TEN YEARS AFTER RIO: GLOBAL DEGRADATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT
AND PARLIAMENTARY SUPPORT FOR THE KYOTO PROTOCOL

Resolution adopted by consensus by the 107th Conference
(Marrakech, 22 March 2002)

The 107th Inter-Parliamentary Conference,

Recalling and reaffirming parliamentary support for the commitment made by States at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, to the principle of sustainable development as the blueprint for future policy development,

Noting that UNCED adopted the Rio Declaration, Agenda 21 and the Statement of Principles for the Sustainable Management of Forests as well as two legally binding Conventions, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Convention on Biological Diversity, and that negotiations on a Convention to Combat Desertification and the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States were initiated there and subsequently concluded in 1994,

Recalling the adoption by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, at its 97th Inter-Parliamentary Conference (April 1997), of a resolution entitled "Measures required to change consumption and production patterns with a view to sustainable development", which urges parliaments to honour the commitments undertaken in 1992,

Cognisant of the Declaration, adopted by that same Inter-Parliamentary Conference, in which the IPU inter alia cautions of the dangers of a "wait-and-see" policy and reaffirms that granting the developing countries new and additional financial resources remains one of the keys to sustainable development throughout the world,

Mindful of the Nineteenth Special Session of the UN General Assembly ("Rio + 5") in 1997, at which participants expressed general dissatisfaction with the advances made in the practical implementation of the Rio commitments and called for measurable progress and the formulation and elaboration of national strategies for sustainable development before the follow-up Conference ("Rio + 10") in 2002,

Aware of the outcome of the negotiations at the resumed Sixth Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 6) in Bonn in July 2001 and at COP 7 in Marrakech in November 2001, which paved the way for the Kyoto Protocol's entry into force prior to the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Rio + 10") in September 2002,

Noting the progress made in national and international environment policy (including the phasing-out of substances which deplete the ozone layer in the stratosphere) and the adoption of various global targets to combat poverty since 1992,

Deeply concerned that the high expectations raised by the international community's necessary and ambitious objectives in environment and development have not been met,

Worried that rising consumption and unsustainable methods of economic management continue to deplete the natural resource base, and that environmental pollution – especially air and water pollution – is increasing,

Underscoring that the ongoing destruction of habitats poses a threat to biological diversity and that poor historic and current agricultural management techniques have contributed to a decline in soil quality due to widespread soil degradation and erosion,

Alarmed that many natural resources (such as water, land and soil, forests and fish stocks) are already exploited beyond sustainable limits and that global health is under serious threat from waste products and harmful emissions,
Recognising that women have been primarily responsible for family subsistence, and that environmental degradation, including the rapid dwindling of natural resources such as water and firewood, have in many countries created conditions in which women struggle to meet the basic needs of their families and have had to become increasingly self-reliant heads of households as men have migrated to the cities in large numbers, following a decline in land productivity,

Alarmed that children, who are vulnerable in their early years, are liable to suffer permanent damage as a result of environmental pollution and unhealthy living conditions,

Reaffirming the resolution on volunteers adopted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union at its 105th Conference (April 2001) and recognising the important role that volunteerism plays in sustainable development,

Underlining the need to focus on practical measures for environmental protection and on sustainable development that engages civil society, especially businesses and NGOs in follow-up,

Welcoming the United Nations Millennium Declaration on 8 September 2000 and the establishment of the Millennium Development Goals, particularly the goal of environmental sustainability,

Deeply concerned that, despite the commitments made in 1992, global emissions of greenhouse gases have continued to rise, climate change is entrenched and ongoing, and the natural resources needed to sustain the growing world population are at risk,

CLIMATE CHANGE

1. Urges States to note the significance of the Third Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which provides new and stronger evidence that most of the global warming observed over the last 50 years is attributable to human activities;
2. Urges States to expedite ratification of the Kyoto Protocol, taking into account the Marrakech Ministerial Declaration, in order to pave the way for its timely entry into force before the World Summit on Sustainable Development (26 August-4 September 2002, Johannesburg, South Africa) and to encourage others to do likewise;
3. Encourages all States, including the United States of America, to recognise that, being the first to industrialise, developed countries should also be the first to take action to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and that the commitments provided for in the Kyoto Protocol are the vital first step towards addressing climate change;
4. Also encourages States to consider what further action, consistent with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, will be needed to meet the overall objective of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change – the stabilisation of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that will prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system;
5. Further encourages States to recognise the impact that climate change has on the frequency and severity of natural disasters, and calls on States to address the humanitarian issues of climate change by working with international organisations, local authorities and community-based organisations such as national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies;
6. Calls on States to agree on an action plan that will provide the necessary energy basis for achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;
7. Encourages States to create conditions enabling countries to maximise the use of renewable energy sources and, in pursuing their national environmental, economic, social and security objectives, to increase energy efficiency inter alia by emphasising the importance of improvement within the transport sector;

