MPs from 29 countries. It submitted 26 cases to the Governing Council. In keeping with usual practice, the delegation includes the text of these resolutions in this report at Appendix 6.

6.6 The Committee also submitted to the Governing Council the report on the trial of Mr. M. Barghouti (Palestine) by Mr. S. Foreman, a lawyer and expert appointed by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians in accordance with the resolution adopted by the Governing Council at its 173rd session. The Committee also decided to annex to its resolution on the case of Mr. V. Gonchar (Belarus) the report Disappeared persons in Belarus by Mr. C. Pourgourides, Rapporteur of the Committee

on Legal Affairs and Human Rights of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

6.7 The Governing Council, acting on the recommendation of the Committee, decided to close the public examination of the case of Mr. A. Klimov (Belarus) while authorising the Committee to continue the examination of the case under its confidential procedure, if deemed appropriate.

Meeting of Representatives of the Parties to the CSCM Process

6.8 The representatives of the parties to the process of the Inter-Parliamentary Conference on Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean (CSCM) held their 22nd meeting on Thursday, 22 April 2004, with Mr. R. Salles (France) in the chair.

6.9 The session was attended by:

- Representatives from 17 of the 24 main participants: Algeria, Croatia, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malta, Monaco, Morocco, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey.
- Representatives of the following associate participants: (i) Germany, Russian Federation, the United Kingdom; (ii) Palestine; and (iii) the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Assembly of the Western European Union, and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

6.10 The session was preceded by a meeting of the CSCM Coordinating Committee, held on Tuesday, 20 April, with Mr. R. Salles in the chair. It was attended by representatives from Egypt, France, Italy, Malta, Morocco, Slovenia, Spain and Tunisia, and a representative of the Mediterranean Women's Task Force. The meeting also heard a report on the meeting of the Mediterranean Women Parliamentarians' Task Force chaired by Ms. E. Papadimitriou (Greece), in the absence of Ms. A. Vassiliou (Cyprus), that had been held earlier that day.

6.11 After an extensive exchange of views the representatives adopted the Summary of Decisions taken by the 28th Session of the CSCM Coordinating Committee held in Nice, 10 and 11 February 2004. In so doing they expressed support for convening a fourth CSCM in the early part of 2005, for which funding would be included in the IPU budget. That meeting would transform the CSCM process into a Parliamentary Assembly of Mediterranean States which would then be funded entirely by the participants.

6.12 The representatives agreed to continue discussing details regarding the functioning of the Assembly on the basis of the draft Rules of procedure prepared by the Parliament of Malta on which several members had provided comments both verbally and in writing.

6.13 The representatives proposed to hold a meeting of the Coordinating Committee open to all members of the CSCM process on the occasion of the 111th Assembly in Geneva. They recommended that the IPU submit a request for

observer status at the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA). Finally, they requested the IPU Secretariat to invite each CSCM member to designate a correspondent in order to facilitate the circulation of CSCM documents.

Committee on Middle East Questions

6.14 The Committee on Middle East Questions met on 19 and 22 April, with Mr. F.M. Vallersnes (Norway) in the chair. It was attended by three other titular members, Mr. O. Bah (Guinea), Mr. S. Al-Alfi (Egypt), Ms. P. Chagsuchinda (Thailand), and two substitute members, Mr. H. Raidel (Germany) and Ms. P. Torsney (Canada), replacing Mr. T. Hadjigeorgiou (Cyprus) and Ms. M. Bergé-Lavigne (France). On the first day, the Committee held a hearing with representatives of the Knesset and the Palestinian National Council, attended also by members of the Jordanian and Egyptian delegations.

6.15 The Committee expressed its deepest concern regarding the situation in the region: on the one hand, suicide bombings against Israeli civilians and, on the other, extra-judicial killings and the repression of the entire Palestinian population. The Committee condemned the use of violence by both sides and appealed to them to re-establish dialogue which, in the opinion of the Committee, was the only means of halting the escalating violence.

6.16 Referring to the present situation in the region, the Committee expressed its deep concern about the building of walls and fences. While admitting that Israel did need to protect its population against terrorist attacks, it deplored the fact that walls and fences were not being built along the Green Line, but instead inside the West Bank.

6.17 The Committee was briefed on progress in setting up the working group of Israeli and Palestinian elected representatives. While welcoming the establishment of the working group, the Committee deeply regretted that it had not been able to meet in Geneva, as planned, in December 2003 or January 2004.

