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THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
--
MESSAGE TO THE 120TH ASSEMBLY
OF THE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION
Addis Ababa, 5 April 2009

*Delivered by Mr. Abdoulaye Jannet, Executive Director,
UN Economic Commission for Africa*

It gives me great pleasure to send greetings to all the parliamentarians assembled in Addis Ababa.

You meet as the international community grapples with a range of serious, unprecedented challenges. The global economic crisis seems to grow deeper by the day. Climate change jeopardizes the very future of our planet. The food crisis remains a stark reality for hundreds of millions of people. Extremism, political instability, nuclear proliferation likewise demand our urgent attention. Such grave problems can only be solved by nations working together.

The economic crisis risks a reversal of hard-won development gains. People everywhere are understandably angry; they could well lose faith in their leaders and their own future. We could be on the brink of widespread social unrest. That is why, at the G-20 Summit three days ago in London, I called for a substantial stimulus plan and for reforms of global rules and institutions. I also spoke out against protectionism. We must do our utmost to protect the poorest and most vulnerable members of the human family, and avoid a catastrophe in human development. I will count on you to help keep us on track toward the Millennium Development Goals.

I also said in London that our stimulus packages should include major investments in clean energy and energy efficiency. Some political leaders ask how we can afford to tackle climate change in the midst of hard economic times. I say just the opposite: how can we afford not to? If we are going to spend substantial sums for recovery, let us do so in ways that will create jobs and put the world on a path toward sustainable growth. We need a green new deal; we need to seal a new climate deal later this year in Copenhagen; and we need legislators such as you to help with implementation of that hoped-for deal at the national level.

Parliamentarians play a crucial role across this agenda. You have the power to bring issues to the table. You can enact legislation, and put the power of budgetary allocations behind your priorities. You are change agents, well placed to build bridges between the local and the global. For these reasons and more, the United Nations

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attaches great importance to the parliamentary voice in world affairs and to the partnership between the world Organization and the Inter-Parliamentary Union. The General Assembly has acknowledged this role, welcoming in its most recent resolution the growing practice of including legislators as members of national delegations to major UN meetings and events, and encouraging the IPU to strengthen its contributions to the work of the Assembly and other UN bodies, including the Peacebuilding Commission, the Human Rights Council and the Development Cooperation Forum held by the Economic and Social Council.

I hope our partnership will continue to flourish in the years to come. No country is immune from the fallout of the current crises. Now is the time for global solidarity. I am confident that you will do your part to see the world through these troubled times, and I look forward to working with you in that effort.

Please accept my best wishes for the success of your deliberations.

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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
CABINET DU SECRETAIRE GENERAL

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22 December 2008

Excellency,

On behalf of the Secretary-General, I thank you for your letter of 11 December 2008, in which you invited him to address the 120th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, to be convened on 5 April 2009 in Addis Ababa.

Regrettably, I must inform you that the Secretary-General will be unable to attend the meeting, owing to scheduling reasons. I am nevertheless pleased to take this opportunity to convey his best wishes for a successful event.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Vijay Nambiar
Chef de Cabinet

His Excellency
Mr. Theo-Ben Gurirab
President
Inter-Parliamentary Union
Geneva

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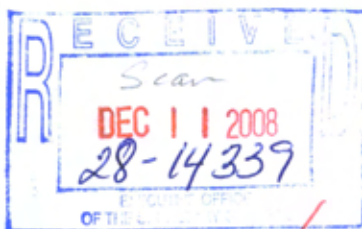
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11 December 2008

Dear Mr. Secretary-General,

I would like to thank you for having joined me at the opening of the Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations late last month. The participants greatly appreciated your opening statement which provided inspiration for the two days of very fruitful discussions. The summary report of the Hearing will be finalized soon and circulated as an official document of the General Assembly.

I welcomed the opportunity to discuss the cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union. United Nations General Assembly resolution A/63/24 provides us with an ambitious agenda for the coming two years. I look forward to working closely with you to build a strategic relationship between our two organizations and believe the proposed annual interaction with the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination can provide important impetus towards this end.

I would like to confirm my invitation to you to address the 120th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, when it convenes in Addis Ababa on 5 April 2009. The week long Assembly will take place under the banner of *Building peace, democracy and development in times of crisis*. The participants from over 150 national parliaments will debate issues that are high on the United Nations agenda, including nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, climate change and sustainable development, and freedom of expression and the right to information.

The IPU Assembly is by far the largest and most widely attended parliamentary event organized in the course of the year, and I know that the leading politicians taking part would greatly welcome hearing your views on these and many other issues confronting the international community today. I therefore very much hope that your busy schedule will allow you to join us on that occasion.