OTHER SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

Poverty and environment

8. Urges States to support the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, including those pertaining to environmental resources, by promoting understanding
of the links between poverty and more effective management of environmental resources
and incorporating environment issues into national poverty reduction strategies;

9. **Calls on** the industrialised countries to support the developing countries in their
development process and in their efforts to accommodate environmental protection in their
development policies, and, in particular, **recommends** adopting policies to lighten the debt
burden of developing countries which, in order to service their debts, are bound to
overexploit their natural resources, depleting them rapidly or endangering them;

10. **Encourages** States to ensure a sound enabling environment (including good governance)
that will not only mobilise domestic resources, but also attract international private
investment flows, realise the gains of trade integration and make best use of overseas
development assistance (ODA);

11. **Calls on** States to ensure that poverty reduction figures prominently in international
agreements and is addressed by organisations like the WTO and the international financial
institutions;

12. **Calls on** States to improve the terms of trade for developing countries, aid effectiveness
(through harmonisation, the de-linking of aid and focusing on capacity building to capitalise
on the opportunities offered by globalisation), increase ODA to 0.7% of GNP as
recommended by the United Nations (through a proposal such as the International
Development Trust Fund to lever in private finance), and ensure that aid is better targeted
according to the twin criteria of poverty and pro-poor policy;

13. **Urges** States to support the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) to enable
Africa to end its economic and social marginalisation, and similar efforts in other regions;

**Water**

14. **Calls on** States to ensure that water receives due recognition as a key to sustainable
development; and **urges** States to implement actions in support of the Water Millennium
Development Goal and to press for the adoption of the following targets, written into the
Bonn Recommendations for Action:
   - To halve the proportion of people without access to appropriate sanitation by 2015;
   - To be in the process of developing water resource management plans by 2005;
   - To set appropriate targets for improving the equity and efficiency with which water
     resources are used;
   - To include water issues in poverty reduction strategies and other national plans;

15. **Urges** States to obtain agreement on how the international community can support action
frameworks that respect national sovereignties and provide a credible path to achieving the
Millennium Development goals, focused on the three key cross-cutting fields of:
   - Governance: sustainable water resources management, effective and transparent
     regulatory processes and cooperation across international boundaries;
   - Mobilising financial resources: new and more effective financing instruments that
     encourage all sources of funding for sustainable development;
   - Capacity building: sharing knowledge and good practice through collaboration and
     international partnerships;

16. **Calls on** States to recognise oceans as a key aspect of the sustainable development
agenda, with important links to achieving the objectives of the World Summit for
Sustainable Development (WSSD), and to embrace the idea of the "global commons"; and
**urges** States to develop international initiatives and action on:
   - Sustainable fisheries (food security, and illegal fishing);
   - Marine protected areas (such as a possible network around the world, including
     coral reefs, tourism and fisheries);
   - Ocean governance and partnerships (new mandate for UN Oceans Consultative
     Process and Regional Seas strengthening and cooperation);
   - Restriction of emissions of nuclear waste which will eventually lead to radioactive
     pollution of the oceans;

**Other key initiatives**

17. **Urges** States to step up efforts to combat drought and desertification, find suitable
solutions with regard to land management, and establish green belts to stop soil
deterioration;
18. **Calls on** States to promote forest ecosystem management, to conserve and protect biological diversity and genetic resources and to support programmes targeting Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs);

19. **Encourages** States to develop or strengthen non-coercive population management strategies consistent with the goals of sustainable development;

20. **Urges** States to raise awareness about the relationship between the environmental, social and cultural dimensions of sustainable development in order to meet the challenges of increasing economic and cultural deprivation, by promoting education, health, gender equality and cultural diversity, and asks UNESCO and other relevant agencies to work closely with IPU to deepen the international debate and assist in the formulation of national policies on these issues;

21. **Calls on** States to promote a framework for stimulating technological and social innovation to facilitate the economic progress required to tackle poverty and improve standards of living while respecting environmental limits; to de-link growth from environmental degradation; and to promote innovation and enterprise, needed to achieve gradual changes in sustainable development;

22. **Encourages** all States, particularly developed States, to use market-based tools to stimulate investment in alternative energy technologies and to promote environmentally sustainable practices in general, and in particular measures to encourage consumers to consider environmental costs when making purchasing decisions;

23. **Encourages** States to ensure that trade and other agreements do not contradict environmental instruments;

24. **Calls on** States to implement the precautionary principle and the "polluter pays" principle;

25. **Believes** that it is the responsibility of all, especially those with access to the media and public forums, to encourage people to adopt environmentally sustainable lifestyles.