

September, 2015

The Future Contribution of a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly to the Achievement of the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals

Recommendation:

To maintain political support, to reinforce accountability and to bring global governance in the pursuit of post-2015 development goals closer to those directly affected, we encourage the creation of a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly.

-- adopted October 2013, Brussels international meeting of the Campaign for the Establishment of a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly,

The UNPA Campaign welcomes the adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The extensive, broad-based consultations leading to the development of the post-2015 goals represents a historic global dialogue.

To achieve the transformative objectives the international community has set for the period up to 2030 will require sustained multistakeholder engagement, investment, and effective monitoring and accountability mechanisms at the national, regional and global levels.

The new UN High Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development (HLPF) will facilitate efforts by governments at the United Nations to review progress implementing the post-2015 agenda. However, the HLPF is an intergovernmental body that is subsidiary to the UN's Economic and Social Council, and meets only for short periods annually. It is clear that mechanisms additional to the HLPF will be required to maintain momentum and provide the necessary oversight and accountability for the implementation of the post-2015 goals, targets and indicators.

A United Nations Parliamentary Assembly should be created to complement the efforts of the HLPF.

The UNPA Campaign also welcomes the recent report of the Commission on Global Justice, Security and Governance, co-chaired by former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and former Nigerian Foreign Minister Ibrahim Gambari. The Albright-Gambari Commission recognizes the numerous challenges facing global governance and the United Nations, and set out a menu of reforms. They foresee a multi-year process of reform leading to the UN's 75th anniversary in 2020. Among their recommendations, Ms. Albright and Mr. Gambari endorse the goal of creating a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly at the UN.

Background -- The proposed United Nations Parliamentary Assembly

The establishment of a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly (UNPA) would provide a powerful mechanism to generate greater accountability and democratic legitimacy in global governance. Creating a UNPA would not require Charter amendment and could be undertaken through a vote of the UN General Assembly under Article 22 of the Charter. Initially, the UN Parliamentary Assembly would be endowed with largely consultative functions. Subsequently it could be vested with additional authority, with the possibility of eventually developing into a principal organ complementing the UN General Assembly.

Once created, a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly (UNPA) would offer a number of benefits to the UN system and global governance in the realization of the Post-2015 goals. These include:

- A UNPA would strengthen the UN system by adding a body of citizen representatives from among the membership of national and regional parliaments. This would make the activities and decisions of the UN system more widely known, transparent and responsive to the needs of the world's citizens.
- While serving as a step toward democratization at the global level, it would also reinforce and strengthen democratic governance and the rule of law among member states.
- A UNPA would also provide new and innovative means of involving civil society organizations and other stakeholders in the UN's work. Through its hearings, studies, debates, committees and other oversight functions, a UNPA would leverage its convening capacity to broaden engagement of various stakeholders. It would bring greater awareness, scrutiny and attention to efforts to fulfill the SDGs.

The campaign for a UNPA (www.unpacampaign.org) was launched in 2007. The campaign's International Appeal has been endorsed by over 1,400 parliamentarians, over 400 NGOs, and over 5,000 individuals including several former heads of state or government, foreign ministers, and former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

