



Inter-Parliamentary Union  
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# Summary Records of the Proceedings of the 145th IPU Assembly

Kigali, Rwanda

11-15 October 2022

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## Introduction

Delegations from 119 Member Parliaments took part in the work of the Assembly.

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Eswatini, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia (The), Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Libya, Liechtenstein, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Türkiye, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Representatives of Afghanistan and Tunisia also participated in the proceedings of the Assembly in a non-voting observer capacity.

The following eight Associate Members also took part in the Assembly: the Arab Parliament, the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), the Interparliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States (IPA-CIS), the Inter-Parliamentary Committee of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), the Latin American and Caribbean Parliament (PARLATINO), the Pan-African Parliament, the Parliament of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC), and the Parliament of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

Observers included representatives of:

(i) the United Nations and related organizations: United Nations, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH), Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), World Health Organization (WHO);

(ii) parliamentary assemblies and associations: ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, African Parliamentary Union (APU), Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union (AIPU), Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA), Commonwealth Parliamentary Assembly (CPA), Forum of Parliaments of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (FP-ICGLR), Global Organization of Parliamentarians against Corruption (GOPAC), International Parliament on Tolerance and Peace (IPTP), Maghreb Consultative Council, Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM), Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic Speaking Countries (TURKPA), Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean (PA-UfM), Parliamentary Assembly of the Union of Belarus and Russia, Parliamentary Union of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation Member States (PUIC), Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum (SADC-PF);

(iii) Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria;

(iv) International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA), Sovereign Order of Malta.

Of the 959 delegates who attended the Assembly, 573 were members of parliament (552 from Member Parliaments and 21 from Associate Member delegations). Those parliamentarians included 39 Presiding Officers, 39 Deputy Presiding Officers, 207 women MPs (36.1%) and 130 young MPs (22.7%).

# Inaugural ceremony of the 145<sup>th</sup> Assembly

TUESDAY, 11 OCTOBER 2022

*The inaugural ceremony of the 145th IPU Assembly took place at the Kigali Convention Centre, Rwanda at 11:00 on Tuesday, 11 October 2022.*

**Ms. Hadija Murangwa, Member of the Senate of Rwanda, Master of Ceremonies,** welcomed delegates to Kigali.

*Upon the arrival of His Excellency President Paul Kagame, a choir sang the national anthem of Rwanda.*

**Ms. Donatille Mukabalisa** (Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies of Rwanda), thanked President Kagame for his presence and warmly welcomed delegates from around the world to the 145th IPU Assembly. Assemblies were key moments in the IPU's commitment to bring a parliamentary dimension to international cooperation, global governance and the resolution of major international issues. An important element of the IPU's primary goals of peace and democracy was its strong commitment to ensure that women could participate in politics on an equal footing with men.

The theme of the Assembly, *Gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments as drivers of change for a more resilient and peaceful world*, was intended as a wake-up call to parliamentary institutions to reflect and take stock on the current state of gender equality, and to identify ways to advance gender mainstreaming in the political and economic spheres of every country. In Rwanda, the promotion of gender equality, women in leadership and women's empowerment more generally, were constitutional imperatives. The political commitment to those values was strong at the highest level. The women of Rwanda were playing an active role, equal to men, in the socio-economic transformation of the country. She thanked delegates for the trust they had placed in the Parliament of Rwanda to host the Assembly and reiterated her strong commitment to ensuring that the event met delegates' expectations.

In a video message, **Mr. António Guterres** (Secretary-General of the United Nations) said that IPU Assemblies were a crucial bridge between the local and the global, allowing people's concerns to be brought into the international arena. He commended the focus of the Assembly on gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments as drivers of change and congratulated Rwanda for being the world's first country with a female majority in parliament. Parliaments should work to ensure women had the same opportunities to sit at the decision-making table as men, and should take action to protect women in politics against the growing threat of violence. Working together, parliaments, governments and the United Nations had the opportunity to move further and faster towards a world of peace, equality and opportunity for all.

**Mr. Martin Chungong** (Secretary General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union) conveyed his heartfelt gratitude to the Parliament of Rwanda for hosting the Assembly. It was a matter of great personal pleasure for him to be back at the heart of his native continent of Africa. The IPU had worked over many years with the Parliament of Rwanda to build one of the most forward-looking and gender-sensitive parliaments in the world. Rwanda provided proof that gender equality and gender-sensitive institutions were drivers of peace and resilience. No country could claim to have achieved full gender equality and no parliament could claim to be 100% gender sensitive, so the General Debate at the present Assembly must look at ways to accelerate progress to achieve the goal of gender equality.

Regrettably, Africa was currently experiencing an epidemic of instability and coups. The IPU could never condone any assumption of power by military force. The *Call of the Sahel* initiative was one way in which the IPU was responding to the situation. He called on all Member Parliaments to strive to identify dynamic and innovative solutions to bring back lasting peace, discourage military responses to instability, and support sustainable development throughout Africa. He also called upon the IPU's governing bodies to consider forging a new partnership with various institutions on the African continent to identify pathways to address Africa's chronic instability.

The founding fathers of the IPU had articulated the importance of deploying the potential of parliaments and parliamentary diplomacy as a contribution to conflict resolution. He hoped that the Assembly in Kigali would be remembered for the unequivocal commitment of the global parliamentary community to spare no effort in complementing traditional diplomacy in order to bring peace to a troubled world.

**Mr. Duarte Pacheco** (President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union) thanked the Parliament of Rwanda for its hospitality and work in preparing for the Assembly, and noted that the presence of the President of Rwanda was testament to his commitment to multilateralism and parliamentarism. He congratulated the President on the economic success of Rwanda in rebuilding after the 1994 genocide, and the spirit of reconciliation and dialogue that pervaded not only Rwanda's parliament but the country in general.

The world continued to face many of the same challenges as at the previous Assembly: climate change, growing poverty and inequality, terrorism, and migration crises. The war in Ukraine was having a global impact and the recent annexation of further Ukrainian territory by the Russian Federation was yet another violation of international law. Human rights continued to be violated around the world, notably the rights of women, such as in the Islamic Republic of Iran, where lessons must be learnt from the tragic case of Mahsa Amini. Nonetheless, several causes for hope stood out: increased interfaith dialogue as evidenced by recent and forthcoming meetings, sport as a means of uniting people, as would be evidenced by the upcoming FIFA World Cup tournament in Qatar, and the growing participation of young people in politics.

The representation of women in politics was also on the rise and Rwanda provided a shining example in that regard, with over 60% of members of its Chamber of Deputies being women. The IPU endeavoured to set a good example on gender equality through measures to ensure gender balance in every aspect of its work. As well as the present Assembly, the IPU's three previous Assemblies had been hosted in countries with a woman Speaker of Parliament, and it looked likely the next two would follow suit.

The international community had failed Rwanda in the 1990s; a mistake it must never repeat. Parliamentarians needed to work together, engage in dialogue and identify solutions to the many problems the world was facing, in order to leave behind a more peaceful, inclusive and sustainable world for the next generation.

**His Excellency Mr. Paul Kagame** (President of Rwanda) welcomed delegates to Rwanda and thanked them for choosing his country as the host of the 145th Assembly. He noted that the primary objective of parliaments was to protect the interests of citizens and that objective could not be met without the full and active participation of women, especially in leadership positions. Gender equality was easier to achieve when it was acknowledged as a right for everyone, everywhere. Women were the backbone of resilient and peaceful societies. Women had played and continued to play a critical role in Rwanda's transformation journey. There were no quick fixes for inclusive communities, but gender equality was a shared responsibility in which men had a duty to speak up and not just be bystanders.

Parliaments also had an important role to play in fighting against genocide ideology. Genocide denial and revisionism were fast becoming growing threats to peace and security globally. Parliaments needed to step up efforts to criminalize all forms of dehumanization and racism around the world. No region of the world could claim to have it all. It was the responsibility of everyone to work for democracy and peace through cooperation. Solidarity in the fight against genocide ideology constituted a recognition of a shared humanity for the betterment of societies and the protection of future generations. He hoped that that message would permeate the discussions in the coming days and wished delegates a pleasant stay in Rwanda.

*President Paul Kagame declared the 145th IPU Assembly open.*

## Sitting of Wednesday, 12 October

(Morning)

*The sitting was called to order at 11:30 with Ms. D. Mukabalisa (Rwanda), President of the Assembly, in the Chair.*

**The President**, extending a warm welcome to participants, said in her opening remarks that the presence of so many parliamentarians in Kigali demonstrated the importance placed on the global IPU family and the value attached to the deep and distinct bonds uniting peoples. The IPU played a key role as a forum for discussion among parliamentarians on issues of global concern, paving the way for decisive action to address the needs of their populations.

For Rwanda, the hosting of the Assembly was a symbol of pride in its openness to the world and an opportunity to show that it was no longer the same country as in 1994, the year of the genocide that had claimed over one million Tutsi lives. Although scarred by their experiences, many of the women survivors had demonstrated a remarkable resilience in building their families and country. Against that backdrop, the sense was that an Assembly focused on gender equality, in particular equality of rights, opportunities and dignity, could lead only to a compelling and irreversible commitment to working for a society in which equality and justice prevailed. The Parliament of Rwanda remained committed to ensuring that equality which remained high on the national agenda, including through work with other parliaments. Thanks to the Assembly, its members would be able to exchange best practices with counterparts from elsewhere and learn from them to help contribute to a more resilient and peaceful world.

With gender sensitivity a prerequisite for the success of parliaments in meeting the needs of the people whom they served, the upcoming General Debate on gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments as drivers of change for a more resilient and peaceful world was extremely apt. Gender equality in any society must be inspired by the example of parliaments. More women working in parliament with men made it easier to overcome the complex challenges of the contemporary world. Only through joint efforts could those in all layers of society have their voices heard and their concerns addressed. The current Assembly was a unique and pivotal opportunity to share experiences on tackling barriers to gender equality in parliaments and to find actionable and realistic solutions for making parliaments more gender-sensitive. Equality was a right, not a favour, and more and better must be done to ensure that the next generations of young women inherited a nation where their aspirations knew no limits.

*A film on gender-sensitive parliaments was projected.*

**Mr. D. Pacheco** (Portugal), President of the IPU, expressing gratitude to the Rwandan hosts of the Assembly, in particular the Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies and the President of the Senate, for their commitment to strengthening ties with the IPU and for their uniquely warm hospitality, said that gender equality was the shared goal about which Rwanda could teach much. In politics, there could be no true democracy if half the population were excluded from decision-making. Progress towards doubling the global proportion of women in parliament to 50% must therefore be swiftly accelerated by emulating the example of the five parliaments that had reached or even surpassed parity by way of a conducive legal framework or ambitious quotas.

The disproportionate impact of the post-pandemic economic downturn on women and girls had a knock-on effect on the whole of society. Rather than building resilience, women's unpaid care work and informal employment alongside the rising violence against women and girls, created vulnerabilities across the board. By contrast, economic gender equality led not only to equal pay, financial inclusion and appreciation for care work but also to women's protection from discrimination and violence. The right and economically smart thing to do could be learned from countries that had advanced on those fronts. Women and girls were also prey to gender-based violence and trafficking fuelled by political instability and armed conflict. Such violence was often condoned by governments that denied universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights, and prevented women's bodily autonomy. In addition, gender-based discrimination and violence of any kind held back societies.



History had shown that societies investing in gender equality for peace and resilience were better off, Rwanda being a prime example. A new political project for a more peaceful and prosperous society was achievable only if women and men were equal partners in political decision-making and if women and girls were empowered and their rights guaranteed. Parliaments must provide the inspiration to build forward better and more equal by being gender-sensitive and gender-equal and by driving gender equality at large, guided by the IPU's *Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments* adopted 10 years previously in Quebec City. No parliament could yet claim to be 100% gender-sensitive. The General Debate would be the opportunity to share successes and also make pledges for firm action to accelerate progress in implementing the plan of action to avoid what would otherwise be a 40-year wait for gender parity in parliaments.

**Ms. S. Bahous** (Executive Director, UN Women), keynote speaker, said in a pre-recorded video message that she deeply appreciated the IPU's abiding efforts to advance gender equality and its long-standing and ever-strengthening partnership with UN Women. Already a powerful leader in the Generation Equality Forum Action Coalition on Feminist Movements and Leadership, the IPU had joined the Generation Equality Multi-Stakeholder Leadership Group only two weeks earlier, which would help to accelerate further progress towards shared goals.

The IPU's visionary *Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments* had reinforced understanding of the parliamentary role in leading by example, challenging outdated gender stereotypes and promoting gender equality through gender-sensitive legislation and resource allocation. Without urgent action, Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 aimed at gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls would not be realized by 2030, and parity in parliament not until 2060, while at the current rate of progress it could take another 300 years to remove discriminatory laws.

Gender balance in decision-making would benefit from the attention of parliamentarians, who could use their legislative power to ensure that temporary measures such as gender quotas – the single most effective tool for increasing women's representation in political life – were ambitious and enforceable. Parliamentary rules of procedure should also support gender balance to allow equal access to decision-making for women parliamentarians and their staff. Parliamentarians should direct similar attention to ending the discriminatory norms, laws and practices affecting women and girls. Laws should be enacted to eliminate all forms of gender-based violence, including the harmful practices of child marriage and female genital mutilation, and to facilitate women's ownership of property. The recent IPU-UN Women *handbook for parliamentarians Gender-responsive law-making* was intended to support such legal reform efforts.

Parliamentarians must also urgently work to reduce the impact of the global recession on women and girls so that they were not further left behind. Ongoing crises were continuing to sharpen existing inequalities, creating an even wider global gender gap that only long-term plans and a strong gender lens could address. Parliamentarians could play their part by helping to put in place and implement gender-responsive budgeting and planning, accelerate the transformation towards more equitable, gender-responsive and sustainable food systems, and promote climate action and equitable access for women to decision-making and markets. UN Women stood ready to support parliamentarians to be the change that the world urgently needed.

**Mr. W.J. van den Berg** (MenCare Officer, Promundo International), keynote speaker, said that men should be part of the gender equality agenda and that parliaments with a care ethic would be gender-sensitive and gender-transformative. In calling for men to do 50% of all care work and be part of the global movement for gender equality, the MenCare fatherhood campaign used evidence, such as from the *State of the World's Fathers* reports, to drive strategic advocacy and programming initiatives with partners in more than 55 countries. Data from the 2021 report showed, for example, that many fewer women than men participated in the paid formal workforce – often because they were otherwise engaged in care and domestic work, which were unpaid but valued at trillions of dollars – and that mothers were far more likely than fathers to be guaranteed paid parental leave.

The aim of MenCare was to raise men's awareness of the reality of caregiving, which was all-important work yet invisible and undervalued, and to support men in helping to address the related inequalities and vulnerabilities. Male politicians were needed as allies at all levels in the cause of caring about care, the importance of which had been brought home by the COVID-19 experience. To change the status quo by increasing the appreciation for care and acknowledging care as the work that kept human beings alive, male politicians must join their female counterparts in voting for and enacting policies that supported care work and equality in that work. Specifically,

they should proactively support gender equality measures and encourage other men to play their part; model equality in their personal and workplace lives, take parental leave and demonstrate in their family settings the importance of caregiving and gender equality; and conduct an audit of bills disaggregated by whether they had been proposed by women or men.

Lastly, male politicians should make the MenCare Commitment towards improving care equality through institutional action on such matters as parental leave, workplace childcare facilities, redistribution of care work equally between the sexes – of which the Uruguayan Care Act was a good example – and fathers' engagement in prenatal visits, childbirth and childcare as in the Bandebereho project in Rwanda. The goal of building back better in the post-pandemic era must result in gender equality, including equality in care work.

**Ms. L. Vasylenko** (Ukraine), ex officio member of the IPU Executive Committee and President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, speaking to inform the coming General Debate from the gender perspective, said that women parliamentarians had worked together across party lines and borders to promote gender-responsive legislation, overcoming difficulties and resistance to institute gender quotas, create parliamentary gender mainstreaming mechanisms and enact laws to eradicate violence against women and children. The main challenge was to bring on board parliamentary institutions in their entirety, which was best achieved if they recognized gender equality as inherent to advancement, prosperity, peace and resilience.

Gender equality had a strong and positive impact on gross domestic product per capita, poverty risk reduction and economic development. Women's leadership, furthermore, was a driving force in durable peacebuilding and diplomacy, which had been the rationale behind the establishment of a gender-balanced IPU task force for the peaceful resolution of the war in her country. The implementation of the IPU's *Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments* would help parliaments to become inspiring model institutions of gender equality and a powerful tool in the face of obstacles to sustainable development, peace and climate change action.

**Ms. S. Albazar** (Egypt), ex officio member of the IPU Executive Committee and President of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians, articulating the youth perspective on the topic of the General Debate, said in a pre-recorded video message that parliaments functioned in an outdated manner in the eyes of the younger generations, who expected and indeed could help them to be constantly evolving and be adaptable to change. Through legislation and policymaking, parliamentarians played an essential role in redressing the imbalances and inequalities between women and men and in empowering women – a role that could be more effectively discharged if the institution was modernized.

To that end and to increase their relevance for all, parliaments should be more inclusive of all social groups, be better attuned to their respective interests, and act upon the voice of youth calling for them to be greener and more efficient as well as more inclusive. As to the parliamentary workplace, it should be modern, attractive and also family-friendly, offering childcare facilities and the option of hybrid meetings. It should furthermore be free of all misogyny, sexism, harassment and violence against women. In 2022, it was time for all parliaments to apply the gender-sensitive concept pioneered 10 years previously by the IPU.

#### *Announcement of the quorum for the session*

**The Secretary General** announced that, in conformity with Rule 33 of the Rules of the Assembly, a quorum of 59 had been established for the current session on the basis of the number of members participating in the first meeting, which amounted to 115.

#### Item 3 of the agenda

#### **General Debate on the theme *Gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments as drivers of change for a more resilient and peaceful world*** (A/145/3-Inf.1)

**Mr. P.H. Katjavivi** (Namibia), opening the high-level segment of the debate reserved for Speakers of Parliament, said that it was of cardinal importance to build societies of equal opportunities and equal rights, and that gender inclusivity should be a collective preoccupation for IPU Members to do more to drive change for gender parity. Gender equality in parliaments revolved around the two key elements of gender representation and gender-based budgeting. A

fundamental human right, gender equality was critical to development and social well-being, thereby underlining the need to attain the SDGs by 2030. Parliaments must act in unison as they strived to eradicate the underlying causes of maternal mortality, increase access to proper health care, and to sexual and reproductive health education, prevent child marriage, combat women's exclusion, and end gender inequalities in employment and pay. In Namibia, equality of men and women was a constitutional guarantee.

While its troubled history with the apartheid system had negatively affected all aspects of its development, Namibia had nonetheless achieved a scoring of almost 80% in the African Gender Index 2019, which measured parity between women and men across three dimensions: economic, social, and representation and empowerment. With women constituting just under 45% of members, its parliament was close to achieving the set objective of 50/50 representation in all government and political positions. Income inequality remained comparatively high, however, which could perhaps be remedied with the help of gender-based budgeting. The Namibian Parliament therefore hoped to benefit from IPU capacity-building support in that area and in engagement on the SDGs so as to speed up its creation of gender-equal and gender-sensitive legislatures.

**Mr. Kim Jin-Pyo** (Republic of Korea) said that gender-sensitive parliaments were among the strongest drivers of inclusive gender-sensitive societies and could also be vital to more effectively resolving multilayered crises. Since 2000, the gender quota for female party-list candidates in Korean national, provincial and municipal elections had been increased to 50%, while in constituency-based elections, political parties were required to nominate at least one woman per electoral district. The proportion of women in parliament had consequently risen by one fifth, in provincial and municipal councils by one third, and at the county level by up to one half. The number of women in political leadership positions had also increased significantly, with women elected for the first time ever as deputy Speakers of the National Assembly and women chairing approximately one third of parliamentary standing committees. Similar trends were also visible in the civil and foreign services.

In addition to introducing measures to make it more gender-responsive and supportive of gender equality, the Korean National Assembly was promoting gender mainstreaming in legislative and policy decision-making processes and enacting or amending laws to improve women's job security and work environment and protect women from all gender discrimination and violence. Its human rights centre also worked to ensure a safe and gender-equal working environment for members. As with many other parliaments, however, full gender equality had not yet been achieved, despite such committed efforts, which must be stepped up in all countries. His own parliament would not rest until it had become truly gender-sensitive.

**Mr. M. Nadir** (Guyana) said that his country and those in the wider Caribbean region had for many years been at the forefront in promoting gender equality and related issues, to which their commitment was demonstrated by their almost unbeaten record on equal access to education. There had also been four women heads of government of international repute in the region. While taking pride in being the only Caribbean country to have legislated for a gender quota of one third among candidates on the electoral lists, Guyana was still playing catch-up with other countries where higher numbers of parliamentary seats were either reserved for or held by women. Roughly one third of Guyanese parliamentarians were women, with indigenous women accounting for just over one third of their number; one third of Cabinet members were also women.

Although lauded as a peaceful paradise, Guyana and the Caribbean region had had their post-colonial challenges, including ethnic conflicts, ministerial and presidential assassinations, undemocratic regimes, political repression and coups d'état, electoral violence, and aggressive border disputes. To avoid a repetition of the past, Guyana had implemented women's empowerment and leadership programmes. With women now dominating tertiary education areas such as social sciences, law and medicine, Guyana would continue to promote equal access to education in addition to increasing women's participation in the workforce, initiating more gender-sensitive programmes and legislation, and working for more gender equality in parliament and parliamentary processes following the trajectory set by others.

**Mr. F. Charumbira** (Pan-African Parliament (PAP)) said that gender equality had been identified as the number one predictor of peace – more so than a State's wealth, level of democracy or religious identity – and as the critical link between the prevention of gender-based harm and the cultivation of peace. Gender mainstreaming, however, required budgetary support,

which was in itself a reflection of the political will to promote gender parity. Parliaments must therefore analyse budgets through a gender lens to ensure that all differential needs were catered for, thereby creating a positive attitude towards gender equality and ultimately fostering peace and sustainable development.

Through its Women's Caucus and its Committee on Gender, Family, Youth and People with Disability, PAP had sought to empower women by advancing their common cause and promoting their meaningful participation in driving Africa's development agenda. In addition, the upcoming annual PAP Women's Wing Conference would be focused on women's empowerment and inclusion in governance. Guided by the IPU's *Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments*, PAP was promoting gender equality throughout the continent and enhancing its own gender sensitivity. It was also undertaking frequent missions within Africa to assess the situation of women and girls in conflict areas and raise awareness of harmful traditional practices, including female genital mutilation, with a view to their eradication. Lastly, it was helping to strengthen health systems, especially in the area of maternity services, and hoped to adopt a model law on gender parity to serve as a benchmark for African countries.

**Mr. M. Ngoga Karoli** (East African Legislative Assembly (EALA)), citing the projection made in the *Global Gender Gap Report 2022* that it would take 132 years at the current rate of progress to close that gap, said that parliamentary action was central to advancing gender equality worldwide towards the attainment of SDG 5 above all, and to averting the risk of backsliding in global gender parity. Parliamentarians must seize the opportunity of the Assembly to share their experiences and ensure a gender-responsive recovery amid the health and climate change crises and emerging security threats.

Under the Treaty on the Establishment of the East African Community (EAC), the EAC Partner States had undertaken to abide by the fundamental principle of gender equality, recognized the indispensable role of women in socioeconomic development and business, and committed to ensuring gender mainstreaming in all EAC endeavours. Key EALA actions towards strengthening the EAC legal and policy framework for gender equality had included the enactment of a law stipulating that one third of its elected members must reflect either gender. The aim was to improve women's representation and leadership within the EALA, given the correlation between gender inequality in politics and in broader society. Albeit still wanting, progress had been impressive, with women currently representing some 40% of the elected members. The EALA had also recently established a women's caucus and was continuing to engage with the EAC to promote the full implementation of the EAC Gender Policy. Further collective efforts across the governance structure were needed, however, to achieve the goal of gender parity.

*The sitting rose at 13:10.*

## Sitting of Wednesday, 12 October

### (Afternoon)

*The sitting was called to order at 14:30 with Mr. M. Dick, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Australia, in the Chair.*

#### Item 3 of the agenda (continued)

#### **General Debate on the theme *Gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments as drivers of change for a more resilient and peaceful world*** (A/145/3-Inf.1)

**Ms. C.G. Hara** (Malawi) said that gender inequality was not only a moral and social issue but also an economic challenge. It shaped how women and men experienced and contributed to decisions. It was also one of the main causes of conflicts across the globe. Empowering women was a major step towards building sustainable peace.

Parliamentarians could play a critical role in promoting gender equality through their representative, legislative, budgeting and oversight roles. They must pass legislation to ensure equal representation of women and men in parliament and other institutions. They must allocate substantial amounts of money to gender equality programmes and ensure resources were available for research, policy review, implementation and follow-up.

The National Assembly of Malawi had been pressing its Government to allocate more funds for gender equality but had been unsuccessful due to numerous competing needs. It had intensified oversight to ensure the limited resources remaining were used effectively and efficiently. A number of laws had been passed in a bid to protect the rights of women and children, including the Gender Equality Act, which provided for a 60/40 gender balance in all public institutions. Currently, 28% of parliamentarians in Malawi were women.

It was important to bring more women into parliament. However, it was even more important to keep them there by helping them do the best job they could once elected. A key part of the solution was girl child education and economic empowerment. In Malawi, election candidates were required to have a basic set of qualifications and sufficient funds to campaign. More women would stand and stay in office if they were educated and economically empowered.

**Mr. M.Y. Abeywardana** (Sri Lanka) said that parliaments must respond to the needs and interests of both men and women in their composition, structures, operations, methods and work.

Gender equality was a basic human right in Sri Lanka pursuant to its Constitution. Parliament had enacted various laws to prevent gender-based violence, including the Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution Act and the Prevention of Domestic Violence Act. It had also adopted a Women's Charter.

Various institutions had been established to empower women. The Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment aimed to develop, implement, monitor, evaluate and coordinate policies and programmes for the realization of women's rights. There was also the Women's Bureau of Sri Lanka and the Children and Women Bureau desks.

Women parliamentarians played a prominent role in the parliamentary committees of Sri Lanka. The Women Parliamentarians' Caucus, established in 2006, provided a platform to discuss gender issues and create capacity building opportunities for women. Women parliamentarians were thus able to build their confidence and assist each other wherever necessary. The caucus also served as a focal point for communication with civil society.

Lastly, Sri Lanka had a select committee on gender equality which made recommendations to Parliament. The committee was responsible for ensuring gender-responsive budgeting, promoting gender equality within small and medium-size enterprises and reviewing the national policy on gender and development.

**Ms. N. Mapisa-Nqakula** (South Africa) questioned why the plight of women remained precarious despite numerous commitments made at the national and multilateral levels. Parliaments were well-placed to translate those commitments into reality through law-making, oversight and public engagement. Gender-sensitive parliaments must go beyond gender representation and actually improve the lives of women, especially those in need. It started with empowering the girl and boy child.

The IPU report entitled *Women in parliament in 2020* was not encouraging. More than 80 IPU Member Parliaments had less than 20% representation of women, including some with less than 5%. Change was needed. The status of women would not improve unless the many systemic barriers to women's participation in leadership and decision-making were addressed. Barriers included disempowering legislation, patriarchal gender roles and conservative traditions that continued to reproduce undesirable stereotypes. Increased participation of women in parliamentary processes would help to meaningfully address critical issues such as child marriage and female genital mutilation.

It was inadequate to depend on political parties to increase women's representation in parliament. Indeed, the Parliament of South Africa still had less than 50% women members despite efforts by the ruling party to impose a 50/50 rule for all structures of leadership. The IPU should consider imposing penalties on parliaments that were not taking steps to ensure proper gender representation.

**Mr. D. Kourouma** (Guinea) said that women and girls were crucial to democracy but continued to face discrimination and violence. They were underrepresented in decision-making posts, received less pay than men and were more at risk of being out of school. Violence against women was rooted in sexist stereotypes, harmful cultural norms and discriminatory legislation.

Guinea had been promoting gender equality since independence. The former President, Mr. Touré, had appointed a number of women to ministerial positions even though some had not attended school. A great deal of emphasis had also been placed on improving the public image of women. Jeanne Martin, a female politician from Guinea, had represented the country at the United Nations and contributed significantly to the establishment of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

Guinea was currently under transition. The transitional authorities were committed to building a country that was inclusive, strong, efficient and gender-sensitive. As such, a women's caucus had been set up to help build institutions that took into account the needs of men and women alike. Efforts would be made to apply a zero-tolerance policy to sexist language and behaviour, and introduce a legal framework on gender equality, including gender quotas. Overall, there was an understanding that gender equality and women's empowerment were drivers of development.

A gender-sensitive parliament was one that: (1) evaluated the impact of all its activities on women, men, girls and boys; (2) developed, implemented and monitored gender-responsive laws and policies; and (3) took measures to ensure gender parity in the appointment, election and recruitment of its own personnel. The way forward was not only about increasing the numbers of women in parliament but also about creating an institutional culture where everyone could reach their potential without discrimination.

**Mr. H. Gebaly** (Egypt) said that women were key to achieving development and prosperity but continued to face hurdles despite international efforts to bridge the gender gap. Recent crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, had exacerbated the situation. More needed to be done nationally and globally to empower women, particularly in times of crisis.

Throughout history, Egypt had considered women a vital pillar of society and had done a great deal to support their interests. The current Government had introduced a legislative and policy framework to promote women's empowerment. Women now represented 28% of seats in Parliament and were able to occupy high-level positions in national institutions without discrimination. Female judges had also been appointed to the Supreme Constitutional Court. Other measures included policies to empower women economically and strict penalties to combat female genital mutilation and sexual harassment. Egyptian women enjoyed a full spectrum of rights, including the right to inherit.

He applauded all women who were participating in political life and encouraged them to continue doing so.

**Ms. N.B.K. Mutti** (Zambia) said that studies had shown that addressing gender inequalities would create a more resilient and peaceful world. She urged parliaments to increase women's political participation, particularly in decision-making positions, adopt legal frameworks protecting women's rights and consider gender implications during the budget approval process. The above measures would not only promote gender equality but would also help to build gender-sensitive parliaments.

It was not possible to build a gender-sensitive parliament if gender equality was not embedded within society. Indeed, the way society perceived women was reflected in the composition of parliaments. Parliaments must include gender perspectives in their work to create gender equality in society.

Gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments were essential for security and stability. Women were more likely to be exploited in societies where gender equality was lacking. Exploitation of women often led to conflict. Both men and women should be involved in peace negotiations to create a firm foundation for sustainable peace.

Zambia had taken measures to address gender inequality. It had established a gender equity and equality commission to oversee activities aiming to enhance the status of women. It had passed the Gender Equity and Equality Act which promoted the integration of both sexes in society in line with CEDAW. Under the Constitution, political parties were compelled to ensure that women could participate freely in party activities. There was also a Zambian Women Parliamentarians Caucus to ensure that women were well-represented in parliamentary work and beyond.

Strong leadership and political will were needed to put gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments at the forefront of change.

**Mr. A. Bictogo** (Côte d'Ivoire) said that the IPU, at its 127th Assembly, had set a new paradigm on gender-sensitive parliaments where parliaments were encouraged to promote gender equality in its structures and work. Since then, Côte d'Ivoire had put women at the centre of its agenda. Among the measures taken was the creation of a fund for women who wished to undergo professional training and the establishment of the Children of Africa Foundation which supported women and girls with education and healthcare. Similarly, the country was participating in the Sahel Women's Empowerment and Demographic Dividend with a view to reducing gender inequalities in the region.

Côte d'Ivoire had introduced a number of legal measures on gender equality. It had passed a constitutional reform in 2016 which set out protections for women and put in place a legal framework to improve the representation of women in Parliament. The said framework included quotas for political parties who must ensure that 30% of their candidates were women. Parties that reached the 50% mark received additional financial resources from the State. There was also a women's caucus which sought to provide technical and financial support to women parliamentarians, and promote women's rights within Parliament.

Although the above measures were encouraging, more needed to be done on gender equality, particularly to increase the number of women in decision-making bodies. Women were the cornerstone of stability and their role in society must not be eclipsed by the environmental, security and economic challenges facing the world today. One way to encourage gender balance was through positive discrimination. Women's access to education must also be a priority.

**Mr. G.P. Timilsina** (Nepal) said that the world was facing many crises, whether a pandemic, climate, or economic crisis, or armed conflict. None of those crises were gender neutral. In fact, crises tended to magnify already existent inequalities, including gender inequality. The COVID-19 pandemic had led to a steep rise in violence against women and left many expectant and new mothers without specialized healthcare. Climate-induced disasters caused food shortages which, first and foremost, affected women.

Complex crises, such as those described above, could not be resolved without the active and decisive participation of women. The Prime Minister of New Zealand, with her excellent track record on COVID-19 prevention and management, had shown that women leaders were capable of facing even the most daunting of challenges. The equal participation of both men and women was needed to make the world a more peaceful and resilient place.

Parliaments should take the lead on gender equality. In Nepal, women must make up one third of seats in Parliament as per the Constitution. The current number stood at 34%. He drew attention to a recent amendment to Nepal's law on sexual violence which increased the overly restrictive statute of limitation. The amendment had been passed thanks to the strong voices and initiative of women parliamentarians.

To achieve sustainable solutions to global problems, it was imperative to end all forms of inequality. Gender inequality was a collective problem affecting every country. Parliamentarians must unite to resolve it.

**Mr. P.T.C. Skelemani** (Botswana) said that women's empowerment in parliament and society was central to global peace and resilience. Unfortunately, gender inequality continued to persist in most countries. Some pervasive forms of gender inequality included gender-based violence, economic inequalities and reproductive health inequalities.

Gender equality in parliaments should not be championed by women parliamentarians alone but by all parliamentarians collectively. Parliaments must be structured in a way that met the needs of both men and women. There was a need for legislation and policies that supported gender equality, including codes of conduct that shunned sexist language and behaviour. Women and men must have an equal right to participate without discrimination.

Equality, including gender equality, was high on the development agenda of the African continent. The Agenda 2063 of the African Union sought to create a more inclusive society where no child, woman or man was left behind on the basis of gender, political affiliation, religion, or ethnic affiliation.

Botswana took gender equality very seriously, recognizing it as a central pillar of socioeconomic, political and cultural development. Among the actions it had taken was the National Development Plan 11 which included measures on gender mainstreaming and prevention of gender-based violence. Parliament had set up a women's caucus to promote equal representation of women in all elective bodies and enacted a number of gender equality laws, including the Domestic Violence Act, the Abolition of Marital Power Act and Economic Inclusion Act. Very positively, the representation of women in middle and senior management positions stood at 60% across all sectors. At the regional level, Botswana was working with the Parliamentary Forum of the Southern African Development Community to strengthen sexual health and reproductive rights.

However, Botswana could still do more, especially to increase the political participation of women which remained very low at only 11%. A review of the Constitution was currently underway and was a good opportunity to further strengthen women's rights.

**Mr. A. Iyamuremye** (Rwanda) said that Rwanda had made huge progress on gender equality over the years. However, gender equality was not a gift that men gave to women but something to which the women of Rwanda were entitled. Rwanda had been completely destroyed following the genocide against the Tutsi. With most men having been killed, imprisoned or forced to flee, it was the women who had rebuilt the country. Women deserved to be considered first-class citizens. As such, the post-genocide Government had made gender equality one of its key pillars.

Since then, Rwanda had made continuous efforts to bridge the gap between men and women. It had discarded old patriarchal traditions and given women back their rights such as the right to inherit. Women had responded positively by taking on more responsibilities. Their participation had helped economic recovery, social stability and national reconciliation. Women had played a particularly important role in raising orphans and supporting widows following the genocide. Many had also testified in court thus helping to establish truth.

None of the above would have been possible had it not been for changes in the law. One of those changes was a constitutional amendment which ensured that at least 30% of decision-making positions were filled by women. Rwanda had now gone beyond the 30% mark and reached an average of 50%. Women's representation was even higher in Parliament at 60%.

Rwanda's internal experience had guided its international endeavours where it continued to promote the rights of women, particularly those of vulnerable women. Recently, the country had hosted an entire school of girls who had fled the war in Afghanistan.

Rwanda had not yet reached 100% equality but was doing its best to get there. A monitoring centre was in place to make sure the national institutions stayed on track. He supported the implementation of the IPU *Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments*.

**Mr. S. Papuashvili** (Georgia) said that parliaments could make a substantial contribution to women's empowerment. They could be drivers of change, helping to make societies more equal and resilient.

Georgia was taking a number of steps to promote gender equality. The principle of equality had been enshrined in the Constitution, obliging the State to implement laws, policies and programmes that ensured equality of opportunities for women. As such, Parliament had adopted the Law on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination and was working to harmonize its national legislation with the Istanbul Convention. Other legal measures included introducing criminal liability for stalking, formulating a new definition of sexual harassment and outlawing forced marriage. In 2020, important changes had also been made to the Labour Code so as to ensure equal pay for equal work. Perhaps the most significant step, however, had been the introduction of mandatory gender quotas to increase women's political participation. The number of elected women had almost doubled as a result.



Parliaments should be gender-sensitive in their composition, structure and work. As such, Georgia had adopted a methodology for assessing the gender sensitivity of Parliament. Carrying out assessments had helped the country to determine its future priorities, including in terms of gender budgeting.

Georgia's efforts on gender equality had increased since applying for European Union (EU) membership. It had been working with the EU to amend and update the State Concept on Gender Equality and the Law of Georgia on Gender Equality. Efforts were also being made to carry out a gender impact assessment for all draft legislation as well as to adopt a women's economic empowerment concept.

**Mr. S.M. Tunis** (Parliament of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)) said that ECOWAS strived for a world free from gender-based discrimination where every human being could fulfil their potential unhindered by discriminating laws or socioeconomic structures. Sadly, women continued to be deprived of their freedom and fundamental rights, including the right to live without the fear of violence and the right to education. Parliamentarians must go beyond words and start taking action.

ECOWAS was matching its words with action. It had made a clear commitment to gender equality in the regional integration process. The Supplementary Act on Equality of Rights between Women and Men for Sustainable Development was a strong legal tool for championing women's rights. There were also plans for ECOWAS delegations to be composed of at least 30% women. The ECOWAS Parliament had strengthened its Female Parliamentarians Association, the purpose of which was to advance parity and create opportunities for women. Parliament was also on track to reaching a 50/50 gender balance among its members.

It was important to achieve concrete progress on the status of women, including by improving their economic opportunities, strengthening their legal status and facilitating their participation in political and decision-making processes. Women must be included in every aspect of parliamentary work. They should be considered collaborators rather than rivals.

It was the responsibility of legislators to promote legal and policy frameworks that not only eliminated all forms of discrimination against women but also promoted women's empowerment. Parliamentarians should exercise their oversight function to monitor the implementation of those frameworks nationally and regionally.

West Africa was committed to gender equality, believing it to be the bedrock of fundamental human rights. Gender parity would lead to more peaceful and developed societies.

**Mr. R. Mancienne** (Seychelles) said that parliaments must be gender-sensitive and representative of the people. Given that half of the population were women, half of parliamentarians should also be women.

The Seychelles was on the right track in terms of gender equality. It had put in place a legal framework to protect women's rights, including the right to participate in decision-making processes. Women and girls were performing well in the education system as well as professionally. Around 70% of top officials in public service and non-governmental organizations were women.

Despite those achievements, the country was lagging behind on women's political representation. Only 25% of parliamentarians in the Seychelles were women. He believed that one of the key reasons for the under-representation was a lack of security in the job. Indeed, due to the nature of democracy, parliamentarians could be in one day and out the next – a risk that women were less likely to take than men. The system did not do enough to address the risks that women faced when entering politics.

Countries must first facilitate the participation of women in politics as a whole before they could facilitate the participation of women in parliament. Currently, political parties found it hugely challenging to recruit enough women as candidates let alone get them elected. The way to address the problem was through a natural process of engagement rather than through quotas or any other artificial means. In other words, parliaments must spark the interest of women by interacting with them more closely.

**Mr. J.F.N. Mudenda** (Zimbabwe) congratulated Rwanda for having achieved gender parity in its Parliament wherein 61% of members were women. It had done so even after a debilitating genocide. Rwanda had proved that adversity could be used as a springboard for wholesome human development.

Nations that promoted gender equality were more likely to use diplomacy before force and less likely to get involved in violent crises. Gender equality therefore played a vital role in peace and development.

The Parliament of Zimbabwe had developed an institutional gender policy aiming to integrate gender perspectives into parliamentary work. Gender parity had also been enshrined into the Bill of Rights. A total of 60 seats were constitutionally guaranteed for women in the National Assembly. As such, women currently made up 34% of parliamentarians. Parliament had made a number of legislative interventions, including an amendment to the Education Act which ensured that pregnant schoolgirls could return to school after giving birth. The Marriages Act had also been passed to prohibit early child marriage. Establishing the Zimbabwe Women's Parliamentary Caucus was another milestone in the quest for gender equality. The caucus had a mandate to build the capacities of women parliamentarians.

In the same vein, the Zimbabwe Government had established a fully-fledged Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development responsible for the socioeconomic empowerment of women. The Ministry ran a women's empowerment bank that offered support to women undertaking business ventures. Indeed, gender parity without economic parity would remain a mirage. A similar youth empowerment bank had also been created.

He called on delegates to follow Rwanda's inspiring example on gender parity in political structures. Gender parity must also be mainstreamed into the private sector. Above all, it was necessary to sanitize the chauvinistic mindset of male members of parliaments. Men and women must walk side by side in the struggle for gender parity.

**Mr. C.A. Bundu** (Sierra Leone) said that gender equality led to strength, resilience and peaceful co-existence and must remain high on the IPU agenda.

The Parliament of Sierra Leone had been working to transform the nation's development aspirations into progressive legislation and budgetary allocations. Among those aspirations was gender equality. In July 2022, a new electoral law had been passed compelling political parties to ensure that one third of its candidates were female. As such, it was expected that the representation of women in Parliament would rise from 12% to 33% at the next election. There was also palpable momentum within the Executive to appoint women in at least 30% of governmental positions. The proposal was currently before Parliament in a new gender equality and women's empowerment bill.

Many other ambitious initiatives also existed. Public and private employers were required to reserve a minimum of 30% of their vacancies and decision-making posts for each gender. Similarly, employers were prohibited from dismissing female employees on grounds of pregnancy and were required to prevent sexual harassment of women at work. All employees must receive equal pay for work of equal value. There were also new proposals to grant women equal access to financial services with strict penalties for violations.

The world would be a better place when gender equality, inclusivity and accountability received full recognition. Parliamentarians were well-placed to take on the work. The time to start was now.

**Mr. M. Diaw** (Mali) said that Mali attached great importance to the role of women in society. Malian women had been active on several battlefronts and had been key to the advent of democracy in the country. They had also played an important role as mothers and economic actors.

Gender equality was about ensuring equal rights, equal responsibilities and equal opportunities for men and women. Mali had enshrined the principle of gender equality in its Constitution and adopted all international gender equality treaties. The national gender policy had been adopted in 2010 aiming to ensure that gender issues were considered in all public policies, programmes and projects. There was also a gender-sensitive budget and a programme that monitored its implementation. Gender-sensitive budgeting was not about creating separate budgets for men and women but about examining the implications that all budget allocations could have on gender equality.

Another historic initiative taken by Mali was a law aiming to ensure gender parity in the national institutions. Pursuant to the law, each gender must make up at least 30% of elected or appointed officials. The number of women in Parliament had significantly increased as a result of the law. Currently, there were 32 women parliamentarians out of a total of 121 in the Transitional National Council. Other measures included a new family code which improved women's rights and a law that set up a support fund for the empowerment of women and children.

Social pressures, traditions and biases had often held women back in Africa. It was important to continue raising awareness of gender equality in the region, particularly among traditional and religious leaders.

Gender equality was very important for peace and security around the world. In Mali, women had contributed greatly to the peace and reconciliation process, for instance, by mobilizing communities and campaigning for the return of displaced people. Peace and security must be a global effort that included all segments of society, including women. Parliamentarians should be at the forefront of that effort.

**Ms. S. Giacoppo** (Latin American and Caribbean Parliament (PARLATINO)) said that citizens had lost trust in their representatives. It was vital to rebuild the link between parliamentarians and the people and, above all, to listen to what the people had to say. Parliamentarians must foster dialogue, inclusion and cooperation. They must build bridges between different parts of society, including the State, the private sector, civil society and local communities. They must not leave anyone behind. Marginalized groups must be able to participate fully in political, economic and social life. There was also a need to eliminate social inequalities.

It was estimated that 300 million people worldwide were migrants many of whom would not have left their homes had they been living in adequate conditions. Impunity and corruption were some of the main causes of migration given the negative impact they had on basic services. Indeed, corruption cost Latin America US\$ 220 billion per year. It was money that should be spent on schools, roads and hospitals.

Parliamentarians must put themselves at the service of their societies and respond to the needs of the people. Part of that work was about empowering women. Women must have a voice across all areas of work and be able to participate on an equal footing in the decision-making process. Above all, women must have access to economic and financial resources. There was ample evidence that women with access to finance were in a better position to provide education, food and healthcare for their families which in turn helped to reduce poverty and social inequality.

The commitment of all was needed to realize the above objectives. It was important to connect, exchange information, listen, harmonize legislation and implement legislation. Intersectoral and transborder cooperation was also needed.

**Mr. F. Boukoubi** (Gabon) said that Gabon was working hard to achieve gender equality. It had introduced women's quotas and a gender equality policy. Measures were in place to ensure sharing of household responsibilities as well as to prevent violence against women, including penalties for perpetrators and a free hotline to report incidents. There were protections for vulnerable women, including widows and orphans, and universal health insurance plans for those struggling financially.

Women played a pivotal role in the decision-making process in Gabon. Most institutions were run by women and many women occupied senior positions in government and the civil service. The Prime Minister of Gabon was female and as were the ministers of defence, economy, budget, justice and education. Women headed the Senate, Constitutional Court and Court of Cassation. The mayor of the capital of Gabon was also a woman.

Gabon was currently battling to increase the proportion of women in elected positions to 30%. A quota had already been adopted in law but was proving complex to implement.

Gabon was ready to accelerate implementation of the IPU *Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments*. It had set up a working group in that regard and organized a subregional seminar on gender-sensitive budgeting in collaboration with the Parliamentary Assembly of La Francophonie.

**The Chair** said that, as a sign of solidarity, the IPU governing bodies had decided to allow the democratically elected Parliament of Afghanistan, which was now in exile following the Taliban takeover, to participate in the Assembly in observer capacity.

**Mr. M.R. Rahmani** (Afghanistan) said that Afghanistan was once again under the brutal control of the Taliban who was ruling with total disregard for the will of Afghan people. Two decades of achievements had been destroyed and the country was on its knees due to poverty, unemployment, insecurity, discrimination and a lack of education.

The Taliban was an extremist movement that supported international terrorism and endangered regional and global security. More than 20 terrorist groups were active in Afghanistan. The world would soon face more catastrophes like the September 11 attacks if more was not done to address the threat of the Taliban.

He thanked the international community for providing humanitarian aid to Afghanistan but warned that doubts had arisen around how it was being distributed. Evidence suggested that the Taliban was giving aid to its own supporters rather than to ordinary Afghans.

The Afghan people were rising up against the Taliban in many different ways. Women had been particularly brave, having taken to the streets and to social media to demand their rights. They did so despite harsh crackdowns by the regime. It was through such protests that the Afghan people hoped to be heard by the international community.

He called on the international community to fully and unconditionally support the people of Afghanistan. It could do so in a number of ways. First, under no circumstances could it recognize the Taliban as a legitimate regime. Second, it should pay greater attention to the extremist groups operating in Afghanistan before it was too late. Third, Afghans needed support in addressing problems such as the collapse of the economy, the lack of security and inadequate rights for women. Fourth, the Taliban must be pressured to reopen the girls' schools that it had closed. Fifth, the Taliban must be held accountable for widespread human rights violations, including the killing of civilians. Sixth, all humanitarian aid should be delivered through transparent means.

**Mr. G. Migliore** (Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM)) said that the world was facing a surge of conflicts, including the war in Ukraine. The rights of women were particularly at risk with many experiencing sexual assault and forced migration. Although women were the primary victims of conflict, they played a less prominent role than men in conflict resolution. Peace and security would not be possible unless women played an equal role in peace and security efforts.

Increasing women's participation in parliament was key to advancing gender equality more broadly. However, at the current rate of progress, it would take at least another 40 years to achieve equal representation in national parliaments and another 200 years to remove discriminatory laws.

Since its inception, PAM had put gender equality at the top of its priorities. In 2021, PAM had amended its statutes to ensure fairer representation of women in its delegations. It had also set up the Women Parliamentary Forum. One of the tasks of the Forum was to share policies and legislation on women's rights among countries of the region. Most recently, discussions at the Forum had focused on women as migrants and gender equality in the post-pandemic era.

*Ms. D. Mukabalisa, Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies of Rwanda, took the Chair.*

**Mr. M. Dick** (Australia) agreed that gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments were drivers of change towards a more resilient world. It was important to put in place mechanisms that supported the wellbeing of all parliamentarians, including women.

Australia had been the first nation in the world to grant women the right to stand for election and the second nation to grant women the right to vote. Women had been represented in the Australian Parliament since 1943. Currently women made up 45% of all parliamentarians and 50% of ministerial offices. Recently, the first female of Islamic faith and first female First Nations person had been appointed to serve as cabinet ministers.

