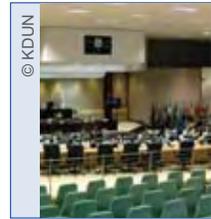




Powers and functions

Once established, the UNPA should, over time, be vested with genuine rights of information, participation and oversight throughout the UN system and the Bretton Woods institutions. The eventual goal is to develop the assembly from a mere consultative body into a full co-decision organ which complements the UN General Assembly.



"In a first preliminary step the UN Parliamentary Assembly could be composed of national parliamentarians, but eventually it should be directly elected."

Pan-African Parliament, October 2007

A catalyst for change

As a unique hinge between local constituencies, parliaments, civil society, the UN system and governments, the UNPA could become an important catalyst for global change. The proponents of its establishment envisage that a UNPA would advocate and help facilitate a reform of the present system of global institutions and governance.

Political support

The UNPA proposal is supported across principal party lines on all continents. The European Parliament, the Pan-African Parliament and the Latin American Parliament have adopted supportive resolutions. International coordination is provided by the Campaign for a UN Parliamentary Assembly.

About the Campaign



The Campaign for the Establishment of a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly (CEUNPA) is a network of parliamentarians and non-governmental organizations advocating citizen's representation at the United Nations through a popularly elected chamber.

The Campaign was launched in April 2007 with events in ten countries on four continents. Its "Appeal for the Establishment of a Parliamentary Assembly at the United Nations" has supporters in over 125 countries. Among them are more than 600 parliamentarians, 200 professors, 150 non-governmental organizations and hundreds of distinguished leaders from all walks of life.

The Campaign's International Secretariat is led by the Committee for a Democratic UN (KDUN) and based in Berlin.

Take action

Visit our website at www.unpacampaign.org, declare your support for the Campaign's Appeal for a UN Parliamentary Assembly and learn more about what else you could do.



Towards a World Parliament

For popular representation in global institutions

Campaign for the Establishment of a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly

Cover photo: © UN/DPI.

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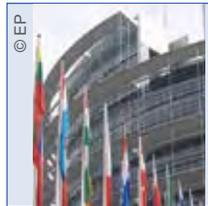




Why popular representation in global institutions?

The world is facing major challenges such as economic instability, climate change, environmental devastation, enduring violent conflicts, extreme poverty and social disparity, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and shortages of fresh water, energy and basic foods. Problems which can only be solved effectively at the global level are multiplying. The requirement for political governance is increasingly extending beyond state borders. More decision-making at the international level is inevitable. The importance of global institutions is growing.

In this process, it must be ensured that these institutions are responsive and in touch with the needs and concerns of ordinary citizens. Critical developments have reached such proportions that it is not possible to come to sustainable solutions without involving the will, ideas and initiative of the world's citizens. The broad diversity of a country's population is no longer sufficiently represented at the global level by its government diplomats alone. Additional means of representation need to be established.



A UN Parliamentary Assembly "would increase the democratic profile and internal democratic process of the United Nations."

European Parliament, June 2005



"A Parliamentary Assembly at the U.N. has become an indispensable step to achieve democratic control of globalization."

Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Egypt, former U.N. Secretary-General, May 2007

How representation is achieved nationally and regionally

In a majority of countries, popular representation is ensured through parliaments. In elections, citizens vote on who shall represent their interests. This creates an important direct link between those elected and their constituency. At the regional level, the necessity of including elected representatives in institutions such as the European Union and the African Union is also clearly recognized. The most developed regional parliament is the European Parliament. As a directly elected body vested with legislative powers it ensures the democratic connection of the European Union to its almost 500 million citizens.

Parliamentary representation also at the global level

If parliamentary representation is recognized as a decisive means to legitimize and improve national and regional governance, this equally applies at the global level. Global cooperation and governance is achieved through a plethora of institutions such as the United Nations and its numerous agencies and programmes, the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Group. None of these institutions, however, provides for adequate parliamentary representation. The best way to achieve this is through the establishment of a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly (UNPA).



Creating a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly

Initially, the assembly could be set up within the UN as a largely consultative body. In this first step, no cumbersome reform of the UN Charter would be required. The assembly could be created by a vote of the UN General Assembly or on the basis of a new international treaty between governments. As a global body, the assembly should be open for participation of all UN member states which possess a national parliament.



"A parliament at the United Nations would symbolize the notion of humanity as a community of world citizens."

Günter Grass, Germany, Nobel Laureate in literature, April 2006

Composition and selection of delegates

In the first phase the UNPA could consist of delegates of national and possibly regional parliaments. Their selection would have to reflect the political composition of the dispatching parliaments, thus representing the political diversity of a country.

At some point, partial or complete direct elections could be introduced. From the outset countries should be allowed to opt for direct elections of their delegates. To some degree, the number of delegates per country (or their allocated share of vote) would have to take population size into account.