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Rabat, 6 May 2013

Post-2015 development agenda and the new Sustainable Development Goals

Dear Madam President,
Dear Mr. President,

You will no doubt agree with me that our recent Assembly in Quito was a resounding success. The feedback I received from participants was overwhelmingly positive and confirms that our efforts to make our Assemblies more relevant and results-oriented are beginning to pay off.

An excellent example of this is the Quito Communiqué adopted at the end of the Assembly. The theme of the General Debate, From unrelenting growth to purposeful development “Buen Vivir”: New approaches, new solutions, was chosen partly to help develop a parliamentary contribution to the current debate on a new vision of development beyond 2015, when a set of global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will be adopted by the United Nations.

Well over 100 statements were delivered during the plenary debate of the Assembly. Most interventions directly addressed the theme or some aspect of it, demonstrating that parliamentarians are keenly aware of the challenges of sustainable development and the need to work together on a fresh and innovative approach. The Quito Communiqué captures the essence of those interventions.

The vision of development portrayed in the Communiqué, anchored in the notion of well-being, can help open up new perspectives for both developed and developing countries on key questions of economic, social and environmental policy. One point that emerged quite clearly from the deliberations is that democratic governance should be part and parcel of the SDGs – both as a goal in its own right and as a cross-cutting issue. This is consistent with the overarching mandate of the IPU and was corroborated, overwhelmingly, by the results of a survey of almost 250 parliamentarians during the Assembly.

I would like to take this opportunity to encourage you to continue this debate in your parliament. You may wish to table the Quito Communiqué in parliament and invite members to discuss it. This would be in line with the recommendation so many of you made in Quito, which is captured in the concluding words of the Communiqué.

In it we affirm that it will be more important than ever for parliaments to assert their legitimate place in the decision-making process. Stronger parliaments will have to play a central role in the implementation of the future SDGs. This will include ensuring that development policies and plans are drawn up through participatory and inclusive processes, with regular progress reports submitted to parliament for review.

By pursuing this debate in our parliaments we will also be in a better position to contribute to the substance of the new development framework. As you know, the task of formulating the new SDGs has been assigned at the United Nations to an intergovernmental Open Working Group of the General Assembly. The Working Group held a first substantive session in mid-April and will meet monthly to discuss a select cluster of issues well into next year.

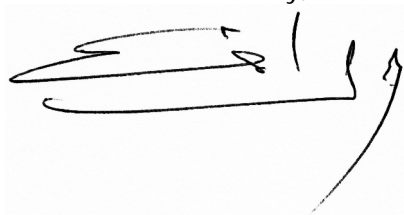
I would like to encourage you to make sure that your parliament is informed of the deliberations of the Working Group and that regular debates are held in your parliament to provide input. For my part, I will try to keep you abreast of major developments relating to the Working Group. A strong position from your parliament in support of a democratic governance goal would of course be most welcome at this early stage even before the Working Group focuses on this key issue.

May I also suggest that you approach your country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and, through it, its Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York and invite them to champion the IPU's proposal to include democratic governance among the future SDGs.

I am convinced that we have a duty to ensure that the new global agenda for development will fulfil people's most cherished aspirations and meet their need for a more just and sustainable world. I look forward to working with you to this end and would greatly appreciate if you could keep me informed of your efforts.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Abdelwahad Radi', with a long horizontal stroke and a curved flourish at the end.

Abdelwahad Radi
President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union