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Official Records

President: Mr. Al-Nasser. (Qatar)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 138 (continued)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/66/668/Add.12)

The President: I should like, in keeping with established practice, to draw the attention of the General Assembly to document A/66/668/Add.12, in which the Secretary-General informs the President of the Assembly that, since the issuance of his communication contained in document A/66/668/Add.11, Swaziland has made the payment necessary to reduce its arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes due note of the information contained in this document?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 130

Interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Report of the Secretary-General (A/66/770)

Draft resolution (A/66/L.45)

The President: I welcome participants to today's meeting. I am pleased that the General Assembly is holding a stand-alone debate on the interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). Today's meeting is more than a discussion of the institutional relationship between two organizations. It seeks to examine in greater

detail how the United Nations, as a system, relates to the global parliamentary community. I would like to acknowledge the presence here today of the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, The Honourable Mr. Abdelwahad Radi, and of the Secretary-General of the IPU, Mr. Anders Johnsson.

In the Millennium Declaration (resolution 55/2) more than a decade ago, heads of State and Government called on the United Nations to engage more systematically with national parliaments through their world organization, the IPU. The report submitted by the Secretary-General for today's debate (A/66/770) highlights the various ways in which that engagement has taken place. More and more, legislators are joining their national delegations at major United Nations events. Parliaments are increasingly involved in the review and implementation of international commitments. I witnessed this during my visits to Member States, including to Strasbourg, France, Belgium and elsewhere.

The IPU has taken the lead in convening parliamentary meetings in the context of global conferences, as we saw last year during the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries in Istanbul. Within the scope of its own bodies and mechanism, the IPU is providing an environment in which members of parliament can discuss and articulate parliamentary input into major United Nations processes. We saw this during the consultations on the outcome of the forthcoming United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio. On 21 September last year, I myself had the pleasure of engaging with a

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group of legislators who had come to New York as part of their high-level delegations to the General Assembly's general debate. I presented to them my initiative aimed at establishing mediation as one of the pillars of my presidency. I was very pleased to see that, not long after that meeting, a parliamentary perspective was submitted as a contribution to the United Nations report on the role of effective mediation.

On 28 November 2011, my Office worked closely with the IPU to convene the annual parliamentary hearing at the United Nations, which focused on the very topical issue of strengthening political accountability for a more peaceful and prosperous world. We had a rich debate in which several Government representatives also participated. I am pleased to note that the draft resolution before the Assembly (A/66/L.45) calls for the annual hearing to be more closely linked to major United Nations processes, so as to help inform those processes from a parliamentary perspective. To that end, I will be consulting with Member States in the coming weeks to determine which forthcoming United Nations process would best stand to gain from robust parliamentary input.

Finally, I strongly believe that in our work at the United Nations we should pay more attention to how we are engaging with parliaments at the national level. We should help strengthen parliamentary capacities, and we should involve parliaments in national dialogue and reconciliation efforts, as well as in formulating and vetting national strategies.

Every parliamentarian here has experience and innovations to share, and each of us has a responsibility and a critical role to play in bridging the divide between the United Nations and parliaments and between parliaments and civilians. It is for this reason that I am a firm believer in cooperation between the IPU and the United Nations and in the essential role of parliamentarians in realizing and implementing the policy work of the United Nations.

I now give the floor to the representative of Morocco to introduce draft resolution A/66/L.45.

Mr. Loulichki (Morocco) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset I would like to express, Sir, on behalf of the delegation of the Kingdom of Morocco, our appreciation and gratitude for your efforts and initiatives in the presidency of the General Assembly at its current session in pushing forward issues of international interest, the most recent of which is enhancing the

interaction and cooperation between the United Nations, national parliaments and international associations and organizations.

Under agenda item 130, entitled "Interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union", I should like to introduce draft resolution A/66/L.45, keeping in mind that the General Assembly has adopted such a resolution on a biannual basis, the most recent of which was resolution 65/123.

The delegation of Morocco, as the head of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and represented by Mr. Abdelwahad Radi, who is present with us here today, has the honour of presenting draft resolution A/66/L.45 on behalf of its original 34 sponsoring Member States, now joined by 50 more, bringing the total number of sponsors to 84. As the Assembly knows, in conformity with past practice the list of sponsors will remain open to any member seeking to join.

The delegation of Morocco, together with the IPU delegation, has conducted extensive discussions on the draft resolution, in which all the necessary information was provided on all amendments. The draft resolution is based primarily on previous General Assembly resolutions, with additions inspired by the outcomes of the 126th IPU Assembly and the report of the Secretary-General contained in A/66/770. These amendments seek to entrench cooperation between the United Nations, national parliaments and the IPU, especially by drawing up a new agreement between the United Nations and the IPU; providing parliamentary input to the process of designing the next generation of international development goals; giving a more regular and systemic role to legislators and allowing them to participate in national delegations to the major United Nations conferences and events; strengthening the links between the parliamentary hearing process and the main United Nations processes, including in preparation for international conferences; calling on United Nations country teams to draw up more systemic and holistic ways to deal with national parliaments; and encouraging the United Nations bodies and agencies to use the help and expertise of the IPU and member parliaments in a more systemic way and in order to strengthen parliamentary institutions, especially in post-conflict States and States in transition to democracy.