Parliament as a workplace must be gender-sensitive. Traditionally, parliaments had been set up for a male-dominated workforce with long hours, lack of support for caregiving arrangements and codes of conduct that did not consider power imbalances or diversity and inclusion. It had become clear that substantial changes were needed to make the parliamentary workplace a safer and more supportive environment for women. As such, Parliament had commissioned an independent review into commonwealth parliamentary workplaces. The report made recommendations in five key areas: (1) leadership; (2) diversity; equality and inclusion; (3) systems to support performance; (4) standards of behaviour and reporting obligations; and (5) safety and wellbeing. In response, both houses of Parliament had made changes to their order of business allowing parliamentarians to better balance work and family responsibilities. Some of the changes included scheduling parliamentary sittings outside school holidays and reducing late night sittings. A review of the procedures for the handling of sexist or otherwise exclusionary and discriminatory language was also underway.

He condemned the illegal invasion of Ukraine. Australia offered its strong support to the people of Ukraine, particularly to the women and girls.

Item 2 of the agenda**Consideration of requests for the inclusion of an emergency item  
in the Assembly agenda**

(A/145/2-P.1, P.2-rev, P.3 and P.4, Inf.1-rev)

*Mr. D. Pacheco (Portugal), President of the IPU, took the Chair.*

**The President** said that the Secretariat had received four proposals for the emergency item. Pakistan had submitted a proposal on 15 September entitled *Creation of a global fund or financing facility for climate-vulnerable countries to address loss and damage associated with climate change*. Chile and the members of the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC) had submitted a proposal on 11 October entitled *Condemnation of the invasion of Ukraine and of the subsequent annexation of territories in defence of the territorial integrity of all States*. Iraq had submitted a proposal on 11 October entitled *Preserving Iraq's sovereignty, rejecting repeated attacks and not interfering in its internal affairs*. Ukraine had submitted a proposal, co-sponsored by Canada, New Zealand and Poland, on 11 October entitled *Condemnation of the illegal annexation of the Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, Donetsk and Luhansk regions by the Russian Federation, the targeting of civilians and other war crimes resulting from the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine*.

**The Secretary General** explained the procedure for examining and adopting the emergency item with reference to Rules 11.1, 11.2 and 12 of the Rules of the Assembly.

**Mr. F. Shivambu** (South Africa) said that the situation between Ukraine and the Russian Federation had already been discussed at the 144th IPU Assembly where a Task Force had been set up to facilitate dialogue between the two Parliaments. It would be premature to entertain further issues related to the Russian Federation and Ukraine without first receiving a report from the Task Force.

**The President** said that the IPU Members were free to propose any topic they so wished.

**The Secretary General** said that, under Rule 12, the Assembly should hear a concise explanation of each proposal by its sponsor. Delegates would then have the opportunity to present a contrary opinion before taking a vote by roll call. The representative of South Africa was therefore at liberty to object to the proposals on Ukraine but could only do so once the proposals in question had been presented. Pursuant to the rules, only one objection could be made per proposal.

**Mr. J.F.N. Mudenda** (Zimbabwe), making a point of order, said that all proposals must comply with the requirements set out in the Rules of the Assembly. According to Rule 11.2, proposals for the emergency item must refer to a recent major situation of international concern.

**The President** confirmed that all proposals met the requirements set out in the rules.

**The Secretary General** said that the Steering Committee had considered the proposals and decided that all four complied with Rule 11.2. Delegates were at liberty to disagree with the views of the Steering Committee but only after hearing presentations by the sponsors.

**The President** invited the delegate of Pakistan to present his proposal.

**Mr. F.H. Naek** (Pakistan) wished to present his proposal entitled *Creation of a global fund or financing facility for climate-vulnerable countries to address loss and damage associated with climate change* as outlined in document A/145/2-P.1. The effects of climate change could be felt across international borders and put the whole of mankind in danger.

Pakistan had only contributed 0.4% of global carbon dioxide emissions since 1954 but was suffering greatly from climate change. It was currently dealing with a climate-induced natural disaster in the form of unprecedented floods. The floods had inundated one third of the country's territory, killed 1,600 people and left many homeless and without food or clean drinking water. Recent estimates placed losses as high as US\$ 30 billion. He emphasized that the situation in Pakistan could happen to any country in the world.

The Government of Pakistan was leaving no stone unturned in its relief and rehabilitation effort. For example, the Prime Minister had launched the Flood Relief Fund 2022 and the Flood Response Plan 2022 to assist victims of flooding.

He appreciated the recent United Nations resolution calling on the international community to increase aid to Pakistan but reminded countries that it must be given practical shape. Current climate finance was insufficient. The international community must go beyond current emergency relief efforts and assist in the rehabilitation and reconstruction of flood-affected areas as well as in disaster risk reduction.

The emergency items proposed by other delegations were significant, but none had as many far-reaching consequences as climate change. The Iraq emergency could be resolved through dialogue and negotiation while the war in Ukraine was not a recent major happening as required under Rule 11.2. He called on delegates to consider the climate disaster in Pakistan as a wake-up call for collective action.

**The President**, in line with the Rule 12 of the Assembly, asked whether any delegation wished to object to Pakistan's proposal.

**Mr. K. Barkiya** (Nigeria) said that natural disasters, such as floods, could happen anywhere in the world. African countries had also been affected. He supported the proposal of Pakistan.

**The President**, replying to the representative of Nigeria, said that his intervention was not in line with the rules. The presentation of Pakistan was meant to be followed by an intervention expressing a contrary opinion.

**Mr. J.F.N. Mudenda** (Zimbabwe), making a point of order, said that the proposal of Chile and the proposal of Ukraine were on the same subject and should be combined as per Rule 11.2.

**The President** agreed that the proposals could be combined but only after the presentations were made and if the supporters agreed to do so. He invited the delegate of Chile to present his proposal.

**Mr. J.M.R. Edwards** (Chile), speaking on behalf of his own country and GRULAC, wished to present his proposal entitled *Condemnation of the invasion of Ukraine and of the subsequent annexation of territories in defence of the territorial integrity of all States* as outlined in document A/145/2-P.2-rev. The war in Ukraine was in a different stage and required a renewed response. Indeed, The Russian Federation had recently decided to annex several Ukrainian provinces which had raised many new questions. For example, if Ukraine stationed troops in the said provinces, would the Russian Federation consider it a direct attack on the Russian Federation itself and as grounds for a nuclear response? Ukraine and the world at large could be in more danger than ever before. The proposal of Chile called for an immediate end to the Russian military aggression against Ukraine and the immediate restoration of Ukraine's territorial integrity within internationally recognized borders.

The Russian Federation had committed war crimes in Ukraine such as mass civilian killings and gender-based violence. The international community must put a stop to the aggression and investigate the crimes that the Russian Federation had committed. It was about humanity. The war was also affecting other parts of the world causing a food and energy crisis.

He recalled the non-existent response of the international community to the Rwandan genocide. It was paramount not to make the same mistake again.

**The President**, in line with the Rule 12 of the Assembly, asked whether any delegation wished to object to Chile's proposal.

**Mr. F. Shivambu** (South Africa) wished to officially object to the proposal of Chile. The IPU, at its 144th IPU Assembly, had adopted a resolution on the situation between Ukraine and the Russian Federation in which it had encouraged dialogue between the two Parliaments and established a Task Force to facilitate peace. The IPU had taken a correct and sensible approach to the situation and did not need to repeat the discussions. It was important to wait for a report from the Task Force before deciding on any further action. Although some aspects of the situation were recent, as per Rule 11.2 they were part of an ongoing war for which the IPU already had mechanisms in place.

**The President** invited the delegate of Iraq to present his proposal.

**Mr. A. Al-Salihi** (Iraq) drew attention to the proposal entitled *Preserving Iraq's sovereignty, rejecting repeated attacks and not interfering in its internal affairs* as outlined in document A/145/2-P.3. The Iraqi delegation had decided to withdraw its proposal so that it could conduct further consultations with relevant parties. However, the topic was an important one. Iraq had been subject to brutal terrorist attacks and required the support of the international community to preserve its security.

**The President** said that a contrary opinion would not be presented given the proposal of Iraq had been withdrawn.

**Ms. R. Kavakci Kan** (Türkiye), making a point of order, said that the withdrawal of the Iraqi proposal was valuable. However, she remained concerned about the situation in Iraq because the terrorist organizations attacking Iraq were also attacking Türkiye. Her country respected the territorial integrity, sovereignty and political unity of Iraq but emphasized that every country must control its own territory.

**The President** invited the delegate of Ukraine to present her proposal.

**Ms. A. Shkrum** (Ukraine) said that the proposal of Ukraine was entitled *Condemnation of the illegal annexation of the Kherson, Zaporizhzhia Donetsk and Luhansk regions by the Russian Federation, the targeting of civilians and other war crimes resulting from the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine*, as outlined in document A/145/2-P.4, and was co-sponsored by Canada, New Zealand and Poland.

In recent days, the Russian Federation had voted unanimously to annex four regions of Ukraine. It had also launched one of the biggest attacks on Ukraine since the beginning of the war and in doing so had admitted to deliberately targeting civilians. The situation was not only about Ukraine but about the values of the IPU and the need to respect international humanitarian law. She emphasized that the abovementioned events were very recent having only happened in the last few days. The Russian Federation had not been deterred by the resolution adopted at the 144th IPU Assembly.

It was important to remember that the world as a whole, not just Ukraine, had been taken hostage by the Russian aggression. Indeed, the aggression had caused a global food crisis, global inflation and global migration flows.

That said, her delegation had made the decision to withdraw the proposal and urged delegates to support the proposal of Chile on the same topic.

**The President** said that a contrary opinion would not be presented given the proposal of Ukraine had been withdrawn.

**The Secretary General** said that the Assembly would now proceed to a vote by roll call on the two proposals that remained. He explained the voting procedure.

*A vote by roll call was taken.*

*With 645 votes in favour, 433 against and 120 abstentions, the request submitted by the delegation of Pakistan failed to obtain the required two-thirds majority of the votes cast and was therefore rejected.*

*With 706 votes in favour, 130 against and 362 abstentions, the request submitted by the delegation of Chile on behalf of GRULAC obtained the required two-thirds majority of the votes cast.*

*Having obtained the required two-thirds majority and the largest number of positive votes cast, the request submitted by the delegation of Chile was added to the agenda of the Assembly as item 7.*

**The Secretary General** requested each geopolitical group to submit nominations for the drafting committee which would finalize a draft resolution on the chosen emergency item.

**The President** wished to show solidarity with Pakistan even though its proposal had not been approved.

*The sitting rose at 19:05.*

## Final Agenda

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1. Election of the President and Vice-Presidents of the 145th Assembly
  2. Consideration of requests for the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda
  3. General Debate on the theme *Gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments as drivers of change for a more resilient and peaceful world*
  4. *Parliamentary impetus to local and regional development of countries with high levels of international migration and to stopping all forms, including state-sponsored, of human-trafficking and human rights abuses*  
(Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights)
  5. Reports of the Standing Committees
  6. Approval of the subject item for the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights at the 147th IPU Assembly and appointment of the Rapporteurs
  7. Emergency item: *Condemnation of the invasion of Ukraine and of the subsequent annexation of territories, in defence of the territorial integrity of all States*
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## **Emergency item entitled *Condemnation of the invasion of Ukraine and of the subsequent annexation of territories, in defence of the territorial integrity of all States***

**SITTING OF THURSDAY, 13 OCTOBER**

(Morning)

*The sitting was called to order at 09:00 with Ms. C.G. Hara (Malawi), Vice-President of the Assembly, in the Chair.*

### Item 7 of the agenda

#### **Plenary debate on the emergency item *Condemnation of the invasion of Ukraine and of the subsequent annexation of territories, in defence of the territorial integrity of all States*** (A/145/2-P.2-rev)

**Mr. J.M.R. Edwards** (Chile), opening the plenary debate on the emergency item, said that the draft resolution set out in document A/145/2-P.2-rev was the outcome of long and hard negotiations among the politically diverse members of his delegation and took into account the views of all those members, including the three who had voted against the delegation's proposal for the item. To attract majority support, the text sought to reflect concerns already voiced and would further seek to incorporate those of others expressed during the debate. With countries around the world experiencing such problems as rampant inflation, rising prices and grain shortages as a result of the Ukraine war, the fighting had to end – and soon.

**Mr. D. McGuinty** (Canada) said that his delegation's unwavering support for the people and territorial integrity of Ukraine and its right to determine its own destiny was plainly echoed in newly adopted UN General Assembly resolution ES-11/4 and in the latest G7 communiqué. No State could act with such reckless abandon, bulldozing its way into another in violation of international law, bombing civilian structures, shooting civilians and forcibly displacing millions, and expect impunity and inaction. All IPU colleagues must redouble their efforts to mobilize their governments and parliaments to bring about justice, maintain economic and diplomatic sanctions, and end the unprovoked, unjust and unacceptable Russian invasion.

**Mr. R. Fogiel** (Poland) said that the Russian Federation was, as usual, attempting to heap blame elsewhere, whereas it had clearly attacked another country without provocation and killed civilians, including women and children. The deportation of Ukrainian children to the Russian Federation simply because of their nationality fitted the definition of genocide. The moral aspect aside, the aggressors were jeopardizing global food security by destroying Ukrainian crops and preventing grain exports. The merit of the Pakistani proposal for an emergency item was not in doubt. The current item, however, involved supporting either the victim or the aggressor and was a choice between good and evil.

**Ms. V. Riotton** (France) said that the devastating new airstrikes on Ukraine indiscriminately targeted civilians and civilian infrastructure, while Russian soldiers were committing daily crimes that must be punished. The Ukrainian armed forces were globally admired for their courage, determination and sacrifice. The Russian facade of democracy was exemplified by the so-called referendums conducted in occupied Ukraine in violation of international law. In its defence of the sacred cause of freedom, Ukraine had garnered wide international support, including from France, which was expediting its delivery of weapons and air defence systems to the country. France would continue its support to Ukraine through to reconstruction.

**Mr. Don Tuan Phong** (Viet Nam) said that recent developments in Ukraine threatened to escalate tensions, with unpredictable consequences for international peace, security, cooperation and development. His country was steadfast in its principled position that conflicts must be peacefully resolved in compliance with the UN Charter and international law. The

spillover effects from the conflict would simply continue unless it was peacefully and expeditiously resolved. The only way forward was to de-escalate and resume dialogue through all channels towards comprehensive long-term solutions acceptable to all parties. Viet Nam stood ready to join with the IPU Members in contributing actively to that process and, where appropriate, to reconstruction in Ukraine.

**Mr. F. Shivambu** (South Africa), recalling that a no-fly zone imposed over Libya by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) had ultimately destroyed that country and led to the assassination of its then President, said that attempts to forge a homogeneous perspective on Ukraine were unhelpful. Multilateral organizations such as the IPU and the United Nations should heed questions raised around the NATO role in the situation. NATO's eastward expansion rightfully gave cause for concern. Rather than go along with the supply of arms to one of the warring parties, the IPU and the United Nations should relentlessly seek to mediate for a negotiated peace.

**Mr. E. Bustamante** (Peru) said that the annexation of territories by force was wrong but that repercussions from any use of tactical or other nuclear weapons in, or as a consequence of, the Ukraine war would be even worse. It was therefore vital not to inflame matters by creating a situation that allowed no alternative to, or created incentives for, escalation through the use of such weapons. The draft resolution should be carefully crafted with those considerations in mind to discourage extreme measures with unavoidable ramifications for the entire world.

**Mr. G. Ahearn** (Ireland) said that he had recently had the chilling privilege of visiting Ukraine and seen for himself the consequences of the eight years of Russian aggression against sovereign Ukrainian territory, including killing fields, destroyed homes and devastated schools. Knowing full well the preciousness of national sovereignty, Ireland stood as one with the suffering people of Ukraine, as must all democrats, especially when violations of territorial integrity involved brute force and indiscriminate violence. Parliamentarians must do likewise at the present Assembly, following the example set the previous day by the UN General Assembly, and call out the aggressor. No one would be safe otherwise.

**Ms. L. Vasylenko** (Ukraine), expressing gratitude to Members for standing united with her country, said that all States were required to abstain from aggression and work for international peace and security, in accordance with the UN Charter. The IPU must call on the Russian Federation to cease its spiralling aggression against Ukraine and its use of food, energy and nuclear threat as weapons of war. The consequences being felt worldwide included the looming spectre of famine and aggravation of the existing migration crisis. To turn a blind eye to annexation, genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity would only encourage other dictators in such activities.

**Mr. M. Santos** (Portugal) said that the Russian Federation was fortunate not to have been invaded and destroyed by foreign troops, not to have its menfolk fighting to protect their homeland, people and way of life, not to have its women abused and raped by foreign troops, not to have its older citizens left homeless, without adequate care or food, not to have its children obliged to seek refuge elsewhere, and not to be facing a holocaust or genocide. Mr. Putin could not win the war, and Ukraine would prevail. Portugal would continue welcoming Ukrainian refugees for as long as necessary until peace and freedom triumphed.

**Mr. J. Whittingdale** (United Kingdom) said that the Russian invasion of Ukraine clearly violated international law, the UN Charter, the Helsinki Final Act and the IPU's founding principles. If allowed to stand, it would signal to all authoritarian regimes that violence paid off and international law could be ignored. Russian-speaking citizens in eastern Ukraine were being killed – not defended – by the Russian Federation which was also in breach of the 1994 Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances by threatening the use of nuclear weapons on Ukrainian soil and conducting sham “referendums” by forcing votes at gunpoint. In the name of democracy, he urged support for the draft resolution.

**Ms. R. Kavakci Kan** (Türkiye) said that her country strongly supported the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders and hoped for a swift end to the war and loss of innocent civilian lives. Ukraine additionally needed political, technical and humanitarian assistance and international support for dialogue. Türkiye was honoured to be hosting thousands of Ukrainian refugees, including orphans, but no one should be forced to leave their home. The good news among all the chaos was that Türkiye and the United Nations had helped to avert a global food crisis by brokering the resumption of grain shipments to the world.

**Mr. J. Cepeda** (Spain) said that the newly adopted UN General Assembly resolution ES-11/4 could leave no one feeling neutral towards events in Ukraine, where fundamental human rights were being flagrantly violated and civilians bombarded, in contravention of the UN Charter and international law. In representing millions of people, parliamentarians were at the heart of global politics and could not simply stand by when weapons and violence were being used to drive forward ideas. The IPU Members must join in solidarity with their Ukrainian colleagues and lament the fact that the Russian delegation was not present to hear the views expressed by the rest of the world.

**Ms. M. Saleh** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that her country continued to endure an oppressive and destructive war accompanied by unilateral coercive sanctions imposed in violation of international law and in collective punishment of the Syrian people while the international community stood silent. The Syrian steadfastness in the face of such tribulation owed much to the ready provision of Russian support in all settings. Recognizing the attempts in pursuit of Western goals to maintain chaos and sow division worldwide, the Syrian Arab Republic supported the Russian position, simultaneously protecting itself from Western and United States aggression. It called for constructive dialogue between the two parties, with international participation.

**Mr. M. Rezakhah** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that his delegation was opposed in principle to any IPU resolutions that were politically motivated, viewing them as unconstructive. The disproportionate Western attacks orchestrated against the Russian Federation during the current session were regrettable. His country supported – and was ready to contribute to – all efforts aimed at a peaceful settlement of the conflict in Ukraine. It was principally opposed, however, to the arming of each party as a means of ending that conflict.

**Mr. T. Sokun** (Cambodia), while expressing full support for the draft resolution, said that it should perhaps include a reference to the possible establishment of a tribunal to prosecute war criminals. Bearing in mind that no tribunal with that task had come into being in his country until after the civil war had ended, the sooner the parties resumed ceasefire and peace negotiations the better.

**Ms. V. Walters** (New Zealand) said that the previous day's vote by two thirds of Members in favour of the chosen emergency item had been a fine example of solidarity in numbers. The same applied to the adoption of UN General Assembly resolution ES-11/4 by 143 nation States, an affirmation of the human rights that protected everyone. The Ukraine situation was not merely a conflict but a Russian war of aggression conducted in violation of Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity, and constituted a blatant breach of international law. New Zealand continued to stand in solidarity with Ukraine on all counts.

**Mr. M.H. Syed** (Pakistan), expressing thanks to the supporters of his delegation's emergency item proposal, said that the IPU and United Nations principles must remain paramount and be universally applied instead of being sacrificed to the altar of realpolitik. There should be none of the double standards seen in the treatment of Ukrainian refugees versus refugees from elsewhere and in the condemnation of the annexation of parts of Ukraine versus condonement of similar instances in Kashmir and Palestine. Essentially a European war and a possible precursor to a disastrous new cold war, the Ukraine conflict must be resolved peacefully – not through further NATO expansion in any direction.

**Mr. T.M. Mnangagwa** (Zimbabwe) said that he endorsed the earlier South African remarks and that the causes and history behind any conflict should be identified before condemning a particular side. Like his country, the Russian Federation had been under sanctions for many years, which was in itself an act of war. People died from sanctions. He did not support war and called for a swift resolution to the Ukraine conflict.

**Mr. C.A. Bundu** (Sierra Leone) said that the first fundamental and now peremptory principle of international law was that, as stated in the UN Charter, States must refrain from the use or threat of force against the territorial integrity of any State. Nor could States acquire territory through use of force. The IPU must always advocate the peaceful resolution of disputes and could not afford to compromise that principle; the use of force must be unequivocally condemned. The war was one of Russian aggression against Ukraine – nothing more and nothing less.

**Mr. Rashad** (Iraq), emphasizing that States and human rights principles must always be respected, said that any military invasion inevitably affected the entire surrounding region and was prohibited by international instruments. As a country still suffering the consequences of the former regime's heinous error of invading Kuwait in 1991, Iraq called on both parties to engage in further dialogue and diplomacy, to the exclusion of all other means, with the aim of resolving the conflict at the earliest opportunity and to refrain from turning the war into one between two camps that would ultimately aggravate matters, with a potentially adverse impact on global food security.

**A representative of India**, speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the delegation of Pakistan had regrettably chosen once again to misuse the IPU platform to propagate false and malicious propaganda against his country and distract from the focus of the debate. Pakistan must immediately cease anti-India cross-border terrorism, shut down its terrorism infrastructure, stop the grave and persistent human rights violations in Pakistan-occupied territories and refrain from effecting any material change in the status of those territories, which were an integral part of India and had been illegally and forcibly occupied, and must be vacated. Osama bin Laden, the face of global terror, had been found in Pakistan and glorified by the country's leadership as a martyr. It was therefore ironic to see Pakistan claiming to be a victim of terrorism, especially as it nurtured terrorists in the hope that they would harm its neighbours. The entire world had suffered from the policies of Pakistan while Pakistan itself attempted to cover up sectarian violence and acts of terrorism on its soil.

**The Chair**, recalling Rule 16.2 of the Rules of the Standing Committees concerning the composition of drafting committees, said that those geopolitical groups that had not yet done so were invited to nominate members for the drafting committee tasked with finalizing the text in document A/145/2-P.2-rev.

### Item 3 of the agenda (continued)

#### **General Debate on the theme *Gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments as drivers of change for a more resilient and peaceful world*** (A/145/3-Inf.1)

**Ms. T. Ackson** (United Republic of Tanzania) said that the crucial Generation Equality Forum commitments were being implemented in her country under a six-point action plan supported by legislative action. Through its oversight responsibilities, the Tanzanian Parliament had similarly supported the implementation of school education policies, including to increase girls' enrolment in science, technology, engineering and mathematics classes. It had also enacted legislation guaranteeing women's equal access to land use and ownership. A national action plan to end violence against women and girls was under way, together with a similar plan in Zanzibar. Both plans were focused on prevention, creating a conducive environment for victims and strengthening support services, with access for the most vulnerable and needy to free legal services. A sexual offences law was in place; the Constitution had been amended to guarantee the allocation of one third of seats in parliament and in local councils to women; and a minimum penalty of 30 years' imprisonment had been established for anyone found guilty of marrying or impregnating a schoolgirl.

On that evidence, parliaments were clearly instrumental to the achievement of gender equality, ideally bringing disjointed efforts together to form new international partnerships – an objective that the IPU could help to accomplish. All parliaments must exercise their oversight function by providing sustainable solutions for making them more gender-sensitive. The

Tanzanian Parliament stood ready to exchange experiences and best practices with other parliaments, including in relation to the excellent work of women's caucuses. Gender equality was attainable if all parliamentarians played their part.

**Ms. J.N. Kumba** (South Sudan), noting that women formed a majority of the global population and must be included in all parliamentary and other decision-making, said that hers was a leading African country in terms of gender equality, having created an environment conducive to promoting women's empowerment following the establishment of peace after years of civil war. The one-third proportion of women parliamentarians was higher than the global average and therefore promising, but challenges to women's full emancipation remained, notably in education and health. Newly independent and the world's youngest nation, South Sudan had recognized the need for women in top leadership positions. As Speaker, she would do her utmost in working with her colleagues to build a gender-sensitive parliament in all aspects. Women had also ascended to other high echelons of power in parliament, including as specialized committee chairpersons and deputies, party chief whips and representatives in the East African Legislative Assembly; one third of ministerial positions were held by women.

Women faced with violence in areas of conflict and natural disaster, and in the COVID-19 pandemic had demonstrated strong resilience in grappling with such challenges as feeding and clothing their families, and caring for the vulnerable. Gender-sensitive institutions and communities must therefore be encouraged so as to construct a peaceful and even more resilient world, with no one left behind. In that context, parliaments had another key role to play in enacting legislation to address issues relating to migration, human trafficking and human rights abuses, and the effects on women and children.

**Mr. R. Lopatka** (Austria) said that the multiple ongoing crises worldwide had strong gender dimensions. In the COVID-19 pandemic, women had been increasingly affected by gender-based violence and further impoverished by the sheer volume of their unpaid care work. The Austrian National Council had consequently advocated women-targeted support measures and instituted a women's health report with the aim of improving gender-sensitive medicine. For the third consecutive year, it had also approved an increased budgetary allocation for women, with a focus on protection against violence. In the 10 years since the adoption of the IPU's *Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments*, Austria had substantially strengthened its gender equality legislation and policy, enshrining gender budgeting in law and ensuring that gender equality was taken into account in every public administration phase. All ministries and supreme bodies, including parliament, were accordingly required to set gender equality as an outcome goal.

Austria had successfully established a gender-sensitive infrastructure and parliamentary culture, thanks to its comprehensive women's advancement plan and its provision of full support to parliamentarians subjected to sexual harassment or abuse of power. Parity was yet to be achieved, but the number of women parliamentarians was at a historic high of 41%, which was well above the global and European averages. Parliamentary groups with a women's membership of over 40% also received a financial bonus as part of the commitment to further encourage women's political leadership. All parliaments must seize the current momentum of change to drive forward gender equality for a better future for all.

**Mr. O. Korniyenko** (Ukraine) said that, owing to increased women's representation, local councils in Ukraine had grown less corrupt and more people-oriented. The fact that one quarter of Ukrainian parliamentarians were women signified relative, albeit slow, progress towards the gender equality in representative bodies that so benefited society and paved the way to a peaceful world. Measures for international peace and stability were currently wanting, however, as evidenced by the appalling Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, an illegal action that had escalated and must be roundly condemned by all. The Russian Federation should be further isolated, especially given its extreme disrespect for those working for a diplomatic solution, which it was unwilling to pursue. As to Russian parliamentarians, they had unanimously supported the Kremlin's actions and should be immediately barred from participating in the current IPU Assembly.

Ukraine would not agree to a temporary truce or any other measure that could be used by the Russian Federation to accumulate forces in pursuit of its aggression. The only solution was a full Russian troop withdrawal from sovereign Ukrainian territory to halt the refugee, food, energy and inflation crises being inflicted on the world. For its part, the world must not succumb to the Russian nuclear blackmail aimed at deterring support for Ukraine in its plight. On the contrary, it should strengthen its support for the forces of good and avoid fuelling through indifference the crimes taking place in Ukraine. Ukraine was grateful for every ounce of support, as only through united efforts would peace be achieved.

**Mr. S.H. Tuku** (Bangladesh) said that, in any meaningful democracy, women's political participation was a prerequisite for gender equality, which facilitated women's direct engagement in public decision-making and improved accountability. It also ensured equality of opportunities and rights, which were comprehensively guaranteed under the Constitution of Bangladesh, where the visionary approaches to women's empowerment and gender equality had been globally acclaimed, including by way of prestigious international awards. Gender-responsive policies had furthermore been introduced in response to important legislation passed to prevent oppression of women and children, restrain child marriage and prohibit dowries. A national women's development policy had also set goals for women's socioeconomic, legal and political empowerment.

Seats were reserved for women in the different local government tiers, while in the country's Parliament, the Speaker, the Leader of the House – who was also Prime Minister – and the Leader of the Opposition were all women. Among the current total of 73 women parliamentarians, 23 had been directly elected and the remainder indirectly elected on the basis of the distribution of the 50 seats reserved for women among the political parties. Through their active involvement in parliamentary standing committees, women members made recommendations on women's empowerment, gender-responsive budgeting and gender equality. In addition to engaging all stakeholders in the efforts to end violence against women and hold perpetrators to account, parliamentarians were raising awareness of the role of girls' education in preventing child marriage. The world's parliamentarians should work together for fruitful outcomes in addressing issues around gender equality and women's empowerment.

**Mr. M.A. Basorah** (Yemen), recalling the prominence of such women as the Queen of Sheba and the long-reigning Queen Arwa in ancient Yemeni history, said that his country had been ravaged by eight years of war following the coup staged by Houthi militias in 2014 against the legitimate authorities and met by some quarters with silence. One year before that event, a national dialogue involving all stakeholders had established a new social contract, including a 30% quota for women in all government positions, which had had a visible impact in ministries, the diplomatic corps, local government and elsewhere. Women had in the past contributed significantly to the country's stability, but the war had adversely affected their lives and undermined their rights and the principle of equality. Millions of women had been forcibly displaced from their homes and were also deprived of medical and other facilities, due to the Houthi attacks on civilian infrastructure.

As affirmed in recent UN reports, several thousand Yemeni women were incarcerated in Houthi prisons and large numbers had been subjected to sexual and other violence. Yemen was in addition suffering a crisis of unaccompanied minors, many of whose whereabouts were unknown, including as a result of forcible recruitment as child soldiers by the Houthis. In further tragedy, much of the aid destined for women and girls frequently went missing, indicating the urgent need for a rethink of the distribution system. He hoped that the discussion would lead to IPU decisions for truly improving the lives of women faced with such circumstances.

**Mr. K. Barkiya** (Nigeria) said that the achievement of gender equality was hampered by challenges ranging from sex trafficking, organ harvesting and sexual violence to child labour, forced prostitution and discrimination. In addition, certain religious and ethnic practices – some of them time-honoured – were inimical to female well-being and hindered women's advancement and overall safety. The historical one-size-fits-all approach to gender equality might in some cultures be inapt as it failed to take into account the idiosyncratic nature of those practices. It was for parliamentarians to ensure that gender-related issues were handled with utmost diligence.

Conscious of women's role in society and the need to protect women's civil rights and privileges, the Nigerian Parliament had forged a legal environment enabling the prosecution of violators and prompt dispensation of justice. Other measures to promote gender equality included the establishment of thousands of primary health-care centres delivering maternity and child services, the appointment of women to key government positions, access for girls to primary and secondary education at nominal cost, and consistent advocacy through different channels to promote women's benefit from and active participation in politics and governance. A new ministry dealing with humanitarian and women's affairs also organized training in women's rights and empowerment, while in the area of human trafficking, a national agency mandated to prosecute human rights abusers had been established to combat the deleterious effects of such trafficking on its women and girl victims and avert the far-reaching social consequences. A huge campaign to raise awareness of the dangers of human trafficking was also under way.

**Ms. H. Alahmadi** (Saudi Arabia) said that, in 2012, Saudi women had been granted full membership of the country's Shura Council in a historic move that had brought about a major shift in women's participation in decision-making and paved the way for further action towards women's empowerment. Women were consequently performing more effective legislative, oversight and other parliamentary roles domestically and engaging in international parliamentary events. The ambitious Saudi Vision 2030 had already led to tremendous progress, as was apparent in a series of international indicators, including the full scores attained in pay and other areas in the World Bank's Women, Business and the Law index for 2021.

With women's empowerment a main priority under Vision 2030, investment in education, training and scholarship programmes was aimed at eliminating the gender gap in education. A solid legislative basis for women's empowerment had furthermore been established to ensure women's equality and rights and strengthen their participation in society, taking into account the teachings of Islam and Saudi values, culture and identity. Thanks to their qualifications and competence, more women had assumed leadership positions in the public and private sectors and were active in the Shura Council, which was testament to the importance attached to women's involvement in decision-making and in building the country's future. Saudi Arabia hoped for success in its bid to host Expo 2030, as it would offer a unique opportunity for it to share the outcomes of its Vision 2030 and the lessons learned in the course of effecting the country's unprecedented transformation.

*Ms. H. Alahmadi (Saudi Arabia), Vice-President of the Assembly, took the Chair.*

**Mr. M.Z. Md Arip** (Malaysia) said that his country's ongoing initiatives for women's empowerment and gender equality were rooted in its constitutional commitments to equitable treatment for all and the elimination of gender-based discrimination. Malaysia was also committed to its obligations under relevant international conventions and in relation to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 and the Beijing Platform for Action. Malaysia's plan of action for women's advancement accordingly prioritized women's interests and potential in national planning and development. In addition to its important role in driving women's empowerment initiatives through its special select committees, the Parliament of Malaysia had formed a number of caucuses and an all-party parliamentary group to accelerate its efforts to promote human rights, including women's rights. Female representation had risen to almost 15%, with 33 women parliamentarians in its lower house and 8 in its Senate, and women were now being appointed to senior positions, including Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives.

The Malaysian Government recognized the importance of structural reform to enhancing the effectiveness of efforts to empower women and achieve gender equality through legislative mechanisms alongside existing instruments. It also strongly believed that positioning women as key drivers of change, including by erasing the gender stereotypes hindering their advancement, required input from the public and private sectors as well as from society at large. For their part, the IPU Members, and women parliamentarians in particular, must firmly support all endeavours to achieve gender equality and create gender-sensitive parliaments for a more resilient and peaceful world.

**Mr. A.S.K. Bagbin** (Ghana), noting that women's equal participation in all aspects of life and decision-making was imperative for inclusive and responsive governance, said that collective global efforts to achieve gender equality must be accelerated for the sake of peace, prosperity and sustainable development, with no one left behind. In that context, the composition of parliaments should reflect the people whom they represented, that is aim for gender parity. Parliaments played a significant role in the creation of gender-sensitive institutions through legislation, regulation and policy adaptation to remove barriers to the full participation of all sections of society, including women, in public life. Gender-sensitive parliaments must accordingly scrutinize their actions through a gender lens so as to cater to the interests of women and girls and ensure that they were on an equal footing with men and boys.

In working to achieve that goal, the Ghanaian Parliament had adopted legislative and policy measures for the emancipation of women and girls, which included the establishment of government bodies dedicated to their affairs. The revival of a stalled gender quota initiative had furthermore borne fruit with the advent of two women chief justices and a woman Speaker of Parliament. Legislation was also being developed to secure women's property and spousal rights and promote women's financial inclusion. Efforts were under way to expedite an increase in women's representation in parliament, which at 14.5% was unacceptably low. By the same token, women comprised one half of his delegation's members and over one half of parliamentary staff.

**Ms. G. Morawska-Stanecka** (Poland) said that the subject of gender equality could not be broached without reference to the war in Ukraine, which was affecting women and girls above all as victims of abuse, rape and murder. In their daily fight to protect their homeland and homes, Ukrainians were forced to defend their rights, language and culture. The belief had been that Europe would never again experience war, but the Russian Federation – a permanent member of the UN Security Council entrusted with the maintenance of international peace and security – had decided to attack and destroy its neighbour, a sovereign independent country that it treated as a colony to be subjugated to its rule. Poland firmly condemned and opposed such post-colonial attitudes.

She had seen with her own eyes the aftermath of war crimes committed by Russian troops against the civilian population of Ukraine, crimes that constituted genocide. The lessons of Rwanda had not been learned by those who violated the basic human right to life. She strongly urged Members to support all resolutions condemning the unprovoked Russian aggression and to vote in favour of robust sanctions against the Russian Federation. Russian troops must be immediately withdrawn from Ukraine and war criminals brought to justice. Poland vehemently deplored the illegal Russian acts of “recognizing independence” and proclamation of “annexation” of Russian-occupied regions that remained part of Ukraine under international law. Gender sensitivity was crucial, but its prerequisite was human sensitivity.

**Mr. J. O'Reilly** (Ireland) said that the COVID-19 pandemic had eroded women's rights by casting women as carers, reducing or halting their education, and increasing violence against them. The effects of climate change had most impact on women, while war and genocide frequently left them as sole providers often uprooted into sometimes hostile environments. Women's full participation in public life was axiomatic to the definition of democracy as a system of government for and by the whole population. If not members of parliament, women could not be part of a gender-equal parliament. Under the Irish quota system, a constantly increasing percentage of candidates in each election had to be women, who would accordingly constitute 40% of candidates in the election scheduled for 2025, climbing to 50% in the subsequent election. Such quotas were essential to enabling women to break the glass ceiling and should be commended to all.

In addition to a gender equality committee and an active, well-functioning and well-resourced women's caucus, the Irish Parliament had set up a forum on a family-friendly and inclusive parliament to consult widely with stakeholders on the structure, functioning and environment of the parliamentary workplace. Priorities identified in the ensuing recommendations had included remote working, proxy voting during parental leave, increased representation of women on committees, and hybrid meetings. Any necessary constitutional amendments would be made in that light. Family-friendly facilities were also set to be established or enhanced, including for breastfeeding and childcare. Without gender equality, which was also a men's issue, there could be no further progress in society.

**Mr. H. Alziadin** (Jordan) said that the challenges created in a world in constant flux had been exacerbated by the war and destruction that were supplanting international cooperation for development and food security so vitally needed to end the undernutrition and malnutrition suffered by millions and causing avoidable deaths. As no country could deal unaided with complex crises, including negative effects of climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic, concerted work to address them must continue. Proxy wars, especially those fought in the Middle East, furthermore fuelled tensions and extremism. Jordan – a prime destination of refuge from war – was therefore working regionally and globally to build bridges and to coordinate international efforts independent of race and religion to combat such extremism.

Believing equality to be a basic human right and a prerequisite for social justice, Jordan was making steady progress in women's empowerment and their political and socioeconomic participation. In that context, the Jordanian Parliament had reviewed relevant legislation and approved new laws allocating 18 parliamentary seats to women as a minimum, requiring political parties to increase their women members to at least 20% of the total, and providing incentives for making women true partners in decision-making. The country took pride in the accomplishments of Jordanian women in all settings in the face of continuing obstacles and sent a message of similar pride to the steadfast women of Palestine in their defence of human dignity and the sanctity of Muslim and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem.



**Ms. L. Fehlmann Rielle** (Switzerland), recalling the time taken for women to win the right to vote, said that the fight for women's emancipation continued and that no democracy was complete without women, who in her country constituted 42% of parliamentarians. Equal rights were not always accompanied by de facto equality in, for example, pay, pensions and professions more reliant on women, such as domestic work and education. Nor was women's bodily autonomy yet a reality, with the right to abortion not universally guaranteed and also worryingly overturned in the United States. The conservatives favouring State interference in abortion matters were curiously restrained, however, when it came to social rights and childcare, considering those to be strictly private family concerns. With feminism already a dirty word in the 1990s, the mistaken belief that equality had already been achieved was perhaps understandable.

Vital progress towards eradicating violence against women and domestic violence, which also often affected children, would be advanced if more States ratified and implemented the Istanbul Convention. As to parliaments, which were instrumental to promoting gender equality, they should introduce list quotas to achieve gender parity and work with parties to dispel the idea that women elected through quotas were simply tokens, whereas in truth they discharged their functions with exemplary skill. Parliaments should also emulate others, including the Swiss Parliament, in combating harassment and sexism and should furthermore promote women in politics at all levels. Lastly, women's key role in strengthening peace must be emphasized in the light of current conflicts and the intensifying Russian-Ukraine war.

**Ms. H. Al-Sulaiti** (Qatar) said that parliamentary and national efforts to achieve social justice continued to be thwarted by successive crises, with implications for the attainment of the SDGs by 2030 and for stability, security and development. In that context, it was fitting to remember the Palestinian women struggling under occupation to cope with those crises and denied rights, including to education and employment. In Qatar, she was the first woman to have been elected as Deputy Speaker of the Shura Council by her male colleagues, all of which boded well for future achievements. Thanks to equal employment opportunities, Qatari women worked in senior positions, whether as ministers, ambassadors, entrepreneurs, prosecutors or judges. Currently, they constituted over 40% of the workforce in all fields but especially in education, health and social work.

Qatar's efforts to realize social justice extended beyond its own borders, as it supported and promoted women's education in numerous other countries, notably those experiencing war, conflict or disaster. Most recently, Qatar had been advocating for Afghan women in the belief that women's participation in building, establishing and sustaining peace was vital and a prerequisite for the success of those endeavours. Social justice and solidarity were among the main pillars of the Qatar National Vision 2030 and were affirmed under the Constitution as a basic right of citizenship. Qatar had accordingly adopted clear policies to enhance women's status in all spheres, provide them with access to education, health services and employment, and ensure their right to political participation.

**Ms. F. Oetkem** (Denmark) said that the fundamental right to education – a prerequisite for equality and a powerful tool for lifting socially excluded children and adults out of poverty – was being violated daily. Women attempting to exercise that right faced obstacles such as forced marriage and early domestic responsibilities, with the result that two thirds of illiterate adults were women, a figure unchanged for 20 years. Focus on the right of all women to education must therefore be strengthened, which would also benefit society at large. Some women had overcome the barriers to make their voices heard, including on the injustices faced by women worldwide. Women's and all other perspectives must be considered in any healthy democratic conversation, Rwanda serving as a prime example, having exceeded gender parity in its lower house through a gender-responsive constitution, with positive consequences for women's and girls' empowerment and sustainable development for all.

In Denmark, women had initially been denied equal voting rights for over six decades, whereas currently over 40% of its parliamentarians were women, 8 of the 13 parties were led by women, the Prime Minister was a woman and the country had a queen. In addition, fathers were entitled to a greater share of the maternity leave, sexual harassment issues received greater attention, and victims of rape, psychological torture and stalking had better legal protection. The present main goal was to reduce hidden inequalities, whether in government, politics, management or research. Through joint action, better could still be done to achieve the common goal of gender equality.

**Ms. N. Shpak** (Israel) said that there was no easy way for women to achieve their potential. As she knew from her own journey of breaking glass ceilings in the military and political arenas, women were held to higher standards and encountered more obstacles than men in reaching their destination. That journey was one of many made by women fighting gender-based and other forms of discrimination. It was time to step up the pace of change and women's participation in decision-making, and to shatter the myths legitimizing and justifying the discrimination that continued to undermine women's integration, as well as the creation of false narratives about women's preference for a domestic life over career.

The landmark UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, peace and security had declared a commitment to guaranteeing women's protection and full participation in peace processes. Twenty-two years on, the struggle persisted and still had a long way to go. Positive portrayals and catchy slogans notwithstanding, a real look in the mirror showed that the place of women at the decision-making table and in senior positions remained far from satisfactory. Data showed the continuing gender divide, for which excuses were always made. Reducing the gap between what women wanted and were capable of, and what the establishment allowed them to do was a long-standing battle. The time had come to change the situation in leadership roles where women, to quote Mary Jackson, the first black female engineer at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, had no choice but to be the first.

**Mr. Y. Suos** (Cambodia) said that participants in the recent P20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit in Indonesia had reaffirmed their commitment to promoting women's empowerment and opportunities for women and girls to engage freely and develop their potential in all walks of life. In Cambodia, a strongly matriarchal society that had always embraced women's leadership, women had been the backbone of nation-building. The country had overcome the adversity of its dark period of genocide in the 1970s to achieve peace and development through national reconciliation and win-win policies. As with Rwanda, Cambodia had successfully transformed itself during its post-conflict reconstruction period and was advancing its development agenda, which included gender mainstreaming and the promotion of gender equality.

Cambodia had recently won its 16-year fight to deliver justice for the victims of the genocidal Khmer Rouge regime, preventing the risk of that regime's return and with it the forced labour of women and children, and was developing its legal and institutional infrastructures to empower women and girls and promote social inclusion. Despite global progress on that front, swift and concerted action was needed from parliamentarians, in cooperation with all stakeholders, to enhance the status of girls and women in, among others, education, employment and decision-making. In November 2022, Cambodia would be hosting important regional summits and meetings that would work to promote deeper and broader engagement of women and young parliamentarians and strengthen their proactive roles in democratic electoral processes, law-making and policymaking so as to contribute to peace, stability and social harmony and progress.

**Mr. T. Kivimägi** (Estonia) said that gender equality was undoubtedly an important issue but should not be an aim in itself, as women and men were different and behaved differently in different situations, including crises and conflicts. A greater proportion of women in parliaments was arguably an additional guarantee of peace and a better future, both of which were more highly valued by women than by men. It took time, however, to remove barriers to equal opportunities and create the preconditions needed to achieve a more reasonable gender balance in politics and other areas.

The world had changed a lot in the preceding 25 years but was likely to change even more in the coming 25. One key difference was that workplace locations were no longer a primary consideration. As demonstrated during the COVID-19 pandemic, many jobs could be performed remotely, including politics, with the added benefit of environmental friendliness. Teleworking enabled women with young children to return to the labour market much earlier than otherwise – potentially also reducing the gender pay gap resulting from long absences – and to compete more equally with their male colleagues. Equality of women and men did not necessarily mean a 50:50 ratio, as there were some fields in which one performed better than the other. Gender quotas were a mistake, as they undermined the end result and aim, and should be applied only very exceptionally. Administrative and material obstacles to equal competition must nonetheless be eliminated to make room for more women in politics if the world wanted peace.

*Mr. D. Jositsch (Switzerland), Vice-President of the Assembly, took the Chair.*

**Ms. M. del C. Alva Prieto** (Peru), noting that laws would not necessarily be applied or change attitudes, said that education was key to the achievement of gender equality, as even women sometimes brought up their sons and daughters differently. Women must also help themselves by voting in solidarity for women candidates. In Peru, it was thanks to a recent law on gender parity and alternation in elections that an unprecedented 40% of Congress members were women. By the same token and similarly unprecedented, three of the four presiding members of the Executive Council in 2021 had been women, including herself as its President. During their tenure, they had revived the women's caucus, which worked actively to benefit women. Peru also had a women's commission and a ministry for women.

Family or other responsibilities made work as politicians more difficult for women than for men, especially as it often entailed time away from home, such as to attend evening meetings. For that reason, campaigns for preferential voting were essential, although only economically independent women could effectively afford to run such campaigns. In the executive, with currently only two women ministers, much more progress was needed. Further difficulties for women politicians included constant harassment by the media and vulnerability to political violence. Unlike their male counterparts, women politicians were victimized in the press and social media mainly because of their gender, as she herself had experienced. While laws and quotas were clearly important to advancing gender equality, a step change in attitudes should be the first priority.

**Mr. R. Lozano** (Uruguay) said that great Uruguayan women of influence distinguished by their dedication, will, tenacity and, above all, their education had always given their best in driving the country forward throughout its history. In 1927, women in Uruguay had been the first in Latin America to vote, achieving a historic milestone followed some 20 years later by the first-ever participation of a woman in parliament. Women soon thereafter acquired their civic rights, including property rights, and true progress in women's political participation and representation began.

Although recognized as a full democracy, Uruguay had nonetheless yet to realize the envisaged gender parity in its institutions. Mechanisms had therefore been established and a quota law introduced to minimize the gap and ultimately bring parity, which was also the focus of two further laws in the pipeline. Countrywide programmes had been established to strengthen women's participation and role in decision-making at all levels and thereby foster a culture of gender equality in politics. A feminine perspective on solutions to everyday issues complemented and enriched the male perspective, although neither the quota nor the related debate had significantly altered the proportion of women in parliament, amounting to around one quarter in the lower house and one third in the upper house. Under the Uruguayan Constitution, all persons were equal, without distinction other than that of talent and virtue. Women were capable of acceding to leadership positions on their own merit. What was required, however, was the general acceptance that women were at least equal to men, or better.

**Mr. M. Rezakhah** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that it was important to learn from women's stories how outcomes might have differed had they had chances to think and start otherwise. Examples included enslaved and abused migrant domestic workers prevented from returning home, and military recruits sexually harassed and raped by their superiors. Far from being the exception, such instances were likely even more common than shown by data, given that violent crimes against women went largely unreported. Despite efforts to address the matter, the global crisis continued, perhaps because young girls were exposed to teachings from mainstream media propagating liberal ideas and values other than the traditional ones associated with their own rich cultures.

In his country, where women were listened to from the outset, policies were focused on facilitating marriage to promote committed relationships, empowering heads of family financially to avoid women having to work in unsafe conditions, and providing safe study and work spaces for women. That family-oriented approach had helped Iranian women to reach their fullest potential as students and professionals, yet they were portrayed as oppressed and without agency to control their own lives. Worse still, that propaganda had been used to impose additional politically motivated sanctions on the country, depriving women and their families of essential medicines, as in the case of Mahsa Amini, who had consequently died. With men's full support, Iranian women had given their all-in fights for their country's independence and subsequently in fights against those coercive unilateral sanctions – fights that were not between men and women.

**Mr. S.S.K. Njie** (The Gambia) said that gender-sensitive parliaments were a recipe for gender equality in the best interest of a genuine and inclusive democracy. The responsibility for advocating gender equality had gradually shifted onto parliaments, many of which were working to

move away from their traditional male-dominated membership. The institution itself must be scrutinized, however, for unseen barriers to progress in that direction. Generally cultural or religious, those barriers must be removed to promote women's presence and participation in parliament and their election to leadership and decision-making positions.