6.18 The Committee requested its President and the Secretariat to pursue their efforts to organise a first meeting of the working group, if possible in a neutral place in the region, as it was crucial to establish institutional dialogue between the members of the Knesset and the members of the Palestinian Legislative Council.

6.19 Lastly, the Committee welcomed the inclusion on the agenda of the 110th Assembly of an item on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law

6.20 The Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL) met on Wednesday, 21 April 2004, with Mr. Jay-Kun Yoo, Republic of Korea, in the chair. Representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) also attended the meeting as observers.

6.21 The Committee assessed the dissemination of the two Handbooks for Parliamentarians which were produced with input from the IHL Committee. They welcomed the fact that the IPU-ICRC Handbook on Respect for International Humanitarian Law has been published in 16 languages and the IPU-UNHCR Handbook on Refugee Protection in 24 languages. The Committee expressed its thanks to those parliaments which had translated the Handbooks and encouraged others to follow suit, in consultation with the IPU and the ICRC or UNHCR. All parliaments were invited to organise a public launch of the Handbook(s) in parliament, once translated, with the participation of the IPU and the partner organisations concerned. The Committee also commended the positive working relationship that had been established with the two partner organisations and thanked them for their support.

6.22 The Committee discussed preparations for the Regional Parliamentary Conference on Refugees in Africa: The Challenges of Protection and Solutions, to be organised by the African Parliamentary Union, with the support of the IPU, UNHCR and the ICRC. The Conference, to be hosted by the Parliament of Benin, in Cotonou, from 1 to 3 June 2004, would focus on the rights of refugees and the identification of lasting solutions.

6.23 The Committee discussed ways and means of reviving parliamentary action to achieve universal accession to and implementation of the Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Antipersonnel Mines and on their Destruction. It recalled that a Review Conference on action taken since its entry into force would take place in 2004 in Nairobi, and invited the IPU and its Members to contribute to that assessment. It suggested that the IPU Secretary-General write to the parliaments of the States concerned urging them to take all necessary steps to ratify or accede to it as soon as possible.

6.24 The Committee also took note of the results of the ICRC Workshop on Landmines and the Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-personnel Mines in East Africa, the Great Lakes and the Horn of Africa Regions, which had taken place in Nairobi, Kenya, from 2 to 4 March 2004 and recommended that its results be brought to the attention of national parliaments.

6.25 The Committee was finally briefed on the follow-up to the ICRC Conference on The Missing, in Geneva in February 2003. It recalled that there was a lack of legislation in many of the fields touching upon the issue and suggested, as a first task, that in cooperation with the ICRC, information on existing legislation and best practices should be collected.

Gender Partnership Group

6.26 The Gender Partnership Group held its 13th session, with the participation of Ms. M. Mensah-Williams (Namibia), Ms. Z. Ríos Montt (Guatemala), Mr. P. Rattanapian (Thailand) and Mr. R. Salles (France). Mr. Salles was appointed Moderator.

6.27 The Group had monitored the effect of the new provisions of the Statutes and Rules on the composition of delegations to IPU Assemblies and the participation of women MPs in various statutory meetings. Of the 616 parliamentarians attending the 110th IPU Assembly, 162 (26.3 per cent) were women. In Mexico City, 22 of the 123 (17.9 per cent) delegations present were comprised only of men. That represented a slight increase compared with the Assembly in Geneva. None of the delegations in Mexico City were composed of women only. Regarding participation to the Governing Council, the Group noted the positive effects of the new Statutes and Rules. On the occasion of the 108th Inter-Parliamentary Conference (before the new Statutes and Rules had entered into force), women had represented 23.9 per cent of delegates to the Council (53 of the 222), whereas at the 109th IPU Assembly, they had accounted for 31.7 per cent of delegates (88 of the 278 delegates).

6.28 The Group expressed concern about those parliaments that had sent delegations without any women members to IPU Assemblies on more than three occasions. It considered it unacceptable that some delegations from parliaments that had a large number of women members did not include women in their delegations, and invited the IPU Secretary-General to take stronger action in that regard.

6.29 Furthermore, the Group encouraged the IPU Secretary-General to continue the practice of sending letters to those parliaments that had informed the IPU that their delegations would be single-sex. Prior to the Mexico Assembly, 13 delegations had received letters. Of those, three had changed the composition of their delegations to include women. Two other delegations had replied that, due to forthcoming elections, no women MPs were able to participate in the Assembly.