These ideas are of special importance in the light of the fact that democracy is expanding and taking

root and the growing role of legislative institutions in drawing up policies and development plans. Moreover, they give added momentum to the role of the IPU at the international level. For all these reasons, we hope that the General Assembly will adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

Mr. Cancela (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on convening this very important debate on the interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). I welcome the presence of Mr. Abdelwahad Radi, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and the officials here with him. I congratulate him on the tireless work he has been performing since he took office, and wish him every success in carrying out his functions in the future.

Greater cooperation and interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union are not only welcome, but necessary. In addition to playing an essential role in incorporating international commitments into national judicial systems and verifying their observance, parliaments are also crucial actors in efforts to achieve a more democratic United Nations that is more connected to the realities of its Member States. In order to achieve this, a more fluid dialogue on the most important global issues is needed among the Organization, those who directly represent the citizens of each country, and the world organization of national parliaments.

From a comprehensive perspective, respect for and the promotion of international law, including the Charter's provisions, on the one hand, and the rule of law at the national level, on the other, are two sides of the same coin. The parliamentary institution is a crucial participant in enabling countries' societies to benefit from both.

In the case of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay, we proudly affirm that our Parliament is continuing to undertake extremely significant work on the country's legal system and development, thereby branding its ongoing constitutionality and making an outstanding contribution to strengthening the rule of law and building a democratic society, which is a distinctive feature of the Uruguayan nation.

More specifically, Uruguay is convinced that strengthening the relationship between national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union is essential at a time when the United Nations is seeking

to preserve and increase its credibility, legitimacy and relevance. To begin with, we should take further advantage of the existing cooperation bodies, for example, by making better use of the annual joint parliamentary hearings between the General Assembly and the IPU. Those should focus on achieving genuine interaction among parliamentarians, diplomats, United Nations staff and academics.

In addition, Uruguay welcomes the interest shown by the IPU and national parliaments in the various issues on the United Nations agenda. We encourage their participation in such matters, for example, in particular, in the Delivering as One process. In that regard, in Uruguay's case, which is one of the eight pilot countries of the programme, the executive branch sees it as very pertinent that the role of parliament in that process be enhanced. Our national Parliament has already taken part in at least two joint projects, one on helping to develop bills on drafting and implementing a communications strategy between parliament and civil society in the context of the decentralization and promotion of citizen participation policy. The other has to do with supporting the strengthening of gender institutionalization in the structures, procedures and practices of the Uruguayan Parliament in the context of a bill to support public policies on reducing gender inequality. The latter is a priority issue on the agenda of both the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, as stated in the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/66/770 and in draft resolution A/66/L.45.

We also share the vision on the critical role that national parliaments can play in effectively implementing the notion of national ownership in post-conflict peacebuilding. At a time when political stability is fragile, the participation of parliamentarians in national reconstruction and development programmes is crucial for sustainable peace processes.

Those and other issues are addressed in the various recommendations proposed by the Secretary-General in his report. The draft resolution introduced by the delegation of Morocco, which Uruguay sponsored from the start and which, we hope, will shortly be adopted by consensus, includes a number of those recommendations. Uruguay encourages the wider membership to persevere in its efforts to achieve the effective implementation of those recommendations and to take advantage of this opportunity to capitalize on the renewed profile of that relationship, which underscores the importance

of interaction, as well as cooperation, and the role of national parliamentarians.

Mr. Percaya (Indonesia): My delegation would also like to acknowledge the excellent work done to date by the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), Mr. Abdelwahad Radi, his team and its Secretary General.

The role of parliament, as the voice of the people, is crucial in a democratic society and deserves the enthusiastic and unfettered support of Governments. As a democracy, Indonesia depends on its Parliament for just, fair and representative legislation and to safeguard the accountability of the Government in its work.

Preceding the United Nations, the IPU has been a home for parliaments of different regions and various legal and political systems. As an institution, the Union has also contributed to deliberations on global challenges, such as sustainable development, democratization and the rule of law, as well as the role of women in parliament. Those all-important issues are also being discussed here at the United Nations and within its organs.

Since 1996, Indonesia has strongly supported the strengthening of the institutional relationship between the United Nations and the IPU. We have witnessed the productive cooperation between the two organizations in various areas, including democracy, human rights, gender equality, sustainable development and international peace and security. On the strength of that cooperation, Indonesia has also thrown its support behind the more structured parliamentary component of the work of the United Nations initiated through resolution 65/123, of December 2010, on cooperation between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union. As reported by the Secretary-General, numerous activities have been conducted among all three since 2010 (see A/66/770).

On democracy and human rights, we welcome and commend the work of the IPU and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in preparing the *Global Parliamentary Report*. The report will be a starting point for further studies in identifying challenges in the evolving relationship between citizens and parliaments. We also welcome the joint meetings and activities conducted by the United Nations and the IPU aimed at promoting democracy at the regional and national levels.

Indonesia also attaches great importance to United Nations-IPU cooperation in promoting the role of women in parliament. We are proud that 30 per cent of the current members of our Parliament are women. Moreover, Indonesia was led by a woman President just a few years ago. Therefore, we are delighted and very supportive of the close cooperation between UNDP and the IPU, along with several national Governments, to promote gender equality and women's rights.

The cooperation between the United Nations and the IPU has also touched upon issues that are of importance on the current international agenda.

Since 2010, discussions and activities on sustainable development and international peace and security have been undertaken. We see it as progress when a parliament, as the voice of the people, gets involved in the discussion of substantive matters in multilateral forums. Such involvement will infuse the national legislative process with knowledge of issues being considered at the multilateral level and enhance the multilateral process thanks to access to national stakeholders.

