



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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IPU Statement

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**Building Sustainable Peace for All:
Synergies between the 2030 Agenda
for Sustainable Development and
Sustaining Peace**
New York, 24 January 2017

President,

The landmark 2016 resolution on Sustaining Peace and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are mutually reinforcing like two sides of the same coin.

They speak to a simple truth: that sustainable development leads to peaceful and inclusive societies; and that sustainable peace, in turn, ensures a favourable environment in which people from all walks of life and conflicting interests can work together for their country's development.

Effective implementation of the SDGs will not only prevent the outbreak of conflict but also lay the foundations for self-sustaining peace and development.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development addresses sustainable peace as a cross-cutting issue with many targets on non-violence, justice and inclusiveness. SDG 16 specifically seeks to 'promote peaceful and inclusive societies...' Among other things, the Sustaining Peace resolution calls for eradicating poverty, promoting socioeconomic development, gender equality and national reconciliation, and building stronger governance institutions.

Both frameworks recognize the key role of gender equality as well as women's contribution to all stages of the sustaining peace process. The 2016 resolution calls for responding to women's needs in conflict and post-conflict settings, for empowering women and for increasing their representation in leadership positions to achieve sustainable peace. Goal 5 of the SDGs, on the other hand, aims to ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making and to eliminate violence against women and girls, which is particularly prevalent in times of conflict.

President,

Peacebuilding and development are long-term, nationally driven processes requiring inclusive, transparent and effective decision making institutions and respect for the rule of law.

Parliaments are among the most important of these institutions.

As key bodies of legislation and oversight, they are uniquely placed to hold governments to account for the effective implementation of these international commitments. They can ensure inclusiveness in decision-making through the representation of neglected groups such as women, youth and ethnic and religious minorities. They can work with civil society to help build people's trust in their governments and to ensure that the political process is driven by the pursuit of the common good.

Clearly, not all parliaments are born the same and not all parliaments are equally capable of carrying out these functions. This is why the core mission of IPU, based on the primacy of political dialogue, is to strengthen democracy by strengthening parliaments.

IPU provides direct assistance to parliaments, as well as policy guidance, to help them find effective ways to mainstream the SDGs and to address specific priorities for our members, such as health, gender equality, climate change, and development cooperation.

Our parliamentary strengthening work includes activities to help parliaments improve their internal decision-making processes as well as to enact reforms - including constitutional and electoral law reforms - to become more representative of all constituencies and more open to the outside world. A key priority in this regard is our work to promote gender equality in parliaments.

In addition to providing assistance to parliaments, IPU promotes dialogue and inclusiveness within parliaments through its own political processes. A most recent example of this is the Outcome document of the 135th IPU Assembly, in October 2016, on "*Human rights abuses as precursors of conflict: Parliaments as early responders*" which outlines a number of recommendations for parliaments to lead by example and make transparency, accountability and respect for the rule of law their guiding principles.

IPU's Standing Committee on Peace and International Security provides a dedicated space for parliamentarians to discuss specific crisis situations as well as global issues such as terrorism, cyber security and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Currently, the committee is working toward a seminar on Sustaining Peace in the fall of this year.

As conflict continues to beset the Middle East, this region is a particular focus of our diplomatic efforts. This includes facilitating parliamentary dialogue around the issue of water, a scarce resource that is essential to the political stability and the sustainable development of the region.

To conclude, President, IPU will continue to do its part to help advance the development and peace agendas by mobilizing political will and leadership in parliaments around the world.

Thank you.