6.30 The Group continued its discussion on the question of a gender-sensitive IPU budget. It considered that institutionalising a gender perspective in the budget was an ongoing process that would require further monitoring, study and debate. The Group was presented with the latest IPU Handbook for Parliamentarians on Parliament, the Budget and Gender. In an effort to maximise the publicity and circulation of the Handbook, the Group encouraged Member Parliaments to foster awareness and use of the book, for example by organising specific events or launches.

6.31 The Group had continued its debate on mechanisms for monitoring progress made in countries where parliaments did not include women. It noted that nine countries had no women in their parliaments, namely Kuwait, the Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Saudi Arabia, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and the United Arab Emirates.

6.32 The Group agreed that the IPU Secretary-General should continue to write to those countries to request information on progress made, and to propose assistance. It also suggested inviting some delegations to attend the Gender Partnership Group meetings, in order to establish a dialogue on the question.

6.33 The Group continued its discussion on the difficulty of meeting the requirements of Article 23.2 of the IPU Statutes which states that "At least three of the

[15] members elected [to the Executive Committee] must be women", in addition to the President of the Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians, who is an ex officio member of the Executive Committee.

6.34 In the light of difficulties faced by some geopolitical groups, the complexity of the matter and the recent reform of the IPU Statutes and Rules, the Group agreed that, for the time being, it would not be appropriate to propose new amendments to the IPU Statutes on the issue. Instead, it considered that it was important to raise awareness within the geopolitical groups before each election to the Executive Committee. It also asked the Secretariat to regularly provide the geopolitical groups with relevant information so that they could discuss the issue and coordinate their candidatures in order to ensure that, at any given time, there were at least three elected women members on the Committee.

Panel on the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children

6.35 A panel on the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, organised in cooperation with UNICEF, was held on 21 April. It was chaired by Ms. L. Burgos Ochoa (Mexico), and the panellists included MPs from Namibia, the Philippines and the United Kingdom, a representative of UNICEF and a representative of Casa Alianza, a Mexican nongovernmental organisation. The UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador, Ms. J. Lange, also took part.

6.36 Participants heard that every year, more than 2 million children worldwide were forced into child prostitution, trafficked and sold for sexual purposes or used in child pornography. They were subject to multiple violations of their human rights, including the right to education, health, and protection from abuse and exploitation. In addition to the denial of their most fundamental rights, the child victims were robbed of their dignity, innocence and childhood.

6.37 In the lively debate that ensued, participants highlighted the grave, complex and far-reaching nature of the problem. Combating it would require the assistance and cooperation of all sectors concerned (public and private) that should work towards its prevention and elimination at the national, regional and international levels. Participants agreed that parliamentarians were in a unique position to create the necessary political and legislative environment to combat the abuse, and to facilitate the rehabilitation of child victims.

6.38 Senator Ferris and Ms Vamvakinou attended the workshop on the prevention of sexual exploitation of children and found the presentations harrowing but challenging. In keeping with the resolution of the panel to highlight this problem at the national level, they have circulated material to all parliamentary and other colleagues and will table it in both Houses of the Australian Parliament.

Panel on Human Rights: a casualty of the fight against terrorism?

6.39 On 20 April a panel discussion was held on the question Human Rights: a casualty of the fight against terrorism?. The discussion, chaired by Mr. F. Margáin

Berlanga, Chairman of the External Relations Committee of the Mexican Senate, opened with presentations by Mr. A. Radi, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Morocco, Mr. D. Türk, United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Mr. J. Saunders, Deputy Asia Director, Human Rights Watch, and Mr. H.A. Relva, Amnesty International. A lively discussion followed, with delegates expressing diverse viewpoints and raising a number of pertinent legal and practical questions, which were addressed by the panellists. Among the main topics were the inter-relationship between poverty and terrorism, the need to eradicate terrorism by attacking its root causes, and the problem of how to defend the rule of law and the rights of persons presumed to be guilty in a context of popular support for anti-terrorist measures, many of which were inconsistent with due process.

Elections for Subsidiary bodies

6.40 The following members were elected to subsidiary bodies:

Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians

Mr. S. Sirait (Indonesia), substitute member, was elected titular member for a five-year term until April 2009.

Ms. S. Carstairs (Canada) was elected substitute member for a five-year term until April 2009.

Ms. Z. Benarous (Algeria) was elected substitute member for a five-year term until April 2009.

Committee on Middle East Questions

Mr. M. Traoré (Mali) was elected substitute member for a four-year term until April 2008.

Group of Facilitators for Cyprus

Mr. F. Gutzwiller (Switzerland) was elected for a four-year term until April 2008.