In addition to ratifying the majority of regional and international conventions relating to women, the Gambia had enacted laws on women, domestic violence and sexual offences and created a women's enterprise fund with the long-term objective of establishing a women's bank for the benefit of women entrepreneurs and women-run organizations. A new 10-year gender policy was being formulated, while in further testimony to the Gambian commitment to gender mainstreaming, a directorate of gender equality and women's empowerment had been established under a new ministry of gender, which was set to table a bill on a national gender mainstreaming strategy. Despite such advances, there remained room for improvement in women's participation and representation in governance. The Gambian Parliament would continue to champion gender and women's empowerment and urged the IPU to provide the necessary tools for gender-sensitivity assessment. There was no single path to gender sensitivity, but common to all gender-sensitive parliaments were their complexity, efficiency and ability to better respond to needs.

**Mr. A.J. Kingi** (Kenya) said that, to redress the balance for women and girls, parliamentarians must champion gender equality nationally, regionally and globally. The Kenyan Constitution underscored respect for and protection of gender-based rights and prohibited discrimination and violence against women. It also provided for the election of 47 women from each county to the National Assembly and for the nomination of 16 women members to the Senate. With an enlightened public appreciative of the need to break down the barriers to women's involvement in public affairs, the number of women in the two houses had steadily increased. Parliamentary political parties were furthermore obliged to observe a gender balance in appointing members to leadership offices and committees. In both houses, women had served or were serving as Deputy Speaker and in other top positions. A women's caucus actively advocated for women's rights and equitable representation in parliament and decision-making; a parliamentary service commission worked for gender equality, and the Kenyan Parliament applied an anti-harassment policy.

To address the threat posed by counterproductive sociocultural attitudes and practices to women's autonomy and well-being, the Kenyan Parliament had enacted laws covering such matters as matrimonial properties, domestic violence, sexual offences, trafficking in persons, female genital mutilation, and marriage. It had also approved empowerment programmes associated with funds established to assist women financially. Parliaments could better promote gender equality by introducing gender quotas, eliminating all obstacles to gender equality, legislating for women's equal access to elective positions, mainstreaming gender in parliamentary work, enhancing women's participation and mounting awareness campaigns.

**Mr. M. Karidio** (Niger) said that efforts to eliminate or reduce gender and other inequalities were hampered in some countries by terrorism and climate change effects in addition to sociocultural factors. The deteriorating security situation in the Sahel region was by far the most worrying concern for Niger, which was paying a heavy price for the turmoil created by the foreign military intervention conducted in Libya in 2011 in disregard of warnings from the surrounding African countries. The closure of schools and health centres – prime targets for terrorist attacks – featured among the many tragic repercussions, adversely affecting girls' education and slowing the appreciable progress being made towards the elimination of gender-based inequalities. Women and children were unfortunately main victims of the insecurity.

The Parliament of Niger had approved national policies for addressing the needs and interests of both sexes, and contributed towards the implementation of the IPU's *Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments*. It had also progressed significantly towards its goal of gender parity, the proportion of women parliamentarians having increased to 30% following the introduction by law of a quota system for elective functions. Compliance with the quota of 25% was a requirement in the election results by electoral constituency and by list. Women parliamentarians were furthermore represented in all parliamentary decision-making bodies and standing committees. Women also constituted 30% of the Bureau of the National Assembly, which chaired debates and was involved in organization and management; the President of the High Court of Justice was a woman.

**Mr. S. Gkikas** (Greece) said that his country's national gender equality plan focused on the eradication of gender-based violence, actions for the implementation of the Istanbul Convention, women's equal participation in decision-making and in the labour market, and gender mainstreaming in sectoral policies. A new labour code included provisions for gender equality and the elimination of sexual harassment in the workplace. Emphasis was laid on initiatives for promoting the life-work balance, supporting working mothers and creating company childcare facilities, and mandatory gender quotas of 25% for listed companies had been introduced.

In meeting their responsibility as role models to promote and achieve gender equality, and build on progress towards gender sensitivity, the good practices that parliaments could follow included conducting awareness campaigns on the importance of women's participation and highlighting accomplishments of women politicians and parliamentarians. Gender quotas ensured a minimum participation of women in parliament and in Greece had been increased to 40% for candidates in parliamentary elections and elections to the European Parliament. More must be done, however, to address the under-representation of women in parliamentary bodies, including by ensuring gender equality across specific committee portfolios and in leadership positions, which would allow women equal influence on policy and a chance to change long-entrenched parliamentary structures. Consideration should also be given to establishing parliamentary committees with legislative competence to deal with matters of equality, including gender equality, and to sharing information on gender equality policies via social and other media. With gender stereotyping still common, parliaments must continue all such efforts to eliminate gender inequality.

**A representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran**, speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that his delegation rejected the baseless allegations made concerning the violation of Iranian women's rights. Countries notorious for their long history of warmongering and violence were unqualified to lecture others on human rights while insisting on their policy of maximum pressure and economic terrorism. As the biggest violators of the rights of the Iranian people, Western countries were ill-positioned to make claims known to be false in order to deceive and portray themselves as sympathizers supportive of the Iranian people. Human rights were cherished in his country, in line with its religious and historical beliefs and values, but were regrettably used by some as a means of political leverage in pursuit of their political goals to the detriment of the Iranian people and Government. With their discriminatory double standards, they turned a blind eye to the crimes of their allies in other parts of the world, further exposing Western hypocrisy on human rights. The Islamic Republic of Iran urged those countries to improve their own dire human rights records and abandon their efforts to sow sedition and interfere in the internal affairs of States in clear violation of international law.

*The sitting rose at 13:15.*

## Sitting of Thursday, 13 October

(Afternoon)

*The sitting was called to order at 14:30 with Ms. D. Mukabalisa (Rwanda), President of the Assembly, in the Chair.*

### Item 3 of the agenda (continued)

#### **General Debate on the theme *Gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments as drivers of change for a more resilient and peaceful world*** (A/145/3-Inf.1)

**Ms. M. Brawer** (Argentina) said that, in just societies, all persons without exception were assured of an equal say and equal participation in pressing debates. Frequently, however, words were followed by inaction, giving rise to discrimination, violence and other ills. Parliamentarians must set the example by renewing their commitment to eradicating those ills and increasing the robustness of equality as a collective construct. Democracy meant respect for diversity, dialogue and tolerance, without which violence could surface to weaken the rule of law, freedoms and opportunities for development. In Argentina, the fragility of its democracy was demonstrated by hate crimes and political violence exemplified in the recent attempted assassination of its woman Vice-President and President of the Senate.

At its recent session in Kigali, the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC) had unanimously approved a statement condemning that attempt in the strongest terms. In the statement, the Group had recognized gender equality in the fight against all forms of violence as a priority for all and a prerequisite for democracy. It had also recognized the responsibility to defend women victims of political violence and stressed the relevance of the increased presence of women leaders in parliament, who reflected women's political empowerment in general. In calling for a prompt investigation of what it viewed as a misogynistic hate crime, it had furthermore encouraged expressions of solidarity and support for the President of the Argentine Senate and all women subjected to political violence and harassment. She called on all Members to join in condemning the attack.

**Mr. S. Cogolati** (Belgium), after acknowledging the courage of all abused and persecuted Afghan, Iranian and Ukrainian women, said that the overturning of the long-standing constitutional right to abortion in the United States showed how quickly achievements could be destroyed, underscoring the need for parliaments to keep up the fight for gender equality. As the second country to have formalized same-sex marriage, Belgium was proud of its anti-discrimination law and its legalized adoption for same-sex couples. It also permitted medically assisted procreation for lesbian women, allowed changes of gender and first name by simple declaration, provided free contraception and morning-after pills to under-25s, and sought to increase friendliness towards lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and other identities (LGBTQI+) under a new 130-point action plan promoting and protecting their rights and banning conversion therapy. Belgium furthermore helped to provide medical and psychological care and legal assistance for survivors of sexual violence in Ukraine and funded the travel expenses of Polish women seeking safe abortions outside their country.

Thanks to a quota system, women accounted for almost 44% of parliamentarians in Belgium, which was working hard to achieve parity by 2030. Currently, both houses were headed by women. Unfortunately, however, the rising incidence of Belgian femicide cases showed that action to combat gender-based violence was more essential than ever. Gender equality would be achieved only if men too spoke out in its favour with will and conviction. As allies in the fight, which was inseparable from that against intersectional discrimination, parliamentarians must defend all communities equally.

**Mr. Vu Hai Ha** (Viet Nam) said that gender equality was a basic human right, a shared goal and a valuable measure of progress and development. In parliaments, it created opportunities for women to speak, promote their talents and engage in policymaking while driving change for a more resilient and peaceful world. In line with the great significance attached to gender equality and women's advancement by Viet Nam, its National Assembly had actively promoted gender-related

legislation with the aim of securing gender equality and women's empowerment. In that process, it reviewed laws to eliminate gender-biased provisions and worked to ensure gender mainstreaming both in law and in ordinance drafting programmes. Gender was also mainstreamed in oversight and decision-making on important national matters, especially budget allocation. Currently, the proportion of women parliamentarians in Viet Nam was slightly above 30%. A women's parliamentary group had furthermore been established some years earlier as a forum for women members to exchange views towards a common voice on gender-related issues at the same time as supporting them to function better and perform more effectively.

To promote gender equality, national policy systems must be improved to create an enabling legal corridor for that purpose as well as for policy implementation. More work was also needed to strengthen women's voices and participation in policymaking and implementation. Lastly, cooperation should be further strengthened among the IPU, the United Nations and international forums on women to better ensure women's rights and empowerment.

**Ms. K. Slassi** (Morocco) said that, in addition to quotas and other measures for increasing women's representation, a culture of equal participation by both sexes in all public and private spheres was required to achieve gender equality. The IPU *Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments* chimed entirely with the transformation that had taken shape in Morocco, where women parliamentarians had increased substantially in number to 96 and women parliamentary advisors to 14. The Moroccan legislative framework promoted gender equality and prohibited gender-based discrimination, with the Constitution enshrining equal rights for all and providing for the establishment of an authority for parity and the fight against discrimination. The Family Code had ushered in a turning point in the promotion of women's rights, further supported by legislative amendments made in favour of women, notably in marriage, divorce, guardianship and custody. As to political parties, they worked hard to discharge their responsibility to advance women's participation in political life, including parliament.

Under a law aimed at combating all forms of violence against women, such practices as forced marriage and sexual harassment were criminalized and institutional mechanisms established to provide support and guidance to victims, with annual awareness campaigns as an additional feature. In the same vein, royal directives were a driving force in the modernization and feminization of Moroccan society through promoting women's rights and putting equality into practice. Concerted efforts and adequate resources were undoubtedly key to achieving the desired goal of gender equality, which was essential for development, prosperity and democracy building.

**Ms. T. Vardanyan** (Armenia) said that women and youth had participated in unprecedented numbers in her country's Velvet Revolution of 2018, when the Armenian people had chosen democracy as the only guarantee of peace and prosperity. Following legislative reforms, Armenian women's participation in political life and decision-making had been normalized as part of the development of democratic processes. Currently, 35% of the country's parliamentarians were women. Unfortunately, however, the young Armenian democracy was endangered. In September 2022, Azerbaijan had without provocation launched a widescale attack on sovereign Armenian territory, targeting civilian infrastructure and causing great loss of life, including among civilians. Appalling evidence pointed to the murder of unarmed Armenian war prisoners and torture of captured Armenian soldiers of both sexes. Moreover, due to the destruction of schools, many thousands of Armenian children had had their education interrupted.

During discussions of the matter in an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council, many strong statements had been made especially by women. Armenia continued to use all possible international mechanisms to restore its territorial integrity and secure peace in the region. With assistance from its international partners, a fragile ceasefire was now in place and a European Union (EU) civilian mission was to be deployed to the country. Armenia appealed for strong statements of condemnation to compel Azerbaijan to withdraw its troops from Armenian territory, return all Armenian prisoners and desist from further acts of aggression. Armenia firmly believed in women's participation in peacebuilding processes and reiterated its commitment to peace and security.

**Mr. S.S. Bilgic** (Türkiye) said that strong women, strong family and strong society was his country's motto in pursuit of its fundamental goal of enhancing women's rights, status, and full and equal participation in all areas of life, as enshrined in the Turkish Constitution and promoted in the Turkish Civil, Penal and Labour Codes. Sustainable development was dependent on women's socioeconomic empowerment, an area on which Turkish efforts were focused, along with

combating violence against women and early and forced marriages. Women's formal employment and entrepreneurship were encouraged by regulation, as was harmony between work and family life. Türkiye had ratified various international conventions relating to women's employment and its Grand National Assembly monitored national and international developments in the area of gender equality by way of an equal opportunities committee, which also gave opinions on proposed legislation and played a vital role in the enforcement of gender-related laws.

In a key initiative, Türkiye had introduced gender-responsive planning and budgeting in which the different priorities and needs of both sexes were taken into account to guarantee equal rights and opportunities and prevent inequalities in public expenditures and services. In addition to zero tolerance for violence against women under a dedicated law, a national action plan to prevent such violence was in place with the aim of improving access to justice for victims, strengthening institutional cooperation and policy development, and raising public awareness of the issue. Itself a gender-sensitive institution, the Grand National Assembly played a further important role in that regard.

**Ms. E. Abdulla** (Maldives), noting the well-documented fact that gender disparities, inequality and violence increased in times of distress and vulnerability, said that parliamentarians could contribute to mitigating fallout from crises by ensuring better preparedness and by swiftly changing course as necessary. Over the preceding decade, the Maldives Parliament had worked to generate legal and financial support for gender-equality policies, enacting laws on domestic violence, gender crimes and gender-based harassment and violence, as well as on gender equality itself, and systematically increasing budget allocations for the activities of the ministry responsible for gender and family. Among other measures, it had reclassified rape and sexual offences as serious criminal offences, increased maternity leave with full pay to six months, and allocated one third of local council seats for women.

A new standing parliamentary committee on human rights and gender had worked extensively to address sexual and child abuse, including in schools, a parliamentary inquiry had been conducted into systemic gender discrimination, and Practice Parliament for Women workshops had been held in partnership with the UN Development Programme. Despite Maldivian women's strong political activism, however, the number seeking public office was decreasing. There were only four women parliamentarians, and men held almost all leadership positions in political parties. Much more therefore remained to be done to address the underlying socioeconomic and political inequalities and bridge the significant gender gaps. Like all parliaments, hers had a meaningful role to play in preventing setbacks in gender equality and must commit daily to fiercer and more urgent action to that end.

**Mr. E. Mulembwe** (Mozambique) said that parliamentarians were among the stakeholders with a crucial role to play in preventing the cycles of poverty and violence perpetuated by social and political inequalities. In that context, women's empowerment, health and education were vital factors directly related to improved family living conditions. In Mozambique, a comprehensive legal framework was in place to promote equality for all, irrespective of gender or other status, as enshrined in its Constitution, reflecting the concern to eradicate persistent inequalities and fulfil the country's obligations as a signatory to relevant regional and international instruments incorporated into its domestic law. The establishment of a ministry for gender, children and social affairs and a parliamentary women's caucus was another reflection of that concern.

Adopted 10 years previously, a gender policy and implementation strategy had set guidelines for decisions and actions aimed at promoting the advancement of women's status and gender equality. Progress had consequently been made in women's participation in decision-making, legislative reform in support of women's empowerment, girls' school attendance and retention, women's access to health care, and assistance for victims of gender-based violence. With women currently accounting for one half of its ministers, Mozambique was the fourteenth globally and third in Africa to have attained the gender-parity goal at government level – an encouraging historic milestone for its women. Mozambique also relied on women's leadership of other bodies, including the Assembly, the Constitutional Council, the Administrative Court and the Attorney General's Office, further affirming the success of efforts made towards gender equality.

**Mr. G. Migliore** (Italy) said that women's representation in all peace and security efforts was as vital as ever and that the shocking developments in the Russian aggression against Ukraine was one of numerous examples demonstrating how much work remained to be done on that score. In addition to the food and energy crises ensuing from that aggression, life had been turned upside



down for an entire people subjected to systematic war crimes and human rights violations. As regular targets of such war tactics as rape and sexual assault, and the most likely victims of forced displacement, women were the more vulnerable in the Ukraine situation. A second example was the Afghan women perhaps forgotten by the world but not by the Taliban criminals, whose primary aim was to subjugate them once more, deny them their fundamental rights and, in particular, ban their education.

A third example was the brutal repression taking place in the Islamic Republic of Iran, where the killing of Iranian women by the theocratic regime was but one symbol of the unrestrained violence against them and a dire consequence of the presence of the “morality” police on the streets. In those and other similar examples in which women were main victims, fear of change was the root cause, whereas women should instead be appreciated for their extraordinary potential, strength and resilience in the face of hardship. Male parliamentarians must therefore change their behaviour and patriarchal mindsets to fight alongside women for a fair society that no longer privileged them over women.

**Ms. M. Saleh** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that legislation was key to development and a safe and secure future for all, especially in a country such as hers where women, as the most marginalized and vulnerable group, had paid a particularly heavy price in the ongoing war. In addition to enacting gender-related laws to strengthen women’s status, the Syrian Parliament had made important amendments to personal status provisions to keep pace with social change, respond to new needs and ensure women’s rights accordingly. Consistent with the Constitution, national and international law and, perhaps most importantly, gender equality, those amendments had helped towards bringing in non-discriminatory laws that boded well for the country’s gender equality indicators. The Constitution provided for equal rights and duties, prohibited discrimination on grounds of sex or other status, and underscored women’s protection from gender-based violence.

Syrian aspirations for resilience were especially vital in the face of continuing Israeli aggression that left its mark on the entire country and also beyond, as was inevitable in an interconnected world. In connection with the sanctions unilaterally imposed on the Syrian people as collective punishment, the Syrian authorities were doing their utmost to mitigate the resulting humanitarian crisis, in cooperation with the United Nations, and to implement the early recovery projects provided for in Security Council resolution 2642 (2022), which hinged on the compliance of Western States with the related provisions. Concerted and proactive international efforts rooted in respect for international law and the Charter of the United Nations were a prerequisite for progress towards a just solution in any crisis.

**Mr. F. Zon** (Indonesia) said that gender equality could not and should not be women’s business alone and must be strengthened through multi-stakeholder efforts, with parliaments leading the way towards the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 and the development of meaningful, effective and inclusive solutions. In any democracy, all women must be treated with respect, dignity and justice, yet some regrettably continued to face violence and discrimination. War and conflict were proof of the international failure to respond to challenges and ensure peace for all, including women, girls and children everywhere. Human rights must be equally guaranteed for all, without double standards or hypocrisy and with the principles of peace and harmony in diversity upheld.

Indonesia was committed to gender mainstreaming in all development, while its diplomacy to promote gender equality worldwide focused on enhancing women’s participation, including in diplomacy and peacekeeping, as indicated by the country’s support for related UN General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, and in its contribution to women’s empowerment programmes. With the law guaranteeing a minimum quota of 30% for female political candidates, there were currently 123 Indonesian women parliamentarians, equivalent to almost 22% of the total. At the recent P20 Parliamentary Speakers’ Summit hosted by Indonesia, social inclusion, gender equality and women’s empowerment had featured on the agenda, with an emphasis on initiatives to support gender-sensitive parliaments and advance women’s equal participation in all aspects of parliamentary work. IPU Members must strengthen their commitment to securing the women’s right to equal opportunities and a dignified life, as every woman mattered.

**Mr. D. McGuinty** (Canada), citing Rwanda as a model of gender parity in parliament, said that his and other countries had fortunately also made progress in recognizing the value of gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments, and in incorporating into their actions the principles of gender equity, particularly in crisis situations. Deliberately reflecting the gendered consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Canadian response and economic recovery plans had each been designed and influenced by a Cabinet composed of 50% women. In addition, of the 14 chief medical officers countrywide who had provided daily briefings during the pandemic, 7 had been women. An entire generation of Canadian girls therefore had excellent role models.

The Canadian pandemic response had nonetheless been imperfect, as indicated in the recommendations made by a parliamentary committee on the status of women in its 2021 report on the impact of the pandemic on women. One of those recommendations involved the collection and dissemination of timely data disaggregated by gender and ethnicity so that assistance could be better targeted to build capacity and drive change in order to provide improved public services, empower women parliamentarians and promote gender equality countrywide. In that spirit, Canada was investing 4.4 million Canadian dollars over three years to support the IPU's work on gender equality in parliament, including by supporting parliamentary leadership to integrate the specific needs of women and girls from the health, social, economic and law-making perspectives. Despite best practices, there remained a long way to go. The IPU Members should therefore recommit to shortening the distance.

**Mr. P. Beyer** (Germany) said that the current times of extreme disarray called for decisive parliamentary action to address a range of crises that nonetheless shared a single common thread, which was that vulnerable groups, including women and children, were the most adversely affected and the most deserving of attention and protection. Along with that protection, women's role in international conflict resolution and their participation in parliaments – if not also in IPU Assemblies – must be strengthened. That said, his own party had only very recently introduced a women's quota to counter its lack of success in attracting women into its ranks.

First started in 2014 but full-fledged since February 2022, the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine was the most horrendous of present violations of human rights, also breaching international law and destroying the European peace architecture. Women and children were victims of heinous war crimes and many had been killed or forced to flee. The Russian Federation must immediately stop its war and withdraw from Ukraine. At the same time, the unprecedented repression of Iranian women by the authoritarian Mullah regime was among the biggest crimes against women who were simply fighting for their rights and merited full support. In addition, multitudes of women and children were being tortured, raped, displaced and killed in the intensifying crisis and terrorist attacks in the Sahel region. Parliamentarians across the world must use their power by calling for an immediate end to all violence and suppression, a resumption of peace talks and a swift return to democratic elections.

**Ms. B. Coma** (Andorra) said that, with a proportion of women parliamentarians standing at almost 47%, including the Speaker, her country was among those having made greatest progress in women's political representation over the preceding 25 years. In 2015, a white paper on equality had marked a decisive step towards the subsequent adoption of a law on equal treatment and non-discrimination. In 2022, a new family code reflecting the country's new social reality had been enacted, together with a historic, ambitious and cross-cutting gender equality law drafted with input from women's associations and parliamentarians of all political persuasions. Gender-based violence and incitement of female genital mutilation of minors had also been newly criminalized, with heavier penalties applicable for non-consensual offences, in line with the Istanbul Convention.

It was a legal requirement for political parties to have between 40% and 60% of their electoral candidates as women and for companies with over 50 employees to provide equal pay for equal work or work of equal value, formulate equality plans and allow flexible or remote working to facilitate a balance with family responsibilities. In addition to following an action plan on equality in the workplace and a sexual harassment protocol, public departments were obliged to refuse subsidies and assistance to businesses sanctioned in the preceding three years for gender-based discrimination. Further efforts were needed, however, to raise public awareness of all such legislation, ensure women's occupation of positions of responsibility in the private and public sectors, and integrate women with disabilities into the world of work.

*The General Debate was adjourned.*

### Special segment on gender-sensitive parliaments

**The President**, introducing the special segment of the General Debate, said that parliaments must build their own gender sensitivity as part of their commitment to prioritizing gender equality for more resilience and peace.

*A video on gender-sensitive parliaments was played.*

**The President** said that, as seen in the video, gender-sensitive parliaments were those that embodied gender equality in their composition and ways of doing business, and that were willing and able to deliver gender equality to society through their work. Gender-sensitive parliaments were also stronger and more modern institutions better able to mitigate crisis and deliver sustained progress for all. The special segment was aimed at shedding the light on how the IPU's *Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments* was being applied by parliaments and its impact on their ability to respond to crises. She invited the three speakers in the special segment to address participants.

**Mr. M. Chungong** (Secretary General of the IPU and Chair of the International Gender Champions Global Board), speaking with reference to the IPU's *Plan of Action on Gender-sensitive Parliaments*, said that talk about gender-sensitive parliaments must be turned into action, which the IPU supported its Members to do. As the Organization celebrated the 10th anniversary of that plan of action adopted unanimously in Quebec City in 2012, it was important to take stock of progress before subsequently rededicating to more stringent and robust efforts to promote gender-sensitive parliaments. The responsibility for gender equality in parliaments had shifted away from women parliamentarians and fortunately so, as for better outcomes it had to be shared with men, who had a stake in ensuring that both sexes were involved in the implementation of parliamentary processes. The plan of action provided a road map for moving away from the outdated traditional modes of membership towards greater inclusiveness and modernity, with diversity addressed as a major challenge.

In addition to critically examining their composition and work, gender-sensitive parliaments must consider the barriers preventing women's political emancipation and take steps to ensure effective delivery on gender equality through parliamentary processes that were fully responsive to the needs and interests of men and women. In offering a positive role model for gender equality, gender-sensitive parliaments must serve as the beacon for efforts to promote women's political and other emancipation – efforts proudly led and encouraged over the preceding decade by the IPU.

To become better institutions, parliaments must first look at representation in terms of both quantity and quality to ensure access for women parliamentarians to their decision-making bodies and leadership positions. As agreed at the recent 14th Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament, in Tashkent, gender-sensitive parliaments were more resilient to crisis effects. Gender-sensitive parliaments must also ground their actions in strong laws that clearly defined the roles of women and men in parliamentary processes and contained no discriminatory provisions constituting a major impediment to women's political emancipation. In addition, they should be safe and empowering institutions serving as examples of how to eradicate sexism and harassment in society. The IPU's landmark studies conducted since 2016 had provided disconcerting evidence of widespread sexual harassment of women parliamentarians and of gender-based violence against them, for which there must be zero tolerance.

Parliaments should furthermore learn from the COVID-19 pandemic experience how best to harness the potential of new technologies to make them gender-sensitive institutions, such as through proxy voting schemes to allow for flexibility, revised working hours to improve the work-life balance, and access to family-friendly facilities in parliament. Lastly, it was vital to build partnerships involving all stakeholders in parliament. Leadership from the top was essential to rebalancing the global parliamentary membership – only 26% of which was currently made up of women – to achieve a 50:50 ratio of men and women. Lastly, he called on all male colleagues to become gender champions working resolutely to make their institutions increasingly gender-responsive and gender-sensitive for the benefit of all. A proud gender champion himself, he was committed to defending gender equality at every turn and looked forward to working with fellow gender champions from the IPU in the endeavour to involve the whole of society in an equitable manner in the management of parliamentary processes.

**Ms. F.E. Rubagumya** (Rwanda), Chairperson of the Committee on Political Affairs and Gender of the Parliament of Rwanda, speaking on her parliament's transformation into a gender-sensitive institution, said that her country had established a conducive policy environment and progressive legal frameworks thanks to political will and a leadership committed to gender equality, a principle fundamentally embedded in the Constitution. Remaining consistently high over the preceding 20 years, women's representation in parliament had now reached 61% in the Chamber of Deputies and almost 35% in the Senate. The former was led by a female Speaker, as had been the case for over 14 years, one of its two Deputy Speakers was a woman, and five of its nine standing committees were chaired by women, aided in two cases by women vice-chairs. As to the Senate, its two Vice-Presidents were women and two of its four standing committees were chaired by women. In both chambers, gender equality was observed in the appointment of clerks and deputy clerks. Currently, the clerk of the lower chamber was a woman.

Serving as a think tank, catalyst and mobilizer, the Rwanda Women Parliamentary Forum played a key role in helping parliament to continue strengthening and advancing gender in legislation and government oversight. The inclusion of men in its membership had positively improved advocacy and influence by engaging powerful allies to address the negative social norms, stereotypes and masculinity that hindered gender transformation. Numerous gender-sensitive laws had consequently been enacted, including an inheritance law that unlocked women's rights. All budget agencies were required to produce a gender-responsive budget, the implementation of which was assessed by a parliamentary budget committee, in collaboration with State institutions and civil society, so as to inform the subsequent year's budget allocation for gender equality measures. Government policies and their implementation were scrutinized for their gender responsiveness, with the Senate also approving government nominations of high-level officials through a gender lens, imposing sanctions for non-compliance with the requirement of gender inclusiveness.

The Rwandan Parliament had built on the strong baseline set in 2011 through its piloting of the IPU's self-assessment toolkit for evaluating the gender sensitivity of parliaments, which, coupled with the ensuing *Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments*, had further strengthened its gender compliancy, enabling it to protect gains and continue leveraging opportunities. As a result, gender mainstreaming in its processes, structure and budgeting were no longer a requirement but a normal fact of parliamentary life. Gender induction courses were organized for the members of each new legislature to strengthen their gender-analysis capacities in the performance of their parliamentary duties. Other customized courses and related assessment tools were designed and implemented to strengthen gender and social inclusion as part of the parliamentary culture. Home connectivity for all parliamentarians and parliamentary staff had also been facilitated in the interest of a sustainable work-family balance.

With areas for improvement still remaining, gender-responsiveness assessments would continue in order to strengthen strategic plans and develop customized checklists for helping standing committees to optimize gender mainstreaming in their work. A strategy was also being formulated for upgrading the parliamentary infrastructure and improving its response to the needs of all visitors to parliament, including women, children and persons with a disability.

**Mr. I. Omer** (New Zealand), speaking on his parliament's advancement of family-friendly policies to produce a more diverse and effective institution, said by way of introduction that, having worked hard after arriving in New Zealand in 2008 as a young Eritrean refugee, he was proud to have been elected in 2020 to one of the most diverse parliaments in the country's history, with women set to comprise 50% of members as from the following week thanks to the commitment to create a more accessible and gender-sensitive institution. To facilitate the work-family balance identified as an action area in the IPU's *Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments*, changes effected by the New Zealand Parliament since 2017 had included shortening night sittings, permitting leaves of absence for personal or family-related reasons, redesignating its wives' room as a family room, and permitting extended family members or staff of parliamentarians to enter the Ayes or Noes lobby to assist in caring for an infant. In addition, limits on the number of trips by a member's child had been removed, mileage claims were permitted for spouses travelling to be with a member engaged in parliamentary business, carers and spouses were granted security clearance for parliamentary buildings, and babies were allowed in the debating chamber.

Those changes had provided opportunities previously unavailable to some individuals, such as those caring for young children, to become elected officials. In the post-pandemic era especially, people needed to feel that they would not be forced by their job to turn their back on their families. Traditionally, only males could afford to go into politics because of the restrictions that came with

being a member of parliament. The removal of such restrictions through family-friendly policies had incentivized more people to take that step, leading to greater representation from a wider range of backgrounds that more accurately reflected New Zealand society. While it was not always easy to draw a line between work and family life, those two outcomes had enhanced the effectiveness of parliament as an institution.

As a former refugee and the only Muslim parliamentarian of African origin in the New Zealand Parliament, he was a member of an ethnic caucus composed of six formidable women and himself as the only male – a sign of progress achieved. The newest of the countless pieces of legislation enacted in New Zealand to improve women's lives was a law under which specific maternal birth injuries were to be covered by an accident compensation scheme. Although more work was needed to make it truly diverse and gender-sensitive, the New Zealand Parliament stood as a beacon of hope towards more diverse and more women- and gender-friendly parliaments.

**The President**, expressing thanks for the valuable insights provided in the three presentations, said in summing up that parliaments with family-friendly policies meeting the needs of parliamentarians could lead to more diverse and inclusive parliaments. In addition, mainstreaming gender in all parliamentary processes and structures could give parliaments more capacity and urgency to drive gender equality effectively, leaving no one behind, for more resilience, prosperity and peace.

### Resumption of the General Debate

**Ms. A. Kuspan** (Kazakhstan), emphasizing the importance of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security and of the eight subsequent resolutions similarly highlighting women's significant role in conflict resolution and peacebuilding, said that sustainable peace could not be achieved without women's security and equality. Kazakhstan had made substantial progress towards building a society of equal opportunities and equal rights, including by way of its Concept of Family and Gender Policy until 2030, which was a document for implementing the country's own women, peace and security agenda. Convinced that women's equal participation and leadership in public life were crucial to the attainment of the SDGs, Kazakhstan had introduced a quota of 30% for women in parliament so that women were better placed to influence policy and improve parliamentary procedures. Gender-sensitive parliaments were also better qualified to foster equality in the community.

Parliaments must ensure that laws were non-discriminatory and actively promoted gender equality, an issue that must remain on their agenda and be addressed in partnership with civil society and private sector partners. The robust legislative framework and initiatives undertaken had produced positive outcomes in Kazakhstan, which would continue to implement joint action plans on issues relating to women, peace and security. Kazakhstan was due to chair the Dialogue of Women Leaders from Central Asian States and was committed to building on the achievements made in the region by continuing to support women towards high-ranking positions and ensure true gender equality.

**Mr. K. Kosachev** (Russian Federation), taking the opportunity to respond to the many who had asked him about the Ukraine situation, said that the general perception among the majority of the IPU Members was that his country had attacked Ukraine as part of a plan to revive the Russian empire, which was entirely false. None of its many non-Russian nationalities and ethnic groups wished to leave or separate from the Russian Federation, where they lived in harmony and exercised their rights freely and fully, contrary to similar groups in other former Soviet republics, including Moldova, Georgia and now Ukraine. Unlike their Russian counterparts, Ukrainian nationalists had been allowed into power in 2014 in a virtual coup d'état, prompting a civil war because millions of Ukrainian citizens refused to recognize their authority and wanted to live in safety and security, with their human rights and interpretation of history intact.

The Russian Federation had attempted to assist Ukraine in restoring its territorial integrity by drafting and subsequently supporting the Minsk agreements, which Ukraine had refused to implement. As at 2022, Ukraine had killed 16,000 persons in its south-eastern regions and over 1 million of its citizens had fled to Russian territory. His country had learned from its Chechen experience that dialogue – not military force – was the way to end conflict, but its appeals for Ukraine to find a political solution with its citizens had been ignored. Talking to those in the conflict region would reveal the truth being concealed by Ukraine and its sponsors.

**Mr. H.B.N. Singh** (India), noting that Indian women had been among the few entitled to vote in 1949, said that his country had moved towards women-led development and was working in mission mode for women's education, safety, health, nutrition and sanitation, with a focus on economic empowerment through skilling, digital literacy and financial inclusion. Millions of women health workers had performed commendably on the COVID-19 frontline and women scientists had been instrumental in the swift development of a COVID-19 vaccine. Women were major beneficiaries of a loan scheme, a large financial inclusion programme and a housing scheme. Women's gross enrolment in higher education, furthermore, exceeded that of men.

The number of women had steadily increased to 114 in the Indian Parliament and to 360 in state legislative assemblies. Thanks to a one-third quota system, women accounted for up to one half of members of grass-roots bodies, the new nurturing ground for future women leaders. Draft legislation was subject to gender-budgeting analysis and all women-related schemes were scrutinized for gender sensitivity. Parliament was fully gender-sensitive as a result of initiatives introduced by previous women Speakers and secretaries general, including to combat sexual harassment. Women parliamentarians regularly made policy and governance recommendations and actively participated in national and international conferences, several of them hosted by India, to exchange views, share concerns and evolve best practices. All Indian parliamentarians worked to foster gender parity through strict oversight, legislative amendments and budget approval, passing in addition progressive laws to protect women and highlighting gender issues in a transformative endeavour.

**Ms. Z.D. Mohamud** (Somalia) said that, in addition to wholesale improvements in her country, including with respect to its security and its economic and political stability, the special attention given to women's political participation through a lobbying campaign had achieved positive results, with women now constituting 26% of members in the upper house of its Federal Parliament and 19% in the lower house following recent elections. For the first time in Somali history, moreover, a woman had been elected as Deputy Speaker of the House of the People, while one half of those chairing Senate standing committees were women.

There was no women's quota in place, however, and there were cultural barriers to be overcome. The traditional clans, for instance, were not in favour of women's representation. Educational capacity and the complexity of the country's situation were other challenges to be conquered. Women traditionally remained at home, but girls' enrolment in schools was increasing. She looked forward to further IPU efforts, including through its parliamentary forums, to build women's capacities so as to enhance their status, create opportunities and promote their participation in society.

**Ms. C. Sousa** (Portugal) said that her country's national action plans were aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and included measures to combat all violence and discrimination based on gender or sexual orientation. Portugal's progress in gender equality was above the EU average, its Gender Equality Index scores having improved in tandem with the increase in women's political participation accelerated thanks to the one-third quota in place for women parliamentarians. The same quota applied to management and supervisory boards in the public sector and to private companies listed on the stock exchange. Gender self-identification and access to medically assisted procreation were both permitted by law, with gender mainstreaming in legislation and the national budget also a standard requirement. Gender discrimination persisted nonetheless, as seen in the workplace and in the alarming rise in violence against women during the pandemic especially, which had prompted measures to strengthen support for victims.

A legislated gender quota of 50% for electoral candidate lists and equality in parliamentary leadership positions were ultimate goals and would be furthered by having men as partners in the fight. Young people were engaged through such initiatives as the Youth Parliament, which had contributed towards addressing gender inequality and gender-based discrimination in the school setting. It was also a fight, however, against retrograde forces threatening to turn women's rights into a political battleground and against the perpetuation of gender stereotyping in the digital world. Women's rights were human rights, underlining the need for solidarity with oppressed Afghan, Iranian and Ukrainian women and girls.

**Mr. A.R. Al Nuaimi** (United Arab Emirates) said that, as in Rwanda, the partnership between men and women in his country was a living example of gender equality in rights and duties. Recognizing women's and girls' empowerment as instrumental to building social unity and cohesion, and the capacity to overcome challenges, the United Arab Emirates applied a gender

balance strategy and a national strategy for women's empowerment and entrepreneurship. As a result, it ranked first in the Arab region for global competitiveness and its women held one half of seats in parliament and one third of ministerial positions while also accounting for 46% of the national workforce.

Gender equality and women's empowerment paved the way for social integration and, in turn, sustainable development and the eradication of hatred and extremism. With that in mind, parliaments must ensure budgetary investment in gender equality and use their legislative and oversight functions to ensure women's access to education that suitably qualified them for work in a range of areas, with an emphasis on the removal of all barriers to women's higher education. Parliaments must also urge the adoption of media strategies for stamping out negative portrayals of women in social media especially and promoting women's status and role in development. Tougher penalties should moreover be imposed for sexual exploitation, trafficking of women and forced marriage. Lastly, national institutions dedicated to gender equality should be established along the lines of the Emirati Gender Balance Council, accompanied by awareness-raising to prevent any backsliding in the implementation of gender-related legislation.

**Ms. T. Samrejvanich** (Thailand) said that her country had been among the first in Asia to grant women the vote and ranked high globally for women in top business positions but needed to do much more to improve Thai women's political empowerment and representation in decision-making. The Thai Parliament had worked hard to advance gender equality through integrating international principles and instruments into the national legislation. Political parties were required by law to consider gender balance in preparing their candidate lists for parliament, while the State was required to prepare a gender-responsive budget and encourage the collection of gender-disaggregated data for project planning. Legislation adopted to improve women's status included a ground-breaking law on gender equality, which protected women and LGBTQI+ persons from gender-based discrimination.

Within the Thai Parliament itself, gender mainstreaming had been initiated to promote a more gender-sensitive institution and zero tolerance of sexism. A code of conduct explicitly prohibited all forms of sexual harassment of women parliamentarians, a mechanism was in place for dealing with related complaints against parliamentarians, and a parliamentary women's caucus actively promoted women's empowerment across party lines. In November 2022, Thailand would be hosting two major regional forums during which it aimed to encourage initiatives for advancing La Serena Roadmap for Women and Inclusive Growth by strengthening women's economic empowerment and greater inclusion in the Asia-Pacific economy, especially in the post-pandemic recovery context. The Thai Parliament would continue to address remaining challenges, including traditional mindsets, gender stereotyping and social barriers to women in politics.

**Mr. F. Marchand** (France) said that women's role in decision-making encompassed a different approach to problem solving and was essential to promoting women's status and rights – areas in which gains made were fragile and easily erased by crisis and conflict. Since the adoption of the IPU's *Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments*, the proportion of women parliamentarians had doubled to 26%, while in Rwanda it had – very commendably – reached over 60%. In the EU, France had made most progress in that respect, with the proportion in its lower and upper houses of parliament hovering around 37% and 35%, respectively. The National Assembly now had its first woman Speaker and four of its eight Deputy Speakers were also women. Parliamentarians regularly tabled bills aimed at enhancing women's status and role, with senators currently poised to consider bills on universal emergency assistance for domestic violence victims and on protecting the right to abortion and contraception.

Each house had a dynamic women's rights delegation responsible for assessing and reporting on policy outcomes with respect to those rights and equal opportunities with men, and for monitoring the implementation of related laws. The delegations had recently covered such matters as women's quotas and the pornographic industry and were about to turn their attention to women's health and the situation of rural women. Parliaments must lead by example in advancing gender equality and parity. In that spirit, a woman member of his delegation would also be speaking in the debate the following day.

**Mr. A. Gajadien** (Suriname) said that obstacles to gender equality were primarily attributable to differences in cultural, religious and political systems, and should be tackled by raising awareness among young women of their role in, and impact on, policymaking processes and among all those involved directly or indirectly in those processes. Legislated quotas to achieve

gender balance should also be introduced and electoral systems adjusted to ensure gender equality in the nomination of candidates in general elections. In addition to its significant progress in those spheres over the preceding decade, Suriname had strengthened maternity rights and initiated paternity leave to support women during and after childbirth and underscore the role of fathers in the family. Tougher legislation on sexual harassment and violence against women was also in the pipeline.

With UN support, Suriname had implemented national and regional programmes for promoting gender equity and equality, in addition to training and skills programmes for high-level government officials and political parties on gender, gender planning, gender analysis and gender mainstreaming. Following an awareness project implemented to increase the number of women candidates on political party lists, 30% of parliamentary seats had been won by women in the latest national elections, contributing to an SDG 5 index score of moderately improving. While there was still far to go to reach parity, the increasing number of women university students gave cause for optimism. Suriname would continue to build on its commitment to promote women's active participation in public life, as directed by its Constitution.

**Ms. M. Valente** (Angola) said that her parliament had established a women's parliamentary group 23 years previously with the aim of promoting gender equality in politics, the economic sphere and decision-making, combating all gender-based discrimination and violence, and defending women's rights. As a multiparty body, the group brought together aspirations for a more just and inclusive society. The proportion of Angolan women parliamentarians had always fluctuated but currently stood at almost 38%, improving the country's global ranking in that respect. Angola now also had its first woman Speaker of Parliament, a women Vice-President and women Presidents of the Constitutional and Audit Courts. Many women likewise held ministerial office, a fact that would no doubt contribute towards bettering women's access to health services, education and employment and towards strengthening legal and other mechanisms for protecting women and their rights.

A UN programme to promote Angolan women's empowerment through civil society organizations had contributed substantially towards addressing gender equality in the country, while EU funding for African Portuguese-speaking countries had contributed towards training and capacity-building for women parliamentarians, one outcome being that a gender-sensitive national budget was set to be elaborated. Women parliamentarians from those countries had also committed to the establishment of a high-level working group on gender issues. The combined efforts of the United Nations, the IPU and the African Union served as a major catalyst for ending gender inequality and gender discrimination not only in Africa but also worldwide.

**Mr. M. Karlsson** (Sweden) said that, some 800 years earlier, his country had pioneered the enactment of a law protecting women from violence and sexual assault. In 2021, as part of the celebration of 100 years of full female voting rights and political representation, the Speaker and members of the Swedish Parliament had conducted a nationwide tour to tell schoolchildren about the struggle for equality and the many benefits of the outcome. An all-party parliamentary group on gender equality monitored threats and sexually demeaning language disproportionately directed via social media at young women parliamentarians in particular, raising awareness of the issue and offering support to those targeted. The group had also worked to improve opportunities for combining parliamentary work with family life, which had led to a change in the voting schedule to better facilitate parliamentarians with small children.

The Swedish struggle for freedom from oppression continued, however, in light of the tragic rise in sexual harassment and sexual violence against women in recent decades. With its changing demographic, Sweden was additionally combating such appalling phenomena as honour killings, forced marriage and female genital mutilation. Swedish parliamentarians had taken the lead, repeatedly forcing the Government to sharpen its laws to deal with those new forms of oppression against women in Sweden and standing in support of women victims of violence and abuse everywhere. It was astounding that, in 2022, governments could kill their own young women citizens for the way they dressed and bewildering that a State clearly lacking in morals could have a morality police.

**Mr. R. De Battista** (Malta) said that ever since the historic general election of 1947, when Maltese women had voted for the first time and the first female parliamentarian had been elected, the number of women parliamentarians in Malta had remained consistently low at under 15%, in contrast to the high female participation in voting. Finally, the Constitution had been amended



before the recent general election to create 12 additional seats for women, the proportion of whom in parliament had consequently risen to 28%. Gender equality policies, however, needed to be more focused on intersectionality, as gender equality meant nothing if not representative of unique differences in populations. Parliaments were not made more gender-sensitive simply by increasing the number of women parliamentarians. It was masculinized institutions that must be fixed – not women who must be fixed to fit institutions.

The Maltese Parliament had undergone a gender audit and was looking forward to the recommendations and to the national action plan for gender mainstreaming in legislation, policies and services. To see women's right of access to health services being rolled back in some countries was troubling. As to violence against women, it was important for all members of the EU and the Council of Europe that had not yet done so to ratify the 11-year-old Istanbul Convention. In Malta, femicide was now an aggravating offence of homicide; a stringent law on hate speech had been enacted and a bill on cyberbullying was in the pipeline. Ultimately, gender equality was a human rights issue and human rights must win.

**Mr. C. Nshimirimana** (Burundi) said that his country had progressed significantly towards the gender equality enshrined in its Constitution, which prohibited discrimination on grounds of sex or other status. The one-third quota established for women's representation in government, parliament and the judiciary also applied as a minimum in local community elections and was being extended to other decision-making positions. Women's representation stood at 39% in the National Assembly and 41% in the Senate. The First Deputy Speakers of both houses were women, one half of the Senate's standing committees were chaired by women, and women held at least one third of community-level positions.

Primary education was free and strategies for preventing dropout among girls, including due to pregnancy, were being pursued, along with measures aimed at providing universal health coverage and access to quality sexual and reproductive and other health services, reducing neonatal deaths and improving maternal health. Prenatal and obstetric care were free. With respect to gender-based violence, punishment for offenders had been stiffened, laws had been introduced to combat trafficking in persons and protect victims, witnesses and others at risk, and special courts, tribunals and prosecution offices had been created to expedite cases involving such violence. A national programme to promote women's economic empowerment was furthermore in train, a new women's investment and development bank offered low-cost finance for women-run development projects, and social protection measures benefiting women were in place. The Burundi Parliament would continue to spare no effort in adopting inclusive laws that left no one behind.

**Mr. F.H. Naek** (Pakistan) said that former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto – the world's first female Muslim leader – had advocated women's empowerment and emancipation, together with gender equality, and that Nobel Peace Prize winner Malala Yousafzai was a compatriot and source of pride. Before judging roles associated with men and women in any society, it was important to understand the correlations between socioeconomic and cultural diversity and gender. Parliamentarians, including men, must identify gaps in access to, among other, education, health care and employment opportunities, and use their legislative and oversight functions proactively to eliminate hurdles and challenges to women's empowerment and the achievement of gender balance in all spheres. The only way forward was for deep politicized debate to drive true reforms facilitating a gender-equal society that contributed to progress in every nation.

Women in Pakistan continued their pivotal role in national development and prosperity, with female parliamentarians instrumental in the enactment of women-friendly legislation on such matters as domestic violence and workplace harassment and in awareness-raising of issues affecting women, whether relating to health care, climate change or disaster. Seats were reserved for women in both houses of parliament – where one in five seats had been occupied by women since 2013 – and in provincial government bodies. Equality, women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming were also key goals promoted in Pakistan's Vision 2025. In sum, the many initiatives under way across all government tiers were drivers of change generating encouraging conditions for girls and women towards inclusivity and gender balance.

**A representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran**, speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the biased and politically motivated statements of certain European delegations about recent internal incidents in his country lacked factual evidence. Countries that regularly

masterminded riots in the Islamic Republic were the same ones heaping on it criticism based on fabrication and inaccuracies. The continued selectivity vis-à-vis his country was apparent in the resolution recently adopted by the European Parliament, which, despite its inflated claims, had never once adopted a resolution opposing on human rights grounds the inhumane maximum sanctions in place against the Iranian people.

Worse still, those same countries had committed unforgivable crimes against thousands of Iranians, a people that had not forgotten the chemical bombs supplied to the former Iraqi Baathist regime and dropped on their country, causing many slow and agonizing deaths. The case of Ms. Mahsa Amini had been comprehensively investigated by direct order of the Iranian President and not to please arrogant politicians to whom human rights mattered only as a tool for oppressing nations and plundering their resources. The Islamic Republic would stand firm against, and respond promptly and fittingly to, any attempt to exert pressure or resort to restrictive measures against the Iranian people under the facade of human rights protection. While the human mind could be tricked into believing fake news if repeated often enough, the refutation of a false claim in no way made that claim accurate.

*The sitting rose at 18:05.*

## Sitting of Friday, 14 October

### (Morning)

*The sitting was called to order at 09:00 with Ms. D. Mukabalisa, Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies of Rwanda, in the Chair.*

#### Item 3 of the agenda

(continued)

#### **General Debate on the theme *Gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments as drivers of change for a more resilient and peaceful world*** (A/145/3-Inf.1)

**Ms. H. Baldwin** (United Kingdom) wished to salute Rwanda's leadership on women in parliament. It was her view that the progress made in Rwanda towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was directly correlated to the high-level of female political representation. The United Kingdom worked closely with Rwanda in many areas, including climate change and education.

The Parliament of the United Kingdom had some way to go before it caught up with Rwanda on female representation. It was ranked 45th in the world with just 35% of parliamentarians being women. Similarly, only three UK Prime Ministers had been women. Work was currently underway to change the rules within the House of Lords to be more supportive of women. Parliamentarians were working on removing the rule which reserved one eighth of seats to men and had introduced a bill to ensure that succession of all peerages passed to the first child rather than the first son. In 2013, her Parliament had also changed the line of succession for the Crown so that it went to the first-born child instead of the first son.