As mentioned in the report, we are encouraged by the increased interaction between United Nations senior officials with the IPU, for we are convinced that that will raise awareness, strengthen understanding and build political support for the important initiatives that are currently under way in the United Nations system. Indonesian membership together with its active role in the IPU is a testimony to our determination to promote parliaments' increased contribution to helping Governments address global challenges. The Indonesian Parliament has also been active in advancing cooperation with various parliamentary organizations, including the Parliamentary Union of Islamic Countries (PUIG), the presidency of which is currently held by the Indonesian Speaker of Parliament. We consider PUIG to be an important parliamentary organization, the objectives of which include advancing a common agenda on economic, social, cultural and political issues of interest to Islamic countries.

Indonesia acknowledges and welcomes the draft resolution before us (A/66/L.45) as introduced by the representative of Morocco on the interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union. We take note of the fact that the draft resolution was generated from the 2010 resolution (resolution 65/123), which enjoyed

wide support from the General Assembly. We are also very pleased that the progress of United Nations-IPU cooperation in the past two years has also been reflected in the draft resolution.

Finally, in line with the position that we have taken concerning issues relating to the cooperation between the IPU and the United Nations during the past decade and our active role in the IPU, Indonesia is delighted to sponsor the draft resolution.

Mr. Mahmoud (Egypt): I would like to start by expressing Egypt's sincere appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Abdelwahed Radi, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and Speaker of the Assembly of Representatives of the Kingdom of Morocco; to Mr. Anders B. Johnsson, Secretary General of the IPU; and to Ambassador Anda Filip, Director of the Office of the Permanent Observer Mission of the IPU to the United Nations, for all the efforts they have undertaken to strengthen the relationship between the IPU and the United Nations. I would also like to thank His Excellency Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for all his efforts to strengthen and develop that cooperation.

Egypt has always believed in the importance of enhancing the cooperation between the United Nations and the IPU, as the latter is an important organization seeking to ensure complementarity of the roles of Governments and parliaments in support of the United Nations system so that it may achieve its objectives and fulfil its mandate. As a strong advocate of the role of national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Egypt has played a central role in furthering the cooperation between the United Nations and the IPU. To that end, we introduced the current agenda item in the General Assembly, as well as the first draft resolution in that context in 1996. The international community's confidence in the accumulated experience of the IPU was further highlighted by the proposals submitted by Egypt that were included in the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1), which stressed the importance of strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and national and regional parliaments, in particular through the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

The IPU, through its conferences and specialized meetings, makes valuable contributions to many important fields, such as disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, while addressing various challenges of world economic and social development, including financing for development, globalization, the

liberalization of trade, climate change, and food and nutrition security, as well as combating the spread of pandemics and their devastating human, economic and social impacts. The IPU also plays an important role in supporting the efforts of Member States to promote and protect human rights through its close and systematic relationship with relevant United Nations bodies. Within that context, we encourage the IPU to work closely with the new United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women in areas that include the empowerment of women and gender mainstreaming, as well as to enhance its interaction with the United Nations on all issues of common interest.

The role of the IPU is of equal importance in the promotion of peace, understanding and tolerance where it actively participates in international efforts, including those of the United Nations, to promote dialogue among cultures, civilizations and religions.

Mr. Khazae (Islamic Republic of Iran), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Finally, as Egypt truly believes in the important role of the IPU in supporting the international community's endeavours to achieve internationally agreed goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, we emphasize the need to continue developing and improving the cooperative relationship of the United Nations with the IPU, including through the active engagement of the IPU in the major United Nations deliberative processes and the review of international commitments and goals.

Mr. Carnahan (United States of America): I wish to offer special thanks to the representative of Morocco for introducing the draft resolution before us (A/66/L.45), on the interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). I also thank the 84 sponsors of the draft resolution. I am honoured to be here today as the United States Congressional representative to the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly to recognize the close ties that are shared among the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

I also wish to acknowledge one of my early predecessors, from over 100 years ago, the late United States Congressman, Richard Bartholdt, who represented my constituency in St. Louis, Missouri, in the early 1900s. He was a German immigrant to America and a strong advocate for legislators being engaged in international issues and organizations, especially

the IPU. In fact, he was a leader in hosting the IPU's international conference in St. Louis during his tenure.

Today, with 162 national parliaments as members, the IPU plays a vital role in bringing parliamentarians from around the globe together to discuss best practices and promote democracy worldwide. The IPU assists new parliaments and advances the role of women, indigenous populations and minorities in governance through its programmes and capacity-building. By encouraging dialogue between members, it promotes human rights, the rule of law and gender equality. The IPU also works daily to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of legislators and serves as a credible and practical resource in helping to improve parliamentarians' understanding of the legislative process. That work is particularly valuable to democracies such as those in the nations of the Middle East and North Africa.

The United States firmly believes that strong legislators are critical elements of strong democracies, and that engaged elected legislators are critical to maintaining engaged citizens in international initiatives.

But the work of the IPU is important not only to emerging democracies; the IPU helps to strengthen parliaments and increase parliamentary capacity around the world. In democracies both new and old, dialogue between individual parliamentarians and between the IPU and the United Nations, such as with the draft resolution (A/66/L.45) we have before us today, is fundamental to this work.

The United States is pleased to join the consensus on this draft resolution today. We are appreciative of the opportunity and the honour to address the General Assembly. We look forward to supporting enhanced United Nations-IPU cooperation from Washington, D.C.

