

Position Paper for the Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

The issues to be discussed in the assembly are: Parliamentary Action to Fight Corrupt Practices; Debt of Developing Countries: Impact on Integration into the international System; Employment in a Globalizing World. In 2005 Slovenia celebrates the fifteenth anniversary of democracy of the first democratic government and of independent Slovene foreign policy. By joining the European Union in 2004, Slovenia is responding to the challenges facing independent countries in a globalized world. Slovenia is proud to introduce the achievements of modern European economic and institutional culture. Slovenia is aware of its responsibility and is a donor of international development and humanitarian aid. Peace and security entail not only the prevention of military conflicts and encounters, but also the prevention and overcoming of economic and social conflicts. Slovenia is firmly committed to addressing the underlying factors.

I) Parliamentary Action to Fight Corrupt Practices

The Republic of Slovenia believes that corruption is a serious threat to the rule of law and the stability and security of societies. It is neither compatible with democracy nor with economic prosperity because it undermines fundamental democratic values and institutions and it handicaps the economic development. The Parliaments, caused by their legislative and representative function, are playing a pre-eminent role in preventing and fighting corruption but also in ensuring the fundamental confidence of the citizens in the rule of law. Therefore Slovenia fully supports the implementation of anti-corruption plans in cooperation with the UN and including non-governmental organizations like Transparency International. Slovenia thinks that states should undertake preventive measures to strengthen efforts in fighting corruption of public officials in form of bribery, embezzlement, money laundering or related acts¹. Furthermore Slovenia promotes the participation of the civil society and non-governmental organizations in form of transparency of the decision-making process and the free and effective access to information. On the international scale the states should cooperate and spread knowledge about corruption. Democracies lacking capabilities to implement these plans efficiently should require assistance from the international donor community.

II) Debt of Developing Countries: Impact on Integration into the international System

The Republic of Slovenia is deeply concerned about the aggravation of the debt overhang in the globalizing world. Especially in the highly indebted developing countries debt curbs or even prevents economic growth. Especially the most vulnerable of a society, children and women suffer the most from the side effects of foreign debt escalation. An unsustainable stock of debt handicaps political and economic sovereignty and is often not only a relic of colonialism but a current tool of foreign domination. Slovenia is assuming, within its capacities, its share of responsibility for the fate of the least developed regions of the world and is taking on its international commitment towards the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

¹ See GA Res. 58/4 (Oct. 31, 2003)

III) Employment in a Globalizing World

The Republic of Slovenia believes that one of the key problems of globalization is that states, particularly welfare states with their social achievements, are getting increasingly under pressure due to the location competition caused by the mobility of the capital. This competition can lead to a “race to the bottom” in labour income, i.e. decreasing wage levels. Eventually, a deterioration of working conditions, weakening of environmental protection standards and reduced social spending can also follow. It is a major problem for both developed countries and developing countries to offer enough work to their citizens and to respect the rights of the workers without losing investments. Slovenia is today considered to be the country with the highest standard of living in Eastern Europe, thanks to the development of the past 15 years. This is also a result of the concentration on service industry and export and the work in improving the framework conditions for business. Slovenia fully supports the implementation of national development and employment plans with the cooperation of the regional organisations, the UN, and the international community. Furthermore Slovenia promotes the participation of the non-governmental organizations to spread knowledge about inhuman working conditions and to include the civic society. The developing states should receive multilateral aid in form of financing agencies but also strategic assistance. Foreign direct investment should be attracted and agencies be created that supervise the sustainability of the investments. The states should improve framework conditions for direct investments, dismantle trade barriers, reduce bureaucracy and reform obsolete labour laws. The states should foster the flexibility of the workers and invest into the infrastructure and into human resources.