One of the lessons of the Rwandan genocide was that the international community had been too slow to act. Today, the world was confronted once again with horrific and deliberate acts of violence by the Russian Federation in Ukraine. The international community must not make the same mistake as in Rwanda. She called on parliamentarians to address the Russian Federation directly during the Assembly and press them to immediately withdraw their troops from Ukraine. Russians too were suffering as a result of the war, among other, with many mothers losing their sons.

**Mr. K. Tanaka** (Japan) said that Japan was focused on people-centred growth which promoted infrastructure and industry but also considered the effects on the people. The city of Kawasaki had seen enormous growth in the 1960s but the resulting pollution had caused much suffering. It was not a situation that Japan wished to repeat. Japan was working with Africa towards people-centred growth and had recently organized the Eighth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD).

Gender equality was key to people-centred growth. Japan had taken a number of measures to achieve gender equality in politics. For instance, it had been hosting the World Assembly of Women since 2014 and had introduced measures to help parliamentarians to better balance politics with family life.

**Ms. H. Järvinen** (Finland) said that Finland was one of the most egalitarian countries in the world though it had not always been that way. Only 100 years ago, women in Finland had not had the right to vote nor could they work without permission from their husbands. Similarly, it was only 30 years ago that women had gained the right to denounce sexual violence within a marriage.

Finland had undergone radical change but the path to equality had been long, slow and complex. Equality would not have been possible without the courage of women or the unfailing support of men. Now, men and women in Finland had equal rights to study, work and raise children. Some successful policies included giving men 160 days of paternal leave and ensuring every child had a place at day care. Gender equality had helped achieve miraculous levels of

development and resilience, including a high employment rate (74%). Despite those achievements, Finland had not met all of its equality objectives, for instance, on the gender pay gap. Women still earned only 84 cents for every euro made by men.

Finland attached great importance to making its Parliament gender-sensitive. The representation of women parliamentarians currently stood at 40% which had been achieved without quotas or electoral lists. However, some challenges remained, such as the fact that men still held most directorial positions. Finland had taken steps to improve the situation further. For example, it had set up an institute for equality which oversaw the implementation of gender-sensitive practices and put 5% of party financing towards the work of women's organizations.

Women's rights were under threat all around the world thus gender equality efforts must continue. Equality was a driver of change. It was only through equality that countries could achieve a better world for all.

**Mr. J.I. Echániz** (Spain) said that a great deal of progress had been made towards achieving gender equality but more remained to be done. Parliamentarians must not allow current crises to hold back further progress. The number of women parliamentarians had increased worldwide but women continued to face risks such as sexual violence and human trafficking. Countries must strengthen their legislative and political frameworks on gender equality, adopt a zero-tolerance approach to sexism and take measures that allowed for a better balance between work and family life. Very importantly, male parliamentarians must offer their unwavering support to the cause.

In Spain, gender gaps existed in many areas, including digitalization, work, education, salaries, pensions and health. One illustrative example was that 57% of women had seen a pay reduction after becoming mothers. The Government had responded with a number of initiatives, including policies that targeted female unemployment, supported women with disabilities and promoted entrepreneurship. The cost of inequality between men and women stood at 19% of the gross domestic product. However, some positive developments had also been observed with 41% of the research community being made up of women.

There was a need to support older women, combat domestic violence and assist victims of human trafficking. More facilities were needed to provide care for women and their families. Countries must better coordinate gender issues across all sectors and develop national gender equality plans. Women should be supported in their return to work after having children. Other important measures included improving training available to women, especially in the area of information communication technologies and offering home-based and digital assistance to families.

**Ms. S. Hjemdal** (Norway) condemned the Russian Federation for killing innocent women and children in missile attacks on Ukrainian cities.

Gender equality was a principle that some women enjoyed more than others. Some lived in developed democracies where their rights were protected while others lived in countries where the State controlled their every move. She drew attention to the story Mahsa Amini who had been arrested, beaten and killed by the Iranian regime simply for not wearing a hijab correctly. It was an abuse of human rights to force a woman to wear a hijab.

Freedom was non-existent for Iranian women who were now risking their lives in protest. It was vital to support them in their fight and to stand up for women and girls everywhere. Gender equality was not possible until every woman was free.

**Ms. A.A. Rodríguez Montero** (Plurinational State of Bolivia) said that the Constitution of Bolivia laid out minimum standards for women's participation in elected institutions. However, in reality, those institutions had not achieved gender equality. For instance, only three of the 17 ministers were women and the Speakers of Parliament were all men. The situation was not acceptable given that the population of women was estimated to be approximately 51%.

Bolivia was currently in crisis. The judiciary had been recently accused of manipulating judicial processes to benefit perpetrators of violence against women. There were also reports of political interference in judicial elections. It was clear that a separation of powers did not exist in Bolivia. The economic situation was equally dire. Unemployment was high and over 90% of the Bolivian population worked in the informal sector with no social welfare and very little salary. The Amazonian region of Bolivia was also at risk due to the illegal exploitation of minerals and other natural resources.

Bolivia, with the help of women and young people, was trying hard to create a real democracy with parity enshrined not only in law but also in reality. Evidence showed that women and young people tended to work in a more pragmatic, transparent, efficient and cost-effective way. Women were also more likely to protect all sectors of society without leaving anyone behind. It was crucial to increase the participation of women and young people in a country such as Bolivia where public sector corruption was rife.

**Ms. M. Bartos** (Hungary) said that gender equality was about human dignity and represented a core value of the international community. She commended the IPU for putting the topic on the agenda.

To bring more women into politics, it was important to strengthen women's participation in society as a whole. As such, parliamentarians were encouraged to introduce gender equality laws and improve women's access to education. Women must have opportunities to shape public opinion. There was also a need to boost their self-confidence.

Hungary placed a great deal of importance on gender equality believing men and women to be two equal halves of one whole. It had taken many successful measures in favour of gender equality. For instance, one of the most essential components of equality was giving every human being a chance to be born. Thus, Hungary had passed laws that protected human life from the moment of conception. There were provisions under the Constitution prohibiting gender discrimination. Women were also a key part of the national family policy given their essential role in family life. The Government provided legal protection to women facing domestic violence and had set up centres to provide support to victims. Cervical cancer screening tests and vaccinations were available to women and girls free of charge and a great deal of attention was paid to women's education. Programmes to support women of the Roma community were also in place.

Women played an important role in public life in Hungary. They participated in the work of local communities and represented 20% of mayors. The Head of State was also a woman.

**Mr. C. Zorrinho** (Member of the European Parliament and ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly) said that dialogue, especially parliamentary dialogue, was key to overcoming obstacles. It was a way to show empathy and work together on mutual concerns such as human rights.

The ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly would hold its next meeting at the end of October 2022 where it would discuss the topic of gender equality. It was proud to be a gender-sensitive parliament working towards a more resilient and peaceful world.

Parliaments were a model for society and could play a crucial role in promoting gender equality. As such, the European Parliament had changed its rules to ensure that all its delegations were gender-balanced. Gender balance would also be required in the parliamentary committees from 2024 onwards. More broadly, the European Union (EU) had enshrined gender equality under Article 3 of the Treaty on the European Union and considered it a fundamental human right.

Gender equality must be taken beyond parliamentary institutions. It was central to building economies and creating dynamic civil societies. Education was a particularly important tool for empowering women and girls.

It was clear that gender equality was beneficial to men and women alike and could help make the world a better place. He called on countries to take a non-fragmented approach to the problem. Parliamentarians must build partnerships and promote multilateralism in their fight for gender equality. The world could only succeed by working together.

**Mr. B.L. Chibane** (Algeria) said that parliaments must be sensitive to equality in general but especially to gender equality. The 145th IPU Assembly was an opportunity to pinpoint challenges to gender equality and respond to the needs of women in the areas of development, security and peacebuilding.

Since independence, Algeria had attached great importance to women's affairs, believing that the contribution of women was vital for real democracy and freedom. It had ratified the main international and regional instruments on women's rights and promoted women's participation in society. Under the Constitution, governments were required to implement gender equality while also respecting cultural values. The recent amendment to the Constitution further strengthened the position of women, for instance, by facilitating their participation in administrative and political roles. His country had been working to achieve full parity in all spheres of political life and had adopted a law and a strategy to combat violence against women.

Algeria had always adopted a fair and balanced foreign policy that defended national interests while contributing to regional and international peace and security. It was important for countries to converge their efforts in areas such as health, agriculture, technology and terrorism. Solutions to conflicts must be found by peaceful means without interfering in the internal affairs of sovereign States.

He condemned the Israeli occupation of Palestine and the impunity it enjoyed. A rapid change of legal status was needed for the city of Jerusalem. To uphold values such as solidarity, independence and freedom, the IPU must support the Palestinian people.

It was also important to solve the crisis between Morocco and the Polisario Front. The Saharan people had the inalienable right to self-determination in line with the Charter of the United Nations.

**Mr. A.-M. Merka** (Romania) said that crises were not gender neutral and, in fact, exacerbated existing gender inequalities. It was difficult to imagine a functional and open democratic society without the effective and full participation of women.

Women were becoming increasingly involved in politics with a view to improving their quality of life but remained underrepresented, including in senior positions. The shortage of women in politics could be put down to a number of factors, such as poverty, a lack of legal rights, an inability to access finance as well as traditional gender roles. There was also a strong link between women's political participation and their economic empowerment. Economic progress went hand in hand with gender equality. It was important to raise awareness of the role of women in politics, train women to assume public posts and encourage them to enter the political arena.

In Romania, women were very much present in political, social and economic life. However, there was room for improvement with regard to their participation in the decision-making process. The country was still overcoming harmful gender stereotypes that were engrained in its culture.

The international community, including States, multilateral organizations and civil society, must work together to close the gap that existed between the discourse on gender equality and reality. Parliaments could play a crucial role in that regard by drafting gender-sensitive legislation. They should start by combatting sexism within their own institutions.

**Mr. A. Fath Allah** (Iraq) said that the world was facing a plethora of challenges, including climate change and the energy crisis. The threat to international peace and security was also huge. Countries must meet the commitments set out in international treaties.

Iraq was working hard to build a country based on the rule of law but faced many difficulties. Terrorism had led to losses by security forces and socioeconomic deterioration. The effects of the refugee crisis were also being felt. The international community must pressure Iran to stop diverting water resources and respect the territorial integrity of Iraq.

Women were considered the cornerstone of Iraqi society but were suffering greatly from the above challenges. It was crucial to ensure political stability.

**Mr. I. Čelić** (Croatia) said that the world was engulfed by crises such as the global pandemic, the economic downturn and the dreadful war in Ukraine. The people most heavily affected were women and children. Parliamentarians had a duty to re-establish peace and protect vulnerable groups. They could do so by passing legislation and setting up structures for gender equality.

The Parliament of Croatia had set up a gender equality committee responsible for the national gender equality policy. The committee was currently reviewing the EU directive on the prevention of violence against women and domestic violence and had proposed an amendment on the need to educate the population about the problem. Education was of utmost importance because it taught children from an early age that violence against women was wrong. It would also help eliminate gender stereotypes as a whole and create a more gender-sensitive population generally. Croatia had about 30% women in Parliament. It would like to have more but was dependent on the political parties to recruit more women candidates.

Parliamentarians had a special task and responsibility to prevent violence against women and children, thus creating a more peaceful and happier tomorrow. They must support women's rights through discussion and negotiation.

**Mr. F. Salim** (Libya) said that human societies differed in their view of gender equality. Libya appreciated the importance of gender equality in a way that did not contradict the Sharia. It had introduced legislation to guarantee the right of women to participate in politics and to work in both

the public and private sectors. Women were able to take up leadership positions and join the police, army and diplomatic corps. There was legislation in place that prohibited all forms of discrimination against women in the world of work and criminalized gender violence. Libya was protecting women by taking a stand against terrorism. It also had a parliamentary committee responsible for women's issues.

Nothing prevented women from exercising their political, cultural, economic or social rights in Libya. All laws currently in force were in complete alignment with gender equality.

**Ms. C. Mix** (Chile) said that, to serve the people in all their diversity, parliaments must promote gender equality in their own institutions. They must introduce codes of conduct, perform awareness raising activities, set up mechanisms to report violence and ensure gender parity among staff.

The Parliament of Chile had been promoting the participation of women since its establishment. Unfortunately, the number of women who had served in Parliament remained low at only 150 compared to more than 3,500 men. However, an upward trend in the number of women parliamentarians could now be observed thanks to gender-sensitive legislation and quotas. The objective to achieve gender parity in Parliament was supported by many Chilean parliamentarians but had been difficult to implement because of some conservative beliefs. For instance, some people believed that quotas were a way to manipulate election results.

Chile had reached some milestones on gender equality. It had created a parliamentary code of conduct which imposed penalties for harassment of women parliamentarians and introduced a protocol to prevent sexual abuse in Parliament. There was also a standing committee on gender equality composed entirely of women. In the last election, the proportion of women parliamentarians had increased from 23.2% to 34.8% and a transgender parliamentarian had been elected for the first time. One of Chile's plans for the future was to introduce gender-sensitive budgeting.

She highlighted the need to eradicate all forms of violence against women, including in parliament. It was not uncommon for male parliamentarians to undermine their female counterparts with a view to making them invisible. Such behaviour was a form of violence and was unacceptable.

**Mr. M.F. Hadid** (Palestine) said that the Palestinian people were suffering tremendously as a result of the Israeli occupation. The Israeli regime had committed all sorts of crimes against Palestinians, the most recent of which was the murder of a seven-year-old schoolboy. It was clear that Israel was a terrorist State which consistently violated human rights and used tactics of intimidation. In their electoral campaigns, Israeli politicians were radicalizing their supporters and competing over who would be more successful at oppressing Palestinians.

Despite the complex situation, the Palestinian people remained determined to build their country on the foundations of democracy and the rule of law. Palestinian women had been key partners in arms and in reconstruction throughout Palestine's struggle for liberation. As such, the Palestinian National Council had enshrined the principle of gender equality in the 1988 Declaration of Independence and the Palestinian Basic Law. There was also a 30% quota for women in politics and a series of public policies to promote the representation of women in the economic and social sphere. Women's participation in public service was high at 45% but remained weak in the workforce at only 18%.

The Israeli occupation prevented Palestinians from expanding their gender equality efforts. By prohibiting elections, Israel had prevented Palestinian women from acquiring the representation they deserved. By stealing land for settlements, Israel had restricted women's freedom of movement and deprived them of the right to work.

He called on the international community to stop practicing double standards and grant the women of Palestine equality not only with men but also with the other women of the world. Palestinian women had a right to live in safety free from occupation.

**Ms. J. Salman** (Bahrain) said that gender equality and women's empowerment were key to achieving development and prosperity. Bahrain had enshrined gender equality in its Constitution and ratified international conventions on women's rights, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Convention). Women played a prominent role in local, national, regional and international endeavours and often occupied senior positions. For instance, they had participated very actively in the COVID-19 response. Steps had been taken to promote gender parity in the State institutions as well as to create a good work-life balance for women. An amendment to the Labour Code had also been adopted which prohibited any form of gender discrimination in terms of wages.

Overall, Parliament was striving to create an environment conducive to the participation of women. The status of women had improved in areas such as the economy, work and health. It was thanks to the participation of women that Bahrain had been able to make progress on its sustainable development indicators.

**Mr. M.A. Rakotomalala** (Madagascar) said that the General Debate must be translated into concrete actions. Parliaments were encouraged to support the empowerment of young girls and boys and allocate funds to the cause. They should ratify all relevant international conventions, adopt laws and oversee their implementation. A particular focus should be placed on raising awareness and combatting discriminatory traditions.

Gender equality was not just a fundamental human right but a necessity for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world. It was crucial for everyone, including men, to participate in the fight for equal rights. The international community must work together in a spirit of unity to remove structural and cultural barriers facing women. Coherent and integrated approaches were needed at all levels.

The Parliament of Madagascar was working hard to achieve gender equality. It had ratified almost all international conventions on the topic and adopted a law prohibiting gender-based violence. Parliamentarians were currently studying the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa with a view to its implementation. However, Article 14 was proving a problem for some sectors of society.

He wished to highlight the important role of young people in peace and security efforts. An international programme should be created to provide young people with the skills they needed to implement change. Far too often young people were associated with violence and insecurity. Such a programme would help to change perceptions.

Lastly, countries must do their utmost to address climate change, including through technological means. The children and young people of today were the ones who would bear the consequences of inaction. Madagascar was facing famine as a result of climate change and called on the IPU for support.

**Ms. V. Walters** (New Zealand) said that great change was possible even in one generation. It was wonderful to observe that young boys today were starting to see women in high-level positions as a normal part of life.

In New Zealand, women who came into Parliament were gifted a brooch of a camellia flower which symbolized women's suffrage. Each brooch was inscribed with a number representing each woman's unique number in the line of women who had been elected to Parliament. It was a moving moment to receive the pin as well as to see other women receive theirs, especially women from underrepresented groups, such as the Māori or Pacific communities. In October 2022, Parliament had achieved an equal number of men and women thanks to the election of one more indigenous woman.

New Zealand was increasingly concerned about the safety of women parliamentarians in other parts of the world, such as Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Ukraine. It found the denial of women's rights by the Taliban repugnant and commended the Iranian community in New Zealand for amplifying the voices of brave Iranian women. Her country condemned the illegal invasion of Ukraine and called on the Russian Federation to immediately withdraw its troops. The Ukrainian delegation, particularly the women delegates, must be acknowledged. There was nothing more powerful than people fearlessly speaking truth and demanding justice.

**Mr. S. Rachkov** (Belarus) said that the theme of the General Debate was relevant for all countries, including Belarus. Women were drivers of sustainable development and played a crucial role in economic recovery, social cohesion and political stability.

Women in Belarus contributed significantly to national development and their social, political and economic status was growing every year. Belarus was among the 27 countries of the world that had reached their target for women's participation in decision-making. The ratio of women in the Parliament of Belarus stood at 35% and included the Chairperson of the Council of the Republic who was female. The figure had been achieved naturally without quotas.

Women's issues had always been a focus for Belarus. Since 1996, the country had been implementing five-year national action plans on gender equality. In the coming decade, it aimed to build a gender-sensitive culture in society by implementing gender equality in education programmes, strengthening legal mechanisms to challenge gender stereotypes and raising awareness of the social and economic benefits of gender equality.



Parliamentarians should consider how to achieve gender equality in employment. It was important to prioritize the recruitment of women in the high-tech industry. Although digital technologies opened up new opportunities for women, few were employed in the field and even fewer were in leadership positions. There was also a need to invest in start-ups.

Today, Belarus was the victim of a full-scale war waged in the form of sanctions, provocations and disinformation. The sanctions policy had devalued partnerships between States, disrupted global economic, financial and social ties and undermined peace and stability in Europe. Sanctions could not be accepted as a new international norm. Sustainability and peace were largely dependent on international cooperation and solidarity without pressure or interference.

*Ms. A. Kuspan (Kazakhstan) took the Chair.*

**Ms. A.N. Reynoso Sánchez** (Mexico) said that Mexico had achieved gender parity at both the local and federal levels. Indeed, there was a 50/50 split of men and women in the Chamber of Deputies, the Senate and the state legislatures. All political parties were obliged to ensure that 50% of its candidates were women. Similarly, governments must have 50% women in their cabinets. The numbers of women in the judiciary and local councils were also growing.

The fight for gender equality should not just be about numbers and quotas but about giving women the chance to make a difference. Women must step up politically. They must work to bring more women into decision-making positions; they must be the ones taking action and finding solutions to problems; and they must be disruptive of the status quo.

Parliamentarians and citizens should come together to fight for gender-sensitive, equal societies. It was particularly important to implement policies and legislation on issues affecting women, such as infant mortality, maternal healthcare and the gender pay gap.

Women were strong, life-giving, courageous and hard-working people that had the capacity to transform societies. She called on women everywhere to help build a better world for all. They could do so by championing peace and freedom over war and supporting policies in favour of families and education.

**Mr. A. Ruhunda** (Uganda) said that Uganda had had a long journey towards the emancipation of women. The most important step had been to recognize that women's empowerment was key to raising children who were good citizens. Women's empowerment started with girls' education. Girls must be given opportunities and a chance to dream.

Uganda had taken affirmative action towards gender equality. It had a law that required each district to have at least one woman representative. As such, the number of women in Parliament had increased to 173 out of a total of 529 seats although only 14 women had been elected directly. Without affirmative action, women would have found it difficult to become parliamentarians. More work was needed to change the culture and traditions of Uganda to be more supportive of women.

The Parliament of Uganda had passed a number of laws in favour of women's rights, including the Domestic Violence Act, the Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation Act and the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act. It had also introduced gender-sensitive amendments to several existing laws. For example, the Land Act and the Mortgage Act had been amended to give spouses and children a say on land transactions, especially on matrimonial property. In addition, all government departments were required by law to provide a certificate of gender equality compliance when presenting their budget estimates.

The Uganda Women Parliamentary Association had been established to amplify the voices of women parliamentarians. Its activities included research, skills development, lobbying, advocacy, mentorship and peer support. Male colleagues were permitted to participate so as to educate them on women's issues.

**Ms. A. Mulder** (Netherlands) drew attention to the brutal aggression of the Russian Federation against its neighbour, Ukraine. The first victims of war were always women. Women were often raped, killed or forced to flee. Ukrainian women were no exception. Evidence had shown that the Russian Federation was abusing, mistreating and dehumanizing the Ukrainian people, particularly the women. History was repeating itself.

The Netherlands had been fighting for gender equality and women's rights on the international level. It was investing in UN programmes that protected vulnerable groups such as women and had supported a number of gender-related resolutions at the UN Human Rights Council, including the resolutions entitled *Accelerating efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls* and *Child, early and forced marriage in times of crisis, including the*

*COVID-19 pandemic*. Furthermore, the Netherlands had been working with the United Kingdom towards a preventive approach to sexual abuse and harassment at the United Nations. She emphasized that women's rights went hand in hand with the right to live freely.

Lastly, she condemned the killing of Mahsa Amini by the Iranian authorities and called for an independent investigation into her death.

**Mr. N. Bako Arifari** (Benin) congratulated Rwanda for driving forward a new impetus for development based on the active participation of women.

Benin recognized the value of women and the importance of treating women equally to men. The world had no choice but to fight for gender equality and to win the battle. It was the only way to overcome challenges such as climate change and insecurity. Gender equality was therefore at the heart of the politics of Benin.

Benin had taken a number of steps to ensure equal participation of women in society. First, from 2023 onwards, 27% of parliamentary seats would be reserved for women. It was a positive step forward given the country had never had more than 8% women in Parliament. Second, a very punishing law had been introduced to combat sexual harassment in schools and universities. The law had already led to the imprisonment of a number of teachers and university professors. Third, a woman's institute had been set up to promote research on gender equality as well as to monitor and defend women's rights. Fourth, the Parliament had widened the scope of its abortion law allowing girls who fell pregnant to have an abortion if having a baby would negatively affect their studies or career. It was, however, unclear how the change in law would be implemented. Parliament had also been accused of being too progressive.

**Mr. Z. Mojskerc** (Slovenia) said that the world had made progress on gender equality since the adoption of the IPU *Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments* but could not afford to be complacent. It was worrying that certain hard-won rights were being eroded by events such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

International indicators had shown that the situation of women in Slovenia had been deteriorating, with more and more women being subjected to violence, humiliation and intimidation. That said, the recent elections had brought hope since 40% of the elected parliamentarians were women. In addition, for the first time in history, a woman had been elected as President of the National Assembly.

Slovenia recognized the importance of upholding gender equality and paid attention to the issue in legislation and policy. It was currently preparing a new resolution aiming to combat sexism in the work of Parliament. A woman parliamentarians club had been established which gave priority to women's issues. There was also a Commission on Petitions, Human Rights and Equal Opportunities responsible for monitoring human rights, including women's rights. Lastly, a parliamentary code of ethics was in force with provisions on accountability, dignity and respect.

Positive discrimination, such as quotas, were an essential foundation for gender parity but were not sufficient. The quota system in Slovenia had increased the representation of women somewhat but not dramatically. The only real way to make progress was to change mindsets and eliminate prejudices. Both men and women must work towards that goal.

Parliaments must set an example to society by taking a zero-tolerance approach to sexism. If parliaments consistently condemned bad behaviour, then society would follow.

**Mr. A.E. Ntugu Nsa** (Equatorial Guinea) said that women must be given access to a good education, a good job, quality healthcare, land rights and other basic necessities. They were also entitled to a life free of violence. Equal treatment of women would not only improve a woman's quality of life but would also lead to economic growth and an improved quality of life for the community. Gender equality was both a public and private issue which must be cultivated at the country level as well as at the level of the family and the community. It was only possible to build strong and vibrant democracies if parliaments were inclusive of the entire population, including women.

Gender equality had been a recurrent theme on the agenda of his Government. A quota had been adopted requiring all State bodies to be composed of at least 35% women. The quota would be applied for the first time during the elections in November 2022. A ministry responsible for gender issues had also been set up and efforts were being made to introduce gender-sensitive legislation and policies. Gender equality had been mainstreamed throughout the whole of Parliament with men and women attributed the same responsibilities on promoting gender equality in their parliamentary work. In addition, the President of the Senate and the Vice-Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies were both women.

Despite the above achievements, Equatorial Guinea was mindful that more work was needed to implement its international commitments on gender equality.

**Mr. J. Fridriksson** (Iceland) said that gender equality was a priority for the Icelandic Government, both domestically and internationally. Great efforts had been put into advancing public debate and research on gender issues. The subject remained an integral part of the national policy on social wellbeing.

Iceland had topped the Global Gender Gap Index for 13 years in a row, making it the country with the narrowest gender gap in the world. In particular, it ranked high on women's educational achievement and political empowerment. Currently, 47.6% of parliamentarians in Iceland were women, including the Prime Minister. The country, however, was aspiring to do even better.

Iceland was of the conviction that gender equality was a human right. He pointed out that the struggle for gender equality tended to be most successful in countries where socioeconomic rights were more developed. It was important to engage men in the fight for women's rights. Men were encouraged to change traditional perceptions of manhood and question power dynamics in their actions.

His Government had recently introduced several gender equality laws. One of those was the amendment to the Penal Code which aimed to tackle gender-based violence online. There was also a law requiring companies to have at least 40% women on their executive boards.

Woman's financial independence was key to ending gender inequalities. An enabling environment must be created for women to participate equally in the labour market. For instance, affordable childcare and paid parental leave should be available for all genders. To achieve sustainable peace, women must also play an equal part in peace processes and post-conflict reconstruction.

The COVID-19 pandemic had rolled back years of progress on gender. Women and girls were also at greater risk as a result of the deteriorating peace and security situation. He condemned the Russian invasion of Ukraine which had had devastating consequences on innocent civilians.

**Mr. N.M. Mdluli** (Eswatini) said that the Constitution of Eswatini gave women the right to equal treatment, including equal opportunities in political, economic and social activities. Governments were obliged to provide the facilities necessary to enhance the welfare of women and help them realize their full potential. There was also a provision on ensuring the full integration of women in economic development. Lastly, the Constitution set out the right of women and other marginalized groups to equitable representation in Parliament and other public structures.

Eswatini had put in place a number of gender equality laws. For example, there was a law requiring the House of Assembly to have at least 30% women members and a law requiring the Senate to have at least 50% women members.

No barriers existed in Eswatini, substantively, structurally or culturally, to women's full participation in decision-making positions. Both houses had a fair number of women members. The parliamentary committees and country delegations also had a good number of women representatives.

**Ms. V.E. Marques Lemos Martins** (Timor-Leste) said that the world was living through many crises, none of which were gender neutral. The COVID-19 pandemic had resulted in increased violence against women and hit women harder than men in economic terms. Similarly, women refugees were at greater risk of sexual exploitation, trafficking and forced marriage. Multiple crises threatened to reverse the progress already made on gender equality.

Gender equality was good for sustainable development, peace and the environment. Evidence showed that building gender parity in governance structures resulted in better policies. Parliaments must tackle inequalities in practice and in law. Parliamentary actions must be grounded in a strong, gender-sensitive legal and policy framework.

Timor-Leste had brought a remarkable number of women into Parliament. It currently had the highest proportion of women parliamentarians in Asia (40%) thanks to a 33% quota in elections. In addition, Parliament had made gender equality a cross-cutting objective in its Strategic Plan 2017-2022. Measures included introducing mechanisms to mainstream gender into parliamentary work and setting up a woman's caucus to work on women's empowerment.

There was still a long way to go on gender equality and parliamentarians were encouraged to continue paving the way forward. The fight for gender equality started with the recognition that equality was about humanity. There was an urgent need to get rid of outdated paradigms and find new ways to make society more open and inclusive.

**Mr. F. Zon** (Vice-Chair, Global Organization of Parliamentarians against Corruption (GOPAC)) said that corruption disproportionately affected vulnerable populations, including women and children. More than US\$ 2.6 trillion was lost to corruption annually, not only affecting economic growth but also aggravating existing gender inequalities. Evidence showed that having more women in parliament was correlated to having lower levels of corruption. Yet, women only represented 26.1% of total parliamentary seats worldwide.

Anti-corruption and gender equality efforts were mutually reinforcing. It was important to strengthen synergies between the two areas. Transparent public accountability and governance systems that were responsive to women's needs were imperative in reducing the gendered impact of corruption.

GOPAC was a platform for parliamentarians to work together on corruption and good governance. It pushed for greater presence of women in legislative bodies and key policymaking positions as well as for gender equality assessments in public recruitment processes. Parliaments around the world must implement gender-responsive budgeting and include women in the process. Lastly, he called for more gender-sensitive anti-corruption policies and more corruption-sensitive gender policies. To that end, parliaments should engage with women's groups and civil society organizations.

**Ms. S. Freizer Gunes** (Regional Advisor for Governance, Peace and Security for Europe and Central Asia, UN Women) said that parliaments had a key role to play in creating gender equal societies. As both lawmakers and overseers of legislation, parliamentarians were the real drivers of change.

She congratulated the parliaments that had achieved gender parity and encouraged those who had not to apply temporary special measures or quotas. Quotas helped to fast-track gender parity in parliament. However, it was not only about numbers but also about the impact women could make in elected office. She encouraged parliamentarians to focus on adopting gender-responsive legislation. Discriminatory laws held back women and girls from reaching their full potential and had stunted progress towards the SDGs. There was also a need to ensure gender-responsive policies and budgets as well as to introduce measures to reduce violence against women in politics.

Lastly, UN Women stood with women and girls in Afghanistan, Ukraine, Yemen, the Islamic Republic of Iran and elsewhere who had shown great courage in their fight for their basic human rights.

**Mr. S. Boule** (Senior Specialist, Parliamentary Affairs, Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria) said that, to make progress on HIV, it was essential to remove gender-related barriers to healthcare. In sub-Saharan Africa, adolescent girls and young women were disproportionately impacted by HIV. Between 2018 and 2020, the Global Fund had increased investments into HIV prevention and testing for adolescent girls and young women by 107% in its 13 priority countries. The key elements of a comprehensive package of services included: (1) making adolescent-friendly HIV prevention interventions; (2) introducing comprehensive sexuality education; (3) scaling up HIV treatment programmes; (4) keeping girls in school; (5) providing safe spaces for girls to raise concerns; (6) equipping young women to be economically independent; (7) preventing and responding to gender-based violence; and (8) ensuring adolescent girls and young women could participate in programme design and implementation. Ending HIV for adolescent girls and young women meant working with boys and men to transform sociocultural norms that continued to drive infections. Men at high risk of HIV infection must be tested and supported to start and stay on treatment. Failing to provide sufficient funding would cause a dramatic increase in HIV. Parliamentarians were key to building a HIV-free world.

**Mr. M.R. Majidi** (Secretary General, Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA)) said that promoting the status of women was one of the key objectives of the APA. The APA had adopted a resolution which underlined the need to pass legislation that facilitated women's representation in APA parliaments. Parliamentarians were encouraged to lead by example and place the interests of women at the heart of policy and decision-making. There was also a need to conduct awareness-raising campaigns to increase women's political participation and promote gender equality in the national culture. The APA had decided to coordinate an annual meeting of women parliamentarians from the region with a view to improving gender equality.

One of the plagues affecting democracy and women's rights was fake news. He warned delegates not to be manipulated by the media.

**Mr. J. Matiya** (Deputy Secretary General, Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)) said that the CPA was committed to strengthening gender representation and parity in all CPA parliaments. It had recently amended its Constitution to increase women's representation on the Executive Committee and within delegations to the annual conference. While there were numerous examples of women changemakers across the Commonwealth, the responsibility to re-gender parliaments should not be seen as an additional burden placed on women parliamentarians alone. Gender equality could only be achieved when all stakeholders came together to address harmful practices, procedures, rules, behaviours, barriers and cultures.

Parliaments must strive to become gender-sensitive institutions by including gender perspectives in all aspects of their work, including legislation, oversight, budgeting and representation. The CPA was continuing its own work in that regard. It had recently published the *CPA Gender Sensitising Parliaments Guidelines* and was encouraging CPA parliaments to conduct gender-sensitive audits of their own institutions. The audits should be based on four dimensions: (1) equality of participation in parliament; (2) parliamentary infrastructure; (3) parliamentary culture; and (4) gender equality policy. A seven-step field guide had also been developed to support parliaments in the audit process.

**Mr. M. Madhioub** (Tunisia) said that women had played a significant role in Tunisian independence as well as in the Jasmine Revolution. Following the revolution, Tunisia had created a democratic State which honoured women. However, in July 2022, the country had experienced a coup d'état which had brought a great deal of turmoil. Men and women had been threatened and did not have access to healthcare. He called on the IPU to help Tunisia recover its democracy.

**Mr. R.E. Nailatikau** (Fiji) said that gender equality and women's empowerment were crucial for sustainable development and inclusive growth. Yet, women remained far behind their male counterparts in politics and leadership.

In Fiji, during the 2018 election, only 10 out of 51 members elected to Parliament were women. The number had increased to 11 following the resignation of a male parliamentarian in 2020. Similarly, in 2018, women had accounted for only 24% of election candidates. The underrepresentation of women in the Parliament of Fiji reflected the broader gender inequality in society which was perpetuated by traditional culture. That said, Fiji ranked higher on gender parity than many other Pacific island countries where the average percentage of women parliamentarians was 9%.

Parliamentarians could make parliament a more welcoming and socially inclusive space by becoming more gender-sensitive and by introducing mechanisms that attracted aspiring women leaders. The Parliament of Fiji had already taken steps in that direction. There was a standing order in force which mandated parliamentary committees to undertake gender analysis when reviewing legislation and policies. A gender toolkit was available to assist them in the task. It was important that progressive rules were accompanied with guidance on how to incorporate them into parliamentary practices. One of the positive impacts of the above standing order was that government ministries and statutory bodies now included data on gender in their submissions to the committees as well as in their annual reports. By including gender analysis in the work of the committees, it was possible to ensure that the issues affecting women and girls were always included in decision-making processes.

The Parliament of Fiji had set up the Commonwealth Women's Parliamentary Fiji Group which aimed to build the capacities of women parliamentarians. It often undertook social work and advocacy on women's issues such as breast cancer, post-disaster relief for women and HIV/AIDS. In addition, much of group's work was about encouraging Fijian women to become leaders and politicians.

**Ms. L. Saint Paul** (France), commencing the segment of the debate reserved for second speakers said that legal measures were not enough for women to be elected in France. By law, all political parties must have a 50/50 ratio between men and women on their electoral lists. However, women had often been listed in voting areas that had been deemed impossible to win. It had required a great deal of political will on the part of the President to place women in areas where they could really win. She believed that strength was in numbers. The participation of women was not in question when women were in equal numbers as men. It was her view that women citizens wished to see women's issues, such as miscarriage and domestic violence, being addressed by women parliamentarians. Quoting Simone De Beauvoir, she said that women's rights should never be taken for granted.

**Mr. T. Yamada** (Japan) said that Japan did not rank highly in some international gender equality indices. In 2018, the Japanese Government had addressed the matter by passing the Act on Promotion of Gender Equality in the Political Field and the results were beginning to materialize. In recent elections, record numbers of women had stood as candidates and more women had been elected than ever before. Furthermore, in 2022, Japan had passed a children's law and a law to create an agency for children and families.

Japan would continue to promote gender equality and child welfare domestically and around the world. It was important to do so in a way that was aligned with the Japanese sociocultural context and did not sacrifice freedom of expression.

**Mr. M. Nandlall** (Guyana) said that his Government supported equality in all its facets and sought to strike down discrimination whenever it raised its ugly head. He pledged his country's unwavering support to the IPU as it strived for gender equality. Quoting Martin Luther King, Jr., he said that peace was not the absence of war but the presence of justice. Inequality in any form, including gender inequality, was the very antithesis of justice. Without justice, there could be no peace.

Gender equality was entrenched in the Charter of the United Nations and enshrined in the Constitutions and laws of most countries. However, the reality was starkly different. Only 3 of the 193 countries surveyed by the IPU had 50% women in their Parliaments. As many as 143 countries had a composition of less than 30% women and several countries had no women representation at all. It was clear that there was much more work to do. A good place to start was with legislation that facilitated gender parity in parliament. Parliaments should continue to canvass for the removal of all institutional and systematic structures that perpetuated gender inequality across national apparatuses.

**Ms. M. Rempel Garner** (Canada) implored the IPU to recognize that equality meant more than filling quotas across the world. Parliamentarians must ensure that women in politics had both parity in numbers and real power in decision-making processes. Tokenization was not equality but a way to perpetuate the patriarchy. In conjunction with efforts to increase numbers, the IPU must work to ensure that women parliamentarians were free to constructively criticize their own political parties or governments and to enact legislative change. Most importantly, women must be able to do so without having to fight through layers of patriarchal roadblocks and without facing reprisals, demotion, harassment or violence. Access to parliament should not just be for women deemed acceptable by the political ruling class. A woman's age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religious denomination or appearance should not determine whether she had access to political decision-making. She encouraged all colleagues to reject tokenization and to fight for women to be truly equal participants in political processes.

**Mr. O. Trellevik** (Norway) said that there were many benefits to including women in the workforce, such as increased economic growth, as had been the case in Norway. Women could also be a resource in business management. Norway was the first country in the world to introduce a legal requirement for 40% of board members in all publicly owned and listed companies to be women. The best leadership talent could only be secured if women were recruited alongside men.

He strongly condemned the Russian Federation for attacking Ukrainian civilians and civilian infrastructure. Attacks against civilians were war crimes. Norway had a common border with the Russian Federation and was concerned about an escalation of the conflict. War was no solution to conflict and in no way helped gender equality. It was often women and children who suffered most.

**Mr. Z. Beleniuk** (Ukraine) said that, although he was from Ukraine, his father had come from Rwanda. In recent decades, relations between Ukraine and Africa had not been close. Ukraine had been too busy fighting an oppressor but now wished to build bridges of cooperation. His personal story had shown that Ukraine and Africa were closer than one might think. Many Africans were also studying in Ukraine.

He had a dream that Ukraine and Africa could live together as one big family, no longer indifferent to each other's concerns and united in a spirit of fraternity.

**Mr. M. Cantú González** (Mexico) said that Mexico had made huge advances on women's participation in politics but still had a long way to go. Women's quotas had been introduced for elections which had increased the proportion of women parliamentarians to 50%. There were also

equal numbers of men and women in the cabinet. Mexico was close to electing its first female President thus setting an example for many young women. Progress was also being made in the area of educational opportunities, equal pay and higher positions for women in Congress.

It goes without saying that reversing decades of gender inequality was not easy. However, Mexico was finding solutions on many different fronts and had a bright future ahead in terms of gender equality.

**Ms. H. Hakobyan** (Armenia) said that 38 out of the 103 deputies in the Armenian Parliament were women. However, she wished to focus her remarks on the role of Armenian women in the battlefield.

On September 13, Azerbaijan had unleashed a new aggression against the sovereign State of Armenia which had been accompanied by war crimes, including cases of intentional targeting of civilians. There was a great deal of evidence of torture, extrajudicial killings and cruel treatment of Armenian prisoners of war. The bodies of Armenian servicewomen had been mutilated, stripped and videotaped by Azerbaijani servicemen and then published on social media networks. The video footage showed piles of mutilated and beheaded Armenian soldiers, including servicewomen, next to Azerbaijani soldiers who stood by laughing and joking.

The servicewomen had been killed with horrific cruelty not only because they were Armenians, not only because they were soldiers, but because they were women. Such atrocities were part of a consistent policy of Armenophobia carried out by the Azerbaijani State in all spheres of public life. The international community could help prevent such war crimes by stopping the Azerbaijani aggression.

**A representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran**, speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that her country was a pioneer in promoting the inherent rights and dignity of all human beings, including women. It did so in accordance with Islamic teachings and with its Constitution.

She rejected the baseless allegations made by the delegations of Norway, New Zealand and the Netherlands which were clear violations of the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of sovereign States. The case of Mahsa Amini had been addressed by the executive, judiciary and legislative bodies of Iran. She advised the above delegations to examine the situation in their own countries before throwing accusations at the Islamic Republic of Iran. Norway, in particular, was urged to address the abuses carried out against the Sami people. She asked why the said delegations had not yet issued a statement condemning the coercive, unilateral sanctions of the Government of the United States of America which had caused the deaths of thousands of Iranian women and children.

*The sitting rose at 13:00.*

## Sitting of Friday, 14 October

(Afternoon)

*The sitting was called to order at 14:30 with Ms. D. Mukabalisa (Rwanda), President of the Assembly, in the Chair.*

### Item 3 of the agenda (continued)

#### **General Debate on the theme *Gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments as drivers of change for a more resilient and peaceful world*** (A/145/3-Inf.1)

**Ms. Y.-O. Rhie** (Germany), commencing the segment of the debate reserved for young parliamentarians, said that the number of young women in politics – and parliaments especially – was astonishingly low. To be in her position was a hard-earned privilege never to be taken for granted. The dire consequences of conflicts invariably started by men were habitually suffered by women such as those fleeing from Putin's barbaric war in Ukraine. Those women remained impressively strong, a trait also seen in Iraqi and Iranian women demanding their rights and freedoms, despite the threat of violence or death. The world stood ever in solidarity with such women, who would achieve a full and deserved victory in all their fights.

**Mr. D. Carden** (United Kingdom) said that women's continuing fight for political representation must include all marginalized and persecuted people, including those with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) identities, who in many countries were still criminalized. LGBT rights were human rights, which were universal and could not be redefined or limited on grounds of cultural exception. A hard fight had been waged in the United Kingdom to achieve the gayest parliament in the world and equal marriage as a right. Such rights had to be defended daily. All the IPU Members must find the courage to support LGBT activists and be on the right side of history.

**Ms. S. Unnopporn** (Thailand) said that Thai political parties and voters alike were keen to see more young women elected to parliament in 2023, which would bring women's representation in Thailand closer to the global average. Reaffirming its commitment to equality, inclusiveness and diversity, the Thai Parliament had a standing committee on women and LGBT+ persons and was set to legalize same-sex marriage and civil partnership. Gender equality should not be championed by women alone but must be promoted by all. It began in homes, schools, communities and indeed parliaments, with everyone playing their part in fostering positive gender attitudes and making their societies better.

**Mr. M. Al-Mannai** (Qatar) said that, thanks to good governance and policies focused on promoting gender equality and eliminating gender-based discrimination, women and men in his country had equal opportunity of access to employment, senior positions and quality education, with more women graduates than men. Measures for achieving social justice were in place and no effort was spared in contributing towards international peace and security, including through the peaceful resolution of conflict. Qatar was also working hard to attain the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially those relating to the environment, and invited all to visit during the upcoming eco-friendly World Cup competition and see its achievements for themselves.

**Ms. S.P. Obono Edjang** (Equatorial Guinea) said that the many key discriminatory factors preventing women's full participation in society and access to top positions included lack of education and training, early marriage and pregnancy, inadequate support, and traditional attitudes. Recognized as drivers of change and backed by a legal framework promoting gender equality, Equatorial Guinean women had attained high office and were involved in important



decision-making. The proportion of seats held by women in parliament, for which party quotas were only voluntary, stood at 22% and the President of the Senate was a woman. Gender-sensitive policymaking and budgeting were prerequisites for gender equality in parliaments and elsewhere.

**Ms. F. Payman** (Australia) said that gender-sensitive parliaments must be considered in particular from the perspective of young women, whose political inclusion and engagement were vital for democracy. The majority of senators in Australia, including herself as the fifth youngest in its history, were women. Generally, however, barriers such as gender inequality and power imbalances skewed young women's perception of politics as a legitimate career option. The Australian Parliament was therefore implementing a road map for making it a more diverse, gender-equal and family-friendly workplace allowing young women and people of diverse backgrounds to perceive it as a welcoming space for them as role models.

**Ms. T. Suzuki** (Japan) said that women should not be compelled to forsake their choices in life owing to pregnancy, childbirth or female health issues. Having been accused during her own pregnancy of dereliction of duty and abandonment of her parliamentary career, she supported women's use of femtech, or female technology, to overcome such challenges by quantifying and giving visibility to difficulties faced by women so as to foster men's greater understanding. Gender equality should not be pursued solely by women for women. It led to respect for diversity and to a richer and more peaceful world and should be championed by all, for all.

**Mr. W. Cervini** (Uruguay), noting that his country's Vice-President and Senate President was a woman, said that the legislated quota of 30% of seats for women in the Uruguayan Parliament was no guarantee of a swift increase in the current figure, which was just above the global average of 25%. Rather, a cultural shift was needed to alter the mindset of voters who believed that the responsibility of caring for children and the home lay with women exclusively. Such a shift would free women – who were demonstrably capable of performing the same work as men – and bring about true parity as a matter of course.

**Mr. S. Tynkkynen** (Finland) said that the magnitude of challenges to gender equality was country-dependent, with women in some instances facing heavy restrictions on their freedom of choice, including to vote independently. In others, women activists and female family members of opposition politicians were threatened with sexual violence. The fallout from such events extended to democracy itself owing to diminishing numbers of women electoral candidates. In over 20 countries, the proportion of women parliamentarians was below 10%. To rest on laurels and neglect the global challenges to gender equality would only further jeopardize the goal of a more peaceful world.

**Mr. E. Eriksen** (Norway) said that all nations could do better on gender equality but that not everything could be solved by laws. The Norwegian experience was that women more often than men moved away from politics when establishing a family, pointing to the need for action to change that statistic. It was shameful that women politicians with children should be called into question as mothers. With the right measures in place to make it easier for women to combine politics with family life, parliaments would perhaps be able to match the Rwandan example of a women's representation of 60%.

**Ms. E. Ernst-Dziedzic** (Austria) said that women's rights were human rights and were in distress, as epitomized by the horrible accounts of Ukrainian women's experiences, women always being those most affected in any conflict. Inequality was exacerbated – not caused – by conflict. Building peace and democracy had to include the whole of society and depended on human security, including an absence of women's persecution on any grounds, as much as on military security. That human dimension was often forgotten when women were missing from politics. For politics to capture the reality of citizens' lives, all parts of society must be represented, as in Rwanda's fine example.

**Mr. S. Patra** (India) said that young women in his country were transforming and revolutionizing the nation and beyond. Using State-provided microcredit, women's self-help groups were promoting socioeconomic development and empowerment within families and communities. Women's political empowerment and participation in governance had similarly increased under the village administration system in which 50% of seats were reserved for women. The current Indian

President was a woman who had risen from humble beginnings, showing that all was possible in the new India, where merit and talent were key. Indian youth appealed to the world to unite, reconcile and build peace for the security of all.

*The General Debate was adjourned.*

*Ms. C.G. Hara (Malawi), Vice-President of the Assembly, took the Chair.*

Item 7 of the agenda  
(continued)

**Adoption of a draft resolution on the emergency item: *Condemnation of the invasion of Ukraine and of the subsequent annexation of territories, in defence of the territorial integrity of all States***  
(A/145/7-DR)

**The Chair** drew attention to a draft resolution on the emergency item entitled *Condemnation of the invasion of Ukraine and of the subsequent annexation of territories, in defence of the territorial integrity of all States*, which had been prepared by the drafting committee composed for that purpose and was set out in document A/145/7-DR.

**Mr. F. Shivambu** (South Africa), Rapporteur, presenting the draft resolution and noting that Members, including those perhaps guided by or wishing to comply with the foreign policies of their respective countries, had the right to abstain from supporting the text, said that the drafting committee had comprised members of the delegations of Canada, Chile, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, New Zealand, Oman, Peru and the United Republic of Tanzania, in addition to his own delegation of South Africa. The committee's sometimes tense deliberations had been professionally and respectfully chaired by Ms. Rempel Garner of Canada, whom he thanked along with the committee members for having worked assiduously to overcome numerous differences of opinion. Those differences notwithstanding, all had agreed that an end to the war in Ukraine was the only way to end the current suffering, with the IPU playing an important role in facilitating dialogue between the two countries concerned. After outlining the content of the operative paragraphs of the text and emphasizing the importance of collaborative efforts towards a peaceful solution, he commended the draft resolution to the Assembly for adoption.

**Ms. M. Rempel Garner** (Canada), Chair of the drafting committee, in expressing her thanks to all committee members, the Rapporteur and the IPU Secretariat, said that the committee's discussions had been heated and passionate but deeply respectful nonetheless in the quest to understand differences and reach consensus. Her involvement in discussions that exemplified what the IPU did best had been a wonderful experience.

**The Chair** said she took it that the Assembly wished to adopt the draft resolution set out in document A/145/7-DR.

*It was so decided.*

**Representatives of India, South Africa, Mozambique and South Sudan** said that their delegations had abstained from supporting the resolution.

**A representative of Yemen** said that his delegation had also abstained, taking the view that all peoples should be treated equally. A war had been ongoing in Yemen for eight years, yet there had been no comparable response from the international community, including the IPU.

**Mr. Z. Mojškerc** (Slovenia), expressing his delegation's strong support for the resolution, said that the visit conducted to Ukraine in March 2022 by three courageous statesmen, the Prime Ministers of Slovenia, the Czech Republic and Poland, had marked a first turning point in the war by giving Ukraine much-needed moral support for its continuing fight. Slovenia would join in all condemnation of the unprovoked aggression against Ukraine, the illegal annexation of four regions and Crimea, and human rights violations perpetrated by the aggressor.