Ms. Ochir (Mongolia): Let me begin by expressing my delegation's deep appreciation to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report (A/66/770) submitted under agenda item 130. The report identifies major areas of interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) since the adoption of resolution 65/123. In that respect, my delegation wishes to make a few comments on the following areas of interaction.

First, engaging parliaments in major United Nations conferences through the IPU-led parliamentary dimension has proved to be critical not only in terms of incorporating their views and concerns in the

proceedings and outcomes; more importantly, it has facilitated the building of political support for the subsequent implementation of those outcomes. The parliamentary track in the lead-up to, as well as during, the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries is a good example. Here, my delegation remains hopeful that the necessary funding will be obtained so as to ensure an effective follow-up of the Istanbul Programme of Action by parliaments through, inter alia, a five-year joint United Nations/IPU project.

The Istanbul Conference was not the first major conference which benefited from an important contribution by parliaments. In 2003, when Mongolia hosted the Fifth International Conference of New or Restored Democracies, a parliamentary forum was an integral part of the tripartite structure of the Conference, along with the intergovernmental process and a civil society forum. The parliamentary forum led by the IPU significantly contributed to the Ulaanbaatar Declaration and Plan of Action on Democracy, Good Governance and Civil Society and its effective follow-up process.

My delegation therefore wishes to express its strong support for the Secretary-General's recommendation to more systematically facilitate the inclusion of a substantive parliamentary component in major international processes, especially in the light of the upcoming global review of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda and the charting of a road map for its implementation. To that end, we believe that annual parliamentary hearings at the United Nations could also be utilized.

Secondly, closer involvement by Parliaments in and their oversight of international commitments represent, in our view, another important area that has great potential for interaction. As the report of the Secretary-General rightly states, parliaments have a wide range of tools at their disposal to ensure that national laws, policies, actions, programmes and budgets reflect the principles and obligations undertaken by Governments at international conferences. We welcome the important work done in that respect by the relevant United Nations agencies, in close cooperation with the IPU, in developing handbooks, guides and other tools for parliamentarians. In furthering such work, a comparative study could be useful on best practices among parliaments relative to how their oversight has led to the better implementation of the commitments

undertaken by respective Governments on aid allocation, aid effectiveness, the MDGs, the elimination of discrimination against women, gender budgeting, the rights of the child, the rights of persons with disabilities and other relevant commitments.

My delegation also commends the important work carried out by the IPU in support of United Nations human rights treaty bodies, including the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women as well as the Human Rights Council, particularly as concerns the universal periodic review of the fulfilment by Member States of human rights obligations and commitments. We trust that the experience gained by the IPU in relation to the Committee will be effectively used in the future with other United Nations treaty bodies, in particular with the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Thirdly, greater involvement on the part of parliaments in the elaboration of national development strategies is critical for their effective implementation, in terms of both creating an enabling legal environment and ensuring the allocation of the necessary resources.

In Mongolia, both the MDGs and the MDG-based comprehensive development strategy were developed with the participation of the Parliament and subsequently adopted by parliamentary resolution, thus becoming law. In its resolution of April 2005, the Parliament of Mongolia endorsed the national MDGs and entrusted the relevant State entities with their implementation and monitoring, and provided for the allocation of the necessary resources in the annual State budgets. It also mandated the Government to report to the Parliament on the progress achieved in the implementation of the MDGs every two years. Here I wish also to highlight that in addition to the eight global MDGs, Mongolia has initiated and integrated a ninth goal, on “strengthening human rights and fostering democratic governance”, into its MDGs as an innovative step reflecting the inseparable link between development, human rights and democracy.

In concluding, may I convey my delegation’s firm belief that interaction between the United Nations and the IPU has evolved over the past decade and a half to encompass virtually all major areas of policy. In view of those developments, we strongly support the recommendation of the Secretary-General that a new cooperation agreement be concluded between the United

Nations and the IPU, as reflected in draft resolution A/66/L.45, which Mongolia is privileged to co-sponsor.

Mrs. Morgan (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico appreciates the opportunity to address the General Assembly at this meeting devoted to the question of interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). This allows us to acknowledge parliamentary diplomacy and its contribution to our Organization in attaining the objective of a world of development, full respect for human rights, peace and security.

Since its creation in the late nineteenth century and beginning with the recognition of its consultative status and subsequently its status as a permanent observer, acquired in 2002, the IPU has increased the quantity and quality of its participation in and contribution to the various global processes.

Clearly, its work has also strengthened the efforts of national parliaments in becoming involved in global governance and promoted transparency and accountability in areas such as, inter alia, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), human rights, international law, democracy and gender equality.

Member States have recognized the importance of fostering intergovernmental debate through the inputs of various sectors of our societies, such as civil society organizations, the private sector, local authorities and Parliaments.

As a result, the outcome documents are more comprehensive because they involve many visions and participants. In particular, there is a greater possibility that they will be complied with because the participants themselves share responsibility for their implementation.

Mexico is convinced that the cooperation of parliamentarians and the Inter-Parliamentary Union with the United Nations should be promoted and strengthened. To that end, Mexico’s delegations to major international conferences have included national parliamentarians for several years. We have also begun to ensure that conferences receive and analyse proposals from parliamentarians and the IPU. In that connection, Mexico is a sponsor of draft resolution A/66/L.45 with a view to strengthening such efforts. We believe that the cooperation agreement between the Organization and the IPU should be renewed in order to recognize the new reality of the IPU and fully benefit from its capabilities. Moreover, we fully support parliamentary

contributions to debates of the Human Rights Council and treaty bodies, and the acceptance and analysis of their input into important topical processes, such as the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the rule of law debate.

