

**PNND Annual Assembly
New York, 11-12 October 2009**

**Conference on the *Role of Parliamentarians in advancing
nuclear abolition***

**REMARKS by Ambassador Anda Filip,
Permanent Observer of the Inter-Parliamentary Union
to the United Nations**

I am very pleased and honoured to be here today, among such a distinguished group of participants. Allow me to begin by conveying the good wishes of IPU Secretary-General Anders Johnsson who have very much liked to join you here today, but he is currently on official travel to the Middle East.

I have been asked to address the issue of *Utilizing emerging opportunities*. In this context, I would like to tell you a little bit about the cooperation that has been developing between IPU, the Global Security Institute and PNND over these past two years, which we very much appreciate and which we think has provided a very useful, innovative and effective vehicle to help advance the agenda of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

As part of its program of work, the IPU has been seeking to develop a parliamentary dimension to the United Nations. On the one hand, this means taking the global agenda and helping mainstream it into the work of parliaments at the national level. This relates primarily to international commitments: the Millennium Development Goals, the 13 international counter-terrorism instruments and protocols, the new Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Accra Agenda of Action for Aid Effectiveness, and so on.

We are working with national parliaments to raise awareness around these commitments, help build capacities so that parliaments can play a real and meaningful role: not just in terms of ratification, but also in terms of national implementation, translating these norms into national legislation and practice. We also believe that parliaments need to be involved at a much earlier stage in the deliberative and negotiating processes on global issues, and therefore are trying to make sure that main UN processes are also accompanied by a parliamentary track.

On the other hand, we are also working to bring the parliamentary voice to the United Nations. In the course of the year we hold a series of parliamentary events at the United

Nations, we address the UN General Assembly and circulate Parliamentary Resolutions as documents of the GA.

Two years ago, in the context of the Annual Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations, Jonathan Granoff joined us, and delivered a very impressive address on what he called “*The Axis of Our Responsibility in addressing the critical global issues of the 21st century*”, with a special focus on the nuclear predicament and the need to mobilize political leadership and a commitment to effectively deal with it.

This was in the fall of 2007. Among the various sessions, one of them proposed to look at the implementation of key international commitments in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation. Alongside Jonathan, we heard from CTBTO Executive Secretary Tibor Toth, Senator Rosario Green of Mexico, Hannelore Hoppe from the United Nations, and Ambassador Peter Burian of Slovakia, Chairman of the Security Council 1540 Committee. It was a good and serious discussion, and several members of parliament decided that they wanted to bring the issue to the formal agenda of the IPU.

And that’s what they did: in 2008 the IPU Committee on Peace and International Security was mandated to look into the issue of Advancing nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament and securing the entry into force of the comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty: the role of parliaments. Two rapporteurs were appointed, the Honourable Roger Price of Australia and Jack Jacob Mwiimbu of Zambia.

In preparing their Report and draft Resolution, they benefitted from the suggestions and expertise of PNND and its members. Alyn Ware joined us for a first reading of the report and exchange of views in Geneva in October 2008. On that occasion, the full membership of the IPU (some 150 national parliaments with their multi-party delegations) was able to hear, learn and be inspired by active PNND members: Rosario Green, Baroness Sue Miller, Speaker Wilson of New Zealand, and others. We also heard views and interventions from many other delegations, and there were opportunities for consultations, both formal and informal, among MPs from various countries and regions.

That debate informed a first draft Resolution put together by the rapporteurs, which was then circulated for comments and amendments to the national parliaments. Once again, PNND members brought a very substantive contribution, and Baroness Miller, assisted by a professional PNND staff, was actually a member of the negotiating committee on the final draft of the Resolution. The text was ultimately adopted by consensus, in April of this year, and we feel it is a very good document.

I believe it has been circulated widely, including among the members of PNND, so I won't go too much into its content. But as you know, it carries a strong political message and it serves as a call for action, by parliaments and parliamentarians from around the world, towards ensuring universal ratification of the CTBT, promoting the UN Secretary-General's five-point plan for nuclear disarmament, and supporting a number of concurrent steps such as reductions in nuclear stockpiles, establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, and commencement of negotiations on a fissile materials treaty.

National parliaments, as part of their association with the IPU, are requested to report back on implementation of various resolutions. What is important, we feel, is that we try and keep up the momentum, see how we can make sure that nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation is placed and remains on the agenda of parliaments, track progress and encourage others to follow suite.

What may work well is to go back to those MPs that were present and participated in the related deliberations in Geneva and Addis Ababa and see what kind of follow-up action is feasible and doable. We know that capacity (expertise and human resources) is a very real issue in many parliaments, and here perhaps IPU & PNND can be more pro-active in seeing how we can assist: highlighting good practices, identifying model legislation, bringing forward new developments on the international arena, and so on.

During the recent IPU Assemblies, for example, we heard some very interesting statements & presentations from a wide variety of parliaments. MPs from Angola, China and Pakistan shared their experiences in the adoption of national laws regulating the use, transport and transfer of nuclear technologies and materials according to international standards. Legislators from Mongolia and New Zealand provided examples of legislation which criminalizes nuclear weapons activities. The parliament of Norway explained how it was able to develop legislation which divests government pension funds from corporations involved in the production of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems. Legislators from South Korea referred to their efforts of parliamentary diplomacy, seeking to engage in dialogue with MPs from North Korea.

At the regional level, the Namibian parliament was recently involved in a regional workshop for the member states of the Southern African Development Community on the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty, and it remains committed to follow-up on these efforts. From Australia, we heard about how there is scope for its parliament to do more, in light of its strong linkages in Asia, to promote non-proliferation and disarmament, both in terms of

support for treaties from countries in the region and of norms of nuclear restraint. For example, it was noted that there is particular benefit in Australian parliamentarians becoming more engaged with their counterparts in India on non-proliferation issues.

In terms of specific efforts to ensure the entry into force of the CTBT, we learned about how the collaborative efforts among the parliaments of Costa Rica and Austria, through the CTBTO Preparatory commission and the Article XIV Conference, are in fact contributing to accelerating the ratification process in Latin America and the Caribbean. MPs from the nine Annex 2 states that have not yet ratified the CTBT came forward to address their concerns but also the avenues they are willing to explore. Clearly this is a discussion that needs to continue with renewed energy, and clearly, the value of inter-parliamentary exchange and cooperation cannot be underestimated here.

The good news, of course, is that we have a tremendous window of opportunity before us. The United States is showing that it is ready to lead by example once again. Just a few weeks ago at the United Nations, we were inspired by President Obama's tone, his message and commitment to engage and to deliver some very ambitious results. It is the type of environment that can inspire action from others as well. We do feel that legislators and parliaments can be an important part of the solution.

We are looking ahead towards the NPT Review Conference next year. We would like to encourage more parliaments to get interested and involved: to have a serious discussion back home in their relevant committees, to engage with their Executives on mandate and expected results, to actively follow the process ahead, to come to New York in May 2010 to get a clearer sense of the state of play and to try and influence their governments towards the best possible outcome.

I look forward to our discussion today. And we very much look forward to further developing our cooperation with PNND: seeking to build new bridges, finding new champions in more parliaments committed to joining forces and working together for a world free from nuclear weapons.

I thank you for your attention.