**A representative of Timor-Leste** said that her delegation also strongly supported the resolution in view of the solidarity it expressed with the people of Ukraine in their immense suffering caused by the brutality of the war and human rights violations in their land, which it condemned.

**Ms. H. Baldwin** (United Kingdom) said that the emphasis placed in the resolution on opposition to the annexation of territories and on the territorial integrity of States was very pleasing. The United Kingdom could not remain neutral on issues of such significance for global peace. Failure as an Assembly to hold the line on those issues would be to throw away a great deal of work by the international community. The dialogue and near unanimous adoption of the resolution on the issue had been important, as no one could be truly neutral in the face of territorial aggression as terrible as that carried out by the Russian Federation.

**A representative of Georgia**, expressing strong support for the resolution and Ukrainian territorial integrity and sovereignty, said that her country was facing similar challenges from Russian occupation of its territories and welcomed the international recognition that such practices by the Russian Federation were unacceptable and had to stop.

**A representative of Canada**, congratulating the drafting committee on the outcome of its work, said that his delegation supported the resolution because it sought a peaceful resolution of the war. The process culminating in the adoption of the resolution by consensus clearly showed that dialogue worked. The Ukrainian people could always be assured of Canadian support.

**Mr. J.M.R. Edwards** (Chile), in thanking Members for their adoption of a resolution initiated by his delegation, said that bullying dictators appeared to believe that they could treat their people and neighbours as they wished and that suffering inflicted through their crimes was a necessary means to an end. The resolution sent a clear message that attacks on neighbours – or indeed any country – were attacks on the whole of humanity and that dictators and their cronies would be relentlessly pursued to justice.

**A representative of Italy** said that his delegation firmly welcomed the adoption of the resolution by consensus and strongly supported the fight for freedom being waged by the Ukrainian people and army, which was a fight for the freedom of the entire world.

**A representative of France** said that, in adopting the resolution and sending a powerful message to the Russian dictator intent on wiping Ukraine off the map, Members had collectively demonstrated that the founding ideals of the IPU were no less relevant than in 1889. Members could also feel safe in the knowledge that togetherness would advance their cause, with the resolution paving the way towards a new phase.

**A representative of Germany** said that he welcomed the adoption of a second IPU resolution on Ukraine and urged the Russian Federation to stop its senseless war, with its killings, bloodshed, bombings, rapes and other horrors, which was a war against freedom, democracy and the rules-based international order.

**A representative of the Czech Republic** said that his delegation strongly supported the resolution and its aim of bringing peace and justice to the Ukrainian people. Along with UN General Assembly resolution ES-11/4, it sent a robust message to the Russian Federation that it could not act as it pleased.

**A representative of Argentina**, welcoming the adoption of the resolution by consensus, said that no one could remain indifferent to war or to human rights violations. It was important to recognize the disparity between instigators and victims of war and also to implement Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security without delay to ensure women's greater involvement in peacemaking. The probability was that there would be less war and more peace if greater numbers of women were in high-level positions.

**A representative of Ireland** said that his country, while militarily neutral and not belonging to any military pact, was not neutral or blind to aggression or barbarism. In the face of Ukraine's continuing suffering, it was critical for the world parliamentarians gathered at the Assembly to demand an end to the Russian aggression and a restoration of peace and the rule of law.

**Ms. L. Vasylenko** (Ukraine), expressing gratitude on behalf of all Ukrainians to the drafting committee, support teams and the IPU Secretariat for their exemplary work on the resolution, said that her delegation would be taking back to Ukraine the global support from all corners of the world that its people truly deserved. The IPU had stood together in unity and in full support of the values paramount to the peaceful coexistence of nations. Ukraine looked forward to the continuation of that unity until the Russian aggression against its territory and all others had ended once and for all.

**A representative of Bolivia** said that all six members of his delegation, including the four who had abstained from supporting the resolution, disagreed with the cruel Russian military attack on Ukraine, which endangered the lives of women and children in particular. The delegation urged the Russian Federation to leave Ukrainian territory immediately and definitively.

**A representative of Austria** said that his was another neutral country that was never neutral when sovereignty was not respected. His delegation therefore fully supported the condemnation of the invasion of Ukraine and the subsequent annexation of Ukrainian territories. It hoped that the IPU Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war could contribute to ending the killing of innocent Ukrainian people.

**Ms. R. Kavakci Kan** (Türkiye) said that her country would continue to do its utmost to bring about an end to the war and always looked to support members of the international community in need of help.

**A representative of Spain** said that the outcome of the work on the emergency item demonstrated that, 133 years after its establishment, the IPU remained ever relevant and efficacious in its defence of democracy, freedom, State sovereignty, territorial integrity, human rights and, above all, peace and security.

*Mr. D. Pacheco (Portugal), President of the IPU, took the Chair.*

#### **Special accountability segment of the General Debate: Follow-up actions by Members on IPU resolutions and other decisions**

**The President**, introducing the special accountability segment and recalling the customary practice of following up in an Assembly on the implementation of the outcomes from the previous Assembly, said that the outcomes in the case of the 144th Assembly in Nusa Dua were: the Nusa Dua Declaration entitled *Getting to zero: Mobilizing parliaments to act on climate change*; a resolution entitled *Peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine, respecting international law, the Charter of the United Nations and territorial integrity*; a resolution entitled *Rethinking and reframing the approach to peace processes with a view to fostering lasting peace*; and a resolution entitled *Leveraging Information and Communication Technology as an enabler for the education sector, including in times of pandemic*. In addition, decisions of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians had been adopted. Delegates would be invited to share information on their implementation of those outcomes following a presentation on reporting by Members on IPU-related activities.

**Ms. A. Filip** (IPU Director for Member Parliaments and External Relations), accompanying with a slide presentation her report on reporting by Members on IPU-related activities, said that the obligation for all Members to submit an annual report of their activities, pursuant to Article 6 of the IPU Statutes, had been further reinforced by the emphasis placed in the new IPU Strategy on accountability at all levels.

In May 2022, the IPU had circulated a survey to Members inviting feedback on questions relating to IPU outcomes from the two previous Assemblies in Madrid and Nusa Dua. Over 90% of respondents had confirmed that those outcomes had been communicated to their respective Governments and parliaments, with some 65% confirming that their specialized committees had also been informed of them in the light of follow-up deliberations. Only around 40% of respondents reported having taken follow-up action. Some parliaments had not responded to all questions and almost one half of those invited to submit responses had not done so, which was a concern. The IPU was grateful to all those parliaments that had responded to the survey and to the 40 or more parliaments that had submitted voluntary reports. As had been requested by the President, parliaments failing to comply with their statutory reporting obligation would continue to be flagged for attention at each Assembly.

Details of selected good practices were set out in the full report, the annex to which also contained many further examples of follow-up actions. Good practices highlighted in the document included those by the Parliaments of Benin, China and the United Kingdom showing the impact of IPU decisions on various aspects of their work; of Gabon and the Philippines in successfully promoting the ratification of the Arms Trade Treaty by their respective Governments, for which they had won recognition from the UN Secretariat; of New Zealand, Sweden and the United Kingdom in conducting awareness activities in the area of disarmament; of Belgium and Mauritius on climate change; and of Bahrain, Ecuador and Paraguay in making good use of IPU tools.

The IPU thanked delegations, notably those of Costa Rica and Switzerland, for their recommendations on ways of enhancing the reporting exercise, such as by fostering a community of peer reviews, dedicating time in Assemblies to an implementation review, and empowering the Standing Committees to report systematically on the implementation of resolutions they had negotiated, which was a matter currently under consideration by their respective bureaux. Further recommendations were to encourage the geopolitical groups to organize debates on implementation at times other than during statutory assemblies, which the IPU was encouraging in view of the important role of those groups in the process, and to strengthen provisions in the IPU Statutes and Rules so as to improve compliance.

The IPU also encouraged Members to circulate their reports of Assembly proceedings widely within parliament, together with copies of adopted resolutions, so as to familiarize their colleagues with the IPU and its activities and at the same time enrich their work. Members were similarly encouraged to invite government officials to hearings, promote specialized committee debates on Assembly topics and resolutions, and review and update legislation in keeping with global commitments. The IPU looked forward to engaging systematically with Members in their reporting and was heartened by the number of delegations wishing to share information on efforts within their own parliaments to implement IPU resolutions and decisions.

**The President**, thanking Ms. Filip for her presentation, said that it was good to learn that most parliaments had taken steps to engage in follow-up activities. He invited delegations to speak about the endeavours of their own parliaments in that respect.

**Mr. R.E. Nailatikau** (Fiji) said that the Fijian Parliament continued to support government initiatives on climate change, including by approving substantial funding for investment in infrastructure, climate and energy initiatives. Climate change action was mainstreamed in national development plans, with objectives and priorities aligned with the related SDGs. In 2021, Fiji had passed an important climate change law embodying, in a world first, a clear commitment to the Paris Agreement. Providing a comprehensive framework for response to the climate emergency, that law recognized the right to a healthy environment and covered long-term net-zero commitments alongside a range of other climate-related issues. Parliament also exercised its oversight function, including through its standing committees, to hold government to account on all its climate change commitments. As one of the most vulnerable to climate change and climate-related disasters, Fiji could not afford to procrastinate and would continue to take real action on climate change.

**A representative of Canada** said that his country had committed significant finance towards the creation of an SDG coordination unit and an SDG funding programme to increase public awareness, support new partnerships, and identify and implement innovative initiatives. In recent years, it had submitted a voluntary national review, launched a national sustainable development strategy, updated its federal sustainable development strategy, and adopted a feminist international assistance policy. Under a new law, national emission reduction targets and accountability mechanisms were to be established for achieving the climate target by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2050. The legal framework had been amended to broaden the scope of the federal sustainable development strategy and increase transparency and accountability. Through their standing and special committees, Canadian parliamentarians played an important oversight role on issues relating to sustainable development, with parliamentary committees additionally allowing for a consultative process with stakeholders. Parliament also tracked progress by reviewing sustainable development reports and documents.

**Mr. M. Nadir** (Guyana) said that his Parliament – a subscriber to the IPU's *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign – had introduced an annual Christmas outreach programme that, in addition to distributing toys, was aimed at familiarizing under-10s with the symbols of parliament. It

also ran a well-received annual national debating competition for secondary school students and had staged its second successful annual youth parliament for older students, with the best performers subsequently taking part in a Caribbean regional youth parliament. Such events were livestreamed through social media, attracting many viewers and stimulating young people's interest in parliament. Young people were able to tour parliament and learn about parliamentary procedures first-hand from parliamentarians, who also gave talks in schools as part of a countrywide outreach programme. Parliament participated in sponsoring youth sports programmes and, taking into account the popularity of the sport in Guyana, a Speaker's cricket championship involving top international players had been launched.

**Mr. E.M. Snowe Jr** (Parliament of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)) said that the functions of the ECOWAS Parliament were governed by a supplementary act that enhanced its powers with the aim of increasing accountability among ECOWAS Members. In addition to helping to formulate and approving ECOWAS legislation before its signing by the ECOWAS authorities, Parliament exercised oversight of all ECOWAS activities and rendered an opinion by resolution on ECOWAS budgets. Its public accounts committee reviewed the audit reports of all ECOWAS institutions and agencies and, twice annually, the ECOWAS President presented to Parliament a report on the state of the Community and responded to questions raised, with delegations also presenting for debate reports on the political and human rights situations in their respective countries. Parliament conducted fact-finding missions and missions to observe presidential and legislative elections in the ECOWAS region, where the work of its association of female parliamentarians, for which there was a specific budget line, included women's empowerment.

*Ms. R. Kavakci Kan (Türkiye), Vice-President of the Assembly, took the Chair.*

**Mr. H.K. Kamboni** (Zambia) said that, in the light of the Nusa Dua Declaration, all Zambian parliamentarians had agreed to plant 1,000 trees each in an initiative overseen by the Speaker and already proceeding at pace. As forests annually absorbed and stored almost one half of the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, they could be used to strengthen resilience to climate change through eco-based adaptation measures, including sustainable forest management and reforestation as a credible and well-tested framework for reducing carbon emissions. Simply planting trees and leaving them to mature was a means of controlling carbon emissions to help prevent global warming, constituting as such a powerful strategy for mitigating climate change effects. By pursuing that strategy, a very significant contribution could be made to the urgent action needed to halt deforestation, prevent forest degradation and promote the forest restoration key to combating climate change.

**Mr. D. Jositsch** (Switzerland) said that an increasing number of issues such as climate change were global in nature and could not be resolved other than globally. International politics, moreover, were monopolized by governments, with no parliamentary involvement. The IPU was unique as a parliamentary institution and enjoyed a high level of legitimacy for dealing with such issues. To improve the status quo, however, the Swiss delegation had proposed that the Twelve Plus Group should set up a working group on establishing a mechanism for strengthening the implementation of IPU resolutions, which were of high quality and had a unifying perspective but were difficult to enforce. The delegation's suggestion was that, as with other international organizations, the IPU should institute a follow-up process led by the relevant Standing Committee. To strengthen implementation in that manner would also ensure that IPU resolutions contained demands that could be implemented in practice.

**Ms. M. Alsuwaidi** (United Arab Emirates) said that the Nusa Dua Declaration had enhanced understanding of climate change issues among Emirati parliamentarians and informed their review of the country's Net Zero 2050 strategic initiative. In 2023, the Emirates would host the UN Climate Change Conference and a parliamentary meeting to coincide and bring an important parliamentary dimension to its outcomes, which could not be implemented unless compatible with national legislation enacted by parliaments. A digital transformation was in train within the Emirati Parliament, where all work was now paperless. Concerning

gender partnership, one half of Emirati parliamentarians were women, in line with the quota in place. In the 2019 elections, 36% of candidates had been women, while in 2015 the first woman Speaker in the Emirates – and in the Arab world – had been elected. The current Second Deputy Speaker was a woman and women chaired a number of parliamentary committees, with some also heading parliamentary delegations.

**Ms. N. Lanjri** (Belgium) said that the Belgian Parliament had adopted a resolution aimed at making the COVID-19 vaccine a public health asset that was affordable and accessible to all, and a resolution in support of establishing a multilateral mechanism for strengthening and financing universal social protection in low- and middle-income countries. Under a new criminal code on sexual offences, sexual integrity was protected and gender self-identification permitted. The code also devoted an entire section to child sexual exploitation. Online child sexual abuse, including online grooming and livestreaming of such abuse, had furthermore been criminalized. As to action on climate change, Parliament had adopted resolutions on climate-related goals and on use of vegetation indoors to enhance energy efficiency. It was also implementing a comprehensive action plan for greening its buildings in line with those goals through such measures as roof insulation, paper recycling and use of indoor plants.

**Mr. J.V. Ndouma-Mbadinga** (Gabon) said that, after being challenged at the 143rd Assembly in Madrid over the Gabonese failure to ratify the Arms Trade Treaty, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2013, his delegation had approached the Gabonese foreign ministry and parliamentary colleagues to underscore the need for compliance with the commitment to ratify the treaty. As a result, the National Assembly and the Senate had each ratified the treaty in 2022, followed by the Gabonese President's promulgation of a law on its ratification. The instrument of ratification had subsequently been deposited in New York, with final procedures completed just before Gabon had taken up its current membership of the UN Security Council. He urged all IPU Members to encourage their Governments to expedite the process of signing and/or ratifying the treaty if they had not yet done so, taking into account its importance for peace and security, above all in regions plagued by tension and rising terrorism.

**Mr. R. Lozano** (Uruguay) said that, having joined the IPU's *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign, the Uruguayan Parliament had organized a day for young parliamentarians to coincide with the International Day of Democracy. Other young people had been invited to participate and be parliamentarians for a day by engaging in a topical debate. In June 2022, Parliament had jointly organized with the IPU a regional seminar on climate change for parliaments of Latin America and the Caribbean. In addition to a field visit to environmental projects in the country's Maldonado Department, the seminar had included celebrations of the IPU's anniversary in which the IPU President, Secretary General and Executive Committee members had taken part. Last but not least, the Uruguayan Parliament had translated into Spanish the IPU's guidelines for the elimination of sexism, harassment and violence against women, which it had circulated to all Uruguayan parliamentarians and posted on its website.

**Mr. R. Mammadov** (Azerbaijan) said that his country had achieved a solid result in overcoming the problems caused by the occupation of 20% of its territory and was pursuing sustainable development on the basis of national priorities identified as part of mapping the SDGs into existing development plans and strategies. Advocacy events covering a range of subjects had been held in partnership with the UN Office in Azerbaijan and a large-scale meeting of parliamentarians on the SDGs had taken place in 2017. The first in its region and among 12 countries globally to have submitted three voluntary national reviews to the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, Azerbaijan ranked 50th in the Sustainable Development Report 2022. The end of conflict with Armenia created new economic opportunities, including regionally, with rehabilitation, reconstruction and reintegration of the liberated and conflict-ridden areas as a main direction of the country's development priority in coming years.

**Ms. H. Fayez** (Bahrain) said that, as part of keeping pace with rapid technological developments, the Bahraini Parliament had digitized its legal and administrative documentation processes and been paperless since 2018. It had also adopted the use of online voting, an e-wallet system, remote and hybrid meetings, and videoconferencing, e-signature and other technologies to facilitate its work, with related training provided for parliamentarians and parliamentary staff. Concerning children and youth, it had enacted a children's law guaranteeing protection for children and a law approving the country's accession to the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on, respectively, the involvement of children in armed conflict and the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. It had additionally passed laws on restorative justice for children, on the professional practice of sports to further young people's prospects in that domain, and on the establishment of a labour fund to promote employment opportunities.

**Mr. S. Rachkov** (Belarus) said that, with many international peace processes stalled and the tendency of peace agreements be short-lived, a change of approach was urgently needed. Despite the situation prevailing in Belarus since the 2020 elections, the country continued participating in international forums, including the United Nations and parliamentary assemblies, to promote unifying peaceful initiatives. Human security could not be an alternative to traditional security, and State and society had to complement one another. Weakened States, moreover, were unable to protect the interests and individual security of citizens. As current geopolitical realities showed, only sovereign States were able to deliver decent living standards, security and freedom. The imposition of economic and political science models limited opportunities for security and lasting peace, and must stop. Belarus stood ready to reinvigorate relations and broaden diplomatic and parliamentary channels as well as mutually respectful cooperation with all States and international organizations to promote lasting security and peace.

**Mr. W. William** (Seychelles) said that his Parliament had installed solar panels and was harvesting rainwater for toilet flushing and irrigation of a garden it had inaugurated to absorb carbon dioxide in the vicinity, where it had also carried out mangrove restoration. The responsible minister had appeared before a parliamentary committee to provide requested clarifications on national challenges, the nationally determined contribution, future road maps, food security and climate change commitments. The committee had also interacted with the country's biosecurity and biosafety agencies to better understand the national situation and participated in a national consultation on the important Midterm Review of the Sendai Framework and other related agreements. His own actions had included tabling questions on environmental, agricultural and sustainable development matters; motions on balanced deforestation measures; a review of the national food security strategy; and launching a local environmental protection association to carry out district cleaning, beach vegetation restoration and an anti-littering campaign.

**Mr. A. Paredes** (Peru) said that education was recognized as a human right and should be a first priority for all nations. The IPU resolution on leveraging information and communication technology as an enabler for the education sector was highly relevant in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, which had increased discrimination, exclusion and inequality around the world and in rural areas especially. Those without access to the internet and the right equipment were essentially denied their basic right to education, with many falling behind as a result. The Peruvian Parliament was calling for more government efforts to support schools, teachers and families in working to reverse that situation, including through additional budget allocations for teacher training. Each October, World Teachers' Day provided an important opportunity to celebrate teachers and their profession. Education should be the focus of an IPU resolution at the 146th Assembly, as without education nothing would change.

**Mr. L.-G. Pajkic** (Serbia) said that his Parliament was acutely aware of the importance of gender equality, as indicated from its gender-sensitive self-assessment conducted in 2017, and had made great progress in all seven key action areas identified in the IPU *Plan of Action*



*for Gender-sensitive Parliaments.* A solid gender-responsive legal and strategic framework was in place, with gender equality and equal opportunities enshrined in the Serbian Constitution and provided for in an anti-discrimination law. A modern gender equality law aligned with best practices had been adopted to further advance women's status, and the criminal, labour and family codes had been amended to combat all forms of violence against women. In 2017, moreover, Serbia had become one of the first countries to introduce gender-responsive budgeting. It was working to increase women's visibility in politics and their representation in top decision-making positions. A minimum quota of 40% was set for electoral candidates from the less-represented gender.

**A representative of Qatar** said that the Qatari Shura Council had submitted a voluntary report to the IPU on its follow-up activities and did its utmost to implement IPU resolutions and use them as guidance in formulating its plans in line with the country's policy of promoting international peace and security, peaceful resolution of conflicts, sustainable development, education, environmental conservation, and access to health and social care for all, irrespective of gender or status. Qatar was known for its mediation and peace efforts and its funding of UN activities and initiatives to combat terrorism, extremism and organized crime and support the attainment of the SDGs. The Shura Council circulated IPU resolutions and coordinated with the Government on its wide-ranging development plans. A new ministry of environment was assisting the country's environmental efforts, including in connection with its staging of the first-ever environmentally friendly World Cup competition, which would be played in stadiums fitted with solar-powered air-conditioning.

**A representative of South Sudan** said that, on its return home, his delegation had transmitted the outcomes from the 144th Assembly to the Transitional National Legislative Assembly. The ministry responsible for environment and forestry had been immediately tasked with acting on the Nusa Dua Declaration by addressing the oil pollution exacerbated by flooding in no less than seven states. A working committee had been established to study the cases highlighted by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians, with other existing committees – each within its remit – scrutinizing the IPU resolutions in cooperation with relevant ministries. The legislature was working closely with the executive to ensure that those resolutions were implemented. Lastly, South Sudan had effectively mediated in regional peace processes, including in respect of the political crisis in the Sudan, with a focus on the Juba Peace Agreement. The lesson was that countries could work together if given the opportunity.

### Resumption of the General Debate

**Ms. Z. Yildiz** (Türkiye) said that Turkish women had occupied leading positions throughout history and, with women's movements strong, had been far ahead in gaining the right to vote and be elected back in 1934. In Türkiye, women in academia currently outnumbered men, 40% of judges were women, and women parliamentarians had quadrupled in total since 2002. Women's choices must be respected and laws requiring them to wear headscarves in public spaces – or not, as the case may be – should be condemned. It was for women alone to make decisions about their lives and about what to wear or not.

**Ms. A. Larouche** (Canada) said that her position as a parliamentarian and vice-chair of a standing committee was thanks to the efforts waged by her courageous predecessors. Young women in politics continued to face legal and other difficulties nonetheless, including gender-based discrimination, lack of financial support for electioneering, and misperceptions about their capabilities for the job. All parliamentarians must inspire the younger generation to participate in politics for the well-being of democratic institutions. An equal society was a prosperous society, but nothing could be taken for granted, as shown by the curtailment of Iranian women's rights and of the right to abortion in the United States.

**Mr. A. Naderi** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that women were equal in humanity and dignity to men under the Iranian Constitution, which promoted women's status within the family and facilitated their dynamic participation in social, political and cultural life. Justice between men and women had been a constant priority and women's access to education since the time of the

Islamic Revolution had greatly improved, with women currently accounting for 50% of university students and working unimpeded, in ever-increasing numbers, in such fields as lecturing, senior management and medicine. Through their social networking, women also played a constructive role in the development of civil society.

**Ms. Q. Marri** (Pakistan) said that all political and other struggles in Pakistan had taken a back seat as the country grappled with the climate carnage wrought by the severe flooding of two months previously. Tragedy, disaster and death had not discriminated among the 33 million victims, with women and children gravely affected as the most vulnerable groups. The suffering was not down to Pakistan but to others who could well meet the same fate in future and should step up and do what was right for all. Privilege came with a responsibility that introspection would tell the developed countries that they were not fulfilling.

**Ms. O. Rudenko** (Ukraine) said that the lives of millions of young people had changed with the start of the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022. Many hundreds of them had been killed or injured and thousands had joined the armed forces to defend their country. With schools and universities destroyed, millions had been denied their right to an education. All young women were helping in one way or another to bring victory closer and save children's future. The Russians wanted to steal Ukrainian youth but could not kill their freedom-loving spirit. Ukraine would prevail, along with its values, democracy and youth.

**Mr. J. Hultberg** (Sweden) said that although ranking as one of the world's most equal countries, Sweden still faced challenges, such as an increasing sense of insecurity, especially among young women, who then felt minded to limit their activities unacceptably. The Swedish Parliament had achieved one of the highest female representations, not through quotas but through measures to create a gender-equal parliament, such as parental leave enabling parliamentarians to combine their demanding work with a functioning family life. While on leave, they were substituted by fellow parliamentarians from the same party. It was those kind of opportunities that parliaments must create to attract young members.

**Ms. J.A. Felipe Torres** (Mexico) said that legislated quotas were in place for elected positions in her country, where progressive legislation had been enacted, including to implement the constitutional principle of gender parity in the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government, and to require political parties to establish quotas for a range of groups and minorities. The current legislature was designated as one of parity, inclusion and diversity. More women were needed in decision-making, however, to improve women's quality of life and, above all, strengthen democracy and restore security to the country, which was vital to ending the violence against Mexican women.

**A representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran**, speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that countries that spoke against the Islamic Republic of Iran and attempted to interfere in its internal affairs, in flagrant violation of international law, should – if they truly sympathized with the Iranian people – oppose sanctions unilaterally imposed on the country.

*The sitting rose at 17:30.*

## Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights

### SITTING OF WEDNESDAY, 12 OCTOBER

(Morning)

*The sitting was called to order at 9:15 with Mr. A. Gajadien (Suriname), President of the Standing Committee, in the Chair.*

#### **Adoption of the agenda** (C-III/145/A.1)

*The agenda was adopted.*

#### **Approval of the summary record of the Committee's session held at the 144th IPU Assembly in Nusa Dua (March 2022)**

*The summary records were approved.*

#### **Preparation of a resolution entitled *Parliamentary impetus to local and regional development of countries with high levels of international migration and to stopping all forms, including state-sponsored, of human-trafficking and human rights abuses*** (C-III/145/DR and C-III/145/M)

**The President** introduced the three rapporteurs of the draft resolution: Mr. F. Zon (Indonesia) and Mr. P. Beyer (Germany), replacing Mr. J. Wadehul (Germany) who was absent, were in the room; Ms. S. Nane (Uruguay) was absent.

**Mr. K. Kosachev** (Russian Federation), making a point of order, said that the rapporteurs had been appointed by the Committee and should not be replaced without a discussion. He asked the Secretary to clarify what the rules said about the situation.

**Mr. A. Richardson** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the rules did not cover the absence of a rapporteur. They did, however, indicate that the President of the Standing Committee should take a decision on any situation not covered by the rules. Past practice had been to replace parliamentarians who were not present with another member of the same delegation.

**Mr. A. Al Zaibak** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that, according to the rules, the Committee must agree on the rapporteurs, and should therefore vote if it wished to appoint a replacement.

**Ms. A. Gerkens** (Netherlands) called on the Committee to accept the replacement so that it could continue its work on the draft resolution.

**The President** took it that the Committee wished to allow Mr. Beyer to stand in for Mr. Wadehul.

*It was so agreed.*

**Mr. P. Beyer** (Germany), co-Rapporteur, said that the international community had already debated the definitions of key terms associated with migration prior to adopting the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees. The Committee should not repeat the same debate but instead focus discussions on the abuse of refugees and migrants for political purposes, including on the grounds of gender and sexual orientation.

**Mr. F. Zon** (Indonesia), co-Rapporteur, said that international migration was on the rise with 3.6% of the global population currently living outside their home countries. People were leaving their homes for many reasons, including economic hardship and conflict.

Migrants were a vulnerable group facing human rights abuses such as intimidation, forced labour and human trafficking. Parliaments must use their legislative, budgeting and oversight functions to protect migrants. It was particularly important to consider the underlying issues that caused people to flee in the first place. All relevant stakeholders, including migrants and refugees

themselves, must be encouraged to participate in the policy and law-making process. He called on the international community to act collectively while respecting the principle of non-refoulement and other human rights protection standards laid out in international human rights instruments.

The IPU had previously adopted a resolution entitled *Strengthening inter-parliamentary cooperation on migration and migration governance in view of the adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration* during the 139th IPU Assembly. The new resolution would further galvanize parliamentary efforts to promote the human rights of migrants around the world.

**Mr. Z. Mojskerc** (Slovenia) said that migration policies must prioritize national security. It was therefore important to distinguish between refugees, migrants, illegal migrants and displaced persons. He was in favour of helping refugees, such as those from Ukraine, but called for a comprehensive and integrated approach to preventing illegal migration, particularly along the Eastern Mediterranean route.

Enhanced cooperation was needed regionally and globally to address abuses of asylum procedures. European Union funding should be made available to support capacity building and information exchange in that regard. It was necessary to stop illegal border crossings and facilitate the effective and swift return of people who were not eligible for international protection. Countries of origin must be ready to readmit and reintegrate their nationals. Western Balkan countries required better assistance in managing return procedures, border control, asylum systems and migrant smuggling. Parliaments could play an important role in the above processes.

**Ms. N. Lanjri** (Belgium) called on parliaments around the world to express their disgust at criminal human trafficking organizations exploiting vulnerable migrants and to take action against them. International cooperation was needed to put an end to the problem as no country could do so alone.

To combat human trafficking, countries must tackle the root causes of migration by implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). There was also a need to quash human trafficking networks themselves by providing adequate resources to the police, judiciary and social services. That said, the focus should be not only on the criminals but also on the victims.

Belgium had taken a multidisciplinary approach to victim support with prevention at the forefront. Measures included raising awareness among the population, particularly among frontline workers and potential victims, and conducting screenings to check people for signs of trafficking. Efforts had also been made to enhance cooperation between different sectors, including the police, public ministries, social services and migration offices. Other countries were encouraged to take similar measures. The need to provide support to victims should be included in the draft resolution.

**Ms. S. Unnopporn** (Thailand) said that stronger efforts were needed nationally and regionally to ensure a holistic approach to human trafficking in the context of international migration. Efforts should be in line with the Global Compact for Migration and must take into account gender-responsive and child-sensitive principles, including protection and support for survivors, especially women and girls trafficked for sexual exploitation. National parliaments should work with governments to expand regular migration pathways, ensure the safety of migrants and reduce smuggling. Thailand had taken steps in that direction by introducing innovative regularization measures such as bilateral mobility agreements with neighbouring countries.

It was important to protect the basic rights of people on the move regardless of their migration status. Countries should observe the principle of non-punishment of victims of trafficking and facilitate access to services that reduced risks and vulnerabilities. Overall, there was a need to address the root causes of irregular migration collectively and combat trafficking in a more effective, coherent and sustainable manner.

**Mr. A. Golroo** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that human trafficking was the result of socioeconomic systems failing to support vulnerable groups. The COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent economic crisis had further exacerbated the risks. It was vital to improve economic conditions, for instance, through job creation. Prevention of violence, exploitation and human trafficking should be a key part of socioeconomic recovery programmes. There was also a need to ensure safe migration routes.

Other ways to prevent human trafficking included boosting cooperation between countries of origin and destination, prosecuting criminals, protecting the rights of victims, raising awareness and strengthening specialized police and judicial units. He encouraged countries to approve the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

**Ms. S.J. Marri** (Pakistan) said that people left their homes for a variety of reasons, including difficult socioeconomic conditions and climate change. Those facing such hardships were easier to exploit which in turn led to trafficking. Countries must come together to stop human trafficking.

Pakistan had recently experienced massive flooding which had displaced 33 million people and pushed a further 9 million under the poverty line. Her delegation had missed the deadline for amendments as a result of the floods but wished to know if they could submit them anyway.

**The President** said that the Committee must follow the rules but suggested Ms. Marri speak with the rapporteurs during the drafting session.

**Mr. R. Mavenyengwa** (Zimbabwe) called on parliaments to implement the SDGs, particularly target 10.7, so as to protect and empower mobile populations. The Parliament of Zimbabwe had established a committee responsible for carrying out oversight on SDG implementation.

Many migrants were suffering human rights violations such as discrimination and xenophobia simply because they were migrants. It was thus critical for parliaments to ensure their governments implemented international migration laws. The draft resolution would not be effective unless support was provided to the bodies dealing with migration, human trafficking and human rights.

**Ms. H. Mohsin** (Arab Parliament) said that unprecedented migration flows were posing challenges for many countries. Women, children and the elderly were particularly affected by migration and its root causes such as economic hardship and political instability. Parliaments must use their power to turn international commitments on migration into national legislation.

She appreciated the draft resolution, particularly the paragraphs promoting the collective implementation of the Global Compact for Migration. However, a point should be added encouraging developed countries to support developing countries on SDG implementation. Indeed, effective implementation of the SDGs would address the root causes of migration, thus reducing numbers and decreasing the chances of exploitation. Transit countries bore many responsibilities and should be listed under operative paragraph 7.

**Mr. K. Ait Mik** (Morocco) said that human trafficking threatened the security and stability of many countries as well as the implementation of the SDGs. Women, girls, children and the elderly were particularly affected.

Transit countries were under the most pressure when it came to human trafficking. He encouraged different sectors to work together to combat the problem, for instance, by sanctioning those involved in the crimes, especially in Africa. It was important to implement the Global Compact for Migration.

**Ms. S. Lucas** (South Africa) said that more people were on the move than ever before with many undertaking perilous journeys in search of safety and opportunities. Collective responses must address the reasons why people were leaving their homes and ensure safe passage and protection, particularly for women and children. She welcomed the focus that the draft resolution placed on strengthening international cooperation on human trafficking. It was important to have a coordinated approach with participation from all regions.

South Africa faced a host of migration-related challenges. Among them was an increased prevalence of irregular migration, including trafficking of women and unaccompanied minors, negative attitudes towards migrants, particularly low-skilled migrants, and continued brain drain due to the emigration of skilled nationals. Her Parliament had introduced progressive migration laws to manage some of the above challenges in a way that balanced the country's openness to legitimate travellers with development and security imperatives. The efforts of South Africa must be supported by other countries in the region and across the world. She supported the adoption of the draft resolution.

**Ms. C. Mumma** (Kenya) supported the adoption of the resolution but called for it to protect all migrants regardless of the reason for migration. Indeed, it was not just political migrants who suffered abuses. Many Kenyan women migrated to work in the Middle East where they were subjected to slavery, sexual exploitation and even murder. The IPU must recognize migrant worker abuses as a stand-alone issue.

Concrete solutions were needed in addition to the resolution. She urged parliamentarians to pass and monitor laws that protected the rights of all those living within their borders. Every migrant, whatever their status, was entitled to their human rights.

**Mr. M. Masadeh** (Jordan) reaffirmed his Parliament's commitment to implementing international treaties on human trafficking. Jordan was a major refugee-hosting country. It therefore appreciated its inclusion under operative paragraph 7 and requested that the paragraph remain unchanged.

**Ms. K. Osamor** (United Kingdom) said that the empowerment of women and girls was essential to preventing them from being coerced by criminals. They must have equal access to basic services and opportunities such as education, healthcare and decent work, representation in political and economic decision-making and freedom from violence. Many women were forced to migrate due to inequality. She called on parliamentarians to fight inequality at home and boost support for women and girls living in low-income countries. It was important to ensure that aid budgets not only addressed the symptoms of gender inequality but also its root causes. Governments must take a strong stance against vested interests and patriarchy itself. She wished to raise her concerns about the Migration and Economic Development Partnership between the United Kingdom and Rwanda and called on politicians to put the human rights of migrants first.

**Mr. K. Sharma** (India) said that India remained deeply committed to addressing human trafficking and its root causes such as economic instability, social exclusion and conflict. It had enshrined anti-trafficking provisions in the Constitution and passed various laws that directly or indirectly addressed the phenomenon. The Trafficking in Persons (Prevention, Care and Rehabilitation) Bill aimed to capture all aspects, manifestations and dimension of the problem while the Penal Code set out stringent punishments for perpetrators. Amendments made to certain laws meant that the National Investigation Agency was now authorized to investigate offences of human trafficking.

Law enforcement, however, was only a partial step towards addressing the problem. India had also put in place schemes to ensure the rescue, rehabilitation, reintegration and repatriation of victims. Under one scheme, grants were provided to victims for rent, medical care, food, legal aid, education and vocational training. Other measures included various women's safety projects and an online portal for sharing best practices.

Lastly, India was committed to combatting human trafficking on the international level. It had therefore ratified the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its three protocols.

**Mr. A. Al Zaibak** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that migration required solidarity and cooperation from all countries. It was necessary to fight the root causes of migration to stop human trafficking and preserve human rights. The most important root causes were terrorism, including state-sponsored terrorism, illegitimate interference in the internal affairs of States, and sanctions imposed on countries of origin.

**Mr. A. Asar** (Egypt) said that migrants must be able to enjoy their fundamental rights, including the right to food, education and healthcare. It was clear, however, that many faced exclusion and discrimination in their receiving countries. The vulnerability of migrants made them easy prey for human traffickers. In addition, some countries were receiving migrants at a rate beyond their capacities which made it even more difficult to control human rights violations.

Egypt had taken measures to support and protect migrants. Migrants in Egypt lived among the citizens and were given equal access to services such as education and healthcare. The national human rights strategy set out constitutional guarantees and a budget for migrants. The country was also working to fulfil its regional and international commitments.

It was especially important to tackle the root causes of migration and prevent illegal migration. He called on delegates to ensure the draft resolution was comprehensive.

**Ms. J. Salman** (Bahrain) said that it was important to tackle human trafficking in a comprehensive way by considering victims, root causes and solutions. War was not the only root cause of human trafficking. There were many others, including unemployment, early child marriage and poverty. Other contributing factors were a lack of sanctions against perpetrators, a lack of awareness about the problem among citizens and technological development where traffickers were misusing social media to target young people.

Bahrain had taken many measures to combat human trafficking. For instance, it had established a national system responsible for tracing suspects, set up centres to support migrant workers and was carrying out regular inspections on the labour market. Efforts were also being made to harmonize national legislation with international legislation.

**Ms. L. Reynolds** (Australia) commended the IPU for tackling the issue of human trafficking and expressed her support for the draft resolution. She drew attention to one particular form of human trafficking, namely orphanage trafficking, which impacted eight million children globally. It was a phenomenon whereby children were trafficked into so-called orphanages for the purposes of exploitation and profit. Many donors were supporting the orphanages wanting to assist the children but were unwittingly funding a criminal enterprise. Orphanage trafficking was a form of trafficking that could be easily addressed simply by educating and raising awareness among donors. Donors must be encouraged to withdraw their support for the orphanages and instead look for projects that kept children with their families.

**Ms. S. Hjemdal** (Norway) said that, overall, the Norwegian delegation supported the draft resolution but had some political differences that must be ironed out before voting. For her personally, it would be difficult to support a resolution that referred so much to the Global Compact for Migration given that her party had not supported the Compact. A decision would be made later as to how the delegation would vote.

**Ms. O. Aymadji** (Chad) said that it was important to work on the root causes of migration, such as poverty, and find solutions at home. Parliamentarians were encouraged to raise awareness, strengthen national legislation and ensure respect for international law.

Chad had begun to think and act ahead despite having low levels of migration and encouraged other countries to do the same. Mostly recently, it had reviewed its Penal Code with a view to strengthening the clauses on human trafficking. Countries would benefit from strengthening border security and cooperation.

SDG implementation was lagging behind and thus contributing to migration. It was important to put in place development policies that supported the people most likely to migrate such as women, young people and children.

**Mr. M. Karakaya** (Türkiye) said that his country was working relentlessly to combat migrant smuggling and irregular migration and had apprehended 162,000 irregular migrants and 7,800 migrant smugglers in 2021. However, it remained under heavy migration pressure due to the ongoing political and economic instabilities in the region. The country currently hosted 4 million refugees, including 3.65 million Syrians, and had the largest population of refugees in the world. It did not have the capacity for another migrant influx.

The recent mass migration from Ukraine had demonstrated that migration could occur anytime anywhere. Externalizing the challenges posed by the migration or transferring irregular migrants to other countries would only postpone the issue for a short while. It was paramount to address the root causes for long-term and sustainable effects.

There was a need to introduce fair and realistic resettlement policies to manage irregular migration. Parliaments must support countries hosting high levels of migrants and ensure implementation of relevant legislation to prevent human trafficking.

**Mr. R. De Battista** (Malta) supported the amendments proposed by South Africa and the comments made by Kenya. It was important to apply a whole-of-route approach that safeguarded the rights of people throughout the whole journey. People should not have to risk their lives at sea or put their lives into the hands of smuggling criminal groups. A whole-of-route approach meant including the crucial inputs of countries of origin and transit. Excluding those countries would strengthen indifference towards those who had died on the way and give a carte blanche to people smugglers.

Calls for tackling the root causes were becoming a cliché but many countries did not seem to understand the phrase. Tackling the root causes meant ensuring respect for human rights, including the rights of women and the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons. He supported the amendment made by Canada to preambular paragraph 6.

He wished to emphasize the points made in the draft resolution on the need for legal pathways for migration and skills mobility. Countries must work together to make sure that the Mediterranean Sea did not remain a deadly border between two continents. Smugglers and traffickers must not win.

**Ms. M. Al Lamki** (Oman) said that there was a need for stronger measures from governments as well as regional and international cooperation to prevent human trafficking. The countries affected by human trafficking might have different legislation and should therefore come up with an understanding to deal with the situation together.

**Ms. M. Bartos** (Hungary) said that Hungary had not adopted the Global Compact for Migration because the text did not make a clear enough distinction between legal and illegal migration. Only legal migration could be supported. Any legal migration initiatives must be voluntary and in line with national competences. Illegal migration was mostly directed by human traffickers who endangered people's lives in the hope of a financial advantage. She supported all initiatives against human traffickers. It was important to promote cooperation with countries of origin and address root causes effectively.

**Ms. M. Alameri** (United Arab Emirates) said that the United Arab Emirates considered it a priority to support refugees and had provided US\$ 56 billion in foreign assistance between 2010 and 2021. It had also introduced a policy to protect the human rights of refugees. Her Government promoted a culture of cooperation to enhance safe migration and was using modern technologies to combat illegal migration, human smuggling and money laundering.

**Mr. K. Kosachev** (Russian Federation) supported the draft resolution. The Russian Federation was the second largest refugee-hosting country in the world according to the United Nations. Most migrants in the Russian Federation were legal migrants, but more and more were also trying to enter illegally.

Referring to the developments in Ukraine, he wished to point out that at least one million Ukrainian refugees had escaped to the Russian Federation since the unconstitutional transition of power in Ukraine in 2014. As such, he could not support preambular paragraph 5. The paragraph did not belong in the resolution and was yet another attempt by the Twelve Plus Group countries to throw accusations at the Russian Federation at any opportunity. The paragraph gave the wrong impression that the Russian Federation was a major cause of migration flows when the real causes were in fact the actions of Twelve Plus countries, such as the forceful change of power in Iraq and Libya, the attempted regime change in the Syrian Arab Republic and bombings in the former Yugoslavia. The resolution must be balanced. It should mention no countries at all or mention all countries that had contributed along with the reasons why.

Showing him a copy of Time Magazine from the time of the NATO bombing of the former Yugoslavia, he urged Mr. Beyer to remind his colleagues in the Twelve Plus Group about their own history.

**Mr. H. Iddrisu** (Ghana) wished to emphasize two issues in relation to the draft resolution. First, a clear distinction was needed between legal and illegal migration as well as between voluntary and involuntary migration. Second, a number of terms needed to be more specific. For example, the term "smuggling" in preambular paragraph 1 should be replaced with "smuggling of people" and the phrase "smuggling and trafficking" in operative paragraph 11 should read "smuggling and trafficking in persons." Ghana supported the draft resolution.

**Mr. S. Rachkov** (Belarus) commended the co-Rapporteurs for their good work in drafting the resolution but requested that preambular paragraph 5 on the Russia-Ukraine conflict be deleted. It was important not to politicize the issue so that the IPU Task Force on Ukraine could do its work properly.

**Mr. S. Aldosari** (Qatar) said that Qatar placed a great deal of importance on human trafficking and had established an institutional and legislative framework to tackle the problem. It had, for instance, introduced a human trafficking law which offered protection to victims and laid out sanctions for perpetrators. A specialized unit had been set up to implement the law. There was also a national committee on human trafficking tasked with preparing reports and running rehabilitation programmes for victims, amongst other things. Qatar supported international efforts to combat human trafficking.

**Mr. A. Gerasymov** (Ukraine), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the Russian aggression in Ukraine had triggered one of the biggest migration crises in the world. More than seven million people had been forced to move out of Ukraine while another seven million had been



internally displaced. The Russian Federation had also made great efforts to spark a worldwide food crisis which would cause additional waves of migration. Preambular paragraph 5 on the Russian aggression against Ukraine must remain in the resolution.

**Ms. A. Gerkens** (Netherlands), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that Mr. Beyer was working in his capacity as co-Rapporteur and not as a messenger for the Twelve Plus Group. Mr. Kosachev should speak directly with the Chair of the Group in person or via email if he wished to convey a message to the Group. Any other form of communication was just propaganda.

**The President** announced that the Committee would proceed to draft the resolution in plenary where it would consider the proposed amendments.

*Drafting continued from 11:30 to 13:00. The sitting then rose.*

## **SITTING OF FRIDAY, 14 OCTOBER**

(Afternoon)

*The sitting was called to order at 17:05 with Mr. A. Gajadien (Suriname), President of the Standing Committee, in the Chair.*

### **Adoption of the draft resolution**

**The President** said that the Committee had considered the amendments to the draft resolution and come up with a final text. A total of 91 amendments had been submitted by 19 delegations and 2 by the Forum of Women Parliamentarians. The Committee had worked together in a constructive manner and had been able to resolve many complicated issues. Several delegations had expressed reservations on some or all of the text. He had received papers on behalf of the following delegations indicating that they could not support the resolution as a whole due to the references to specific countries: Belarus, Mali, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Pakistan, Palestine, Russian Federation, Syrian Arab Republic, Uzbekistan and Zimbabwe.

*The resolution was adopted by consensus.*

**The President** wished to place a number of the reservations on record. Hungary and Indonesia had expressed a reservation on the entire resolution. India had expressed a reservation on preambular paragraph 21. The Czech Republic had expressed a reservation on operative paragraph 2.

**Ms. S. Lucas** (South Africa) said that, overall, the resolution reflected the discussions that had taken place. However, as a principle, the Committee should not be biased towards certain countries in its resolutions. If it wished to mention the Russia-Ukraine situation, then it must mention all other situations affected by the same phenomenon, such as India-Pakistan and Israel-Palestine. Many countries felt their challenges were not being taken as seriously as others.

**A representative of Togo** agreed with the representative of South Africa. The mobilization seen for the Russia-Ukraine conflict must happen for other conflicts, particularly in Africa.

**Mr. A. Al Zaibak** (Syrian Arab Republic) agreed with the previous two speakers. Western countries were spreading disinformation about the conflict in Ukraine to serve their own political interests. The draft resolution was part of a coordinated campaign to point the finger at Russia. There were also double standards in the work of the IPU. The same mobilization must happen for other situations, including those instigated by Israel and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Indeed, Israel was committing daily massacres of Palestinians and NATO had caused massive displacement in Libya. He was against a number of paragraphs in the resolution, including preambular paragraph 9.

**Mr. V. Vojtko** (Czech Republic) wished to clarify that his delegation had expressed a reservation on the former operative paragraph 2 which was currently operative paragraph 3.

**Mr. M. Alhelalat** (Jordan) said that countries hosting large numbers of refugees should have been mentioned in the resolution. Jordan had received three million Syrian refugees in recent years and was therefore dealing with a big financial burden. Much of the international community had abandoned their commitments to supporting major refugee-hosting countries.

**Mr. S. Aldosari** (Qatar) said that his delegation expressed a reservation to the inclusion of labour mobility under operative paragraph 5 as well as to the omission of Palestine from the text as a whole.

**A representative of Türkiye** wished to express a reservation to preambular paragraph 19.

**Mr. A. Gerasymov** (Ukraine) thanked delegates for supporting the resolution and stressed that specific cases could be included in resolutions as long as they referred to the topic at hand.

**Ms. M. Kyllönen** (Finland) said that the Committee should be ready to defend every country whose territory had been attacked and every country suffering from human rights violations. Peace could only be achieved if countries worked together without excluding anyone. Every country should have a space to speak at the IPU.

**The President** suggested that, as President of the Committee, he should present the resolution to the Assembly for formal adoption.

*It was so agreed.*

### Preparations for future Assemblies

**The President** said that three IPU Members had submitted proposals for the topic of the next resolution. Australia had proposed the title *Orphanage trafficking: The role of parliaments in reducing harm*. France had proposed the title *Parliamentary impetus in favour of the fight against disinformation and hateful and discriminatory content in cyberspace*. Morocco had proposed the title *Ending child military recruitment by 2025: The role of the IPU and national parliaments*. After considering each proposal, the Bureau had decided to recommend the topic of orphanage trafficking.

**Ms. F. Payman** (Australia) said that orphanage trafficking was a modern form of slavery and a multibillion-dollar scam. Millions of people found the narrative of assisting poor orphans so compelling that they readily opened their wallets and hearts. However, they did so without conducting due diligence on the orphanages or the children in question. The intention of the orphanages was in fact the exploitation of vulnerable children, 80% of whom were not even orphans. Many of the children lived in substandard conditions, received little education and were very poorly fed. Equally, many of the children were subjected to child labour, sexual exploitation and domestic servitude. The situation had been specifically designed to elicit sympathy from donors, tourists and volunteers.