Parliaments are important participants in the international arena, complementing countries' external efforts. Their active role fosters and strengthens our international efforts. We support their cooperation with our Organization.

Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri (India): I am happy to participate in today's plenary meeting on agenda item 130, "Interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union". We welcome the Secretary-General's report on the subject (A/66/770), which is a comprehensive catalogue of some of the modalities and examples of interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) over the past two years.

We are also happy to be a sponsor of draft resolution A/66/L.45 on the subject, which, among other things, calls for the inclusion in the provisional agenda of the General Assembly's sixty-eighth session of the item "Interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union". Let me also place on record our appreciation for the work done by the Permanent Mission of Morocco in that regard.

India is the largest democracy in the world. The success of the democratic principle and all the institutions that it entails has defined my country and its approach to relations with the rest of the world. It is no wonder, then, that we have placed great emphasis on the work of the General Assembly ever since we first joined the United Nations. In fact, even as early as the Assembly's eighth session in 1953, an Indian, Mrs. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, had the singular honour of presiding over this Hall.

This year, 2012, also happens to mark the sixtieth anniversary of the first sitting of the Indian Parliament. Speaking on that occasion, our Prime Minister, Mr. Manmohan Singh, said,

"The story of the Indian Parliament is a story of human striving for freedom and dignity, for tolerance and equality, for peace and progress. Our Parliament has not just voiced the concerns and aspirations of the Indian people alone, but those of all humankind, of every freedom-loving person who

seeks a life of dignity and peace. Our Parliament stands as a unique representation of the values that created our republic: of unity in diversity, of secularism, of pluralism and the rule of law. How we conduct ourselves, how the Parliament conducts itself, is therefore a way of showing respect to those values and to the memory of those who created and built this symbol of freedom and dignity. Each one of us owes it to those who sent us here to not only represent their views and their interests but to do so with dignity, compassion and decorum. Our democracy has passed through many testing times. At every turn the people of India have with great enthusiasm and hope reiterated their faith in the democratic character of our State and reaffirmed the pluralistic character of our polity and society. Among democracies around the world India has one of the highest voter turn-outs in elections."

The Inter-Parliamentary Union, which is the world organization of 162 national parliaments, has done yeoman service over the last decade or so in promoting closer coherence and interaction with the United Nations and its activities. The areas to which the IPU has contributed include peacebuilding, human rights, gender equality, economic and social development, international law, the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, protecting the interests of least developed countries and the like. Of particular relevance is the role that the IPU and its members are playing, and should continue to play, in the years to come, and which have led to the cementing of a culture of multilateralism and internationalism in today's world. As the Secretary-General rightly points out in his report,

"parliaments and their members have a vital role to play in ensuring respect for, and implementation of, international commitments. Parliaments have a wide range of tools at their disposal to ensure that national laws, policies, actions, programmes and budgets reflect the principles and obligations contained in various international instruments" (A/66/770, para. 20).

This has been most evident in the context of gender issues, in particular the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. We are of the view that such trends must be strengthened and encouraged.

An important pillar of the ongoing interaction between national parliaments and the United Nations

is the practice by various Member States of including legislators as members of national delegations to United Nations meetings and events. Many of those here will have witnessed active participation by some of India's finest parliamentarians in the Assembly, the Security Council and the various committees during the period from October through November every year. We have found that tradition to be very useful, both for the visiting legislators as well as for us here in New York. We intend to continue that practice, and I am happy to note that it finds special mention in the draft resolution.

In conclusion, permit me to reiterate that India attaches importance to the role of the IPU and the interaction between the IPU, national parliaments and the United Nations. We will play our role in pushing that interaction forward.

Mr. Mihuț (Romania): I am honoured to express Romania's support for an important element of the international cooperation connecting the democratic processes at the national and international levels and nurturing more direct involvement in global affairs by constituencies all over the world.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the world organization of national parliaments, plays a crucial role in bringing together legislative bodies and legislators from all continents into the work of the United Nations. As a sponsor of draft resolution A/66/L.45 on interaction between national parliaments, the United Nations and the IPU, Romania supports more systematic engagement on the part of the United Nations with the IPU in organizing and integrating a parliamentary component of and contribution to the major United Nations deliberative processes and reviews of international commitments, in accordance with the provisions of resolution 65/123.

Cooperation among national parliaments, the United Nations and the IPU is of the utmost importance to all parties — a win-win process — due to the fact that solid parliamentary support for the United Nations and the implementation of multilateral agreements boosts the global role of the United Nations and keeps national parliaments connected to international topical issues.

Democratic governance, national dialogue and reconciliation, respect and promotion for human rights and enhanced development effectiveness must continue to represent shared values of all entities. The architecture of the next generation of global development goals must benefit from a substantial parliamentary contribution. In an international system aiming to strengthen the rule of

law and democratic governance, stronger parliamentary involvement is to be recommended in order to identify viable solutions to major global issues and to work towards their implementation.

The Parliament of Romania, represented by the Romanian group at the IPU, is an active contributor to the thematic debates and to the drafting of IPU resolutions that address many issues, such as fighting organized crime, the transparency of the financing of political parties and electoral campaigns, ensuring sustainable development through the management of natural resources, agricultural products and demographic changes, and the enhancement of health for women and children.

For the sake of all the reasons I have set out, Romania fully supports a new cooperation agreement between the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union in order to better reflect the deepening and widening interaction between those two international bodies.

