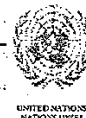




SECRETARIAT OF THE CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION
SECRETARIAT DE LA CONVENTION SUR LA LUTTE CONTRE LA DESERTIFICATION



**MODTAGET
LEDELSSESSEKRETARIATET**

Dato 21/4-10 kl.

Date: 31 March 2010
Ref: MND/mr
Cc: LG.

Subject: Designation of an Official Parliamentary focal point to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

Honourable President,

I would like to refer to the Eighth Session of the UNCCD Round Table for Parliamentarians held on 24-25 September 2009, in Buenos Aires, Argentina. On that occasion Parliamentarians adopted a document submitted by the Steering Committee regarding the future actions of Parliamentarians (copy attached).

Section A of the aforementioned document invites every Parliament to identify a focal point to the UNCCD. In order to enable the Secretariat to establish a roster for Parliamentarians focal points, it would be highly appreciated if your national Parliament could designate an official focal point and provide us with his/ her name, title and full contact details (e-mail, telephone, fax).

Once finalized, the roster for parliamentarians focal points will be an important tool for inter action with Parliaments. It will be posted to the UNCCD web site through the link especially devoted to the actions taken by parliaments in the context of the UNCCD (www.unccd.int/parliament/menu.php).

I would be grateful if you could kindly transmit your response to the UNCCD Secretariat preferably by 17 May 2010.

.../...

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UNCCD

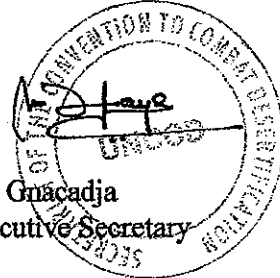
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I would like to seize this opportunity to thank you for your continuous support to the work of the UNCCD.

Please accept, Honourable President, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Luc Gnacadja
Executive Secretary



Annex: Copy of the document on commitments and future actions of Parliamentarians



Eighth Session of the UNCCD Round Table for Parliamentarians

Commitments and future actions of Parliamentarians

This document has been prepared by the Steering Committee of the Parliamentarians Networks of the UNCCD. It was adopted by Parliamentarians on the occasion of their Eighth Session held on 24-25 September 2009, in Buenos Aires; Argentina.

Background

Parliaments and parliamentarians seeking to deal with desertification, land degradation and drought should take account of the conclusions and recommendations of the meeting of the Steering Committee of the seventh UNCCD Parliamentary Round Table and Parliamentary Network (PNoUNCCD), held in Praia, Cape Verde, on 1 December 2008 under the chairmanship of President Dr. Aristides R. Lima:

- There is at the national, regional, subregional and international levels a need for improved parliamentary participation, greater parliamentary involvement, capacity strengthening, and more parliamentary networking in the areas of sustainable land and water management, land governance, food security, climate change, and so on.
- The PNoUNCCD must be revitalized, including more communications with parliaments, the establishment of a database of relevant laws and legislation, and the elaboration of a statute on its objectives, organization, and so on.
- A two-year work programme (2010-2011) should be discussed at the next Parliamentary Round Table to be held in parallel with the ninth Conference of the Parties to the UNCCD in Buenos Aires in September 2009.

Members of national and international parliaments attending the eighth Parliamentary Round Table (Buenos Aires, 24 and 25 September 2009) committed themselves to undertake – where appropriate – the following actions during the next two years (through parliamentary motions, hearings, questions and lawmaking initiatives etc.):

A. General commitments and actions

1. In every parliament a focal point on UNCCD issues should be identified.
2. Parliamentary declarations emphasizing as priority the control of desertification and land degradation in state policies should be promoted.
3. A database of successful experiences and good practices in desertification control should be set up in order to be shared by all countries.

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B. Commitments and actions in specific areas
(The first two areas are of primordial importance)

1. Contributions achieving food security in the context of the UNCCD:

- (a) Allocation of a higher national budget to agriculture (at least 10 %¹).
- (b) Establishment or strengthening of food security systems, including storage and marketing facilities, particularly in rural areas of the drylands.
- (c) Setting sustainable land management (SLM) on the political agenda and promoting corresponding ordinances, laws and rules of land use.
- (d) Influence and monitor the regulations and investment legislations for international land deals.

2. Mobilize public opinion and raise awareness:

- (a) Special parliamentary debates or organization of other relevant events commemorating the World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought on 17 June every year.
- (b) Encourage campaigns on land degradation and desertification (involving farmers, schools, academics, artist, civil society organisations, media, private sector).

3. Improvement of the quality of governance² in agriculture in the drylands:

- (a) Strengthen the institutional capacity of parliaments in the sphere of political formulation and control as well as stimulate the work of parliamentary commissions and networks on desertification and land degradation.
- (b) Improve land tenure regimes and the security of land use rights, a prerequisite for SLM.
- (c) Work for the pursuit of coherent and better coordinated policies for the drylands in the area of anti-poverty and sustainable human development strategies including anti-desertification, the enhancement of synergies between the Rio conventions and the building up of a culture of coordination of the NAPs with other national development priorities.
- (d) Integrate and monitor foreign assistance into a country's own development plans.
- (e) Enhancing a development assistance policy which must be effective, strengthening rather than undermining country efforts to improve governance in agriculture, and counteracting agricultural protection in developed countries and subsidized agricultural exports.

¹ In the 2003 Maputo Declaration, African leaders committed themselves to allocate 10% of their national budget to agriculture by 2008 as part of attempts to meet the first MDG.

² Governance refers to the rules, processes and behaviour by which interests are articulated, resources are managed and power is exercised. Governance includes participation, accountability, efficiency, transparency and coherence as well as capable public institutions and individuals, responsible State management and the rule of law.

(f) Strengthen the subregional and regional cooperation with regard to anti-desertification/land degradation politics and in order to attenuate and mitigate the effects of drought and climate changes.

4. Climate, SLM and post-Kyoto:

(a) Taking actions – on national and international parliamentary levels – for a Global Green New Deal on the condition that SLM becomes an integral part of it and of future climate protection strategies.

(b) Helping realize the large potential for SLM to contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

(c) Ensuring that strong SLM components are included in the national climate action plans and in development cooperation programmes.

(d) Calling on governments and pertinent authorities to implement the UNCCD in a more effective way and to link it better with efforts to accomplish relevant objectives under climate change processes, and efforts to promote human security, tackle forced migration and prevent conflict.

C. The Parliamentary Steering Committee

- (a) should show more guidance in strengthening the PNoUNCCD,
- (b) look for a better follow-up of the declarations of the Round Tables,
- (c) monitor the work of parliamentarians.

Intercessional meetings of the Parliamentary Round Table are considered to be useful.

All activities must be communicated to the PNoUNCCD which was created as a network of information, interaction and influence with the aim of increasing parliamentary involvement and efficiency in the fields of combating desertification, soil erosion and land degradation, and as a tool of pooling information and of ensuring greater parliamentary input into international negotiations and organizations. (See the corresponding website www.unccd.int/parliament/menu.php)
