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Contact Address:

Committee for a Democratic UN
C/O Society For Threatened Peoples
Hanspeter Bigler
Wiesenstrasse 77
CH-3014 Bern
Switzerland

Phone: +41 (0) 31 311 90 08

Fax : + 41 (0) 31 311 90 65

E-Mail: hanspeter.bigler@gfbv.ch

Secretary-General Kofi Annan
United Nations Headquarters
New York, NY 10017
USA

Fax 001-212-963-7055

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Establishment of a Parliamentary Assembly at the UN

Honourable Secretary-General

Sixty years after its foundation, the United Nations is of more importance than ever in the face of global challenges. The fight against genocide, HIV/Aids or the spreading of weapons of mass destruction, are only a few examples of the problems the world faces today and which nation-states cannot solve successfully by themselves. The UN is the only international organization capable of effectively promoting and coordinating national efforts on a global level.

In a radically changed world, the structure of the world-organization still reflects the time of 1945. It is a top priority, therefore, that the UN and its system adapt to the changing conditions in order to fulfil their duties in the 21st century. The establishment of the High Level Panel on relations between the UN and civil society and the High Level Panel on threats, challenges and changes raises hopes that structural reform of the UN will occur in the sixtieth year of its existence.

With this initiative we, the parliamentary members of one of the youngest UN member states, would like to suggest a concrete reform proposal that is supported by us all: the establishment of a Parliamentary Assembly at the UN.

A Parliamentary Assembly at the UN would encompass a number of advantages. **Representation of the population and participation of civil society** within the organization would promote the **faith** of citizens in the UN and increase its **acceptance** and **legitimation**. Most of the solutions developed by the UN, moreover, have to be implemented by civil society. A Parliamentary Assembly at the United Nations could also be an important link with which to include civil society and use their **ideas** and **experience** constructively to find new solutions. The inclusion of members of parliament and civil society increases the **efficiency** of the UN and ensures that solutions remain pragmatic.

With the establishment of a Parliamentary Assembly, the present **mechanisms of democratic control** could be strengthened, thus achieving **a greater level of transparency**. In turn, the global population would gain a better understanding of the commitment of the UN.

On the international level, it is especially important to emphasise democratic principles. Since the UN functions as a role model, it is suitable to **promote world wide democracy**. To fulfil this duty, moreover, these structures have to be compatible with democratic principles. A Parliamentary Assembly could, therefore, make a contribution in this direction.

Furthermore, **peoples** and **minorities** could introduce their concerns more efficiently within a Parliamentary Assembly at the UN, ultimately promoting the **preservation of global diversity**.



Switzerland has a long humanitarian and democratic tradition. It has always promoted international law, democracy and respect for human rights. On the basis of this tradition we, the Swiss members of parliament, turn to you and encourage you to introduce the idea of a Parliamentary Assembly at the UN into the reform debate and to forward this suggestion to the governments of the UN member states for further discussion.

Yours sincerely

Principal Signatories (Members of Parliament)

Gysin Remo
Social Democrats Faction, SDF

Lang Josef
Green Faction, GF

Markwalder Bär Christa
Radical-Liberal Faction, RLF

Studer Heiner
EPP/FDU Faction, EFF

Zapfl Rosmarie
Christian Democrats Faction, CDF

Further Signatories (Members of the National Council):

Abate Fabio (RLF), **Aeschbacher** Ruedi (EFF), **Allemann** Evi (SDF), **Bader** Elvira (CDF), **Banga** Boris (SDF), **Bäumle** Martin (Green-Liberal), **Berberat** Didier (SDF), **Bruderer** Pascale (SDF), **Brunschwig Graf** Martine (RLF), **Bühlmann** Cécile (GF), **Cavalli** Franco (SDF), **Christen** Yves (RLF), **Cuche** Fernand (GF), **Daguet** André (SDF), **Darbellay** Christophe (CDF), **de Buman** Dominique (CDF), **Donzé** Walter (EFF), **Dormond Béguelin** Marlyse (SDF), **Dupraz** John (RLF), **Egerszegi** Christine (RLF), **Fasel** Hugo (GF), **Fässler** Hildegard (SDF), **Fehr** Hans-Jürg (SDF), **Fehr** Jacqueline (SDF), **Fehr** Mario (SDF), **Frösch** Therese (GF), **Galladé** Chantal (SDF), **Garbani** Valérie (SDF), **Genner** Ruth (GF), **Germanier** Jean-René (RLF), **Glasson** Jean-Paul (RLF), **Goll** Christine (SDF), **Graf** Maya (GF), **Gross** Andreas (SDF), **Gross** Jost (SDF), **Guisan** Yves (RLF), **Günter** Paul (SDF), **Gutzwiller** Felix (RLF), **Gyr** Josy (SDF), **Häberli** Brigitte (CDF), **Haering** Barbara (SDF), **Hämmerle** Andrea (SDF), **Heim** Bea (SDF), **Hochreutener** Norbert (CDF), **Hofmann** Urs (SDF), **Hollenstein** Pia (GF), **Hubmann** Vreni (SDF), **Huguenin** Marianne (Labour Party), **Humbel Näf** Ruth (CDF), **Janiak** Claude (SDF), **Jermann** Walter (CDF), **Jutzet** Erwin (SDF), **Kiener Nellen** Margret (SDF), **Leuenberger** Ueli (GF), **Leutenegger Oberholzer** Susanne (SDF), **Leuthard** Doris (CDF), **Levrat** Christian (SDF), **Marti** Werner (SDF), **Marty Kälin** Barbara (SDF), **Maury Pasquier** Liliane (SDF), **Meier-Schatz** Lucrezia (CDF), **Menétrey** Anne-Cathérine (GF), **Meyer** Thérèse (CDF), **Müller** Geri (GF), **Müller-Hemmi** Vreni (SDF), **Nordmann** Roger (SDF), **Pedrina** Fabio (SDF), **Pelli** Fulvio (RLF), **Randegger** Johannes (RLF), **Rechsteiner** Paul (SDF), **Rechsteiner** Rudolf (SDF), **Recordon** Luc (GF), **Rennwald** Jean-Claude (SDF), **Rey** Jean-Noël (SDF), **Riklin** Kathy (CDF), **Robbiani** Meinrado (CDF), **Rossini** Stéphane (SDF), **Roth-Bernasconi** Maria (SDF), **Sadis** Laura (RLF), **Salvi** Pierre (SDF), **Savary** Géraldine (SDF), **Schenker** Silvia (SDF), **Simoneschi** Chiara (CDF), **Sommaruga** Carlo (SDF), **Stöckli** Hans (SDF), **Stump** Doris (SDF), **Teuscher** Franziska (GF), **Thanei** Anita (SDF), **Vanek** Pierre (Alliance de Gauche), **Vermot-Mangold** Ruth-Gaby (SDF), **Vischer** Daniel (GF), **Vollmer** Peter (SDF), **Walker** Felix (CDF), **Widmer** Hans (SDF), **Wyss** Ursula (SDF), **Zisyadis** Josef (Labour Party)

Further Signatories (Members of the Council of States):

Brunner Christiane (SDF), **Béguelin** Michel (SDF), **Berset** Alain (SDF), **Leuenberger** Ernst (SDF), **Sommaruga** Simonetta (SDF), **Studer** Jean (SDF), **Gentil** Pierre-Alain (SDF)

CC: Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the UN