Gender Partnership Group

The Executive Committee appointed Ms. M. Mensah-Williams (Namibia), Ms. Z. Rios-Montt (Guatemala) and Mr. P. Rattanapian (Thailand) as members of the Gender Partnership Group.

Chapter 7

ANZAC Day Ceremony

Participation

7.1 The delegation was honoured to participate in the ANZAC Day ceremony at 8.00am on 25 April 2004 at the Australian Embassy in Mexico City, Mexico. Members of the New Zealand IPU delegation were also in attendance.

7.2 The ANZAC ceremony is hosted on a bi-annual basis by the Australian and New Zealand Ambassadors and this year His Excellency the Ambassador of New Zealand, Mr George Troup, extended an introductory welcome to over 100 people who attended the ceremony.

7.3 The service was conducted by Rev. Susan Rodriguez.

7.4 His Excellency, the Ambassador of New Zealand gave the address and this was followed by a reading of the following words of Kemal Ataturk inscribed at Ari Burnu, ANZAC Cove, by His Excellency Mehmet Nuri Ezen, the Ambassador of Turkey in Mexico:

Those heroes that shed their blood
And lost their lives ...
You are now lying in the soil of a friendly country.
Therefore rest in peace
There is no difference between the Johnnies
And the Mehments to us, where they lie side by side.
Here in this country of ours ...
You, the Mothers
Who sent their sons from far away countries,
Wipe away your tears.
Your sons are now lying in our bosom
And are in peace
After having lost their lives in this land they have
Become our sons as well.

7.5 Wreaths were laid by representatives of New Zealand, Turkey, Great Britain, South Africa and the United States of America. The Australian IPU delegation also laid a wreath.

7.6 Mr Con Sciacca, a member of the Australian IPU delegation and a former Minister for Veterans' Affairs, was invited to address the gathering.



Mr Con Sciacca speaking at the ANZAC Day ceremony in Mexico City

7.7 His Excellency the Ambassador of Australia, Mr Graeme Wilson, read the Ode.

7.8 The service finished with the playing of the "Last Post", a minute's silence and "Reveille".

Comment

7.9 The delegation was very moved by the ceremony and honoured to participate in it. Although thousands of kilometres from similar ceremonies being conducted in Australia, the proceedings in Mexico City had the same poignancy and significance. Indeed, in some ways the fact that the ceremony was being held so far away from Australia gave testimony to the timeless significance of ANZAC to Australians and New Zealanders.

7.10 The delegation records its sincere appreciation of the invitation to attend and participate in the ceremony.

Chapter 8

Meetings of the Association of Secretaries-General of Parliaments

8.1 The Clerk of the House of Representatives, Mr Ian Harris, attended the meetings of the Association of Secretaries-General of Parliament (ASGP) and its Executive Committee held in conjunction with the deliberations of the 110th Inter-Parliamentary Assembly held in Mexico City. The meetings of the Executive Committee and of the ASGP plenary were held from 19 to 23 April 2004. Mr Harris chaired all plenary and Executive Committee meetings.

Consideration of Parliamentary matters

8.2 The general meetings of the ASGP continued the format of a general, thematic debate. The chosen subjects were:

- Gender partnership in the parliamentary service; and
- Relations between parliament and civil society.

8.3 There were also presentations and discussions on specific parliamentary topics.

Administrative matters

New members

8.4 A number of new members were admitted to the Association. Most were replacing existing members who had retired or moved to other employment.

Executive Committee matters

8.5 There were three vacancies on the ASGP's Executive Committee. One was to replace Mr Mario Farrachio (Uruguay), whose term of office finished with the conclusion of the Mexico meetings, and two were to fill additional positions on the Executive Committee previously agreed in Geneva last September. Two of the vacancies were filled in Mexico City by:

- Dr Hafnaoui AMRANI, Secretary-General of the National Council of Algeria, and
- Mr Arie Hahn, Secretary-General of the Knesset, Israel.

8.6 The third vacancy was left vacant until the next meeting in Geneva in September 2004.

Rule changes

8.7 The meeting agreed to a rule change recommended by the Executive Committee. This was to alter the status of former Presidents of the Association to be honorary members, rather than full voting members, of the Executive Committee. The membership present also voted to adopt guidelines in relation to proposals to confer honorary membership on former members of the Association.

Website

8.8 The meeting agreed with the administration of the Association's web site by Australia, at least for the immediate future.

Agenda

8.9 The meeting also adopted a draft agenda for the next meeting in Geneva. When finalised, this will be placed on the ASGP web site.