It was important to understand that there was an issue of supply and demand. By cutting demand, it would be possible to cut the supply. Donor source nations must make sure that people did not fund or support the orphanages in question while donor recipient nations must build programmes that strived to keep children with their families.

*The topic of the resolution was approved.*

**The President** said that a debate on the topic of orphanage trafficking would be held at the next Assembly in March 2023 where parliamentarians would have the opportunity to share their views and contribute to the preparation of the resolution. The resolution would be adopted at the following Assembly in October 2023. He took it that the Committee wished to approve the nomination of Ms. L. Reynolds (Australia) as rapporteur.

*It was so decided.*

The IPU President would carry out consultations to appoint a second rapporteur. The Bureau had also recommended that a debate on disinformation and cyber harassment be held at the next Assembly. The debate would be based on the proposal from France but would not lead to a resolution. He took it that the Committee wished to support the recommendation.

*It was so decided.*

**The President** said that the Bureau had received a document describing the ways in which the Standing Committee could contribute to the IPU 2022–2026 Strategy. The document would be circulated to all members of the Committee who were encouraged to submit their comments.

### **Elections to the Bureau**

**The President** said that the Arab Group had nominated Mr. S. Aldosari (Qatar) to complete the term of his compatriot Mr. A.F. Al Marri (Qatar) on the Bureau. Similarly, Mr. D. Larsson (Sweden) was no longer a member of parliament but his replacement on the Bureau would be nominated by Sweden in due course. He took it that the Committee wished to approve the proposals.

*It was so decided.*

**Mr. S. Aldosari** (Qatar) said that he was very pleased to become a Bureau member. He wished to clarify that Mr. Al Marri was still a member of parliament but had another commitment which prevented him from remaining on the Bureau.

**Mr. R. Raba** (Jordan) said that his country was committed to peace, democracy and justice and called on delegates to ensure the entrenchment of those ideals in national policies. The Palestinians were suffering oppression and human rights abuses at the hands of the Israeli occupation and were in need of a solution to alleviate their suffering.

**Ms. S. Lucas** (South Africa) said that she had observed a great deal of disrespect during the sessions of the Committee. It was important that all members felt welcome in the IPU family.

**Ms. W.M. Fahad** (Iraq) took the floor to point out that she had been nominated by the Arab geopolitical group to complete the mandate of the Bureau member from Iraq (Ms. A. Talabani) who was no longer a member of parliament. This nomination had been submitted to the Secretariat during the Assembly.

**The President** took note and said that the election of Ms. Fahad to the Bureau would be included in the records of the meeting.

**A representative of Rwanda** thanked delegates for their work during the Assembly where they had pursued their commitment to peace, security and human rights and found solutions to many of the world's problems.

*The sitting rose at 17:50.*

## Standing Committee on Peace and International Security

SITTING OF THURSDAY, 13 OCTOBER

(Afternoon)

*The sitting was called to order at 14:45 with Mr. M.B.M. Al-Ahbab (Qatar), President of the Standing Committee, in the Chair.*

### **Adoption of the agenda** (C-I/145/A.1)

*The agenda was adopted.*

### **Approval of the summary records of the Committee's session held at the 144th IPU Assembly in Nusa Dua (March 2022)**

*The summary records were approved.*

### **Elections to the Bureau**

**The Chair** said that the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean had nominated Mr. J. Rathgeb (Chile) to replace Mr. R. García (Chile) on the Bureau. The Twelve Plus Group had nominated Mr. L. de Nicolay (France) to replace Mr. E. Blanc (France) on the Bureau.

*The nominations were approved.*

**The Chair** wished to make several announcements. The theme of the General Debate at the present Assembly was gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments. It marked the 10th anniversary of the IPU *Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments*, which had paved the way for incorporating gender equality into the DNA of parliaments. Gender-sensitive parliaments were parliaments that promoted gender equality and offered a positive example to society of how equality between men and women could be achieved. A parity debate and side event on gender equality would also be held during the Assembly.

The *Common Principles for Support to Parliaments* would celebrate their 10th anniversary in 2024. The Principles were intended to support parliaments in their efforts to lead their own development. Parliamentarians were encouraged to endorse and implement the Principles if they had not done so already. So far, the Principles had received 173 endorsements, including by 143 parliaments.

The IPU was conducting a campaign called *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* which identified six ways to bring more young people into parliament. He called on delegates to commit to one or more of the campaign pledges. Delegates were also invited to visit the solidarity stand of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians and read the 2022 Global Parliamentary Report on enhancing public engagement. Public engagement was key to building trust between parliament and citizens.

Lastly, the IPU wished to raise awareness of the various key UN disarmament treaties and urged parliaments to advocate for their ratification. Several countries had made progress towards ratification in the past year. He wished to recognize the Gambia, Tuvalu, Timor-Leste, Equatorial Guinea and Sao Tomé and Principe for ratifying the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. He congratulated the Philippines and Gabon for ratifying the Arms Trade Treaty. He also acknowledged the work of Cabo Verde, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Guatemala, Malawi and Timor-Leste towards ratifying the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

**Panel discussion on the theme *The impact of war and atrocity on civilian populations***

**The Chair** introduced the panel discussion on the theme *The impact of war and atrocity on civilian populations*. War was not just a military affair but also had terrible consequences for civilians, especially women and children. The panel discussion would consist of a moderated round table of experts followed by contributions from parliamentarians. He introduced the moderator of the discussion.

**Ms. F.S. Diallo** (Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance), moderator, said that the state-centred definition of security was too narrow because it did not consider the experience of civilian populations. The panellists would share their insights on the impact of war and atrocity on civilians, particularly women and children, and address the need for compliance with international humanitarian law (IHL).

**Ms. M. Kiener Nellen** (PeaceWomen Across the Globe), panellist, said that, in 2000, the UN Security Council had expressed concern that civilians, particularly women and children, accounted for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict. The present-day situation was not much better, thus hindering durable peace and reconciliation.

War and armed conflict affected women in many different ways. When men were sent to war, women typically remained in contested areas or alone at home where they suffered food and water shortages, unemployment and inadequate social security. They carried a disproportionate burden of care for vulnerable people who could not leave conflict zones, such as the elderly and the sick. Pregnant women gave birth in bunkers or under shelling without proper care for themselves or their babies. Many women were also affected by sexual and gender-based violence.

It had only been in 1998 with the adoption of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court that sexual violence had been recognized as a crime against humanity. Sexual violence included rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy and forced sterilization. The Rome Statute had been a historic success in the field of international criminal law but more needed to be done. For example, it was vital to make abortion freely available worldwide for all women who had been raped. Women must always be in control of their bodies.

**Mr. F. Safari** (Director, African Centre of Excellence for Children, Peace and Security, Dallaire Institute), panellist, said that children represented half the population affected by armed conflict, with many being killed, injured, raped, or recruited as combatants. Many children had known nothing else other than war, which had serious consequences on their mental health. Such was the situation in Mozambique, the Central African Republic and Somalia.

He recounted a story told to him by a Canadian General, Roméo Dallaire, who had served as Force Commander of the UN Assistance Mission for Rwanda during the 1994 genocide. Mr. Dallaire had been on routine duty one day when he had come across three children armed with AK-47 rifles. At first, he had been unsure how to handle the children but had eventually decided to offer them some chocolate. The children had then warmed to him instead of engaging in violence. The message of the story was that children were innocent and could be easily manipulated. It was clear that even the most professional soldiers were ill-equipped to handle armed children.

The Dallaire Institute had been founded in 2017 to prevent the recruitment and use of children as soldiers. It was based on the Vancouver Principles on Peacekeeping and the Prevention of Recruitment and Use of Child Soldiers. So far, 105 countries around the globe had endorsed the Vancouver Principles but only 16 were located in Africa, where the scourge was rampant. The Institute had thus set up the African Centre of Excellence on Children, Peace and Security based in Kigali whose mission was to tackle the problem of child soldiers specifically in Africa.

**Ms. J. Arman** (Regional Legal Advisor for East Africa, International Committee of the Red Cross), panellist, said that she would explore the impacts of urban conflicts on civilians and how IHL compliance could reduce those impacts.

Urban warfare was a large concern for the International Committee of the Red Cross, precisely because of the impact on civilian populations. By definition, urban areas were densely populated, which meant that the frequency of destruction to civilian infrastructure was much greater. The use of explosive weapons in cities was a particular problem.

Pursuant to IHL, it was important to ensure respect for the principles of distinction and proportionality. The principle of distinction obliged the warring parties to distinguish between combatants and civilians, target military objectives only and take all feasible precautions to reduce

civilian casualties. The principle of proportionality prohibited attacks that caused excessive civilian losses and required a profound examination of the situation in question. For example, it was necessary to consider that civilian infrastructure was often interconnected, which meant that an attack on one part could have reverberating effects on others.

The principles of distinction and proportionality were difficult to uphold when using explosive weapons in urban areas as civilians were likely to be hit. Her organization was hoping to reduce the use of explosive weapons except where essential.

There were also specific IHL violations that impacted civilians in urban environments, such as sieges and encirclement. Civilians must be allowed to leave besieged areas but should not be compelled to leave permanently. Those who chose to remain in besieged areas (often people with disabilities, the elderly, the wounded and the sick) must have access to essential services.

**Ms. F.S. Diallo** (Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance), moderator, asked what concrete actions parliamentarians could take to mitigate the impact of war on civilians.

**Ms. M. Kiener Nellen** (PeaceWomen Across the Globe), panellist, said that, in 2005, her organization had published a book entitled *1000 PeaceWomen Across the Globe* which depicted 1,000 women who had been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. She urged parliamentarians to launch similar initiatives documenting the work of “peacewomen” in their own countries or regions.

Parliamentarians were encouraged to implement UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security as well as its nine follow-up resolutions. The resolution recognized the central role of women in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding and called for equal participation of women in those processes. Unfortunately, recent talks in Türkiye between the Russian Federation and Ukraine had been carried out by delegations consisting entirely of men. It was also important to fulfil Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16, which set out to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

The 2016 Colombian peace agreement was the first peace agreement in the world to include a gender focus. It referred explicitly to women’s rights to own land and offered no amnesty for crimes of sexual violence. The Parliament of Colombia must now legislate accordingly. Other countries should follow Colombia’s lead.

Parliamentarians must use parliamentary diplomacy to end armed conflicts and ensure compliance with IHL. It was important to join the Global Action Against Mass Atrocity Crimes and support Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, particularly their work on nuclear risk reduction. Parliamentarians should check that their national constitutions protected and safeguarded minority rights, including minority language rights. There was also a need to eradicate corruption.

**Mr. F. Safari** (Director, African Centre of Excellence for Children, Peace and Security, Dallaire Institute), panellist, said that the work of the Dallaire Institute focused on engagement, training, capacity-building and advocacy around the topic of child soldiers. He called on parliamentarians to advocate for the endorsement of the Vancouver Principles, particularly in Africa where the problem was particularly acute. Working groups must be set up to deal specifically with the use and recruitment of child soldiers. In addition, it was necessary to bring perpetrators to account and ensure sure that international laws were not only endorsed but also implemented.

**Ms. J. Arman** (Regional Legal Advisor for East Africa, International Committee of the Red Cross), panellist, said that parliamentarians were key to building strong legislative foundations for the implementation of IHL, both in peacetime and during and after conflict. While ratification of international instruments was important, it was even more important to ensure domestic implementation. Parliamentarians were encouraged to implement protections for internally displaced persons, establish mechanisms for the missing and pass legislation related to specific weapons. There were many aspects of the conduct of hostilities that would benefit from legislative strengthening, such as the protection of cultural property.

Overall, parliamentarians should use the mechanisms of parliament to review laws, policies and practices in relation to the implementation of IHL. Some countries had set up inter-ministerial working groups and committees on IHL which provided a very useful mechanism for reviewing domestic activity. Indeed, inter-ministerial approaches were the only real way forward as IHL implementation was not the exclusive purview of any one ministry.

**The Chair** thanked the moderator and panellists for their contributions and invited contributions from the floor.

**Mr. S. Tynkkynen** (Finland) said that the brutal invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation was an acute crisis affecting the whole world. Civilian targets had been ruthlessly bombed and millions of Ukrainians had been forced to leave their country. The war had also led to rising energy prices and famine in many African countries. The international community could not accept the atrocities that the Russian Federation had committed against civilians or allow the Russian Federation to annex the territories of other countries. The war did not have to continue. He called on all parliaments and governments to condemn the invasion of Ukraine and support Ukrainians, including by supplying humanitarian aid.

**Mr. N.A. Cheema** (Pakistan) said that the observation made by Mr. Tynkkynen was valid but questioned why the world had not expressed the same magnitude of pain at the annexation of territories in other parts of the world. The discussion would not do justice to civilians if the civilized world turned a blind eye to the situations in South Asia and the Middle East.

**Ms. D.E. Dlakude** (South Africa) said that the most effective way to protect civilians was to prevent the outbreak and escalation of armed conflicts and settle them peacefully. Human rights violations were often the root cause of conflict and insecurity. As such, parliamentarians must establish a sound framework to protect human rights. Protection of human rights would help to promote key values, such as fairness, dignity, equality and respect.

The human rights framework must identify and eliminate all forms of discrimination, including structural inequalities. It must create an environment that allowed for the participation of vulnerable groups in decision-making structures, including parliaments. It must enable access to essential socioeconomic rights, such as food, health care, water, housing and sanitation. There was also a need to establish early warning mechanisms that enabled regular exchanges with citizens, such as hotlines for reporting violations.

Where conflicts could not be prevented, parliamentarians must call on the warring parties to comply with IHL and human rights. The parties must be reminded that continued attacks on civilians and crucial infrastructure amounted to war crimes. Lastly, it was necessary to introduce legislative and institutional arrangements that addressed violations and held perpetrators accountable.

**Mr. A.-M. Merka** (Romania) said that the war in Ukraine had had multidimensional and multigenerational consequences for Ukraine, Europe and the world at large. One of those consequences was food insecurity. Romania was committed to delivering immediate humanitarian assistance to those in need and building resilience among vulnerable people. It was also working on introducing social protection and safety nets and on strengthening sustainable and inclusive food systems.

Romania had been on the front line of the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine, providing support to refugees and to those remaining on the ground, including women and children. Support had come in the form of accommodation, food, medical services, schooling and employment. In addition, the Government had liberalized transport conditions for Ukrainian exports, especially of agricultural products, such as grains. As a leading producer of sunflower and corn, Romania stood ready to help prevent a global food crisis by providing the necessary food supplies.

**Mr. S. Patra** (India) said that war destroyed communities and families and disrupted socioeconomic development. As such, the Constitution of India placed an emphasis on promoting international peace and security, maintaining good relations with other nations and settling disputes by peaceful means.

India strongly supported efforts that strengthened international and regional cooperation in the fight against terrorism. It was party to the 13 sectoral conventions on terrorism adopted by the United Nations and attached great importance to the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on International Terrorism established by the UN General Assembly in 1996.

Human rights were essential in any worthwhile strategy to preserve peace and security. It was imperative that governments, civil society and communities worked together to implement lasting solutions to reduce violence, deliver justice, combat corruption and ensure inclusive participation of all stakeholders.

India, as the largest democracy in the world, had a long record of engaging in dialogue with people who opposed the Government. It had established a vital link between civil society and the State whereby citizens could articulate their views, for instance via political parties or during elections.

The international community must work together on peace and security, human rights, institution-building, humanitarian aid, socioeconomic development and peaceful elections. Those elements combined would create long-lasting peace and prevent atrocities.

**Mr. L. Slutsky** (Russian Federation) said that it had been eight years since Ukraine first started dropping bombs in the east of the country, killing more than 10,000 civilians, including children. The Russian Federation had intervened to protect the civilian population in Ukraine in line with the Charter of the United Nations. The people of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia had made a decision about their future in a referendum. It was not an annexation. He called on delegates to accept the truth rather than listening to the United States mass media. There was nothing more atrocious than the impact of war on civilians.

**Mr. A. Naderi** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that Israel was committing gross violations of international law, humanitarian law and human rights, thus jeopardizing peace, security and stability in the region. He called on the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in Israel to pay attention to violations committed against the Palestinians, particularly women and children. The IPU should establish its own commission of inquiry composed of parliamentarians from different geographical regions to investigate the oppression of Palestinians by Israel.

Yemen was facing a humanitarian crisis where people had long been experiencing human rights violations. Indeed, more than 10,000 Yemeni children had been killed or injured since the beginning of the crisis. He appreciated all initiatives made in good faith to alleviate the suffering of the Yemeni people. His country had been working hard to deliver humanitarian aid to Yemen, including during the pandemic, but its efforts had been hindered by the so-called coalition led by Saudi Arabia. The unlawful use of force against Yemen was a clear violation of the Charter of the United Nations, including the principle of self-determination.

**Mr. H.A. Al-Ahmar** (Yemen) said that the Yemeni people were experts on the impact of war on women and children because they were living it first-hand. The Houthis, supported by the Iranian regime, were recruiting children as combatants, launching missiles at refugee camps, distributing mines and targeting women and children.

Parliamentarians from Yemen were doing their best to monitor IHL violations and abide by the Vancouver Principles. He was open to participating in a commission of inquiry into the impact of war on women and children, particularly in Yemen and Palestine. The international community must support Yemen not only in terms of material assistance but also in finding concrete solutions.

He refuted the claims made by the representative of Iran, adding that Saudi Arabia was very much supporting Yemen alongside Egypt.

**Ms. A. Shkrum** (Ukraine) said that, in March 2022, the IPU had passed an emergency resolution entitled *Peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine, respecting international law, the Charter of the United Nations and territorial integrity*. It contained specific provisions on the protection of civilians and had even established a task force to facilitate peace. However, the resolution had made zero difference because the Russian Federation was continuing its aggression. In recent weeks, Russian parliamentarians, some of whom were attending the present Assembly, had voted unanimously to annex another four regions of Ukraine and launched one of the biggest attacks on Ukrainian civilians seen thus far. It had never been their intention to hit military objects but to specifically target civilian infrastructure, such as parks, bridges and schools. A total of 422 children had died and 804 had been wounded since the beginning of the war. She drew attention to the social media posts of a Deputy Speaker of the Russian Parliament, which encouraged the Russian Federation to be as tough as possible on Ukraine, including by hitting governmental and parliamentary shelters, targeting bridges and power plants and killing the people. She called on delegates to support the implementation of the abovementioned emergency resolution and to remove the Russian Federation from the IPU until it ended its aggression.



**Mr. J. Alnimri** (Jordan) said that international laws and agreements were very important to alleviate the suffering of women and children in times of war. Jordan had recently enacted a national law on children's rights in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

There were several hotspots in the world where civilians were experiencing war, such as Ukraine and Yemen. However, Palestine was a hotspot where war had been raging for decades. The suffering in Gaza was particularly severe. The population was living under siege and half of young people were unemployed.

**Mr. M.A. Bouchouit** (Algeria) said that the Committee could not talk about the impact of war on civilians, including women and children, without mentioning concrete cases such as that of Palestine. Palestine was suffering from daily atrocities and the people of Gaza were living under siege. No peace could be achieved without peace in Palestine. He called on the IPU to take the crisis in Palestine, Yemen and the Sahel as seriously as the crisis in Ukraine. It was important to treat each cause equally so that war could be eliminated everywhere.

**Mr. A. Alharbi** (Saudi Arabia) said that Saudi Arabia was located in a region highly impacted by war. The Government was taking in refugees and providing them with free education and health care. Much work was also being done to rehabilitate child soldiers, remove mines and facilitate the recovery of the wounded.

He supported the statement made by Mr. Al-Ahmar. Saudi Arabia had supported the Yemeni people in many ways, including through 700 humanitarian projects worth US\$ 4 billion.

**Mr. K. Ait Mik** (Morocco) said that the recruitment of child soldiers was a war crime. Parliamentarians must convince their governments to ratify the Principles and Guidelines on children associated with armed forces or armed groups, as well as any other agreements aiming to preserve the rights of children. The IPU should continue addressing the issue of child soldiers in the future. He drew attention to the situation of civilians in North Africa and the Sahel who were suffering greatly as a result of war. There had, for instance, been a wave of human trafficking. Governments must put an end to such abuses while respecting the sovereignty of the countries in question.

**Mr. F. Al Ahmad** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that Syria was being subjected to continuous attacks that were impacting the lives of women, children and society as a whole. The Turkish occupation was depriving millions of Syrians of water. The American occupiers were stealing oil from the Syrian desert. The Israelis were launching daily military attacks on Syrian territory. The country had also been the victim of terrorism and extremism. As such, much of its infrastructure, including 3,000 schools, had been damaged. He called on the IPU to condemn the abovementioned atrocities.

**Mr. J.G.N. Noh** (South Sudan) said that his country's own experience of war had shown that women and children suffered most in times of conflict. It was often the destruction of infrastructure and livelihoods that contributed to the suffering. He asked the panellists to clarify how to deal with deteriorating infrastructure and livelihoods during an urban conflict. In addition, he asked how parliamentarians could support internally displaced persons and refugees in the long-term. Many had uprooted their lives and had limited future prospects.

The neighbourhood was the best protector of society. South Sudan, despite its own internal conflict, had been working hard to bring peace to its neighbour, Sudan. Sudan was now somewhat stable thanks to the Juba Agreement.

Interstate relations in Africa were taking shape and African solutions being found to African problems. Solutions tended to be more successful when countries formed international and regional networks, as had been the case in West and Southern Africa.

**Ms. J. Sabao** (Zambia) said that since independence, Zambia had not experienced any intrastate or interstate wars but had felt the effects of wars in neighbouring countries. It had hosted a large number of refugees from Angola, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Somalia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. The open-door policy on refugees had come at a great cost both in financial and material terms. The country had experienced severe pressures on socioeconomic infrastructure, with local authorities struggling to find resources for education, health care, water and sanitation, communication and transport. In spite of those challenges, the Government of Zambia had taken steps to improve the lives of refugees, for instance, by introducing policies that gave refugees greater freedom of movement and better access to work, education and civil registration.

Civilian populations affected by war had often experienced trauma, including sexual abuse and loss of property. The international community could strengthen protection for civilians, particularly women and children, by adhering to international laws, norms and protocols.

**Mr. J. Rathgeb** (Chile) said that it was important for parliamentarians to raise their voices around the suffering of populations and denounce any events that put people's safety into question. That said, denunciations were not enough. There was also a need to find concrete solutions that alleviated the suffering felt by so many, particularly by women, children and the elderly. Parliamentarians had a duty to act on behalf of the people they represented.

**Ms. J. Arman** (Regional Legal Advisor for East Africa, International Committee of the Red Cross), panellist, took note of the comments made, particularly those by Mr. Noh and Ms. Sabao. International humanitarian organizations were having to respond differently to protracted conflicts. The current model where States received humanitarian assistance followed by development support was not working. Parliamentarians had an important role to play in creating policy and legal frameworks to ensure IHL compliance and reduce the suffering of civilians.

**Mr. F. Safari** (Director, African Centre of Excellence for Children, Peace and Security, Dallaire Institute), panellist, emphasized that the recruitment of children into armed groups was a serious issue which should be high on the peace and security agenda. Boys and girls recruited as combatants were highly vulnerable and needed the consideration of parliamentarians.

He drew attention to the comments made by Ms. Diakude. He agreed that prevention was the most effective way of dealing with conflict and called on delegates to address the underlying causes. It was true that early warning systems were very important as they allowed countries to act quickly. There was also a vital need to include vulnerable populations in decision-making processes and to ensure accountability.

**Ms. M. Kiener Nellen** (Peace Women Across the Globe), panellist, said that the next important step for peace was to ensure that women became Heads of State. Currently, only 9 out of 152 Heads of State were women. Women leaders must not engage in war but instead work to prevent and resolve conflicts through comprehensive, gender-sensitive peace agreements. More political will was needed to implement the existing international framework on the protection of civilians. Parliamentarians should join forces to bring States closer to climate, youth, peace and anti-nuclear movements. Three actions were particularly important: fighting corruption, fighting for human rights and fighting for peace.

**Ms. F.S. Diallo** (Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance) said that war affected civilians all over the world and not just in certain regions. Parliamentarians were encouraged to find innovative solutions to security challenges and preserve the right to safety.

### **Panel discussion on the theme *War and climate change as triggers of global food insecurity***

**The Chair** said that the next item on the agenda was a panel discussion on the theme *War and climate change as triggers of global food insecurity*. The SDGs included a goal to end hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition by 2030 but matters were evolving very differently. Conflicts and climate change were fragilizing already unstable food supplies, creating tensions worldwide and triggering additional conflicts. As before, the panel discussion would consist of a moderated round table of experts followed by contributions from parliamentarians. He invited Ms. Diallo to moderate the panel discussion.

**Ms. F.S. Diallo** (Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance), moderator, said that freedom from fear and freedom from want were two principles of human security. Yet, the world was witnessing a rise of poverty and instability. She introduced the panellists.

**Ms. E. Heines** (Country Director of the UN World Food Programme, Rwanda), panellist, said that, since 2019, there had been a two and half fold increase in the number of people facing food insecurity, with figures rising from 135 million people to 345 million people worldwide. An additional 50 million people were on the edge of famine. It was clear that the world was experiencing a food crisis of unprecedented proportions. The three key drivers of the food crisis were: conflict, climate shocks and the threat of a global recession.

She drew attention to the interaction between climate, food and conflict. Climate shocks had a negative impact on agriculture and livestock which in turn affected food security. Global emissions also affected food productivity. For instance, fruit productivity growth had decreased by 21% due to global heating while yields of rice, maize and wheat were expected to fall between 10 and 25% per degree of warming. People were being forced to compete for scarce resources, which was exacerbating conflict. Conflicts could have larger ripple effects beyond the national context, including at the global level. Tackling the climate and food crises was therefore vital for peace and international security.

The international community must break the vicious cycle of crisis-response and instead focus on building resilience, boosting capabilities and strengthening systems. The work must be done in the humanitarian context, the development context and across climate action programmes. More climate financing should be directed towards the most fragile settings given their lack of resilience and heightened vulnerability to climate shocks.

Rwanda was a stable country with no ongoing conflicts but was very vulnerable to climatic shocks. Every year, about 44% of the population was affected by climate shocks, such as floods, landslides or droughts. The private sector could play a key role in de-risking agriculture in Rwanda, specifically through blended concessional finance, including below-market terms of finance and risk mitigation products. Rwanda was also among the top 10 countries with the highest food price inflation (34%). Climate shocks and food price shocks, such as those experienced in Rwanda, affected the entire global food system.

The UN World Food Programme (WFP) had a mandate to work not only on humanitarian emergencies but also on development. Its work in Rwanda focused on development and resilience. One project aimed to build climate resilient community assets, such as terracing for agriculture and marginal developments for irrigation. Another project was looking at shock-responsive social protection.

She wished to highlight four entry points on climate action. First, it was important to anticipate climate hazards before they actually happened. For example, in Somalia, the WFP had worked on early warning systems and anticipatory cash. Second, there was a need to restore degraded ecosystems and infrastructure to build climate resilience. The WFP had offered an integrated package of restoration support to the Sahel. Third, countries must protect the most vulnerable people with safety nets and insurance against climate extremes. Much work was being done on climate risk insurance in West and Southern Africa through the African Risk Capacity replica initiative. Fourth, communities must be energized to create access to sustainable energy solutions, as had been done in Chad through school feeding.

**Mr. W. von Trott zu Solz** (Ambassador of the Sovereign Order of Malta to Kenya and South Sudan), panellist, said that there was an intrinsic link between war, climate change and food insecurity. The most recent example of the impact of war on global food insecurity was the war in Ukraine which had impeded the delivery of 20 million tons of grain around the world.

It must also be noted that war, climate change and food insecurity were the main causes of displacement. In 2022, the Horn of Africa had faced the most severe droughts in 40 years and the third drought in only 10 years. As a result, many people had been forced to leave their homes.

He wished to share some good practices and projects undertaken by the Sovereign Order of Malta to counter climate change and build resilience to food insecurity. The Order's relief agency, Malteser International, was providing food in acute crisis situations and helping to build sustainable food security. It placed a particular focus on combating malnutrition and undernourishment in pregnant women and young children but was also supporting smallholder farmers and striving to boost sustainable agriculture.

In Kenya, the Order was giving direct support to rural populations by providing feed for animals and money for supplies. It was conducting training courses and publicity campaigns to raise awareness among local populations on climate change and on the sustainable use of natural resources. Work had also been done to strengthen the resilience of households to drought, for instance by increasing water storage capacities. Other measures included planting trees and introducing energy-efficient cooking stoves.

In Uganda, the Order was reforesting woodland areas, building tree nurseries, educating refugees on sustainable agriculture and forestry, and raising awareness about environmental protection and sustainability. In Haiti and Colombia, it was reforesting woodland areas and rehabilitating important ecosystems with mangrove forests. Efforts were also being made to educate the population on sustainable fishing, recycling and beekeeping. In India, Indonesia, Nepal and the Philippines, marginalized women were being supported on their path to self-determination through a plastics recycling project.

In South Sudan, the Order was tackling the ongoing issue of food insecurity by proliferating urban gardens, especially in schools. The idea was to make young people self-reliant by teaching them productive and sustainable methods of cultivating fruits and vegetables. Farmers cooperatives were also being established with a view to ensuring a sustainable approach to collective food security. Lastly, school feeding had been introduced, especially in refugee camps.

**Mr. M. Kapila** (Professor of Global Health and Humanitarian Affairs, University of Manchester and Senior Adviser to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean), panellist, said that the climate crisis was now well-established, with a temperature rise of 1.1°C above pre-industrial levels already locked in. Within the next five years, the world was likely to reach the 1.5°C threshold which would cause an even greater deterioration of living conditions around the world.

The world was also living through the deadliest of times since the Second World War. In 2021, 130 armed conflicts had taken place worldwide killing 2.9 million people. One-third of humanity lived in conflict-affected areas where conflict was considered a part of life. Every country was dealing with some degree of conflict even if not in an official state of war. Today's wars were whole-of-society affairs, affecting all sectors and hallmarked by war crimes and crimes against humanity. Conflicts did not just play out in the battlefield but in a whole array of other scenarios, such as in cyberspace. It was therefore crucial to reconceptualize modern warfare.

There was no indication that any of the above trends would be reversed anytime soon. In fact, conflict combined with climate change was creating intensified impacts, such as food insecurity. According to the WFP, 128 million people were going to bed hungry every night while 50 million people were facing famine. One of the reasons why international policy had failed was because famine was declared far too late. Organizations such as the WFP were extremely reluctant to declare famine, which must change.

**Ms. F.S. Diallo** (Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance), moderator, said that the human security approach offered a practical framework to prevent and mitigate the impacts of war and climate change as well as to empower communities. Security, peace and development were interconnected. She called on the panellists to identify specific actions that parliamentarians could take to combat the major drivers of food insecurity.

**Mr. W. Von Trott zu Solz** (Ambassador of the Sovereign Order of Malta to Kenya and South Sudan), panellist, said that the Order was only able to address the symptoms rather than the core of the disease. Parliamentarians, however, were in a position to influence governments and could therefore tackle the core. He encouraged parliamentarians to travel to the places most affected by war and climate change where they could experience the situation first-hand. They must then adapt their policies accordingly. In addition, parliamentarians should support international organizations, not only with money, but also by giving them the floor to communicate with politicians and by providing them with know-how. It was important to use all means possible to stop wars and conflicts, such as the war in Ukraine.

**Mr. M. Kapila** (Professor of Global Health and Humanitarian Affairs, University of Manchester and Senior Adviser to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean), panellist, said that he wished to emphasize two points. First, wars and climate change were not going to go away and would only get worse. As a result, policy prescriptions must be relevant not to the circumstances of today but to the circumstances of the future. Second, the problem was not a lack of food but of availability, access and affordability. Food was also of a poor quality. Indeed, the Global Dietary Database score for global food quality was only 40 out of 100. People's health was suffering as a result, with non-communicable diseases now responsible for 70% of all deaths globally.

Policy responses must be both short-term and long-term. He agreed that hungry people must be fed immediately but stressed that the current system for doing so was not working. The delivery of short-term humanitarian aid, including food, had been monopolized by large non-governmental and international organizations that were well-meaning but unreliable and inefficient. Indeed, the arrangements could be likened to a random lottery with many countries depending on the mercy of strangers. It resulted in a situation where hungry nations were competing with each other for food. He also considered it highly unjust that largely unaccountable multilateral organizations were calling the shots in terms of needs, priorities and allocations. He called on parliamentarians to reduce their country's dependency on the said system. Instead, they should build long-term self-reliance by improving national agricultural policies and food assistance programmes. The policies and programmes should be designed according to nationally determined criteria rather than global norms that tended to promote a one-size-fits-all approach.

Parliamentarians must conduct urgent reviews of their food and nutrition systems and incorporate the right to food as a universal human right. They must break the historical divide between short-term emergency humanitarian strategies and long-term sustainable development strategies. The divide had initially been developed to facilitate the division of labour within international organizations but was unhelpful in the national context. One way forward was to develop universal social protection systems that included food. Parliaments everywhere should work towards establishing national safety nets phased in according to available resources. Foreign aid, especially food aid, should feed through national systems rather than through parallel projects that undermined national systems. Rwanda provided a very good example of how to do so, showing that it was possible even in low-income countries.

There was also a need to treat food as a strategic security issue akin to military defence. Nowadays, food was being used as a weapon and must be handled accordingly, even in peacetime. Countries should set aside strategic food reserves, develop food intelligence capabilities, conduct threat and risk analysis, and institute balanced economic, financial and agricultural policies that built food system resilience.

The above approach required national leadership and accountability, which were the principal functions of parliamentarians. One priority for parliamentarians should be to foster a debate on globalization – the top factor influencing the destiny of nations. While globalization had brought many benefits, it had also caused huge problems and created much discontent. A review of globalization through the national lens would have huge implications on the choices that a country would make when navigating the world.

Two major things must happen. First, since more people lived in cities, countries must reduce their rural farming footprint and move towards urban farming. Second, dietary systems must become more diverse and flexible. Although 50,000 edible plants existed, people depended on only 3 for two-thirds of their calories. It would be impossible to resolve food insecurity unless people changed what they ate. Parliamentarians must lead the way in making the above sociocultural shifts. Democracy was not sustainable unless food was readily available to all.

**Ms. E. Heines** (Country Director of the UN WFP, Rwanda), panellist, said that parliaments could create real and lasting change through policy and legislation. National laws and policies should: (1) prioritize climate adaptation and solutions on loss and damage, (2) protect the most vulnerable communities against climate shocks, and (3) ensure that the most affected populations had the necessary resources to protect themselves, such as national safety nets and social protection systems. National budgets and international development financing should be amended accordingly.

Parliamentarians could play a key role in influencing global leaders. She encouraged them to conduct field visits to areas affected by climate change and conflict and use the knowledge gained to demand greater attention to the issues at hand. It was particularly important to influence the G20 given they were responsible for 80% of emissions worldwide. G20 parliamentarians must advocate for more climate financing, especially in the area of adaptation. Leaders must be pressed not only to make commitments but also to implement them.

She called on the IPU to establish a special committee on climate change and hunger. Its work should place a particular focus on preventing and mitigating famine by addressing the drivers of food insecurity around the world.

**The Chair** thanked the moderator and panellists for their contributions and invited contributions from the floor.

**Mr. O. Al-Nasiri** (Arab Parliament) said that countries must urgently address the impact of war and climate change on food security. Climate disasters, such as droughts and flooding, were destroying crops while wars were affecting supply chains. The situation had created a great deal of economic disruption, including a rise in food prices. Arab countries had experienced the effects first-hand.

Parliamentarians should encourage governments to implement a green economy that used modern technology to support sustainable agriculture, trade and commerce. There was also a need for regional food security networks to protect countries against food shocks.

**Mr. S. Kondo** (Japan) said that war and climate change were key drivers of food insecurity. Climate events, such as flooding and extreme temperatures, were destroying crops. Wars were impeding international trade in food.

The United Nations had been founded to promote peace, cooperation and socioeconomic advancement around the world. The Japanese Constitution renounced the use of force, recognized the right of all to live in peace and acknowledged the responsibility of each nation towards other nations. The IPU should conduct its work in the same spirit.

**Mr. S. Rachkov** (Belarus) said that political action must be taken to protect current and future generations from the effects of war and climate change. Parliaments, governments and international organizations must provide more substantial financial support to those in need, particularly to countries affected by conflict. It was vital not only to reduce greenhouse gas emissions but also to introduce adaptation measures. Overall, there was a need to strengthen the capacities of countries to cope with war and climate change.

Belarus was firmly committed to becoming a low-carbon, sustainable economy and had been among the first European States to ratify the Paris Agreement. It had a solid legal framework on climate change and was on course to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by at least 35% by 2030. The country gave utmost priority to food security and had ranked high on the Global Food Security Index. Every five years, it implemented special programmes to develop the agro-industrial complex, for instance, by making use of locally produced agricultural machinery. Regular support was also provided for food production, which had allowed Belarus to substantially increase its food exports.

Climate change and food security were common challenges that required international collaboration. He supported the IPU in its efforts to overcome the global food crisis.

**Ms. S. Falaknaz** (United Arab Emirates) said that parliaments must play a more proactive role in combating food insecurity. They could do so by improving their responses to economic, political and social crises and enhancing their work on climate change. Unfortunately, the responses of parliaments to recent crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, had been largely lacking.

The United Arab Emirates had adopted a national strategy on food security. It was also a major donor to many countries affected by malnutrition, having provided US\$ 57 billion in food assistance between 2010 and 2021.

The panellists should clarify how parliamentarians could contribute sustainably to the many different food security initiatives being implemented around the world.

**Ms. D.E. Dlakude** (South Africa) said that South Africa welcomed the recent agreements that cleared the way for the export of millions of tonnes of grain. The grain must reach the regions where it was needed most: Africa and the Middle East. She supported calls to lift trade restrictions on medical supplies and food. Restrictions exacerbated health and economic crises, especially in vulnerable, low-income countries.

It was important to find durable solutions to armed conflicts by addressing root causes such as marginalization and inequality. In addition, UN studies had shown that more than 40% of internal armed conflicts over the past 60 years had been linked to natural resources. National structures to combat illicit mineral extraction must therefore be strengthened.

Climate investment must go beyond agricultural productivity. Countries must invest in electrification, transport and broadband so that rural communities could connect with markets. They must invest in climate smart innovation to make food systems more climate resilient. They must also invest in early warning systems to prevent humanitarian disasters. Early warning systems should advise farmers on the likelihood of threats and how to reduce the potential impacts.

She supported the African Continental Free Trade Area, which would enhance food security on the continent and reduce vulnerability to shocks.

**Ms. A. Sarangi** (India) said that India had always supported peace and had done a great deal to address climate change. For example, it had reached its target to generate 40% of its energy from non-fossil sources nine years ahead of time, built the world's first fully solar power operated airport, and distributed 367 million LED bulbs, 2.3 million energy-efficient fans and 93.4 million clean cooking gas cylinders across the country. The above measures had proved that it was possible to save millions of tons of carbon emissions while also providing energy to low-income populations.

India had also been working on food security. The Government had launched a national mission for sustainable agriculture and created programmes on soil health, organic farming and agroforestry. The National Food Security Act had been enacted in 2013, making food grain

subsidies a legal entitlement for over 67% of citizens. Efforts were also being made to support the food security of other nations. For instance, Afghanistan had received 35,000 tonnes of wheat from India following the recent earthquake.

India would assume the presidency of the G20 in December 2022 where it would make its best efforts to address war and climate change as triggers of food insecurity.

**Ms. H. Fayeze** (Bahrain) said that parliamentarians could guarantee food security through oversight and legislation and were encouraged to share experiences and best practices in that regard. It was important to monitor SDG implementation and pass laws on environmental protection and climate change. A focus should be placed on addressing the impact of climate change on food production and vice versa. There was also a need to pass and implement good agricultural laws. The international community must cooperate to alleviate the food crisis. Parliaments would benefit from cooperation with UN agencies, such as the WFP and World Health Organization.

**Mr. M.A. Rakotomalala** (Madagascar) said that his country was feeling the full force of climate change. It had experienced drought and flooding which had led to a shortage of drinking water and of water for agricultural production. Crops were suffering and inflation on products such as fertilizer and oil was adding to the problem. He called on the international parliamentary community to show their solidarity by covering the country's emergency needs and helping to restart the agricultural sector.

**Ms. E. Heines** (Country Director of the UN WFP, Rwanda), panellist, wished to reiterate her previous comments. First, one of the most important ways to protect food security was to address climate change. Countries with the lowest contribution to global heating bore the largest burden and were usually the least resilient. Second, climate change, conflict and food insecurity were interlinked, with each driving and reinforcing the others. The impacts went beyond the country in question and rippled out into the world at large. Third, a focus must be placed on building resilience among vulnerable people so that they could withstand shocks, particularly climatic shocks. It was crucial to break the endless cycle of crisis-response and create a more sustainable system. Fourth, there was a need to build programmes at different levels which focused on anticipating climate hazards, restoring degrading ecosystems and infrastructure, protecting the most vulnerable and energizing populations through access to sustainable energy. Lastly, parliamentarians had a key role to play in pushing forward policies and legislation, influencing leaders and ensuring that commitments were taken seriously.

**Mr. W. Von Trott zu Solz** (Ambassador of the Sovereign Order of Malta to Kenya and South Sudan), panellist, said that the Sovereign Order of Malta was a faith-based organization with diplomatic representations in over 110 countries and was ready to support all citizens of the world without discrimination. Other faith-based organizations were also able to help.

**Mr. M. Kapila** (Professor of Global Health and Humanitarian Affairs, University of Manchester and Senior Adviser to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean), panellist, said that technical or project-based solutions were not enough. Countries, and therefore parliaments, must take a more strategic approach to the problem. Every country must become self-reliant. Resilience was not possible without self-reliance. It was crucial to treat food security as a security issue. An entire transformation of the system was needed.

**Ms. F.S. Diallo** (Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance), offered the support of her organization, which worked holistically to build resilience. It worked with institutions such as governments and parliaments on policy development, capacity-building and security sector governance.

**The Chair** reminded delegates that the Committee had adopted a landmark resolution in May 2021 entitled *Parliamentary strategies to strengthen peace and security against threats and conflicts resulting from climate-related disasters and their consequences*. Members were invited to report back to the secretariat of the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security on the measures taken to implement the resolution by the 146th IPU Assembly in March 2023.

*The sitting rose at 18:25.*

**SITTING OF FRIDAY, 14 OCTOBER**

(Afternoon)

*The sitting was called to order at 14:40 with Mr. M.B.M. Al-Ahbab (Qatar), President of the Standing Committee, in the Chair.*

**Expert hearing on the theme *Cyberattacks and cybercrimes:*  
*The new risks to global security***

**The Chair** opened the expert hearing on the topic of the next resolution, *Cyberattacks and cybercrimes: The new risks to global security*. The hearing would serve as an intermediary checkpoint halfway through the resolution's drafting process and provide guidance to the co-rapporteurs in their work on the draft resolution. It would consist of presentations by the co-Rapporteurs, contributions from the experts and a debate with members.

**Ms. S. Falaknaz** (United Arab Emirates), co-Rapporteur, said that she and her fellow co-Rapporteur, Mr. Cepeda, had been working hard to prepare the draft resolution. They had held consultations with researchers in the field of cybersecurity and attended a session of the Ad Hoc Committee to Elaborate a Comprehensive International Convention on Countering the Use of Information and Communications Technologies for Criminal Purposes in Vienna.

So far, the co-Rapporteurs had agreed on the purpose and content of the draft resolution as well as the way forward. The purpose of the resolution was to examine the challenges involved in combating cyberattacks and cybercrimes. The content would provide insights into the risks associated with such crimes. The way forward was to incorporate the views of parliamentarians and experts.

Some of the challenges involved in combating cybercrimes included disagreement on the definition, outdated legislation and a prevalence of actions that compromised the confidentiality, integrity and availability of computer data. It was her view that the definition of cybercrimes should include any act that violated the law through the use of information and communication technology (ICT), including child sexual exploitation and abuse, hate crimes and terrorist recruitment. Several cybercrime initiatives had already been launched at the regional and international levels, such as the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime (2001), the IPU resolution entitled *Cyber warfare: A serious threat to peace and global security* (2015) and the Global Programme on Cybercrime.

The draft resolution must draw attention to the increased number of cybercrimes that had occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic. It must consider the rapid and fast-changing nature of such crimes and call for greater international cooperation. Differences in laws from one State to another often delayed the litigation process.

**Mr. J. Cepeda** (Spain), co-Rapporteur, said that, in 2024, the United Nations was planning to hold a world summit precisely on the topic of cybersecurity. The resolution was a good way in which the IPU could contribute to the summit.

The use of technology had been growing exponentially since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, which had led to an alarming increase in cyberattacks. The issue must be addressed immediately. The IPU was well-placed to recommend a basic set of policies on cybersecurity. It was particularly important to push for more funds. He recommended that 20% of national investments made into new technologies should be directed towards cybersecurity. There was also a need to develop laws and plans to protect critical infrastructure, including parliaments themselves. A good way to tackle the problem was through early warning systems. It was his hope that national cybersecurity centres could be set up in every country and coordinated under the auspices of the United Nations.

A number of international laws were relevant to the draft resolution. A new convention on cybercrime developed by the Council of Europe aimed to facilitate information exchange between different judicial systems. There were also several conventions that allowed for tracking of digital identities, for instance through blockchain technology.

It was important to understand that cybersecurity was not just a technical issue but also a political one. Cyberspace had become a domain where geopolitical conflict took place and was being used as a weapon of war. Countries must be able to protect themselves from cyberattacks launched not only on warfare systems but also on critical public infrastructure which put civilian lives at risk.



Another important point was that cybersecurity was not a national issue but a global one. Indeed, the nodes of one network could be located in many different countries, any of which could be targeted by attackers. Coordinated action between countries was therefore needed. The IPU, as a global organization, was in a good position to drive such global initiatives.

Cybersecurity was a complex, wide-ranging and cross-cutting problem but one that parliamentarians could address effectively.

**The Chair** introduced the experts.

**Ms. A.M. Buzatu** (Vice-President and Chief Operations Officer of ICT4Peace Foundation), expert, said that cyberattacks and cybercrime were on the rise worldwide, particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic. Cyberattacks had doubled in 2021 compared to 2020, with the highest number of attacks being carried out on the education sector.

Cyberattacks were posing a number of challenges for existing legal frameworks. First, there were low barriers to entry which meant that an individual or group could have a major impact on a computer system with just a few resources. Second, it was very difficult to identify the authors of an attack. Third, attacks were often of a transborder nature with victims and perpetrators located in different countries. It was important that the legal frameworks in place responded effectively to those challenges.

Parliamentarians should not be daunted by the technical nature of cybersecurity. The term “malware” referred to malicious software designed to compromise, damage or destroy a device or the data stored on it. One of the most important types of malware used in cyberattacks was ransomware. Attackers used ransomware to lock, encrypt or save data and then to demand a ransom in exchange for the return of that data. Sometimes attackers threatened to release sensitive personal data if the ransom was not fulfilled. There were also other types of attacks, including attempts to crash a server by overburdening it with requests for information. Attacks on the internet of things were also common since the network tended to be less secure.

Cyberattacks were increasingly being launched on critical infrastructure systems such as energy and water supply. She wished to highlight a few examples. In May 2021, the health care system of Ireland had shut down completely as a result of a major ransomware attack. Electronic records had been inaccessible for a number of weeks and appointments had had to be cancelled along with many treatments. There were also concerns about patient information having been stolen and shared online. In the same month, the Colonial Pipeline Company in the United States had suffered a similar ransomware attack leaving people unable to purchase fuel for their vehicles. The attackers had stolen 100 gigabytes of data and threatened to release it online. The company had paid a ransom of US\$ 4.5 million in exchange for a tool to unlock the stolen data, only to find that that the tool had been ineffective. Lastly, in April 2021, the city of Johannesburg had reported several ransomware attacks on banks where attackers demanded Bitcoin ransom payments. It was clear that such attacks were disrupting societies and causing chaos. They were not simply attacks in an amorphous cyberspace but were having a real impact on people's lives.

There were many kinds of online behaviours and activities that could violate human rights, including invasion of privacy, unlawful surveillance, bullying and degrading treatment, incitement to violence and sharing of personal information to cause harm. It was important to respond effectively to those behaviours.

Moving forward, parliamentarians were encouraged to include cyberhygiene as a part of the education curriculum from primary school to university. Cyberhygiene could help reduce the likelihood of cyberattacks. Indeed, it was estimated that around 85% of all successful cyberattacks happened because of mistakes that ordinary people made, such as clicking on suspicious links. Laws and policies were also needed to protect the cybersecurity ecosystem, both nationally and internationally. Computer emergency response teams should be put in place to serve as first responders to cyberattacks. Given the transborder nature of cybercrime, countries must cooperate with each other as well as with ICT companies to collectively defend against cyberthreats.

She drew attention to a number of cybersecurity initiatives that were already under way. The United Nations was currently in discussions about a cybercrime convention and had set up an open-ended working group on responsible State behaviour in cyberspace. There were also many regional initiatives led by bodies such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Organization of American States and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

**Mr. J. Candau** (Head of the Cybersecurity Department of the Spanish National Cryptologic Centre), expert, said that the world was seeing a huge increase in cyberattacks, particularly in the education sector and in government. In Spain, the number of critical incidents had increased

twofold since the pandemic. There had been around 60 incidents in 2020 capable of completely shutting down an organization and double the amount of such incidents in 2021. The attackers tended to act in a very short amount of time and with a high level of sophistication. Targets did not usually have equivalent defences. As a result, it often took weeks or even months to detect and recover from an attack.

