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SEMINAR ON
**IMPLEMENTING THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS
AND THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL
RIGHTS: WHAT PART FOR PARLIAMENTS?**

22 OCTOBER 2009, CICG, GENEVA

Geneva, 20 August 2009

Dear Mr. President,

I am pleased to invite your parliament to participate in a human rights seminar, which will be organized by the IPU, in cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, on 22 October 2009, the day after the closure of the 121st IPU Assembly. The seminar is designed to enhance parliaments' involvement in the work of the United Nations treaty bodies, and more specifically, in the work of the Human Rights Committee and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) cover the full spectrum of human rights. By ratifying them, States commit themselves to implementing their provisions and reporting regularly on the steps taken to this end to the Human Rights Committee, which oversees the implementation of the ICCPR, and to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which oversees the implementation of the ICESCR. Both Committees issue concluding observations and recommendations to each State party. Parliaments can make a significant contribution to this reporting and follow-up process.

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Mr. Kristian Pihl Lorentzen, MP
President of the Danish Inter-Parliamentary Group
Danish Inter-Parliamentary Group
International Department (IPU-Sekr)
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The seminar, which is part of the IPU's efforts to strengthen the role of parliaments in the promotion and protection of human rights, is designed for parliaments of those States parties to the Covenant(s) whose reports were considered recently by the UN Committee(s) or will be considered shortly. Please find enclosed the list of countries (see Annex) which fall into these categories.

As indicated therein, the UN Human Rights Committee examined your country's report in October 2008 and issued concluding observations, a copy of which I attach herewith.

I hope, therefore, that your parliament will be able to participate in the seminar, and designate for this purpose, and where possible, members of committees whose mandate is directly related to the work of the relevant UN Committee examining your country's report. Please note that the invitation is also extended to one parliamentary staff dealing with these issues.

Members of both UN Committees and expert members of parliament have been invited to facilitate the seminar. *Human rights: Handbook for Parliamentarians*, published in 2005 by the IPU and OHCHR and widely distributed among parliaments, will be used, along with relevant UN publications, as reference tools during the seminar. Please find attached a preliminary agenda of the seminar. A final version will be sent to you in due course.

I sincerely hope that it will be possible for your parliament's delegation to participate in this seminar and would be grateful if your parliament could complete and return to us the attached registration form by Friday 25 September latest.

I look forward to the participation of your parliament in the seminar.

Yours sincerely,

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

Anders B. Johnsson
Secretary General



IMPLEMENTING THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS AND THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS: WHAT PART FOR PARLIAMENTS?



Seminar organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

GENEVA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTRE (CICG), 22 OCTOBER 2009

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

8.45 a.m.	-	9.30 a.m.	Registration
9.30 a.m.	-	9.45 a.m.	Welcoming remarks
MORNING SESSION			
General overview of the Covenants and of the contribution that parliaments can make to ensure respect for their provisions			
9.45 a.m.	-	11 a.m.	Introducing the Covenants and their Optional Protocols <i>Presentations and debate</i>
11 a.m.	-	11.15 a.m.	<i>Coffee break</i>
11.15 a.m.	-	1 p.m.	Implementing the Covenants: the role of parliament in the reporting and follow-up procedure <ul style="list-style-type: none">> Parliamentary involvement in the reporting mechanism> Developing an adequate legislative and oversight framework to ensure implementation of concluding observations> Working with civil society and the media> Keeping track of progress <i>Presentations and debate</i>
1 p.m.	-	2.30 p.m.	<i>Lunch</i>
AFTERNOON SESSION			
A close-up of two rights and the obligations they entail for States, including parliament			
2.30 p.m.	-	4 p.m.	Article 7 of the ICCPR: the right to personal integrity and dignity and the prohibition of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment <ul style="list-style-type: none">> How is the right to personal integrity and dignity addressed by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights? What are current challenges to the prohibition of torture?> What is required of States parties?> What can parliaments do? <i>Presentations and debate</i>
4 p.m.	-	4.15 p.m.	<i>Coffee break</i>
4.15 p.m.	-	5.45 p.m.	Articles 6 and 7 of the ICESCR: the right to work and rights at work <ul style="list-style-type: none">> What does the right to work as enshrined in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, entail? What are the current challenges to the implementation of this right?> What is required of States parties?> What contribution can parliaments make? <i>Presentations and debate</i>
5.45	-	6 p.m.	<i>Closure of the seminar</i>



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Seminar organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

GENEVA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTRE (CICG), 22 OCTOBER 2009

REGISTRATION FORM

DELEGATION OF: _____

PARTICIPANTS:

<input type="checkbox"/> Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. <input type="checkbox"/> Mr	Last name	First name	Title
	1.		
	2.		
	3.		

Please complete and return this form **no later than 25 September 2009** to:

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For any additional information, please contact Ms. Ingeborg Schwarz (+4122 919 41 42 / is@mail.ipu.org) or Mr. Rogier Huizenga +4122 919 41 24 / (rh@mail.ipu.org)

Date

Signature

ANNEX

Human Rights Committee - Sessions

The Human Rights Committee convenes three times a year for three-week sessions, normally in March at the United Nations Headquarters in New York and in July and November at the United Nations Office in Geneva. **These are the countries whose reports have been examined or are scheduled to be examined soon:**

No.	Dates	State reports	Location
	Sessions	Serbia, Slovakia	Geneva
97	12-30 October 2009	Croatia, Ecuador, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Switzerland Task Force: Cameroon, Colombia, El Salvador, Estonia, Israel, Poland	Geneva
96	13-31 July 2009	Azerbaijan, Chad, Netherlands, Tanzania Task Force: Argentina, Ecuador, Mexico, New Zealand, Uzbekistan	Geneva
95	16 March - 3 April 2009	Australia, Chad, Rwanda, Sweden Task Force: Croatia, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Switzerland, Tanzania,	New York
94	13-31 October 2008	Nicaragua, Monaco, Denmark, Japan, Spain	Geneva

Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights - Sessions

The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights convenes twice a year for three-week sessions, normally in May and November at the United Nations Office in Geneva. **These are the countries whose reports have been examined or are scheduled to be examined soon:**

No.	Dates	State reports
	Sessions	Argentina, New Zealand, Slovakia
45	November 2010 (Pre-Sessional Working Group)	Cameroon, Estonia, Germany, Israel
45	November 2010	Netherlands, Switzerland, Uruguay, Dominican Republic, Sri Lanka, Mali
44	May 2010 (Pre-Sessional Working Group)	Sri Lanka, Yemen, Russian Federation, Turkey, Republic of Moldova, Mali
44	May 2010	Algeria, Colombia, Mauritius, Kazakhstan, Afghanistan, Tanzania
43	23-26 November 2009 (Pre-Sessional Working Group)	Uruguay, Afghanistan, Netherlands, Switzerland, Dominican Republic, Tanzania
43	2-20 November 2009	Republic of Korea, Poland, Chad, Madagascar, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon
42	25-29 May 2009 (Pre-Sessional Working Group)	Kazakhstan, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Algeria, Mauritius, Gabon
42	4-22 May 2009	Brazil, Cyprus, United Kingdom, Australia, Cambodia
41	3-21 November 2008	Philippines, Angola, Kenya, Nicaragua, Sweden