Mrs. Pacunega Manano (Uganda): I thank the President for organizing today's debate on the important issue before us. Uganda welcomes the increasing interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union as highlighted in the report of the Secretary-General (A/66/770).

Our deliberations on the draft resolution that we are considering for adoption today (A/66/L.45) provide an opportunity for advancing and concretizing the cooperation between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union. In the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1), world leaders called for strengthened cooperation between the United Nations and national and regional parliaments, in particular through the Inter-Parliamentary Union, with a view to furthering all aspects of the United Nations Millennium Declaration (resolution 55/2) in all fields of the work of the United Nations and to ensuring the effective implementation of United Nations reform. We are convinced that enhancing that cooperation will result in mobilizing greater parliamentary support for the United Nations, contributing to the implementation of multilateral agreements and reform of global governance. There is no doubt that global action is required to respond more effectively to challenges that transcend national borders, such as the financial and economic crisis, food crisis, volatility, energy deficits, climate change, terrorism and transnational crime, which threaten the future of humankind.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union assemblies continue to provide a unique and valuable forum for the engagement of national parliaments and legislatures, not only in seeking solutions to key global issues but also in working towards the implementation of agreed outcomes and commitments. Uganda was therefore honoured to host the 126th Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly in Kampala from 31 March to 5 April, under the theme “Parliaments and people: bridging the gap”. That Assembly adopted a number of resolutions on key issues, including ownership of the international agenda, good governance and access to health as a basic right. We commend the increasing engagement with the Inter-Parliamentary Union in integrating a parliamentary component and contribution to major United Nations deliberative processes and their review of international commitments in accordance with resolution 65/123.

My delegation recalls, in that regard, the valuable contributions made by parliaments during the sixteenth and seventeenth Conferences of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Cancún and Durban, respectively, as well as the fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Istanbul. Given the representative political oversight and resource-allocation roles of parliaments and legislatures at the national level, their involvement can significantly contribute to providing impetus to the implementation of agreed outcomes and to fulfilment of commitments. In our quest for the reform of global governance institutions, including the United Nations, particularly the Security Council, as well as international financial institutions, parliaments and legislatures can also make a valuable contribution.

Finally, as the target date for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals nears, with many developing countries, particularly in Africa, unlikely to meet the targets by 2015, we call upon the Inter-Parliamentary Union to intensify its efforts in mobilizing parliamentary support for the fulfilment of those commitments.

Mr. Repkov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation attaches great importance to international parliamentary cooperation. The Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation is an active participant in universal and regional structures and is in constant cooperation with the United Nations. The extensive programme of international working relationships and communications of the Russian Federation’s Federal Assembly is an integral part of

our country’s foreign policy, which aims at achieving unswerving compliance with international norms. Such cooperation is of great practical importance. Due to it, the legal framework is being improved, issues related to the harmonization of legislation are being resolved and legislative support is being provided for decisions of the State.

The Russian Federation takes note with satisfaction of the role of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) as a facilitator in improving relations between the parliaments of various countries and the United Nations for the purposes of strengthening and broadening international cooperation. The result of such work is evident in the fact that a growing number of parliaments of various States are attending international meetings and more parliaments are in the process of creating special committees to deal directly with issues related to United Nations activities.

Today, the steady convergence of the programmes and actions of the United Nations and the IPU is palpable. Joint parliamentary hearings have become an important arena for the interaction of members of national parliaments, the leadership of the United Nations and representatives of Governments on the entire spectrum of current global issues, such as peace and security, the economy, social policy and human rights. Moreover, the potential for interaction among national parliaments, the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the United Nations has not yet been fully tapped. In that context, it is necessary to continue the dialogue that has already begun, which, first and foremost, is aimed at achieving the most important goals in the area of strict observance of human rights throughout the world.

The draft resolution that will be adopted by consensus today, on the interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (A/66/L.45), which the Russian Federation has sponsored along with others, provides great opportunities to achieve those goals. Of particular importance is the role of the IPU in establishing and strengthening parliamentary institutes in countries emerging from conflict situations, as well as in those that are making the transition to democracy. It is necessary to make every effort to achieve other goals as well, such as ensuring peace and security, economic and social development, the primacy of international law, human rights and democracy, gender equality and the expansion of opportunities for women.

Furthermore, it is important to focus the efforts of the Inter-Parliamentary Union on providing assistance to national parliaments, particularly in post-conflict countries, strengthening the rule of law and bringing national legislations into line with international obligations.

Mr. Mottaghi Nejad (Islamic Republic of Iran): On behalf of my delegation, I would like to thank the sponsors for presenting draft resolution A/66/L.45, entitled "Interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union". In that regard, I would like to make a few brief remarks.

It is evident that the resolutions and decisions that we adopt at the United Nations may frequently appeal to the national parliaments of Member States to play their role in implementing the provisions of those resolutions and decisions. For that reason, cooperation among national parliaments of Member States, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the United Nations is considered to be of great importance to the goals and purposes whose implementation the United Nations pursues at the national level. In fact, the kind of work that is done by the United Nations could be of great guidance to the planning of national goals and plans, as well.

Considering the current developments in international relations, the Inter-Parliamentary Union faces greater duties and responsibilities. The past cooperation between the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the United Nations has seen significant achievements to date. There is a need to evaluate and assess measures already taken by the United Nations and their implications and application for national parliaments of Member States and to explore ways and means of enhancing their role in the work of the United Nations in areas applicable to national parliaments.