There were many different actors carrying out cyberattacks. An increasing number of entities, including intelligence services and armed forces, were carrying out cyberespionage on behalf of States. Such entities tended to attack companies and governments with a view to stealing intellectual property and were usually able to receive huge returns with very little investment. Others were carrying out attacks for the purposes of cybercrime, including credit card theft, money-laundering and extortion. Some were engaging in cyberwarfare, including cybersabotage, as had been seen in Ukraine. In such cases, attackers used tools to destroy hard drives and network configurations which could shut down entire organizations. Lastly, there were attackers carrying out political hacking, terrorists using the internet for their own gain and attackers responsible for cyberterrorism.

The Spanish cybersecurity system was one of the strongest in the world and was made up of 10 pillars: (1) approving a cybersecurity strategy, (2) establishing a cybersecurity governance system, (3) enabling regulatory development, (4) creating cybersecurity incident response teams, (5) introducing detection capabilities and early warning systems, (6) increasing cybervigilance, (7) boosting training and capacity-building, (8) forming public-private partnerships, (9) ensuring information exchange, and (10) launching communication and awareness-raising campaigns. He encouraged other nations to cover the same 10 pillars in their own work on cybersecurity.

Spain had also set up a group on cybersecurity that brought together all relevant stakeholders, including law enforcement and the private sector. The aim of the group was to facilitate easy exchange of information. Its work was being further strengthened through the national security operation centre network.

Parliaments were encouraged to take a number of actions. First, it was important to create a cybersecurity baseline in both the public and private sectors. The baseline should be the same for both sectors since they often worked together. Second, there was a need to improve horizontal cybersecurity services so that the entire public sector was protected. It was not uncommon for local bodies, such as city councils and regional governments, to be lacking the resources they needed to defend themselves. Similar structures should also be created for the private sector. Horizontal cybersecurity services must include: (1) prevention measures such as awareness-raising campaigns, audits and training for personnel, (2) automatic detection services active 24 hours a day/7 days a week, and (3) response capacities, including computer emergency response teams. Third, parliamentarians must produce metrics and periodic reports to measure how well the system was performing.

**Mr. M. Al-Kuwaiti** (Managing Director of the National Data Centre of the Emirati Supreme Council for National Security), expert, said that the world was currently at its fourth industrial revolution where technologies such as artificial intelligence, cloud computing and blockchain were becoming commonplace. Countries were building smart cities where all services were connected and every sector, be it aviation, transportation, health care or education, depended on technology. It was for that reason that cybersecurity was crucial.

The United Arab Emirates had developed a cybersecurity strategy which was made up of five pillars. Pillar 1 was about enhancing cybersecurity governance, including through policies and laws. Pillar 2 was about ensuring a vibrant cybersecurity ecosystem that leveraged technology and human resources in line with national needs. Pillar 3 was about introducing a national cyberincident response plan to defend against cyberattacks. Pillar 4 was about developing critical information infrastructure protection programmes. Pillar 5 was about forming partnerships with a variety of actors, including academia, industry and governments. A policy framework was also in place which included a cloud security policy, a policy on the internet of things, a cyberaccreditation programme and a cybersecurity operations centre responsible for monitoring, detection and response.

The Government had also launched a number of practical initiatives to foster a cybersecurity culture and build cyberresilience. It had launched the “Cyber Pulse” initiative aiming to raise awareness of cybersecurity across the entire population, including among young people, parents and senior citizens. The idea was to teach people about all aspects of cybersecurity, both general and specialized, including forensic analysis, malware, reverse engineering, cybercrime, cyberwarfare and cyberbullying. The “Cyber Drills” initiative had been established to conduct cyberattack simulation exercises or drills. So far, six drills had been carried out in collaboration with

60 entities and 2,000 participants. A number of Guinness World Records had been broken in carrying out the drills. There was also a “Future Leaders” initiative to teach leaders about the importance of cybersecurity and an initiative to help countries raise their ranking on the Global Cybersecurity Index. As part of the above initiatives, extensive efforts were being made to develop the skills of women in cybersecurity and to include cybersecurity in school and university curricula.

The United Arab Emirates was a leader on cybersecurity, having recently moved from 47th to 5th place on the Global Cybersecurity Index. Its success, however, could be replicated elsewhere. His Government was already working with four or five other countries on similar cybersecurity frameworks. Local and international collaboration was needed to create a cybersecurity culture around the world.

**Ms. D.E. Dlakude** (South Africa) said that new and emerging technologies were being used to violate international norms, such as the right to privacy, as well as to undermine the sovereignty of countries. South Africa had not been immune to those developments. It had experienced the third highest number of cybercrimes worldwide and was estimated to suffer 577 malware attacks an hour. The economy was losing billions as a result of the attacks.

In 2021, a joint operation between South Africa, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and INTERPOL had led to the arrest of a group of criminals linked to a US\$ 100 million internet scam. The joint operation had demonstrated the importance of international police cooperation in fighting internet crimes.

Effective protection against cyberattacks and threats could only be achieved through empowerment, cooperation and education. Parliamentarians must enhance their national cybercrime investigation capabilities and encourage their governments to collaborate with foreign States. It was important to support national awareness campaigns aiming to educate the public about the risks inherent to cyberspace. Close cooperation between the public and private sectors should also be encouraged.

The escalation of cybercrime in South Africa had led to the enactment of the Cybercrimes Act and the Protection of Personal Information Act. The acts brought the country's data protection and cybersecurity legislation into line with global standards.

**Mr. S. Patra** (India) said that India had adopted its national cybersecurity policy in 2013. Since then, it had been building a robust infrastructure to deter, disrupt and respond to cyberattacks. The National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre was the main cyberprotection agency while the computer emergency response teams acted as first responders to cybersecurity incidents. Adequate legal provisions were also in place to punish perpetrators of cyberoffences.

India was actively participating in the negotiations of the Ad Hoc Committee to Elaborate a Comprehensive International Convention on Countering the Use of Information and Communications Technologies for Criminal Purposes. The convention was expected to bridge gaps in international law and enhance international cooperation on cybercrime, including by enhancing the collection and sharing of information and improving the use of mutual legal assistance. Parliamentarians must press their governments to ensure early conclusion of the convention.

It was vital to ensure that digital technology continued to serve and empower mankind. The extent of the benefits derived from the use of the internet depended to a large extent on the choices made by politicians. Parliamentarians could help counter the ever-changing cyberthreat landscape by working together and ensuring coordination across different security agencies.

**Mr. A. Suwanmongkol** (Thailand) said that Thailand had established a government office, hotline and contact centre to deal specifically with cybersecurity. Its newest cybersecurity challenge was a phenomenon whereby attackers demanded money from their victims by pretending to be government officials. In response, the Government had taken measures to block suspicious communications, such as those containing sensitive content.

Thailand had recently passed a cybersecurity law that had led to the establishment of a national cybersecurity agency. It also had an action plan on cybersecurity for 2021-2027 aiming to build capacities, foster partnership and boost resilience.

The national cybersecurity agency was helping to ensure the smooth and timely operation of the national computer emergency response team. It was collaborating bilaterally with countries such as Australia, China and Japan, as well as multilaterally within organizations such as ASEAN. Other responsibilities included sharing knowledge among cybersecurity experts and personnel and advancing critical ICT infrastructure.

**Mr. J. Fakhro** (Bahrain) said that the resolution must define the responsibilities of parliaments in relation to cybersecurity. Among them was the need to ensure sufficient budget for cybersecurity and to raise awareness of cyberthreats, particularly among children. In addition, parliaments must pass clear laws that set out severe punishments for perpetrators as well as for entities who failed to put in place the right protections. Cybersecurity was a global issue as well as a local one and required international cooperation. Parliaments could play a key role in cybersecurity but the responsibility lay first and foremost with governments.

**Mr. D. McGuinty** (Canada) said that the National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians had recently conducted a review of the national cybersecurity framework in Canada. It was the first and deepest review of its kind, setting out threats from both domestic and foreign actors. He encouraged delegates to read it.

The report showed that Canada was facing many cyberthreats. The Government was subjected to hundreds of millions of cyberattack attempts every single day. There were also attacks on critical services, such as health care. Recently, the health care system of Newfoundland had been shut down for over two weeks, leaving thousands of patients unable to get treatment. Medical records had also been stolen and circulated on the Internet.

The report showed that China was the most prolific and most aggressive actor targeting the Canadian Government. For example, in 2010 and 2011, China had attacked the National Research Council of Canada and stolen 40,000 files of intellectual property, research and business information. The situation had become so serious that legislation had been amended to allow critical infrastructure actors, such as water companies, to apply for security assistance from the Government.

He drew attention to growing interference by certain actors into democratic processes. According to a recent report, the Russian Government had covertly supplied over US\$ 300 million to politicians in more than two dozen countries since 2014. Its aim was to exert political pressure and sway elections. Such interference could only be described as a significant assault on sovereignty.

It was vitally important to address cybersecurity. A great deal was at stake, including personal information, tax information, immigration information, border information, proprietary information, government policies, security and intelligence information and the general integrity of government systems. The Committee must talk openly about the issue with all IPU Members. Cyberattacks were increasing at a rapid pace. It was only a matter of time before each and every country was hacked.

**Mr. S. Rachkov** (Belarus) said that cyberspace had the potential to bring enormous social and economic benefits to all but could have detrimental consequences nationally, regionally and globally if misused. Cybersecurity strategies were therefore needed. International regulatory bodies and instruments should be established to guarantee cybersecurity. Belarus wished to propose an initiative called the “digital good neighbourhood belt” which would oblige all countries to observe the digital sovereignty of other countries and practice non-interference into their information and resources.

**Ms. A.M. Buzatu** (Vice-President and Chief Operations Officer of ICT4Peace Foundation), expert, wished to recap on the points she had made earlier. First, parliamentarians must craft laws that responded effectively to the challenges and opportunities posed by ICT, taking into account the specific characteristics of the technologies in question. Second, she stressed the importance of ICT education, with a particular focus on cyberhygiene. Cyberhygiene should be included in the curriculum at all levels of the education system. Parliamentarians needed education on the same topics. Third, robust cybersecurity policies were necessary to protect the cybersecurity ecosystem, including critical infrastructure installations. Fourth, computer emergency response teams were an important part of the response. Fifth, cooperation was needed between governments and ICT companies. Parliamentarians were encouraged to participate in cybersecurity discussions at the United Nations and at different regional organizations with a view to developing effective collaboration mechanisms.

**Mr. J. Candau** (Head of the Cybersecurity Department of the Spanish National Cryptologic Centre), expert, wished to conclude with three points. First, cybercrime was a cross-border phenomenon that required international coordination. Second, legislation had not yet caught up

with the extent of the threats and should therefore be reviewed by parliamentarians. Third, all countries needed basic cybersecurity standards that improved their defences. The same level of cybersecurity was needed across all countries in order to ensure full protection.

**Ms. S. Falaknaz** (United Arab Emirates), co-Rapporteur, said that the interventions had confirmed that she and her fellow co-Rapporteur were on the right track. She agreed with several of the points made, including the need to update the regulatory framework, consider the transborder nature of cybercrime, enhance international cooperation, raise awareness and increase the cybersecurity budget. Parliamentarians were invited to send any further inputs to the Secretariat.

**Mr. J. Cepeda** (Spain), co-Rapporteur, said that it was interesting to observe that certain sectors of the population were more vulnerable than others, such as women and children. There were also specific points in time, such as elections, where cybercriminals were more likely to launch attacks. The resolution must be sensitive to such trends. All interventions would be taken on board in the drafting of the resolution.

### **Any other business**

**The Chair** said that, as decided at the 144th IPU Assembly, the Committee would dedicate all its time at the 146th Assembly to the drafting of the resolution.

*The sitting rose at 16:30.*

## Standing Committee on Sustainable Development

SITTING OF WEDNESDAY, 12 OCTOBER

(Morning)

*The sitting was called to order at 09:00 with Ms. A. Mulder (Netherlands), President of the Standing Committee, in the Chair.*

### Adoption of the agenda

(C-II/145/A.1)

*The agenda was adopted.*

### Approval of the summary record of the Committee's session held at the 144th IPU Assembly in Nusa Dua (March 2022)

*The summary record was approved.*

### Debate on the theme of the next resolution entitled *Parliamentary efforts in achieving negative carbon balances of forests*

**The President** introduced the Committee's next resolution, entitled *Parliamentary efforts in achieving negative carbon balances of forests*. The co-Rapporteurs would prepare a draft resolution, which would be open for amendments at the end of December 2022. Members of the Standing Committee would subsequently have an opportunity to discuss the amendments ahead of adoption of the resolution at the next IPU Assembly in Bahrain in March 2023.

**Mr. C. Hoffmann** (Germany), co-Rapporteur, referred to the call made in 2019 by Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, on the global community to turn the tide on deforestation. He said that it was unlikely, if not impossible, that the goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius would be met, even with ambitious reductions in emissions. Carbon sequestration was therefore imperative.

Trees played an essential role in climate security by capturing carbon and storing it as biomass. The world's forests did not just have the potential to mitigate climate change, but also conserve biodiversity, cultivate carbon-neutral resources and promote sustainable economic development. Global efforts were required to address the issue. Parliamentarians had the most important role to play, by stepping up the legal processes to halt deforestation and forest degradation, and promoting efforts on conservation, afforestation and sustainable forest management. Forestry resources stored half of the world's terrestrial-bound carbon, which was needed to help the world regulate regional climates and the water balance, and to protect against erosion and natural disasters. Deforestation had contributed to the recent severe flooding that had occurred in multiple countries.

Sustainably managed forests delivered natural, clean and climate-neutral resources, providing indigenous communities with livelihoods, sustenance and refuge. The draft resolution would recognize the need for urgent action and state that deforestation, and its impact on humanity, was a common struggle. The international community needed to stand together, not just to uphold the natural foundations of life, but also to sustain peace, stability and prosperity. There would be no healthy economies on an unhealthy planet.

**Mr. B. Kaiser** (Rector of the University of Applied Forest Sciences Rottenburg, Germany), expert, speaking via video link and accompanying his comments with a digital slide presentation, said that sustainability had not originated as a practice undertaken to protect nature, but rather as a means of using natural resources in a sustainable manner. The sustainable use of forestry resources was essential in providing incomes for individuals and combating climate change. To be effective, incomes needed to be: regular; plentiful in natural, economic, political and legal terms; and high enough to sustain a living and compete with other land uses.

Surprisingly, it was important to use wood in a sustainable manner, as opposed to not using it altogether, in order to combat climate change. Further processing capacities for the use of wood in industry and as an energy source were needed. The question was therefore whether natural, virgin forests or sustainably used forests sequestered more carbon. The carbon storage capacity of

a sustainably used forest was lower than a virgin, unused forest. The use of forests, however, offered an opportunity to build external carbon storage and for forests to regrow and sequester more carbon.

He provided several recommendations for parliamentarians. First, they should provide mechanisms for the clear ownership of forests. Second, they should support the long-term rights of use of owners. Third, they should link the income function of forests directly and indirectly to the local population. Fourth, they should promote additional industrial processing capacities for wood.

**Mr. P. Boeckx** (Professor at Ghent University), expert, speaking via video link and accompanying his comments with a digital slide presentation, said that 90% of Africa's tropical forests were located in the Congo Basin. There were multiple drivers of deforestation in the region. First, food production via shifting cultivation. Second, the use of charcoal as an essential energy resource, along with the region's significant contribution to worldwide charcoal production. Third, mining activities, especially in the southern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In comparison, the main drivers of forest disturbance in the Amazon and Asia were commodity-driven plantations and forestry plantations, respectively.

Currently, 17% of the world's population lived in Africa, but that was projected to increase to 40% by 2100. In light of the use of shifting cultivation and the use of charcoal as an energy resource in the region, such an increase in population would apply significant pressure on natural ecosystems.

With a view to balancing the use of forests to produce food with the need to preserve forests, he proposed three crucial actions. First, intact forests needed to be conserved. It was important to measure the amount of carbon dioxide absorbed before using other tools, models and remote sensing. Second, degraded forests needed to be restored. The priority given as to which specific forests and ecosystems to restore was based on carbon dioxide sequestration, biodiversity conservation and the financial costs involved. There was a lack of data, however, in that regard for the continent of Africa. The key question to justify ecosystem restoration following shifting cultivation in Africa was biodiversity and the rate of above-ground carbon sequestration. Third, agriculture needed to be intensified. An experiment in the Congo Basin of giving farmers improved varieties of casava had not led to a decrease in deforestation. Actions such as integrated soil fertility management and the addition of nutrients, in particular following repeated clearance of forests via shifting cultivation, would help to sustain food security.

To conserve, restore and intensify agricultural production, it was important to apply a unique, holistic and interdisciplinary approach, fill the huge knowledge gap for Central Africa relative to the other tropical basins, and provide training and capacity-building resources.

**Mr. A. Gerasymov** (Ukraine) thanked all countries and delegations that had offered their support against the unprovoked aggression from the Russian Federation. The Ukrainian Parliament was committed to the global goals on climate change, aiming to ensure that clean technologies and sustainable development solutions were more accessible, affordable and attractive in all gas-emitting sectors by 2030. It was widely understood that the best ways to increase carbon absorption in the forestry sector were afforestation, sustainable forestry and reducing deforestation. His country had adopted many laws in that regard.

As a result of the Russian aggression against Ukraine, many forests had been completely destroyed, affecting both people and ecosystems. Despite such action, the Parliament had continued its legislative work to improve the effectiveness of State policy in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). He called on all democratic States to stop the terrorist State of the Russian Federation from destroying ecosystems, as well as global peace and security.

**Ms. R. Abunayan** (Saudi Arabia) said that climate change was one of the most serious threats facing the world. Parliamentarians could and should play a part in addressing that threat, alongside their respective governments. Her country had established numerous initiatives to address climate issues. It aimed to reach net-zero carbon emissions by 2060, with 50% of the country's energy needs coming from renewable sources. A green initiative to plant billions of trees and rehabilitate millions of hectares of degraded land had been formulated. Priority had been given to the promotion of the circular carbon economy and technological innovation through renewable energies. Strengthening cooperation between global entities and organizations would bring about lasting change in protecting the environment. A national environment committee would monitor and follow up on the progress of those programmes, with a view to introducing or amending legislation to facilitate timely implementation.

**Mr. H. Kumagai** (Japan) said that planted forests accounted for 40% of his country's forested areas. To achieve carbon negativity, further action was needed, as planted forests did not absorb as much carbon dioxide due to ageing. The cyclic use of planted forests and reforestation would expand the use of wood. Leveraging technologies like cross-breeding roots that were fast-growing and high-performing would promote forest rejuvenation. The use of green spaces in cities as places for children to deepen their understanding of green development would help to further promote environmental policy. Urgent measures were therefore needed to preserve the planet for future generations.

**Mr. G. Nouri Ghezaljah** (Islamic Republic of Iran) emphasized the need for all countries to adhere to commitments on climate change. Maintaining and developing forests was a means of contributing to those commitments. His country had supported international efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate the effects of climate change. Despite various obstacles, such as unfair sanctions, Iran had implemented several sustainable development programmes. However, the country's contribution to reducing greenhouse gas emissions depended on sanctions and restrictions being lifted. In addition, the phenomenon of fine dust and desertification needed to be addressed. He suggested that a parliamentary committee involving Asian and Pacific countries be formed in that regard at the IPU.

**Mr. T. Sokun** (Cambodia) said that immediate action was needed to ensure that the protection of forests was more profitable than clearing them. Advancements in sustainable forestry management would contribute to combating desertification, protecting biodiversity, enhancing water resources and mitigating climate change. Preventing deforestation and forest degradation, along with planting new trees, were the simplest ways to not only reduce carbon emissions, but also improve carbon sequestration. At the international level, there had been noticeable progress on developing national disaster risk-reduction strategies. Education and awareness-raising efforts had been established in local communities, which was ensuring all individuals had the necessary knowledge to contribute meaningfully to national-level decisions.

Cambodia had committed to the goal of achieving good forestry cover and establishing protected areas throughout the country's territory. He was pleased with the achievements made through cooperation with partners and the Warsaw Framework for REDD+. Participation from all stakeholders, along with close regional and global cooperation, was needed for REDD+ for such continued actions to be successful.

**Mr. O. Al-Nasiri** (Arab Parliament) wished to make several remarks for inclusion in the resolution. First, the resolution should place a particular emphasis on equality and international justice; countries needed to take responsibility for the damage that they had caused to the environment. Second, carbon emissions were responsible for the effects of climate change. Those countries with the highest emissions should bear the greatest responsibility. Third, all countries should abide by their commitments. Developed countries should help developing countries in mitigating the effects of climate change, in accordance with the Paris Agreement. Fourth, national legislation on climate change should be reviewed to provide a legal framework that supported the implementation of international resolutions and treaties.

**Ms. A. Lotriet** (South Africa), referring to the 2021 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, said that the climate destabilization that the world was witnessing was unprecedented and irreversible. Only drastic and immediate reductions in emissions could prevent climate catastrophe. One of the best methods was a healthy ecosystem that could store carbon through natural processes. Good forest management and reforestation could provide large-scale reductions in emissions. Parliaments had a key role in ensuring that governments followed through with their deforestation-related pledges made at the 26th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26). Parliamentarians should demand specific achievement milestones on the path to the 2030 target. In addition, it was critical that financing for forests was safeguarded by integrating it into post-COVID-19 recovery plans.

Halting deforestation was not just about slowing climate warming, but also about protecting the livelihoods of millions of people. Adopting comprehensive legislation would strengthen national forest authorities, enhance the monitoring of illegal logging and provide for the preservation of indigenous knowledge. Local communities had sustainably managed forests for generations, enabling them to fulfil their needs without undermining the capacity of the ecosystems and forests in which they lived. Afforestation, urban forestry practices and the promotion of protected land tenure rights for local communities should be encouraged.



Parliaments should persuade governments to conclude bilateral agreements on effective border control and quarantine mechanisms to prevent the spread of pests and diseases across borders. Parliaments also needed to encourage the private sector to commit to zero-deforestation supply chains. Forests played a key role in mitigating climate change, and to that end, parliaments should use their constitutional mandates to protect forests for the future of humanity.

**Ms. M. Alsuwaidi** (United Arab Emirates) said that cooperation at the international level was lacking, with many international policies to combat climate change having still not been implemented. Parliaments had a key role to play in monitoring if the executive was implementing international agreements and participating in climate change-related initiatives. Increasing the capacities of parliaments and pushing for green budgets would improve the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

Although the United Arab Emirates did not have any experience in managing deforestation or climate management, its Government had set out priorities to combat climate change, including by participating in international efforts, launching carbon-negative initiatives and investing in the green economy and energy. Her country would also be hosting COP28.

**Mr. V.D. Ram** (India) said that climate change had already affected the environment and human life all around the world. Forests played an important role in efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change, serving as a natural brake in that regard. It was imperative to balance carbon assets and liabilities, and create a negative carbon balance. India had launched numerous initiatives, including the creation of a carbon sink through additional tree cover, a national action plan on climate change and a draft national forest policy.

The issue of carbon emissions and global warming was not specific to individual countries. Bilateral, regional and international cooperation was required. All countries needed to keep emissions within their respective shares of global emissions. Sustainable forestry was critical in both achieving negative carbon balances and improving the economic, social and environmental benefits of forests for present and future generations.

**Ms. J. Sabao** (Zambia) said that, despite Zambia contributing only 0.19% to global greenhouse gas emissions, climate change was already affecting her country in coastal areas. Although a high proportion of her country's landmass was covered by forests – acting as a buffer to climate mitigation – deforestation through charcoal burning had threatened such prospects. In response, her Government had enacted several measures to promote sustainable forest management as a pathway to a low-carbon economy. It was clear that, without a decrease in carbon emissions, adverse climate events would continue to escalate in frequency, intensity and magnitude.

Attaining net-zero emissions relied on the conservation of forests and forestry resources. Parliaments had a role in that regard, by promulgating legislation to promote sustainable management, and educating the public about the importance of conserving and planting forests. Continuous capacity-building programmes for parliamentarians and staff were also needed to address complex issues, such as carbon trading and sequestration through forests.

**Mr. W. William** (Seychelles) said that parliaments should ensure that the necessary laws to control deforestation amid the drive for sustainable development were in place. Parliamentarians were able to scrutinize environmental protection laws, propose amendments and summon ministers to answer questions in parliament. In addition, they could pass resolutions to achieve negative carbon balances of forests.

More than 50% of the landmass of the Seychelles was classified as protected. Flora and fauna were critical to his country's social-economic development and in combating the consequences of global warming. In that regard, the National Assembly had adopted a portion of marshlands for the restoration of mangroves.

Many countries around the world had been devastated by the effects of climate change, which had been exacerbated by mass deforestation, as demonstrated recently in Pakistan. At the global level, he recommended more meaningful and committed actions following the Midterm Review of the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.

**Mr. Yu Eui Dong** (Republic of Korea) said that preserving and protecting forests was vital in tackling the climate crisis. Forests played a crucial role in acting as carbon sinks and storage. In recent years, large areas of forests had been destroyed, affecting the world's biodiversity. The

forestry sector had grown in significance as a major contributor to climate change mitigation. The international community had adopted numerous agreements, including the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement. The promotion of forests could be part of a solution to build on those international climate change agreements and combat climate change.

Based on his country's unprecedented achievements in reforesting areas ravaged during the Korean War, the Republic of Korea was working to restore the world's forests by sharing its experience and forestation technology. The restoration of forests was critical for sustainable development and in responding to climate crises. Forests themselves made the world sustainable, not efforts to make forests sustainable.

**Ms. T.V. Muzenda** (Zimbabwe) said that forests were of paramount importance to the discourse on climate change; they served as both carbon sinks and a source of emissions. Some 5% of Zimbabwe was covered by forests, contributing about 4% to its gross domestic product. The agricultural and forestry industries were major contributors and drivers of greenhouse gas emissions.

The Parliament of Zimbabwe hoped to increase forest land areas and reduce poaching in order to create jobs and improve health and equality. Her country's robust policy framework had supported efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change, including the use of green energy and renewable sources.

**Mr. P. Supadma Rudana** (Indonesia) affirmed his country's commitment to addressing climate change. Indonesia had taken affirmative action at the national level by increasing emission reduction targets and implementing green policies. Indonesia was the world's fifth largest emitter of greenhouse gases and the largest contributor of forest-based emissions, in addition to being home to the world's third largest span of tropical rainforest. Indonesia therefore played an essential role as a climate superpower. His country had been reducing emissions and deforestation, but international support and contributions would further help in that regard. He urged the adoption of further global forestry regrowth regulations on a non-binding basis to maintain government flexibility and take into account the uniqueness of the region and each country's conditions.

**Mr. K. Ballah** (Chad) said that forest degradation had resulted in lower levels of carbon sequestration. Achieving negative carbon balances of forests was therefore a priority issue for parliamentarians. The world was also witnessing increased desertification, exacerbated by forest degradation. Action was needed to reverse that trend. Parliaments needed to enact legislation to preserve forests and reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

**Mr. L.A. Cuello** (Chile) said that the world was at a critical juncture as a result of climate change and carbon emissions. The task of capturing more carbon would not be easy, in particular in countries that taxed primary resources to protect their macroeconomies. Support from developed countries and international organizations was essential. State policies were needed to ensure responsible and sustainable production and consumption. The legal protection and conservation of natural reserves and agricultural land was needed. The urbanization of agricultural land entailed deforestation and the reduction of arable land cover.

Legislation was needed to regulate and implement standards to protect biodiversity and limit carbon dioxide emissions. Increased sanctions would combat irregularities in the sector, corruption and illegal deforestation. Actions at the national level were not sufficient to protect soils and forests; the world needed a legally binding consensual strategy that included an inter-legislative agenda.

**Mr. B. Khawale** (Kenya) said that the Kenyan Parliament was committed to the issues of conservation and forest restoration. Climate change had increased the frequency and magnitude of extreme weather events in Kenya, resulting in lives and homes being lost and reduced crop-livestock production. His delegation had taken note of the emergency item proposed by Pakistan to set up a global fund to address those types of disasters. Kenya would support the creation of such a fund. The Parliament of Kenya took the issue of climate change very seriously, as demonstrated through its national legislation. However, Kenya had little historical or current responsibility for climate change, as its greenhouse gas emissions accounted for less than 1% of total global emissions.

**Mr. T. Raven** (Netherlands) said that the discussion of achieving negative carbon balances of sustainable forests was potentially incorrect. Trees should not be cut down and then new ones planted in their place. In light of trees taking a long time to grow and the associated economic effects, he asked the experts to explain how a balance could be found in regard to carbon dioxide emissions. It was important to discuss and include in the resolution how to replant trees and reintroduce them to expanding desert landscapes.

**Mr. K. Tontisirin** (Thailand) said that sustainable forestry should be promoted locally, nationally and globally. Due consideration of the forestry economy from multiple perspectives was important to sustainably conserve, restore and intensify forests. He recommended the use of mangroves and seagrass owing to their stronger carbon dioxide absorption properties relative to forests. A multi-stakeholder and multi-strategy approach focusing on participation, knowledge and technical-based solutions would be beneficial. The role of parliamentarians in enacting legislation on land ownership, land use and budgets, as well as overseeing governments, would help to monitor the implementation of policy actions. He encouraged IPU Members to learn from each other's experiences in order to find practical and workable solutions.

**Ms. Z. Yildiz** (Türkiye) said that her country was aware of the importance of forestation in combating climate change. Reforestation projects had been implemented in areas throughout Türkiye that had been affected by climate change. In that context, support, training programmes and assistance had been provided to cooperation partners, such as in Madagascar. She called on parliamentarians to concentrate their efforts on achieving negative carbon balances by adopting legislation and monitoring national and international targets.

**Mr. L. Wehrli** (Switzerland) said that his country had a long history in forestry management. He drew attention to numerous actions to achieve negative carbon balances of forests. First, in regard to the construction industry, a reduction in the amount of cement and tarmac was needed, owing to the huge amounts of energy required to produce them. Forests were also used as insulation materials, which had an impact on energy consumption. Second, a reduction in the use of wood as a heating source was needed. Actions could be implemented in that regard by local, regional and national parliaments. Thirdly, parliaments could play their part in implementing and adapting legislation, as well as providing the financial resources necessary for good forestry management. For Switzerland in particular, forests were key in protecting against avalanches and landslides, in sustaining biodiversity and in job creation.

**Mr. K. Alabdallah** (Jordan) said that recent events in Pakistan were the result of international negligence. Without immediate solutions, other countries would suffer from similar natural disasters in the future. Overpopulation and the increasing number of factories were also problematic. The superpowers and developed countries were exporting their goods to developing countries. The resulting emissions directly affected the climate and health of local populations. International conventions needed to be implemented in all countries and appropriate legislation was needed to increase the number of green spaces and combat desertification.

Jordan was one of the poorest countries in terms of water resources. Solutions were needed in developing countries and in countries at risk of desertification. It was important to raise awareness of new agricultural technologies that no longer depended on water. Countries that were known for their industries and manufacturing should be forced to increase the number of green spaces.

**Mr. A.Y. Ihou** (Togo) said that his country was committed to improving green spaces nationally, and policy had been implemented in that regard. The exploitation of oil deposits led to deforestation. He was concerned by the suggestion from poorer countries of the need to reduce oil extraction to protect forests. Many countries would always want to explore such oil deposits.

**Mr. R. Lozano** (Uruguay) said that his country was vulnerable to global warming and to future adverse climate conditions. His country had implemented actions to mitigate and adapt to climate change, as well as to build resilience in that regard. Forestry resources not only made a significant contribution to the economy and development of the country, but also in absorbing carbon emissions. Proactive action needed to be taken.

**Ms. A. Nassif** (Egypt) said that there was no doubt that the world was taking climate change and its impact on livelihoods into account. Poor management had resulted in the destruction of land, resulting in lower carbon sequestration rates in forests. She called for global action to transition away from the use of fossil fuels. Increases in global temperatures also had an impact on the function of trees.

Nationally, Egypt had launched several initiatives and a roadmap to find the right balance between sustainable development and combating climate change. Cooperation with the international community was key. She called for further negotiations on climate change at international forums. COP27 would provide an opportunity for Egypt to promote its vision on combating climate change. She hoped that COP27 would bring about positive recommendations and build on the results of COP26 held in Glasgow. Parliaments played a unique role in driving cooperation between different programmes at the local, national and international levels, as well as in monitoring budgets.

**Ms. M. Rempel Garner** (Canada) said that the resolution needed to recognize and respect science-based methodology and guidance in relation to forest carbon reporting systems, so as to neither over- nor underestimate carbon emission removals. A sustainable forest management and development strategy was crucial in combating climate change for two reasons. First, there were benefits in replacing carbon-intensive construction materials with more environmentally sustainable materials. Second, there were economic benefits of sustainable forest development for countries all around the world. The resolution should note that the knowledge of indigenous persons in sustainable forest management was integral in the fight against climate change.

**Mr. H. Choumais** (Morocco) said that he wished to thank the co-Rapporteurs for their hard work. Morocco attached great importance to efforts to achieve negative carbon balances of forests. He drew the attention of the co-Rapporteurs to the declaration on access to a clean and sustainable environment as a universal human right, as recognized by the United Nations in July 2021. He suggested a clause on boosting the role of parliaments in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDGs. He called for further cooperation between the IPU and the United Nations.

**Ms. C. Kafantari** (Greece) said that climate change had become more visible recently as a result of extreme weather events and crises. Action was needed to meet the target of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. The planet produced enough food to feed humanity, but global food scarcity was on the rise, and was one of the dramatic consequences of the war in Ukraine. She reminded delegates that action against war and climate change equalled life.

The role of forests in acting as carbon sinks was well known, but forest areas were decreasing as a result of certain politics and wildfires. Urgent action was needed globally, in particular at COP27 in Egypt. International organizations had their role to play in supporting climate adaptation by financing the most vulnerable. Global social solidarity was essential. There were two choices: collective action or collective suicide.

**Mr. B. Almomani** (Jordan) said that all stakeholders were mobilizing efforts to safeguard forests in Jordan. Palestine was suffering as a result of Israeli violations. Forests had been destroyed and settlements had been built on forest areas. He wanted to speak up and ask Israel to stop such violations. The IPU should take a clear stance in that regard in order to protect Palestinians and Palestinian land. Despite previous calls to stop such violations in Palestine, they had continued.

**Mr. C. Hoffmann** (Germany), co-Rapporteur, thanked all participants for their contributions. He aimed to include them in the resolution. It was clear that success globally could only be achieved if countries stood together. Money was an urgent question to be addressed. Responding to points raised, he said it was in the interest of the whole world to conserve forests. Certain countries would need compensating if the extraction of fossil fuels under forests did not take place. He recognized that deforestation was linked to poverty. He would aim to include poverty reduction in the resolution.

**Mr. B. Kaiser** (Rector of the University of Applied Forest Sciences Rottenburg, Germany), expert, said that it was important to distinguish between afforestation and reforestation. Afforestation was the planting of trees on land that had previously not been forested. Such action was difficult in certain areas because the applicable climate would not allow for trees to grow sufficiently. Planting trees in savannahs in Africa for example would not be successful.

Global forests were crucially important in limiting the amount of carbon dioxide that humanity produced. The action of planting trees alone would not solve the climate problem. To cancel out annual carbon dioxide emissions, 34 million square kilometres of trees would need to be planted. The Congo Basin –the second largest tropical forest in the world – was only 4 million square kilometres. He asked delegates not to turn the planting of trees into a myth. Other measures were needed, such as preserving existing forests, restoring degraded forests, planting trees in suitable environments and climates, and transitioning to other forms of energy.

**The President** thanked the experts and all those who had contributed to the discussion.

### **Preparations for the Parliamentary Meeting at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP27) in Egypt**

**The President** said that the IPU had promoted parliamentary engagement in climate change processes for over a decade. The Parliamentary Meeting at COP27, hosted by Egypt and the Egyptian House of Representatives, would be held on 13 November 2022 in Sharm el-Sheikh. The Parliamentary Meeting would provide an opportunity to obtain first-hand information on the main issues to be discussed at the United Nations Climate Change Conference.

**Mr. K. Darwish** (Egypt) said that his country was proud to host COP27, in particular on behalf of the African continent. He was honoured to have been nominated by the Egyptian House of Representatives to serve as its rapporteur.

The resolution to be adopted at the end of the Parliamentary Meeting would draw on a number of elements. First, the necessity to enhance the principle of human responsibility for non-human aspects, such as biodiversity and the diversity of ecosystems, while determining actions to combat climate change. Second, recognition that knowledge and science were joint human rights. Scientific means must be made available in a transparent manner, as the effects of climate change posed a risk and threat to humanity. Third, asserting the importance of the right to access sustainable ecosystems. Fourth, the need for parliaments to work to adopt laws to reduce and adapt to the effects of climate change. Legislative action would support the move to a green economy and the commitments made in the Paris Climate Agreement. Fifth, an increase in the use of tools, such as green budgets and evidence-based decision-making. Six, enhanced capacities in the field of climate change risks for different institutions. Seven, the provision of enhanced support to countries and communities that were in dire need, including through bridging the gap of climate funding and consolidating coordination with neighbouring countries.

**Mr. M.H. Syed** (Pakistan) expressed his gratitude for the statements of sympathy and solidarity made by other delegates. It was a difficult time for Pakistan. The recent floods were of biblical proportions, having affected over a third of the country. As one of the top countries that was most affected by climate change, Pakistan was facing the consequences of policies in which it had played no part. His country contributed only 0.7% of greenhouse gas emissions. Climate change was therefore a global issue, which involved climate mitigation, climate justice and climate finance. Climate justice should be apportioned to countries that suffered as a result of the actions of global polluters. Responding to Mr. Darwish, he said that treating knowledge and science as human rights and advocating for human responsibility were key. He reminded delegates that Pakistan had submitted a request for the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda on a global financial facility for climate-vulnerable countries.

**Mr. N. Alalou** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that climate change posed a threat to humanity and to species around the world. The Syrian Government had expressed concerns about the effects of climate change even before the current crisis in Syria. In accordance with the Paris Agreement and the United Nations Convention on Climate Change, Syria had implemented numerous measures to reduce carbon emissions and the effects of climate change. However, the current war in Syria had presented several climate-related challenges. First, non-methodological policies had resulted in a decrease in the water levels of the Euphrates River. Second, oil had been stolen by militias that were supported by other countries, affecting agriculture and the wider population. Third, terrorist groups had burned forests and crops.

**Ms. M. Perez** (Chile) said that her country met seven of the nine vulnerability criteria established by the UNFCCC. Chile depended on the climate and water resources. Although not an island, her country was nevertheless vulnerable. There was a need to adapt to and mitigate that

vulnerability. It was alarming to see an increase in extreme weather events, losses in biodiversity and a decrease in water resources. Chile was proud of its national legislative actions to raise awareness of climate change and promote a low-carbon, resilient economy. The key was to be rigorous to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in all countries. Action was needed on additional challenges, such as ensuring food security, increasing the availability of water, and reducing pollution and risks to health.

**Ms. A. Habibou** (Niger) said that repeated droughts had caused cereal shortages in Niger, resulting in the loss of land, large numbers of displaced persons and severe damage to crops. The Government was pursuing further actions to achieve carbon neutrality. With a view to achieving the objectives outlined in the SDGs and the Paris Agreement, parliamentarians had a role in implementing legislation, bolstering awareness-raising efforts, providing adequate financing and overseeing the actions of their governments.

**Mr. R. Cutajar** (Malta), recalling that Malta was the first country to put climate change on the agenda at the United Nations General Assembly in December 1988, said that the same topic was still being discussed, some 34 years later. He appealed for governments to show goodwill and commitment in taking the appropriate measures needed for all countries. Politicians were obligated to take appropriate decisions to leave a better world for future generations.

**Mr. M. Reddad** (Morocco) said that the world was facing a lot of challenges that threatened food security and energy security, such as climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact of the war in Ukraine. Following the adoption of the Paris Agreement, another threat was industrial and polluting countries not fulfilling their commitments. Poor countries would pay the price for that rollback on commitments. He hoped that COP27 would provide an opportunity to safeguard everything that had been achieved since COP22 in Marrakech and other summits since. Morocco had implemented actions to fulfil its commitments on climate change. He hoped that his country's efforts would assert its determination to contribute to international efforts to find permanent solutions to climate change.

**Mr. O. Amutike** (Zambia) said that climate change was one of the key subjects of the 2030 Agenda. Through their oversight and representative functions, parliaments were expected to prioritize action on climate change. To avoid the humanitarian, economic and environmental consequences of natural disasters, he proposed several actions for parliaments to take. First, they should provide appropriate budgets and robust oversight on the implementation of climate change activities. Second, they should prioritize capacity-building among parliamentarians and parliamentary staff, and improve the availability of information and data in library departments. Third, they should use the IPU as a platform to share experiences and best practices. He recalled that Zambia was a signatory to the Paris Agreement and the UNFCCC. Nationally, the Government of Zambia had demonstrated a political commitment to addressing environmental issues, including the creation of a green economy minister, a national policy to reduce carbon emissions and a climate change response strategy.

**Mr. T. Raven** (Netherlands) said that he was disappointed in the answer provided by Mr. Kaiser on how to replant trees and reintroduce them to expanding desert landscapes. It was a pity because the issue was key.

**Mr. K. Darwish** (Egypt), extending his condolences and thoughts to Pakistan, said that he had taken note of all the contributions, which would be included in the outcome document of the Parliamentary Meeting. Of particular note were the points on climate justice, climate mitigation, raising awareness, the urgency of taking action, accountability and the role of parliaments.

**Mr. G. Nouri Ghezaljah** (Islamic Republic of Iran) noted that the emergency item proposed by Pakistan was related to climate change and was thus within the remit of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development. He called on the Committee to fully support the emergency item.

**The President** said that it was up to all countries to form their own judgements on which emergency item to support, as there were many important issues to discuss. Nevertheless, the events in Pakistan had affected everyone. She thanked all participants for their contributions.

*The sitting rose at 12:00.*

**SITTING OF FRIDAY, 14 OCTOBER**

(Morning)

*The sitting was called to order at 11:00 with Mr. W. William (Seychelles), Vice-President of the Committee, in the Chair.*

**Panel discussion on the theme *Reconnecting local communities with a local sustainable inclusive economy to achieve the targets of SDG 8***

(CII/145/5-Inf.1)

**The Chair**, introducing the panel discussion, said that a local sustainable inclusive economy was important for local prosperity and the local economic ecosystem. A local economy that connected with local society increased the well-being of households and communities. The discussion was aimed at examining ways of reconnecting local communities with local sustainable inclusive economies and the measures and policies required to that end. The two panellists were Mr. A. Gryffroy of Belgium, who had proposed the subject for discussion, and Mr. J. Chirove, an employment specialist at the International Labour Organization (ILO).

**Mr. A. Gryffroy** (Belgium), panellist, said that, following the shifts caused around the world by the COVID-19 pandemic, ways of reconnecting local communities with a local sustainable inclusive economy had to be found for the reasons mentioned if SDG 8 concerning decent work and economic growth was to be achieved. During the pandemic, 255 million full-time jobs had been lost, which was four times more than in the financial crisis between 2007 and 2009. One effect of the resulting unemployment was that young people lacking in education and training were at risk of impoverishment and faced greater challenges in regaining their livelihoods in the pandemic recovery period.

In 2020, the number of unemployed worldwide had risen by 33 million, equating to a global unemployment rate of 6.55%, up by 1.1 percentage points. A further 81 million, moreover, were either not actively seeking employment or unable to find employment owing to COVID-19-related restrictions. Employment losses stood at 8.7% for young people and 5% for women, as against 3.7% for men. Similarly hard hit by the pandemic were the 1.6 billion informal workers without a social safety net and the independent micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) struggling to survive or forced to close through lack of custom. Their numbers were very substantial but hard to calculate. Global gross domestic product (GDP) per capita had decreased on average from 2.2% in 2017 to -4.6% in 2020, representing a fall of 6.8 percentage points over three years.

The expected return of economic growth to pre-pandemic levels could not yet be fully gauged, especially in light of the current energy crisis, although its impact was less than COVID-19 in the sense that the food, tourism and hospitality industries had revived. In countries with an open economy, local players were finding it difficult to survive, in contrast to the expansion seen in large companies with financial wherewithal and online capabilities that left small physical stores unable to compete, affecting the local economic ecosystem, which was unlikely to recover.

During the pandemic, local society had accordingly grown disconnected and incapable of contributing to inclusive and sustainable economic growth and of providing full and productive employment and decent work for all. Even if economic activity were to recover to pre-pandemic levels, a part of it – essentially comprising MSMEs – was set never to return, meaning that local society might never again be connected to the same level as before the pandemic. Against that backdrop, the reconnection process was not progressing well. He was therefore eager and curious to hear the expert perspective and to learn from countries about how and whether their local economic ecosystems were successfully reconnecting.

**Mr. J. Chirove** (Employment Specialist, ILO), panellist, speaking via video link and accompanying his remarks with a slide presentation, said that unemployment had already been a global challenge before the pandemic and that about one third of current unemployed were in the 16–24 age group, a rising number of whom were also neither in education nor training. While informal workers accounted for up to 60% of the global workforce, the figure rose to as much as 90% in some countries, typically developing ones. Invariably, those workers experienced decent work deficits, such as low wages, precarious employment conditions, denial of basic employment

rights, absence of social protection, and lack of any worker-employment dialogue. Such matters were in need of attention, along with gender gaps in pay and conditions, which also persisted in developed countries, and gaps produced or exacerbated by COVID-19, including between low- and high-income countries.

As ILO analyses had shown, sustained economic growth was not necessarily accompanied by a commensurate increase in jobs, especially decent and productive jobs, and generated little capacity for absorbing job seekers or young people entering the labour market. Sector analysis also showed variations in the potential for creating jobs and was, as such, an important means of determining opportunities for job creation in the post-pandemic recovery period. The agricultural sector, for instance, could always provide many jobs, except they were not decent or productive compared with jobs in, among others, the manufacturing, construction and service sectors.

At the same time as working to improve productivity in sectors employing the majority of a population, as was sometimes the case with agriculture in particular, efforts must be made to promote a structural transformation through moving productive resources and people towards more productive sectors. In that context, governments and parliaments played an important role in directing investment and resources accordingly, often paving the way in the process for private-sector engagement. In practice, that required a coordinated all-of-government approach to planning for job creation across all sectors, including with an eye to the impact of sectoral strategies on employment.

Linked to that approach was the entire macroeconomic policy framework. Monetary policies especially should go beyond simply keeping inflation and interest rates under control. Central banks in some countries were required to report on the impact of policies on employment, which was good practice, while in others employment was mainstreamed in plans and programmes, with rewards sometimes given where job creation was promoted through pro-employment budgeting. It was equally important to harmonize sectoral policies, including in terms of delivery of employment outcomes and the promotion of private companies of every size as the main job creator, all while engaging employers' and workers' organizations in the development of economic policies and programmes.

Through its field offices, the ILO could work closely with parliaments and governments in exploring ways of improving employment outcomes. More specifically, it could provide advice and capacity-building to promote employment by way of macro frameworks and budgeting, mainstream employment in national development plans, and realistically identify potential for employment creation. The ILO could also conduct impact assessments to determine the sectors, subsectors or value chains with better employment outcomes and ascertain the impact of public investment programmes on employment so that efforts could be focused towards sectors offering more valuable opportunities for decent and productive employment. The ILO furthermore continued its long-standing provision of support for the development of comprehensive national employment frameworks and policies, in which questionnaires were used to clarify the roles of all stakeholders and the priorities for job creation, including in terms of decent work. In addition, the ILO provided technical assistance concerning youth employment strategies and action plans.

To conclude, parliaments had a role to play in job creation by bringing together different ministries through their committee structures and by approving budget allocations made by the executive. The ILO would be pleased to engage further with parliaments at country level. Meanwhile, he looked forward to learning from the experiences of IPU Members.

*Ms. A. Mulder (Netherlands), President of the Standing Committee, took the Chair.*

**The Chair** thanked the panellists for their contributions and invited comments from the floor.

**Mr. N. Alalou** (Syrian Arab Republic), noting that economies were the first affected and the last to recover in times of crisis, said that the global economy had not improved and was shaped by the whims and policies of those controlling it without a thought to local impact. Employment, furthermore, was being reframed with an emphasis on technology and artificial intelligence rather than on low-income earners and the working class. The world was in flux, with the economy standing as the main cause of, and the main solution to, problems, and as the driver of politics. Efforts should therefore be redoubled to connect MSME projects with an economy focused on sustainable development, decentralization and a shift towards secure employment and away from the greed and self-interest of big business, which was corrupt and encouraged a black economy. Such projects could be implemented at any time, especially in developing countries beset by crisis and conflict.



**Mr. O. Amutike** (Zambia) said that parliamentarians should be actively involved in the implementation of mechanisms designed to allow for regular interaction and meaningful engagement between local communities and central government so as to foster local sustainable economic development. Despite positive indications of economic expansion, the poverty reduction rate in Zambia had remained low and unemployment relatively high, which had implications for local communities and the achievement of SDG 8 targets. To encourage economic growth that translated into decent jobs for local people, decentralized government structures were consequently being established and inefficiencies tackled. Measures in that context included labour law reforms, implementation of the ILO-supported Zambia Decent Work Country Programme, support for MSMEs, and action to ensure respect for workers' rights in line with ILO standards. The current national development plan moreover recognized the importance of effective local community involvement in sustainable and inclusive economic growth, with parliament playing a key role in promoting such involvement.

**Mr. H. Kumagai** (Japan) said that, following the rapid spread of teleworking during the pandemic, work in his country was no longer as concentrated in Tokyo and had shifted more towards rural areas, contributing towards addressing the long-term challenges of decentralization. Japan was working to instil fair and just labour practices and build a happy and sustainable society. Currently, however, the gender pay gap was substantial, many women and young people were irregular workers in receipt of less pay for work of equal value done by regular workers, and the declining birth rate presaged rising labour shortages. Those obstacles must be tackled by motivating the workforce and encouraging the establishment of families countrywide through measures aimed at striking a work-life balance and creating stable employment in rural areas. For their part, local governments must lay the appropriate framework for local sustainable inclusive economies much dependent on decent work opportunities, which parliament would continue helping to promote.

