



THE SECRETARY GENERAL

## INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION

Geneva, 6 April 2011

### **2012 Development Cooperation Forum of the United Nations: First High Level Symposium**

Dear President,

The IPU works closely with the United Nations Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) in an effort to help improve aid and development practices around the world. The third session of this major biannual event will take place in New York in July 2012. It will be prepared through three symposia. I have pleasure in writing to invite your parliament to take part in the first of these symposia which will take place in Bamako, Mali, on 5-6 May of this year.

The DCF is different from other high level UN processes in that it was designed from the start to have a strong multi-stakeholder component bringing together representatives from governments, parliaments, civil society and local authorities from both donor and recipient countries. The aid effectiveness agenda, and within it the question of mutual accountability of aid between donor and recipient countries, is a central preoccupation of the DCF. Indeed, aid effectiveness is key to the entire development enterprise and the way developing countries are able to progress toward the Millennium Development Goals and other such international commitments.

The parliamentarians that have attended the meetings of the DCF over the last three years have brought many important insights to the process, which have helped the United Nations re-think some key issues while bringing new ones to the fore. The IPU is keen to intensify this work at both the normative and operational levels.

The two-day Mali symposium will focus on the question of how to improve the *results* of aid at the country level and within a context of enhanced ownership and accountability. The symposium will pay special attention to aid effectiveness issues affecting the Least Developed Countries, including the question of how aid from all sources is distributed within this group of countries and between them and other aid recipients. The symposium will also contribute to the global meeting later this year, in Busan, Korea, to assess progress on the commitments of the landmark 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.

Mr. Kristian Pihl Lorentzen  
Member of Parliament  
President of the Danish Inter-Parliamentary Group  
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The symposium will be interactive, with small group discussions as well as a breakout session for a discussion between parliamentarians and civil society representatives (*non-executive* stakeholders). The documentation of the meeting will include two substantive studies as well as the preliminary results of a survey on mutual accountability that the IPU has assisted with and that will include the views of parliamentarians.

We hope that a group of some 12-15 MPs will be able to participate in this first symposium of the DCF, including one member of your parliament. Ideally, the member would need to be already familiar with the aid effectiveness agenda and able to draw from direct experience of interaction with development agencies, donors, civil society or other actors active in this field. Funding is available through the United Nations to cover the cost of travel and accommodation for four MPs from Least Developed Countries on a first-come, first-served basis. Interpretation will be available in English and French.

An aide memoire elaborating on the issues on the agenda will be available soon. The IPU is working with the UN organizers to make sure that questions of particular interest to parliamentarians will be included in the programme. Up-to-date information, including the final agenda, aide memoire, background papers, and logistical note for participants will be posted on the DCF website at <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/dcf/>. The information will also be sent in advance to all registered participants.

It would be most appreciated if you could assign a member of your parliament to attend the Mali symposium by returning the enclosed form to us by 30 April. For further information about the meeting and the DCF in general please contact the IPU office in New York where this process is being coordinated, either by email ([ny-office@mail.ipu.org](mailto:ny-office@mail.ipu.org)) or by fax (+1 212 557 3954).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anders B. Johnsson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Anders B. Johnsson