There is also a need to identify and explore new areas of cooperation between our Organization and the Union. We would recommend more frequent consultations between the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The IPU should not limit its role as an Observer to the United Nations. Rather, it should directly participate in the relevant activities of the United Nations.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has made great efforts to promote the role of parliament and to advance the goals and purposes as defined and set forth by the IPU and the United Nations. In that spirit, we support and

join consensus on the draft resolution before us. We believe that it would greatly help us to regulate such contacts and mutual cooperation.

The Acting President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 57/32, of 19 November 2002, I now call on the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Mr. Radi (Inter-Parliamentary Union) (*spoke in French*): It is a great honour for me to address the General Assembly for the first time in my capacity as President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). I take this opportunity to pay tribute to my predecessor, Theo-Ben Gurirab, Speaker of the Namibian Parliament, who also served as President of the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session, for his vision and his hard work. I, in turn, pledge to spare no effort in continuing to enhance the interaction between the United Nations Organization, parliaments and the IPU.

Ten years ago, in the autumn of 2002, the IPU was granted Permanent Observer status to the United Nations. Our relationship has significantly developed since then. The most recent report of the Secretary-General (A/66/770), which has been prepared for our discussion today, bears testimony to what we have managed to achieve together. Allow me to mention a few aspects of our engagement.

Parliaments and parliamentarians increasingly take an active part in implementing international commitments. The area where that cooperation is most systematic is in the context of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The IPU works with parliaments of the countries under review so that they can participate in the review process, provide input to the national report, attend the sessions of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and receive its findings for consideration and action by parliament. At each of its sessions, the Committee then verifies the level of parliamentary involvement in drafting the reports. On the basis on that experience, we hope to establish similar forms of cooperation with other United Nations treaty bodies, as well as with the Human Rights Council, in particular in the context of the universal periodic review.

Over the years, we have also been working to develop a meaningful parliamentary component to the major United Nations processes. The parliamentary track of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the

Least Developed Countries last year was one of our most successful initiatives in that regard. The parliaments of many least developed countries have already directly participated in the national progress reviews of the Brussels Programme of Action. The IPU has held consultations with parliamentarians in order to garner their views on the new agreement for the period 2011-2020 and to then reflect that input in the United Nations process. The Parliamentary Forum held in Istanbul on the sidelines of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries helped to provide stronger political support for the Istanbul Programme of Action. Lastly, there was a proposal for a five-year joint United Nations-IPU project to help mainstream the Istanbul Programme of Action in the work of parliaments, whose implementation, we understand, will start shortly.

Every year, in close cooperation with the Office of the President of the General Assembly, we have been convening a joint parliamentary hearing at the United Nations. That gathering has provided a unique opportunity for legislators to engage with senior United Nations officials, representatives of permanent missions and experts on issues that are high on the global agenda. We are pleased to see that the draft resolution before the Assembly today calls for this annual parliamentary hearing at the United Nations to be more closely linked to major United Nations processes, so as to help inform those processes from a parliamentary perspective. We welcome the prospect of further pursuing that work.

Finally, the report of the Secretary-General refers to the nature of the relationship between the United Nations system and national parliaments. All too often, we have observed that development partners primarily consider parliaments as recipients of technical assistance and less as political players with a voice on matters relating to national development strategies or budget oversight. That needs to change. If we truly wish to promote democratic governance, parliaments need to be acknowledged, respected and included in national consultations on matters of crucial interest for the citizens they were elected to represent.

I myself come from a region that is undergoing fundamental changes towards greater political transparency and accountability. The core mission of the IPU is to promote democracy and help build strong parliaments. Over the past year alone, from Egypt to Tunisia, Bahrain to Libya and to Oman, the IPU has anticipated the needs of parliaments and has responded

to their requests to help strengthen their capacities. In so doing, the IPU does not act alone, but brings with it the talent and expertise of its member parliaments. We welcome the fact that the General Assembly calls for greater coherence and closer cooperation between the United Nations and the IPU in support of parliamentary institutions, particularly in countries emerging from conflict and in transition to democracy.

I think we can all agree that there is a real need for greater transparency at both the national and international levels. The United Nations has been gradually opening up to other major stakeholders, in particular civil society and the private sector. That has helped to partially address the challenge of the democracy gap in international relations. We believe that the enhanced partnership with the IPU has also brought its own contribution, helping to make the work of the United Nations better known and more accessible to legislators, while at the same time allowing for a certain measure of parliamentary oversight.

As far as we are concerned, we see the cooperation between the United Nations and the IPU as a two-way relationship. We see it as a partnership that is mutually beneficial. Of course, much remains to be done, but we feel that we are on the right track towards our goal, which is to promote a parliamentary dimension in the work of the United Nations. We look forward to our future work with the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination to build greater coherence in our joint initiatives, and we plan on revising the cooperation agreement between our two organizations, which is outdated.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Permanent Representative of Morocco, Ambassador Loulichki, for leading the consultations with Member States and presenting a substantive and promising draft resolution. I would also like to thank all the Missions that have sponsored this draft resolution, in particular those that have taken the time to participate in this discussion today. The IPU and our member parliaments greatly value this relationship. We are determined to work hard in strengthening the United Nations as the cornerstone of international cooperation, while helping to promote the contribution of parliaments to the major issues facing the international community.