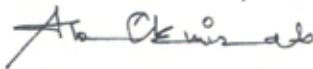
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Mr. Ban ki-Moon
Secretary-General of the United Nations
United Nations Plaza
NEW YORK

When we met in New York, we also discussed the global financial crisis. As I mentioned, I intend to convene a parliamentary conference next year to examine the causes of the crisis and its consequences. The conference will formulate proposals to achieve better global governance through greater parliamentary involvement in and oversight of multilateral processes, the global financial institutions and the financial markets. I hope to advance preparations for this conference in consultation with you to make sure that our efforts are supportive of those of the United Nations.

I look forward to hearing from you and send you my warmest Season's Greetings.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Theo Ben Gurirab', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Theo-Ben Gurirab
President of the
Inter-Parliamentary Union



Inter-Parliamentary Union

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THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENTS IN CONTAINING THE GLOBAL FINANCIAL CRISIS AND ITS ECONOMIC IMPACT, BOTH ON DEVELOPING AND DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

*Resolution adopted unanimously by the 119th Assembly
(Geneva, 15 October 2008)*

The 119th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Considering the consequences of the international financial crisis and its negative repercussions on the global economy, in particular its adverse effects on developing countries,

Noting the recent warning issued by the International Monetary Fund that debt-ridden banks are pushing the global financial system to the brink of meltdown, and that it is the responsibility of the wealthy nations to restore investor confidence,

Considering the importance of parliaments' role, in cooperation with national governments, to contain the effects of the global financial crisis that threaten the world's stability, security and development,

Recognizing the shared and differentiated responsibility of all countries in dealing with the international economic crisis in order to meet human development needs, eradicate poverty and achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs),

Aware of the threat that the international economic crisis poses to sustainable development - considered essential for human progress - particularly in the context of the Declaration issued by the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg in September 2002,

Considering the need to allocate the necessary resources and to ensure the establishment of a stable, fair and secure global economic system,

Mindful of the interdependence of the national economies and the global economic system, which requires a holistic approach and strong international cooperation to ensure the optimal use of financial resources and the establishment of strong and accountable financial institutions,

Recalling that the report on the outcome of the International Conference on Financing for Development held in Monterrey, Mexico, in 2002, considered that international financial stability in particular was crucial for fostering international economic growth,

Concerned that the international financial crisis has undermined social stability in many countries around the world and threatens the gains made in democracy and human rights,

1. *Calls on* the Governing Council to organize, as soon as possible, an international parliamentary conference with experts to examine the causes and effects of the international financial crisis on the global economic system and identify ways of dealing with the consequences of this crisis;
2. *Urges* parliamentary committees dealing with financial, economic and trade-related issues to urgently convene meetings to identify the best ways of protecting financial institutions and mitigating the effects of the international financial crisis, until such time as a global strategy to deal

with the crisis is found;

3. *Calls on* national parliaments to provide a more efficient proactive regulatory framework for national regulatory bodies with a view to preventing future instability in the major financial markets;
4. *Encourages* implementation of internationally agreed laws and standards on the transparency of financial markets to ensure the clarity of financial transactions, as this would enhance the national and international capacity to assess financial risks;
5. *Calls on* governments to include parliamentarians in their official delegations to conferences, forums and meetings organized to discuss the international financial crisis so that parliamentarians can express their opinions and ideas as the representatives of the people;
6. *Calls for* the necessary national and international measures to oversee financial institutions so as to mitigate the impact of this crisis;
7. *Calls for* action to reduce the potential social consequences of the international financial crisis as they relate to employment prospects, job security, rising prices and poverty, all of which are covered by the United Nations Millennium Declaration;
8. *Calls on* the central banks and currency control agencies to implement precautionary policies, procedures and measures in order to ensure the stability of the financial and banking sectors;
9. *Calls for* greater regulation of the financial sector, with particular attention to inter-bank lending and consumer protection, to prevent future financial crises;
10. *Calls on* all countries to put in place more effective law enforcement measures to deal with financial crime and to cooperate in this field;
11. *Requests* the governments of the leading industrialized States to assume their responsibility for the developing countries by curbing the negative effects of this crisis on their national economies and to make every effort to prepare the ground for the full participation of developing countries in shaping the global economy;
12. *Urges* the governments of developed States to promptly honour their commitments vis-à-vis the developing countries in order to help them resolve their domestic economic problems, eliminate poverty, illiteracy and disease and achieve higher growth rates, as recommended in relevant instruments, in particular the UN Millennium Declaration; and, in this context, *urges* international organizations, within their respective mandates, to contribute to the achievement of the above-mentioned objectives;
13. *Urges* parliaments to spare no effort in working on ideas and initiatives aimed at promoting a new rules-based financial system that could help to achieve a more just and transparent world economic structure, which in turn could also help to achieve peace and stability.

Note: you can [download a complete electronic version](#) of the brochure "Results of the 119th Assembly and related meetings of the Inter-Parliamentary Union" in PDF format (file size approximately 595K). This version requires [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#), which you can download free of charge.

