



## INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION

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TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS : INTERPARLEMENT GENEVE

24 August 2011

Dear Madam President,  
Dear Mr. President,

I would like to draw your attention to the increasingly high level of parliamentary engagement with the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) process. This has included robust participation by parliaments in the review of the 2001 - 2010 Brussels Programme of Action (BPOA) for the LDCs and parliamentary input into the design of the 2011 - 2020 Istanbul Programme of Action (IPOA).

Earlier this year, the IPU organised a Parliamentary Forum on the occasion of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the LDCs (LDC IV) (please see the attached summary report). The outcome documents of the Conference, namely the Programme of Action and the Istanbul Declaration (both attached), highlight the prominent role of parliaments in the achievement of the development objectives of the Conference. In particular, the Declaration takes note of the "important role of parliaments in debating development strategies, as well as in overseeing their implementation." It stresses the centrality of parliament to effectiveness, transparency and accountability in the design, the implementation and the review of the policies and programmes in the context of the IPOA. The IPOA further reinforces this view, stating that:

- *Greater ownership and leadership of LDCs is indispensable, including the integration of the Programme of Action in national development strategies, plans and programmes, and identification of authorities to oversee implementation, as well as multi-stakeholder engagement by parliamentarians [...].*
- *Policies and measures will be pursued in line with the following goals and targets: Strengthen good governance, the rule of law, human rights, gender equality and empowerment of women, and democratic participation, including by enhancing the role of parliaments.*

As part of the proposed actions, the IPOA notes that LDCs should:

- *Implement greater transparency in public financial management, including [...] improving parliamentary oversight of public financial management.*
- *Promote effective participation of all stakeholders and government accountability at all levels by strengthening the role of parliament [...] including in relation to the preparation, implementation and monitoring of national development policies and plans, while ensuring that all stakeholders abide by the national legislation and adhere to the rule of law.*

Lastly, the IPOA recognises that:

- *LDCs have made encouraging progress on some aspects of gender equality and empowerment of women, such as in primary education and women's representation in parliament.*

Parliaments are central to the effective mainstreaming of the IPOA into national development strategies and to the implementation of such strategies at both the national and local levels. LDC parliaments can now make use of the IPOA and Istanbul Declaration as leverage in asserting their constitutionally mandated responsibilities.

In accordance with the Parliamentary message to LDC IV, which recognises the strong support that parliaments from donor countries should provide to LDC parliaments, the IPU encourages cooperation between LDC and non-LDC parliaments. There are numerous ways in which non-LDC parliaments can engage with this process. For example, the IPU promotes the nomination of LDC parliamentary focal points. In LDC parliaments, this facilitates the sharing of information and ensures parliamentary engagement with the follow-up, implementation and review of the IPOA. In non-LDC parliaments, the focal points facilitate the sharing of lessons learnt and good practices with LDC parliaments. Should your parliament already have focal points or wish to nominate some, I would be pleased to receive their names, titles and contact details at your earliest convenience.

Wherever possible, non-LDC parliaments could also provide direct support to LDC parliaments. Your parliament may already be providing such support, in which case the IPU would welcome information on this cooperation.

For your information, the IPU Committee on United Nations Affairs will organise a briefing at the 125<sup>th</sup> Assembly in Bern in October 2011 on parliamentary engagement with the LDC process.

I look forward to working with your parliament in this global movement to ensure the effective implementation of the IPOA.

Yours sincerely,

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

Anders Johnsson  
Secretary General