The Acting President: We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/66/L.45 entitled "Interaction

between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union”.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Botnaru (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that since the submission of the draft resolution, in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have also become sponsors of A/66/L.45: Afghanistan, Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Azerbaijan, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Canada, China, Cyprus, Denmark, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Georgia, Guatemala, Honduras, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Latvia, Lebanon, Lichtenstein, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Pakistan, Panama, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, Rwanda, San Marino, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Ukraine and the United Republic of Tanzania.

The Acting President: May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/66/L.45?

Draft resolution A/66/L.45 was adopted (resolution 66/261).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 130?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 75 (continued)

Report of the International Criminal Court

Draft resolution (A/66/L.47)

The Acting President: Members will recall that the Assembly considered agenda item 75 at its 44th and 47th plenary meetings, on 26 October and 1 November 2011, respectively.

I now give the floor to the representative of Japan to introduce draft resolution A/66/L.47.

Mr. Nishida (Japan): It is my great honour to introduce, under agenda item 75, draft resolution A/66/L.47, entitled “Report of the International Criminal Court”. At the outset, I would like to thank Ambassador Herman Schaper, Permanent Representative of the

Netherlands, and his team for having coordinated this draft resolution until the previous session.

The draft resolution before us has some new elements with respect to the previous session’s resolution. First, in the sixth paragraph of the preamble, the General Assembly acknowledges the fact that the International Criminal Court (ICC) has achieved considerable progress in its analyses, investigations and judicial proceedings in situations and cases referred to it by States parties and by the Security Council, as well as those which the Prosecutor of the Court has initiated proprio motu in accordance with the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

Also in the preamble, a paragraph that reads “Noting the need for funding of expenses related to investigations or prosecutions of the International Criminal Court, including in connection with situations referred to the Court by the Security Council” has been inserted.

In the operative part, paragraph 6 recalls article 3 of the Relationship Agreement between the United Nations and the Court, as well as the need to respect each other’s status and mandate, and requests the Secretary-General to include information relevant to the implementation of article 3 in his report to be submitted pursuant to operative paragraph 11.

In paragraph 11, the words “all aspects of” have been added. The paragraph now reads, in part, “emphasizes the importance of the full implementation of all aspects of the Relationship Agreement”.

In paragraph 12, the General Assembly, recalling the referrals to the ICC already made by the Security Council, also invites all States to consider voluntary contributions to bear the expenses related to investigations or prosecutions of the ICC, including in connection with situations referred by the Council. I recognize that starting an operative paragraph with the progressive form is not the usual practice from the editorial viewpoint. It is my understanding, however, that, even with that knowledge, the Member States wish to take action on the text before us as it is the only acceptable formulation to be arrived at after extensive negotiations. I would like to thank the President and his team for their support and understanding.

Let me speak in my national capacity of the ICC in general and its relationship with the United Nations. First of all, we welcome the seven new States Parties — Grenada, Tunisia, the Philippines, Maldives,

Cape Verde, Vanuatu and Guatemala — that have joined our effort to fight against impunity since the adoption of resolution 65/12. As President Sang-Hyun Song of the Court mentioned during his introduction of the report to the Assembly in November (see A/66/PV.44), a new chapter will open for the ICC as this year marks its tenth anniversary. In this connection, I would like to express my appreciation to the President of the Assembly of States Parties, Ambassador Tiina Intelmann of Estonia, for her tremendous work coordinating all the efforts to commemorate the anniversary both inside and outside of the Assembly of States Parties.

In opening the next chapter of the Court's history, however, we have already found challenges to overcome, such as universality, complementarity, cooperation, non-cooperation, victims assistance, reparation, ratification of the crimes of aggression clauses, referrals by the Security Council and the budget of the Court, to list but a few. To tackle those challenges, not only should the States parties cooperate with the Court, but also cooperation by States not parties is necessary; and close cooperation and consultation between the United Nations and the ICC are indispensable as well. To this end, it is of high importance to have discussions on the ICC at the General Assembly.

In order for us, the international community as a whole — States parties and non-parties alike — to fight impunity and have the rule of law prevail, we should redouble our efforts and move in unison as we proceed into the future of the Court.

The draft resolution before us is, as in previous years, the result of very extensive consultations that comprised the whole membership of the United Nations, that is to say, the States parties and non-parties to the Rome Statute. Therefore, I would like to thank all Member States, and I sincerely hope that the draft resolution will be adopted by consensus.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take action on draft resolution A/66/L.47, entitled "Report of the International Criminal Court".

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Botnaru (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that,

since the submission of the draft resolution, in addition to those delegations listed in document A/66/L.47, the following countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution: Albania, Andorra, Costa Rica, Georgia, Ghana, Honduras, Paraguay and San Marino.

The Acting President: May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/66/L.47?

Draft resolution A/66/L.47 was adopted (resolution 66/262).

The Acting President: I shall now call on the representative of the Sudan, who wishes to speak in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted.

May I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by representatives from their seats.

Mr. Osman (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): The delegation of the Sudan would like to reiterate that it will cooperate with all members of the international community in the process of entrenching the concept of international justice. However, we are opposed to the politicization of that concept by any party. I would also like to state that we are opposed to impunity.

The delegation of the Sudan is not a party to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and has reservations relating to the past conduct of the ICC Prosecutor, which was neither neutral nor impartial and was aimed at politicizing international justice.

The Sudan therefore wishes to register its position on draft resolution A/66/L.47, entitled "Report of the International Criminal Court". We do not believe that the resolution is binding on the Sudan, and we declare our reservations thereon for the reasons we have just outlined.

We ask that our position be recorded in the records of this meeting.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 75?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.