**Ms. A. Nassif** (Egypt) said that, in the constantly evolving political and economic landscape of the current world, local economic development should be prioritized as part of an inclusive social process, which called for a shift in economic thinking and planning. Strong local economies were especially key to generating comprehensive sustainable economic growth and improving prospects of decent, secure and productive work – and in turn a better future – for all. To that end, effective monitoring, evaluation and accountability strategies were needed, together with innovative ways of collecting and widely disseminating economic development data. Related laws should also have a built-in flexibility for empowering local administrations to better implement sustainable development plans, with local capacity-building provided to support economic participation and employment in an economy resilient to external shocks. To effect such changes, however, the international community must cooperate and fulfil its responsibility to ensure that the poorest were not neglected in the efforts to achieve sustainable development.

**Mr. G. Nouri Ghezal** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that failure to pursue appropriate economic growth policies disrupted financial markets and destabilized the global economy. To prevent inequalities, economic policymakers must always seek to distribute economic gains fairly and introduce reforms to create and increase job opportunities for deprived and marginalized groups, including through education and skills training. Governments must also ensure that their taxation policy did not benefit the rich to the detriment of the poor. Economic growth was sustainable only if the benefits were shared among all groups in society, which called for proper regulation of the global financial market. The Islamic Republic of Iran was prioritizing sustainable development, adopting in that regard a more realistic and more robust approach than previously in its plans for achieving the SDGs and for creating an environment offering protection from future economic shocks and downturns.

**Ms. A. Lotriet** (South Africa) said that, in her country, local municipalities had been crucial in keeping local businesses afloat during the pandemic through measures ranging from, among others, debt cancellations and temporary permits at reduced cost for informal traders, to relief funds, interest-free loans and rent payment holidays for enterprises. To improve the regulatory environment, building applications were now automated and business permits fast-tracked along with clearance certificates. Municipalities worked with industry to

enhance skills development, expand public works employment and match jobseekers with employment opportunities. Partnering with the private sector, they also created enabling environments for major international companies to boost production capacity, create jobs and bring local suppliers into the supply chain. Challenges included weak governance, non-compliance with legislation, poor quality financial management, performance issues and technical capacity constraints. Progressive new legislation covering appointments to municipal office and accountability of elected municipal officials would help to build municipal resilience and promote local economic development.

**Mr. H. Al Nasairi** (Arab Parliament) said that the current shift in focus towards local communities and decentralized planning demanded that local and rural communities operate and take decisions independently, be allocated adequate funding, and have access to well-qualified personnel able to keep up with the rapid technological developments always under way. Local communities gave added value to all national economies and were therefore main partners in the achievement of sustainable economic development, thereby contributing positively towards the attainment of SDG 8. Parliamentarians could play their part by building a modern legislative framework to advance that objective and linking it to the role of local communities in the process. Essentially, that framework should be based on three pillars, specifically, empowerment of local communities in promoting sustainable inclusive economic development, flexible budgeting, and a competent workforce.

**Mr. V.D. Ram** (India) said that his country was implementing development initiatives for building self-reliance across the country, including locally, as part of efforts towards the attainment of SDG 8. India's commitment to reconnecting local communities with local sustainable inclusive economies was echoed in its call for nation-building through mutual support among citizens for decent economic growth. Government schemes were in place to support that growth, with the "vocal for local" mantra unequivocally underlining the importance of domestic industries and small shops. An example of one of many such schemes was the One District, One Product programme aimed at transforming the most underdeveloped districts into performing districts each manufacturing a single product for export. Recently enacted labour codes, moreover, were immensely supportive of workers in the organized and unorganized sectors. Through participatory efforts, sustainable growth and self-reliance, challenges to the achievement of SDG 8 could be overcome.

**Mr. W. William** (Seychelles) said that the achievement of SDG 8 was threatened amid the myriad global uncertainties slowing down potential growth in some parts of the world while pushing others further towards extreme vulnerability. In some cases, decent jobs and economic growth would remain far beyond reach unless governments reassessed global strategies for addressing growth regression. Failure to attain SDG 8 would have a cascading effect on the attainment of other SDGs, pushing back the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In the run-up to COP27, the impending UN Conference on Climate Change, governments must take stock of the growing risk in that regard to realign and bring global political stability to secure the global economic stability needed to reconnect local communities with a local sustainable inclusive economy. Global leaders had to stop fooling themselves with contradictory styles of governance and diplomacy, stop the procrastination and do what was right in a timely and precise manner.

**Ms. S. Alteneiji** (United Arab Emirates) said that the main challenges preventing the reconnection of local communities with local sustainable inclusive economies to achieve the SDG 8 targets included the COVID-19 pandemic, which had plunged the global economy into recession and prompted a spike in global poverty rates unseen for over two decades. Another factor was lack of appropriate legislation. Despite efforts to pass laws for reducing unemployment, the global unemployment rates continued to rise. Against that background, parliaments should work to raise awareness among their members of the importance of incorporating the achievement of the SDGs into their work. In addition to enacting laws that would help to reconnect local communities economically and provide decent work for all, parliaments must review all laws that could be impeding that objective. As to her own country, it had put in place legislative and other measures to further strengthen its participation in the global economy.

**Mr. L.A. Cuello** (Chile) said that local communities could not be supported towards sustainable development without local government, which worked in his country with MSMEs, workers and others to develop an agenda for promoting a local sustainable inclusive economy. With the State as a facilitator of the economy, its role in the market was a key consideration in that respect. Focus must be placed on creating the right conditions and ecosystems for strengthening the economy and promoting health and hygiene in addition to research and development and public works. Boosting local economies called for local participation and a bottom-up approach to address the growing income inequality between rich and poor. In Chile, tax reforms and other mechanisms were needed to redistribute the wealth concentrated in the hands of the few so as to channel it towards rebuilding local economies to create decent jobs and increase productivity.

**Mr. M.A. Rakotomalala** (Madagascar) said that there had been a severe downturn in his country's economy and that many problems remained. Madagascar was furthermore deeply affected by climate change, which would lead to food shortages. The State was unable to subsidize the large number of farmers and lacked the financial resources needed to achieve food security and create jobs for all. More global solidarity and cooperation were needed to help improve the situation.

**Mr. J. Fakhro** (Bahrain) said that SDG 8 was simply about decent work for economic growth. An important point had been made, however, about the impact of the pandemic and technology on small businesses, taken as a result to the brink of collapse. In view of the dilemma thus created between decent work and economic growth, the question was how, going forward, could a balance be struck between better use of technology and sustainable economic growth. A further question was how small businesses, which were the main employer, could be helped to survive.

**Mr. P. Supadma Rudana** (Indonesia) said that COVID-19 had had a devastating impact on his country's economy, above all in local communities. One of the financial allocations made in response had been towards the recovery of MSMEs, which currently contributed some 60% to GDP and were the biggest employer. During the pandemic, MSMEs had been the backbone of the national economy and, as such, their empowerment was essential to building resilience and ensuring that the right to economic development was equally enjoyed by all. With digital and financial literacy critical in that context, Indonesia had put in place programmes on the subject for its citizens so as to promote the achievement of SDG 8. It could not, however, build a resilient economy without international cooperation, for which the IPU provided an appropriate platform. The Indonesian Parliament stood ready to assist in reconnecting and empowering local communities economically for development and prosperity.

**Mr. Z. Mojskerc** (Slovenia) said that his country had been among the first to incorporate all SDGs into its development strategy. It ranked an impressive 15th in the Sustainable Development Report 2022, attaining in addition the highest score of "on track" for the achievement of SDG 8. In another important milestone, Slovenia had negotiated a post-pandemic recovery and resilience plan worth 2.5 billion euros, with investment focused on green and digital contexts in particular and on reforms and other aspects featuring in the plan's four priority areas. In the preceding few years, Slovenia had notably dedicated itself to addressing the negative socioeconomic impact of COVID-19. The implementation of SDG 8 was a shared responsibility and successful delivery was dependent on a collective and uniform approach, in which parliaments had an important part to play.

**Mr. K. Abu Hassan** (Jordan) said that the upheaval wrought by the many great challenges around the world had affected the global economy and national economies alike. His country had felt the direct impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the arrival of migrants fleeing wars in neighbouring countries, which had created infrastructure pressures and pushed unemployment rates up to 25% of the population and to 40% among youth. Although new jobs were being created, others were disappearing. To address such issues, strategies had been introduced for modernizing political, economic and administrative systems with a view to progress towards prosperity through a flexible approach. Whether caused by the pandemic, conflict or other events, the economic challenges facing Jordan were not of its own

making but had to be tackled head on. Under the strategies introduced, the private sector was a true partner in the country's development, which was unlikely to advance substantially without its support.

**Mr. N.A. Cheema** (Pakistan) said that the SDGs were so interlinked that none could be achieved in isolation, which called for a comprehensive, integrated and holistic approach to related issues. While all SDGs were important, SDG 13 on climate action was especially relevant for Pakistan, which had recently suffered catastrophic flooding attributable to the effects of climate change. In the aftermath, it faced a multitude of challenges relating to, among others, rehabilitation and reconstruction, disease, and food insecurity, with marginalized and vulnerable groups worst affected. Neither an emitter of greenhouse gases nor a polluter of the environment, Pakistan was bearing the burden and punishment for mistakes and crimes that it had never committed. It was also fighting not only the cause of all other potential victims of climate change through no fault of their own but also the cause of all humanity. It called on the international community to fulfil its duties pertaining to climate justice.

**Mr. T. Sokun** (Cambodia) said that, in his country, MSMEs accounted for 98% of businesses – 61% of them women-owned – and provided one third of jobs, with a GDP share of 58%. Following the pandemic, however, demand for their products had fallen considerably. To combat the ensuing economic decline, MSMEs had been given access to more affordable financing to enable their development and continued employment of workers, who would otherwise be in dire straits. In addition, the business registration process had been simplified and tax incentives introduced to encourage foreign and other investment and promote economic recovery. MSMEs were being encouraged to embrace the transition to the digital age, in which context legislation had been proposed to deal with potential cyberthreats. The aim of the recovery process should be to create more resilient, sustainable and diverse societies than before, with women playing a more prominent role and all stakeholders taken into account.

**Mr. J. Chirove** (Employment Specialist, ILO), panellist, speaking via video link, said in response to the discussion that it had been very informative, with many of the comments resonating with the need for pro-employment measures to ensure that no one was left behind in the post-pandemic recovery and touching on important related issues. Concerning technology, it was true that it could be used in place of people in certain jobs, but at the same time it could create new types of jobs in, for example, the digital, gig and smart economies. It therefore had positive and negative aspects, which were important to assess in order to strike the necessary balance.

As reflected in its Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work adopted in 2019, which focused on a human-centred future, the ILO did not promote technology as a replacement for people, who should always remain in charge of driving technology to benefit society and build efficiency and productivity. If well managed, technology could be used to create opportunities for MSMEs to participate in global supply chains, whether as suppliers, distributors or subcontractors. It was important, however, for those supply chains to demonstrate responsibility and address some of the challenges facing MSMEs, such as the difficulty in complying with stringent quality certification standards. With the right business linkages and responsible business practices, MSMEs could be supported to benefit from global supply chains. Through its Multinational Enterprises and Enterprise Engagement Unit, the ILO provided advice to multinational companies and large enterprises on how their operations could be run in order to integrate MSMEs into their global supply chains and benefit local communities.

**Mr. A. Gryffroy** (Belgium), panellist, said that all SDGs, including SDG 8, were very broadly defined, which was to be expected as they had been formulated so as to be universally relevant, taking into account the vast differences among – and even within – countries, and the absence of any silver bullet. In that context, it was also necessary to work mostly, although not always, top-down in the interest of providing flexibility, and to enact legislation that was transparent, smart and inclusive and promoted technological advancement. The establishment of that key framework should then be followed by empowerment of regional and local authorities, in view of their connection with local populations and MSMEs and their knowledge of local needs, so as to further enhance local policymaking.

Globally and nationally, the management of technology in relation to the global supply chain was problematic. Even in Belgium, only one half of MSMEs were digitally fit, meaning that they had good online access and good digital security, which differentiated them clearly from digitally unfit businesses. It was important to provide local capacity-building in digital fitness, which was not something that could be decreed through top-down measures or legislation. The solution had to be local, although help could always be sought from national governments.

To conclude, the circle had to be broken. With no local economy, there was no ecosystem and with no ecosystem, there was no local prosperity and no local well-being. A specific national framework complemented by a local and regional framework was needed to help MSMEs and independent businesses. Once a local ecosystem was re-established, local prosperity would follow, to promote the attainment of SDG 8.

### **Elections to the Bureau**

**The Chair** said that Mr. Sergey Gavrilov of the Russian Federation had been nominated to fill the vacant position in the Bureau of the Standing Committee for a member from the Eurasia Group. She took it that the Committee wished to elect Mr. Gavrilov to that position.

*It was so decided.*

### **Any other business**

**The Chair** said that, following its previous morning's meeting during which it had discussed the Committee's workplan, the Bureau proposed that, given the breadth of the subject matter of the draft resolution to be prepared at the 146th Assembly, the Committee should dedicate its entire time at that Assembly to drafting and debating the related text. She took it that the Committee wished to agree to that proposal.

*It was so decided.*

**The Chair**, after the customary exchange of courtesies, declared the session closed.

*The sitting rose at 12.55.*

## Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs

### SITTING OF FRIDAY, 14 OCTOBER

(Afternoon)

*The sitting was called to order at 14:35 with Mr. L. Wehrli (Switzerland), Vice-President of the Committee, in the Chair.*

**The Chair** explained that he, as Vice-President of the Committee, would be chairing the current meeting because the President of the Committee, Ms. S.A. Noor, was no longer a parliamentarian.

#### **Adoption of the agenda** (C-IV/145/A.1)

*The agenda was adopted.*

#### **Approval of the summary record of the Committee's session held at the 144th IPU Assembly in Nusa Dua (March 2022)**

*The summary record was approved.*

#### **The UN response to growing hunger and famine**

**The Chair**, introducing the item, said that hunger and famine were worsening around the world because of growing conflict, runaway climate change, the economic consequences of those issues and the COVID-19 pandemic. The accumulation of crises and conflicts, including the war in Ukraine, had directly affected food production and the transportation of food, particularly to those most in need.

Some 800 million people suffered from hunger every day. The number of people experiencing extreme food insecurity had soared from 135 million to over 270 million and almost 50 million people were experiencing emergency levels of hunger. The World Food Programme (WFP) was leading humanitarian efforts to provide food and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) was helping governments and development agencies to coordinate activities to improve agriculture and manage land and water resources. The panel would explore the work of those organizations and the challenges that they encountered when delivering their complementary mandates.

**Mr. S. Krishnaswamy** (Representative of the WFP), presenter, accompanying his remarks with a digital slide presentation, said that most countries adopted one of two systems to identify food insecurity: the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) or the Cadre Harmonisé. Of the five phases of food insecurity, the WFP dealt with the three most severe, which covered over 200 million people. That figure had been increasing in recent years. Almost half a million people were in the most severe phase, phase five, and were at risk of famine within three to six months, depending on the help that they received. There were millions of people in phases three and four and, if action was not taken, they would enter more severe phases.

**Ms. B. Lazarus** (Representative of the FAO), presenter, accompanying her remarks with a digital slide presentation, said that the causes of food insecurity at a global level could be grouped into three categories: conflict and insecurity, economic shocks and rising food prices, and extreme weather.

Conflict could affect livelihoods by preventing members of crop-farming households from accessing their fields, which reduced the produce that they could eat and sell. In some cases, livestock were killed or stolen, which reduced income and food. Conflict areas were often difficult to access, leading to market closures and limiting access to services and humanitarian aid. There were protracted conflicts in all of the countries with populations in IPC phase five and in the countries with the largest populations in IPC phase four.

Economic shocks and global inflation also drove hunger. Between March 2020 and March 2022, some areas had experienced food price increases of over 100%. In some cases, such as the Horn of Africa, adverse weather conditions were decreasing regional production and

tightening cereal supplies, which increased food prices. Conflict could have major market implications and the COVID-19 pandemic was still disrupting production in some areas. Currency depreciation increased food prices, particularly for imported goods. Rising energy prices and supply chain bottlenecks increased shipping prices and insurance costs, particularly in the Black Sea. The result of those developments had been a dramatic increase in global and national food prices over the previous two years.

Extreme weather – such as flooding in South Sudan, cyclones in Madagascar and the extremely severe drought affecting the Horn of Africa – also led to food insecurity. There had been four failed rainy seasons, which had led to low production, decreased food stocks and little income. Predictions showed that there would be another poor rainy season before the end of 2022. An estimated nine million livestock had died in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia, which had reduced household income and limited children's access to milk, which was key to meeting nutritional requirements. Between 18.8 and 21.3 million people were highly food insecure and needed humanitarian assistance in those countries. New data from the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund showed that some 7.5 million children were facing acute malnutrition.

It was imperative to help populations in IPC phases three and above to prevent the loss of livelihoods, gaps in food consumption, and increases in malnutrition and mortality. Humanitarian assistance was currently underfunded and needed to be scaled up.

The drivers of food insecurity needed to be addressed by resolving conflicts, building resilience to climate change and protecting livelihoods in rural areas. Current efforts to tackle food insecurity were insufficient and needed to address humanitarian crises and long-term resilience issues.

**Ms. E. Heins** (Representative of the WFP and Country Director in Rwanda), presenter, said that, in addition to conflict and climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic had contributed to food insecurity and that lack of knowledge about nutrition could lead to deficiencies. Policies to ensure food security and good nutrition had to be implemented at country level.

A survey carried out in 2021 found that 20% of the Rwandan population was food insecure, with almost 2% severely insecure. Although it was very unlikely that there would be a famine in Rwanda, it was important to monitor increasing food prices in order to address problems in a timely manner. Most Rwandan households, including those in rural areas, were heavily dependent on markets for buying food. Price increases had a significant impact, particularly on the most vulnerable who represented 30% of the population and who spent more than 65% of their monthly income on food. A study by the World Bank showed that food price inflation was at 34.4% in Rwanda, which was one of the highest rates in the world. The predicted failure of the upcoming rainy season, global increases in fuel prices, greater transportation costs, poor access to fertilizer and climatic shocks all contributed to inflation and affected the whole food system.

Rwanda had experienced a gradual decline in cases of chronic malnutrition but the level remained high whereas levels of acute malnutrition and wasting were low. Tackling chronic malnutrition was a priority for the Government. There were approximately 120,000 refugees in Rwanda from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi.

The WFP provided relief in emergencies, helped to build resilience and carried out development initiatives. It had helped the Government of Rwanda to introduce a school feeding programme for students across all year groups in order to support households struggling with price increases and to ensure access to nutritious food. The Government was funding the programme with its budget for education but, together with the WFP, it was exploring financing strategies and the possibility of working with the School Meals Coalition. The programme ensured that ingredients were sourced from local farmers to support small-scale agriculture.

The Government of Rwanda had a social protection scheme and the WFP was working with government ministries to ensure that it could cope with natural disasters and did not focus only on poverty. Other programmes focused on making vulnerable people and communities more climate resilient, providing data about food security, nutrition and social protection to the Government, and introducing early warning systems.

Although Rwanda was not at risk of famine, a multi-year engagement was necessary in order to build systems, develop capacities and collaborate with the Government. Parliamentarians could influence their governments and raise awareness of food security and nutrition in their countries. To avoid crises, it was imperative to implement a sustainable approach and to foster resilience within stable countries.

**Ms. C. Sow** (Country Representative of the FAO in Rwanda), presenter, said that the FAO was present in Rwanda and other countries facing famine in order to implement policy frameworks, legislation and programmes.

Despite increases in agricultural productivity, 70% of the food consumed in Rwanda was purchased at markets rather than self-produced, even though 72% of the population worked in agriculture. The population of Rwanda was very young and only the agricultural sector could absorb those new entrants to the labour force. Efforts focused on providing young people, especially women, with the skills to work in agriculture, as well as the support to access funds and benefit from the African Continental Free Trade Area, where agricultural products were key to trade. Young people were looking for new national and international markets and, in that regard, the FAO shared knowledge about the Codex Alimentarius to ensure that standards were met and exports could be made to other countries.

Synergies between social protection and agricultural policies needed to be strengthened. There was great potential to transform rural areas, which were generally poor, through the fourth phase of the Strategic Plan for the Transformation of Agriculture in Rwanda. FAO support had been requested to implement the fifth phase of that strategy.

The FAO was supporting governments to provide sustainable food security, improve nutrition and reduce poverty. In the Rwandan districts with the worst stunting levels, the Hand-in-Hand Initiative helped small-scale farmers access inputs, fertilizers and training to grow crops. That initiative, alongside the school feeding programme, increased employment among young people and connected them to an existing market.

The FAO collaborated with the WFP, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), IFAT and other organizations to ensure a coherent approach to the solutions it provided to the Government.

Rwanda had become a highly digitalized country and young people were exploring new technologies with regard to irrigation and seeds. The region was experiencing a drought that was set to continue for the rest of the year. In that regard, the FAO was sourcing adapted seeds and training farmers so that a planting season would not be missed.

Parliamentarians needed to be engaged in food security through parliamentary alliances. They had to approve budgets in order for the FAO to work and support countries. The FAO stood ready to provide those parliamentary alliances across the world with the support and analysis that they required. The Speaker of the Parliament of Rwanda had agreed to host the upcoming meeting of the Eastern African Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition in November 2022. Parliamentarians were particularly important during crises and they had helped the Rwandan Ministry of Agriculture obtain fertilizers when the war in Ukraine had started. The FAO stood ready, alongside the WFP and UNICEF, to work with countries and provide information to facilitate decision making.

**The Chair** invited questions and comments from the floor.

**Ms. D. Kumari** (India) said that the COVID-19 pandemic had undermined economic growth and further increased hunger. The number of people suffering from hunger and facing acute food insecurity was shocking. COVID-19 pandemic recovery efforts had to be inclusive and should include commitments to fight poverty and ensure food security. In that regard, parliaments should provide relief in the short term, and develop agricultural, land and water resources in the long term.

Almost a third of the food produced around the world was wasted. Work had to be carried out on the ground by local and national governments to reduce that waste during food production and processing, and after cooking.

It was very concerning that 60% of people suffering from hunger lived in areas affected by war. Efforts should focus on minimizing conflicts and providing food to those in need. In that context, the Government of India had contributed to the WFP and provided neighbouring countries with food. Private donors, governmental institutions and civil society organizations had to work together to make food more accessible and affordable.

**Mr. M. Al Muhairi** (United Arab Emirates) said that, despite decades of progress, people still needed aid in some parts of the world. In the United Arab Emirates, governance and politics focused on people, particularly with regard to food security. Farmers received support in order to ensure food security but coordination needed to be improved to decrease transportation costs. It was important to share knowledge and expertise on food production and distribution to help those at risk of hunger, particularly refugees and the most vulnerable members of society. Despite the ongoing global crises, a policy had been implemented to provide food. The Emirates Council for



Food Security had been established and the National Food Security Strategy 2051 had been launched. Work was being carried out alongside the FAO and WFP and US\$ 75 billion had been provided between 2010 and 2021 in humanitarian aid.

He asked how parliamentarians could further promote or influence the resilience and sustainability of the donations and aid that they were providing.

**Mr. F. Naek** (Pakistan) said that United Nations estimates showed that more than 790 million people in the developing world were chronically undernourished and vulnerable to blindness, infectious diseases, anaemia and mental illness. Widespread hunger and malnutrition were a result of poverty and inadequate food production. Four factors had contributed to the current hunger crisis: conflict, climate change, the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the return of global inflation. The gap between needs and funding was expanding. To avoid catastrophe, everyone should make an effort alongside governments, and donors should increase the technical assistance, knowledge and funds available. High net worth individuals, celebrities and youth leaders should highlight the injustice of global hunger.

He asked how resources could be provided cheaply and without waste to vulnerable nations struggling with hunger and poverty.

**Ms. F. Ilimi Haddouche** (Algeria) said that food security guaranteed the socioeconomic progress of countries. From 2018 to 2020, the WFP had ranked Algeria as the top country in Africa in terms of food security. The second Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) – zero hunger – had been incorporated into national development policies to ensure that the population's nutrition was healthy and sufficient. Food security had been ensured through work towards achieving the first Millennium Development Goal and extreme poverty had been eradicated between 1995 and 2011. Significant progress had been made in terms of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) development indicators and had led to the FAO highlighting Algeria's achievements in 2013 and 2015, and to Algeria ranking highly on the Human Development Index since 2010.

In order to achieve the second SDG, efforts would be made to increase agricultural productivity and meet the nutritional needs of the population. Past achievements would be maintained and food security would be strengthened, while trade and basic agricultural production would be rebalanced. A sustainable fishing and agricultural policy would be created to meet the growing needs of the Algerian population and to diversify the national economy. Natural resources needed better management to ensure their sustainability and provide benefits to society and the economy. A seed bank had recently been established to strengthen food security.

She asked what role regional products played in guaranteeing food security.

**Mr. N. Alalou** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that the United Nations played a crucial role during conflicts and crises and in fighting hunger and famine. Those present at the current meeting represented the survivors of their countries and their hope for a better future. The long war in the Syrian Arab Republic had left 50% of the population below the poverty line and suffering from malnutrition. The United Nations had warned that citizens were at risk of malnutrition and food insecurity, which had led the Government to introduce new policies. Those in need should have their basic needs met, regardless of their nationality or religion.

In 2022, aid to the Syrian Arab Republic had decreased significantly and it was suffering from a water crisis, especially in Al-Hasakah, which had increased the spread of disease and created a difficult situation for women and children.

**The Chair** invited panellists to answer the first round of questions.

**Mr. S. Krishnaswamy** (Representative of the WFP), addressing Ms. Ilimi Haddouche's question, said that the United Nations focused on local markets and ensured that they did not create imbalances in supply and demand. Before purchases were made, markets were monitored to ensure that there were no disruptions. Funds that were spent on procuring food and transporting it to areas in need fuelled the local economy. The previous year, the WFP had spent US\$ 800 billion in East Africa on food and transport alone. Such initiatives created supply chains, helped the economy, fuelled demand and generated employment. The FAO worked closely with universities and farmers across the world to create solutions that were tailored to local areas.

Turning to the question on resources, efforts had been made by donors, governments and the United Nations to demonstrate the impact of funds on development. That created a system of checks and balances, whereby the FAO and WFP had to ensure that the right measures were in place.

**Ms. B. Lazarus** (Representative of the FAO), addressing Ms. Ilimi Haddouche's question, said that the FAO considered supporting livelihoods and local production to be crucial. It was important to increase local production because it improved livelihoods, increased resilience, and provided a source of food and income for households. They could use that income to buy ingredients that they could not produce themselves. Regional procurements were key to supporting local markets.

In the humanitarian sector, there had been a recent push towards cash-based programmes, which could support local markets, traders and producers.

**Ms. C. Sow** (Country Representative of the FAO in Rwanda), addressing Mr. Naek's question, said that she agreed with Ms. Lazarus with regard to cash-based programmes. The WFP had moved away from programmes that procured food in one part of the world and transported it to another. It was important to facilitate access to food in the most cost-efficient manner possible which could involve giving cash. However, if there was no food to buy, it had to be provided.

Regarding the issue of food waste, the WFP had focused on reducing post-harvest losses, which could be significant. The private sector was called upon to ensure that storage bags and silos for proper food storage were available on the local market.

Regarding Mr. Al Muhairi's question on sharing knowledge about produce, it was important to look beyond the United Nations and to encourage south-south collaboration. There were also entities, such as the School Meals Coalition, which helped countries to learn from each other.

**Ms. E. Heins** (Representative of the WFP and Country Director in Rwanda) said that policies to eradicate hunger had been successful in the past. From 1992 to 2015, efforts had been made across the world to halve the number of people suffering from hunger in order to reach one of the Millennium Development Goals. Similarly, policies had been implemented in Ethiopia to alleviate the famine in the 1980s. Those successes demonstrated that solutions could be found at the parliamentary and governmental levels.

Commitments, such as that of the Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security, to allocate 10% of national budgets to agriculture could help ensure that measures were financially sustainable. Parliamentarians should ensure that commitments made by Heads of State were upheld.

The FAO recognized globally important agricultural heritage systems and the importance of local food products. Those products were often the most nutritious, affordable and well adapted to the local climate and environment. The FAO would participate in national and international efforts to promote little known food products.

United Nations funds, such as the United Nations Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund, made resources immediately available to the WFP, FAO and UNICEF, and donations could be made directly to those funds. There was also a partnership between the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and the United Nations in Rwanda.

**The Chair** invited more questions and comments from the floor.

**Mr. O. Zhmerenetskyi** (Ukraine) said that most of the problems caused by the rise in food prices and the destruction of food supply chains had been caused by the unprovoked Russian invasion of Ukraine. Those problems were set to continue because fields had been damaged by missiles and mines, and food transportation infrastructure had been destroyed. Reopening Ukrainian seaports had not been enough. In the past, the United Nations had been unable to protect its Member States from unprovoked aggression, which had resulted in hunger, and the United Nations Security Council was unable to resolve the interconnected issues of hunger and war.

The Russian Federation had abused its veto power at the United Nations Security Council to prevent discussions about its crimes, which included creating food insecurity. Global food security depended on the expulsion of the Russian Federation from the United Nations Security Council.

The basis for the membership of the Russian Federation on the United Nations Security Council should be questioned. Official documents demonstrated that the Russian Federation had never acquired the status of a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, had never ratified the Charter of the United Nations, had never had its membership approved at the United Nations General Assembly, and was not listed in the Charter of the United Nations as a member of the Security Council. The Russian Federation was not a founding member of the United Nations, unlike Belarus and Ukraine. In terms of the Charter of the United Nations, the Russian

Federation had the same status as other countries from the former Union of Socialist Soviet Republics and should have waited for its membership to be approved at a United Nations General Assembly. Other countries, such as China, the Czech Republic and the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, had followed the proper procedure when there had been a change to their state system and borders, but the Russian Federation had replaced the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in the United Nations Security Council. The IPU should request that the United Nations Secretary-General resolve that issue.

**Mr. A. Golroo** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that conflict, economic shocks and weather extremes, combined with economic terrorism and the imposition of illegitimate, unilateral and coercive measures – such as sanctions – had negatively impacted global food security. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, 2022 was the year of the knowledge-based economy. Knowledge and technology in the agricultural sector were helping with regard to food security and self-sufficiency in basic food products, and domestic capacity building had improved.

The Ministry of Agriculture, alongside the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology, had established agricultural and natural resource knowledge bases to protect the environment, increase productivity, reduce water consumption and help farmers achieve their goals.

According to the FAO, the Islamic Republic of Iran was ranked 76th in terms of food security. One of the principal measures adopted by the Government was to increase the guaranteed purchase rate of wheat to incentivize farmers to increase production. As a result, wheat production and reserves had grown, and wheat imports had decreased. Developed countries should prevent export restrictions on the world market and ensure sufficient access to chemical fertilizers and food for low-income countries. Parliamentarians could request that the International Monetary Fund accelerate the allocation of financial resources to low-income countries in order to deal with droughts and to invest in their agricultural sectors.

Urgent action was needed to end conflicts and provide humanitarian aid, otherwise lives would be lost. Political measures should be implemented to prevent inequality, injustice and conflicts, which drove hunger.

**Mr. A. Tohir** (Indonesia) said that elected representatives of nations should spearhead initiatives to tackle increases in global hunger and famine. Helping those suffering from hunger was a top priority to avert catastrophe. Climate change, the economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and particularly conflict – including the war in Ukraine – had worsened global hunger. There had been a collective failure to maintain global peace, particularly through the United Nations and the United Nations Security Council. It was necessary to review the right that permanent members had to veto United Nations Security Council resolutions, as it hindered immediate action to maintain peace, security and stability. The right to veto was undemocratic and put the work of the United Nations at risk.

He asked to what extent it was possible to reform the United Nations Security Council to make it more democratic and effective in ensuring global peace and security.

**Mr. M. Kapichila** (Malawi) said that it was common knowledge that hunger was worsening around the world because of conflicts, the war in Ukraine, climate change and the economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. Hunger was increasing in Malawi due to unreliable weather patterns, economic instability and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The WFP was providing emergency food assistance and cash transfers to the Government of Malawi to counteract food insecurity and poverty. It was also working to restore food security and livelihoods, ensure food supplies were available at Dzaleka refugee camp and provide school meals. The FAO was providing technical and financial assistance to review the national agricultural policy of Malawi, which had expired in October 2021. It had helped to formulate the new policy, which was aligned with Malawi 2063, a development agenda.

Efforts to counteract hunger had led to greater political stability, progress in the fight against HIV, AIDS and malaria, and a reduction in the infant mortality rate, but they had been marred by crop failures. It was hoped that governments and parliaments would continue to collaborate with stakeholders.

**Mr. M. Ntombela** (South Africa) said that the FAO and WFP served 128.2 million people and safeguarded millions of livelihoods, despite limited budgets, access constraints, security incidents involving staff members, fluctuating commodity prices, supply chain issues and insufficient operational capacity. In particular, they had cleared nearly two million hectares of land of desert locusts. Support for those organizations should go beyond donations and include support to break the link between armed conflicts and hunger.

All parliamentary avenues had to be explored to prevent and resolve armed conflicts, which displaced populations, impacted livelihoods, disrupted food systems and triggered food insecurity. The COVID-19 pandemic had exacerbated food insecurity and increased hunger and poverty within vulnerable communities. Security incidents involving WFP employees were a new challenge and FAO staff members were also vulnerable.

Access to a database of world agricultural statistics and research projects, and participation in expert meetings on nutrition, food additives, fisheries, forestry and commodity issues, had been beneficial.

**Ms. M. Moguena** (Chad) said that climate change was worsening famines around the world, particularly in developing and underdeveloped countries. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development required political change to reduce hunger. Action at national level was necessary to break the vicious cycle that affected the poorest and most malnourished. The FAO had identified 19 countries experiencing prolonged crises and the impacts of climate change. The solution to end those crises would be to bring peace, but action had to be taken immediately.

The quantity and quality of the food available, and the way in which it was produced, were also issues. The United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition 2016-2025 was a major step towards mobilizing action on world hunger. Global campaigns to reduce hunger had been launched because solutions had not been found to the problems that the poorest and most populous countries faced. Hunger would only end if governments, non-governmental organizations and citizens worked together. In 1960, the FAO had launched a campaign to eradicate hunger but, more than 60 years later, that aim had not been achieved because of climate change.

She asked what measures the United Nations could take to tackle the increase in hunger and famines.

**Mr. K. Tontisirin** (Thailand) said that he would like to know whether there were any programmes to support governments in ensuring food security, dealing with emergencies and developing national food security and nutrition frameworks. In that regard, United Nations agencies could provide technical and financial support and capacity building, and carry out trials at community level.

Good nutrition and health were interconnected, and both were linked to agriculture. Therefore, possible reforms to agriculture and food systems should be explored. Similarly, ensuring good nutrition required improvements to national health care systems. He asked whether there were any policies to support national policy frameworks with regard to agriculture, the food system and nutritional improvement, which simultaneously supported food security in the long term.

To successfully implement programmes, indicators to measure success and targets would be required. Programmes would need to be implemented at community level with the help of the government and there would need to be a mass mobilization, particularly within the agricultural sector, to reach those targets.

**Dr. B. Khaliwale** (Kenya) said that hunger, famine and malnutrition should no longer be issues in the modern world. Most people in Kenya lived in a climate-friendly region, but 3.1 million Kenyans lived in arid and semi-arid areas where there was serious food insecurity due to three failed rainy seasons. The economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine, climate change and a locust infestation between 2020 and 2021 had contributed to that insecurity. The Government of Kenya had appealed for support to ensure food security and sustainable livelihoods, and it had called for a swift end to the war in Ukraine.

The call by the delegation of Pakistan to create a global fund or financing facility for climate-vulnerable countries to address loss and damage associated with climate change was welcome. The death of one child anywhere in the world from hunger signified the death of political leadership everywhere in the world.

**Mr. P. Katjavivi** (Namibia), referencing the presentations delivered by Ms. Heins and Ms. Sow, said that some small-scale farmers were having their efforts to improve food security hampered by a lack of technology and resources. With regard to Ms. Sow's intervention on producing foodstuffs that were adapted to the local climate, Namibia was surrounded by two deserts and had very little rainfall. It was hoped that farmers could be shown how to overcome those climatic challenges with examples from elsewhere in the world and through the use of technology or fertilizers. He asked whether it was possible to create a network to share experiences and best practices.

**Ms. A. Larouche** (Canada) said that food insecurity was a growing problem across the world and that it was important to consider the impact on vulnerable groups, particularly women and girls. The FAO report on the current state of food security and nutrition in the world had revealed worrying developments. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and forced displacements were all concerning and, according to the most extreme United Nations predictions, two billion people would be suffering from food security by 2050.

The Government of Canada had provided CA\$ 155 million in emergency support to respond to global food crises but there was still much work to be done. Gender-sensitive approaches should be introduced to meet the specific needs of women and girls. The FAO report highlighted that, in order to reverse food insecurity trends, emergency development and nutrition measures were needed, as well as concrete action to limit the effects of climate change and armed conflicts. Work with multilateral organizations should be carried out to end the conflict in Ukraine and ensure that the Black Sea Grain Initiative could be carried out without interference. Efforts should be made to ensure food autonomy.

**The Chair** said that the issues that the representatives of Indonesia and Ukraine had raised concerning the United Nations and the United Nations Security Council were very important but exceeded the scope of the current discussion. Those issues could perhaps be dealt with during a future sitting of the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs.

**Ms. C. Sow** (Country Representative of the FAO in Rwanda) said that the FAO and WFP briefed the United Nations Security Council twice a year because conflict was one of the greatest drivers of food insecurity. Information shared at the current meeting had been shared with the United Nations Security Council.

Regarding Mr. Katjavivi's question about whether it was possible to create a network to share experiences and best practices, the Fome Zero programme had been implemented for small-scale farmers in the north-eastern semi-arid region of Brazil using models that were available through south-south cooperation. Further discussions would be held with Mr. Katjavivi to facilitate knowledge sharing between those regions.

Many countries had adopted an approach similar to that of the Government of Iran to increase domestic production and the FAO supported the implementation of those programmes. With regard to Mr. Tontisirin's statement, programmes had been implemented in Rwanda with FAO support and analysis.

**Ms. E. Heins** (Representative of the WFP and Country Director in Rwanda) said that she appreciated the recognition that FAO and WFP staff members worked in difficult conditions in the field. With regard to Ms. Moguena's question, the vicious cycle of crises and responses had to be broken. When there was a lack of food, the WFP had no choice but to intervene and offer support with the help of donors, but sustainable solutions had to be found.

Countries should advocate for measures to resolve conflicts. Similarly, they should call for measures to mitigate the effects of climate change, such as increased climate financing for fragile countries and climate adaptation programmes. Communities also needed to become more resistant to shocks.

With regard to Mr. Tontisirin's question, it was important to consider the situation of countries and communities. The United Nations would only intervene in desperate situations and would provide technical assistance to middle-income countries.

In Rwanda, WFP work on nutrition and social protection did not involve handouts of cash or food. The WFP worked on policies and strategies, and it helped the Government to develop its systems and mechanisms.

**Ms. B. Lazarus** (Representative of the FAO) acknowledged that increases in food insecurity were a failure, but recognized that some progress had been made. In 2011, the famine in Somalia occurred after two failed rainy seasons but currently famine was only being discussed after four failed rainy seasons. Households had clearly become more resilient, which was a sign of progress. However, the severity of the current level of food insecurity was undermining that resilience.

Support should be provided through a community-based approach. Efforts should be made to involve communities more in food security information systems, as well as humanitarian and development programmes, because those communities could provide early warnings about crises and explain what they needed.

**Mr. S. Krishnaswamy** (Representative of the WFP), in response to Mr. Tontisirin, said that the United Nations never worked in isolation and always relied on collaboration with governments to deal with any issue.

**The Chair** thanked participants for their contributions, as well as the FAO and WFP for their work.

### **The UN field presence in support of national development: The case of Rwanda**

**The Chair**, introducing the item, said that parliamentarians had a responsibility to follow United Nations affairs. He reminded those present that there had been a visit to an agricultural cooperative and a school to the north of Kigali.

**Mr. O. Ojielo** (United Nations Resident Coordinator in Rwanda) said that he had two remarks: first, he had only been in his post for three months so he was not an authority on how the United Nations had been working with the Parliament of Rwanda; second, the previous panel had laid the groundwork for the current panel and had highlighted many of the issues that countries were facing. Those issues required a sense of urgency and greater ambition from parliaments, governments and the United Nations. There was no template for development in any country and a platform to deepen engagement on research and analysis was necessary. The United Nations could share experiences from different contexts, geographies and regions and make them available to parliaments in order to prevent countries from repeating mistakes that had been made elsewhere. In his previous post as United Nations Resident Coordinator in Kyrgyzstan, a parliamentary SDG committee had been created and had highlighted important, protracted and intractable challenges. The United Nations had been tasked with researching solutions, which had informed the decisions of members of parliament.

The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the current cost of living crisis were causing protests in many countries. Parliaments were critical interlocutors with the public. Although politicians had to prepare for future elections and tailor their messaging, it was hoped that a consensus could be reached through the IPU and other platforms and mechanisms. The research and analytics of the United Nations could help parliaments in that regard.

The structural transformation and legacy of Rwanda were a testament to the political consensus that had been reached. *Imihigo* performance contracts, public mobilization through *umuganda*, and gender parity in the Cabinet and Parliament would not be possible without that consensus, and the United Nations championed Rwandan development. Rwanda was being positioned as a frontier African country in terms of innovation, digitalization, blended financing and development approaches, but some challenges remained. The role of the United Nations was to identify those challenges with policymakers in Rwanda and to facilitate action in order for Rwanda to become a middle-income country by 2035 and an upper-middle-income country by 2050. The whole of society would need to be mobilized in order to achieve those goals. Investors were willing to do business in countries that had welcoming laws, strong rule of law and good environmental, social and governance indicators. The United Nations development system was designed to provide strategic policy advice that could be implemented across governments and societies. Investments in one area needed to be reinforced with investments in other areas.

In Rwanda, the National Strategy for Transformation had been developed, which focused on social, economic, environmental and governance issues. The role of the Resident Coordinator was to co-chair a partner's platform alongside the Minister for the Economy and to lead strategic thinking among development actors, provide information and analysis, and brief policymakers, decision makers and parliamentarians so that they could make their own decisions. The United Nations would observe the implementation of those decisions and learn lessons. Vision 2050 was a national pathway to middle-income and upper-middle-income status and when United Nations representatives met with parliamentarians, they shared information on accountability, budget oversight and corruption.

Rwanda had developed its own voluntary national reviews as part of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, which were an opportunity to assess development efforts. Evidence showed that the biggest constraint to effective development in many low- or middle-income developing countries was the lack of an integrated approach to implementation, but the voluntary national review ensured effective collaboration.

The Universal Periodic Review was a global mechanism that monitored international commitments on human rights standards. It facilitated a dialogue with the Human Rights Council and provided an opportunity to determine the work of the State and to collaborate with the development partners.

Through the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review and the resolution that had followed in 2017, Member States of the United Nations had voted to reform the United Nations development system because the SDGs were not on track to be achieved. Resident coordinators had received more authority, power and leadership opportunities in order to strengthen the United Nations system and help States to address significant issues. Cooperation frameworks had been designed to look beyond day-to-day projects and monitor strategic decisions to accelerate transformation. The United Nations contributed to policies and projects by providing proof that new ideas and approaches could work, but that was only possible with the help of national systems, capacities and leadership. There was the potential to create a new dynamic to the relationship between the United Nations and national actors, the private sector, international and national financial institutions, and parliaments.

**The Chair** said that parliamentarians should facilitate those processes in their respective countries and regions. It was only through collaboration that problems could be solved. Governments could help at the executive level and parliaments could pass legislation and approve budgets. International organizations, such as the United Nations, could provide important technical assistance to attain the SDGs while remaining politically impartial.

**Mr. S. Mukunyaide** (Zimbabwe) said that there was a collective aspiration and determination in Zimbabwe to become an empowered and prosperous upper-middle-income country by 2030. The FAO was critical to ensuring that transformation and those economic opportunities in order to leave no one and no place behind. The United Nations Resident Coordinator led the United Nations country team, which comprised of 25 entities that had signed the 2022-2026 Zimbabwe United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (ZUNSDCF). The 2016-2020 ZUNSDCF had delivered US\$ 1.7 billion through development projects and programmes by late 2019.

The United Nations country team facilitated the achievement of the SDGs by nurturing sustainable partnerships, enhancing human rights and transforming lives. In 2019, Zimbabwe had received a funding commitment of US\$ 30 million through the Spotlight Initiative, which would be used to create a platform for the empowerment of women, including those with disabilities, and to introduce gender-based responses. The initiative had impacted five million people in Manicaland, Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland West, Matabeleland South and Harare.

The UNDP had developed the Zimbabwe Resilience Building Fund, which was funded by the European Union, Sweden and the United Kingdom, to support irrigation-based farming and transform agricultural production in Beitbridge. Some 840,000 people in 18 districts would benefit from the project.

In response to Cyclone Idai, the United Nations Office for Project Services had launched a project that had been implemented by the FAO, UNICEF, WHO and WFP, and had provided US\$ 72 million through the World Bank. It had helped communities to adapt and had increased resilience for the future. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Foundations for Farming had developed training on climate-smart agriculture, which had targeted 1,200 migrant returnees with a view to ensuring economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The United Nations had stepped up efforts to support the COVID-19 response plan in Zimbabwe, which had included efforts to raise awareness, procure personal protective equipment, strengthen lab systems for surveillance, infection prevention and control, and ensure the continuity of essential services.

**Mr. M. Bani Yassin** (Jordan) said that Rwanda was an example to the world and that the work of the FAO in Rwanda was very important. The suffering of the people of Rwanda was unfortunate and many people in the Middle East, particularly Palestinians, displaced people and the unemployed, were suffering from similar or even worse problems.

Having listened to discussions about FAO contributions to food security and the coordinated work between United Nations agencies, governments and parliaments, he noted the lack of United Nations cooperation in Jordan. It was possible that some parts of the Government of Jordan cooperated with United Nations specialized agencies, but there was no cooperation with the Parliament of Jordan. It was important to highlight that issue for countries such as Iraq, Jordan,

Libya, Palestine and the Syrian Arab Republic, which desperately needed consultations between United Nations specialized agencies and their parliaments. Perhaps countries with lower levels of immigration and unemployment needed consultations with the United Nations less.

**Ms. A. Ticona** (Plurinational State of Bolivia) said that the Bolivian economy was being built to raise the standard of living. Efforts to eradicate hunger and eliminate poverty were being made through the economic and social development plan for 2021-2025.

The State was committed to ensuring food security and sovereignty. It had passed a law in that regard, which had been created with the help of civil society organizations and indigenous farming groups.

The economic policy of the Plurinational State of Bolivia was based on principles of social justice and had created economic stability and more jobs. Food sovereignty had been improved through industrialization, which had provided a substitute for imports and had reduced poverty. Data showed that the Plurinational State of Bolivia had experienced the lowest rate of inflation in South America in 2022, which had reduced uncertainty and safeguarded the purchasing power of the population. The internal market had been strengthened and there had been a reduction in unemployment – particularly open urban unemployment – as well as moderate and extreme poverty.

**Ms. O. Madougou** (Niger) said that the food crisis affected all continents because of climate change. In Niger, climate change had caused floods, fires and drought, leading to famine. The United Nations had provided long-standing support to Niger, and that support would need to be maintained. Synergies should be created between countries to tackle climate change.

**Ms. A. Al-Sulaiti** (Qatar) said that capacity building, creating partnerships and ensuring development were important. Without education and training, it would not be possible to provide a sound education system or to eradicate poverty. Education would help find solutions to issues such as population displacements, poverty and terrorism.

The United Nations had worked closely with Qatar, where regional offices for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UNICEF, IOM, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Labour Organization had been opened. In 2020, Qatar had provided US\$ 533 million in aid to support programmes related to health, infrastructure and economic development. It had also contributed to international funds.

She asked Mr. Ojielo whether he had assessed the work carried out with the United Nations specialized agencies and whether there was a five-year plan and framework for that work.

**Mr. O. Ojielo** (United Nations Resident Coordinator in Rwanda) said that the United Nations was accountable to national authorities, including parliaments, and the representative of Jordan was encouraged to request that the United Nations explain its work in his country. The United Nations supported national development agendas that had been produced by governments on behalf of national populations. It should therefore be held accountable for its actions. It was hoped that the representative of Jordan would see the relationship between the United Nations and national authorities in a more positive light.

The United Nations should show great humility because it was employed by Member States. Members of staff of the United Nations were international civil servants who should create development plans alongside governments and seek out ways to support governments, particularly through the analysis of trends. The United Nations had an abundance of data but parliamentarians struggled with a lack of information when making decisions. Representatives of the United Nations should therefore share that data and participate in parliamentary committee meetings to provide their perspectives.

The benefits of economic growth were not reaching many parts of society in middle-income countries, and those countries, particularly in Africa, Central Asia and the Pacific, were struggling with development challenges. Whereas the Millennium Development Goals had been designed for the global north to help the global south, the SDGs treated development challenges as universal. Countries should provide support to each other to tackle challenges in the areas of development and inclusion. The role of parliaments was to give a voice to the voiceless, such as migrants, and the United Nations could help in that regard by providing data and analytics. Some parliaments had created SDG committees, to which the United Nations contributed information and analytics, in order to keep abreast of national development matters and make informed decisions.



As part of the reform of the United Nations development system, the United Nations would agree its contribution to national development plans in advance. It would help make decisions regarding assistance for people, particularly women and youth, to develop their skills and ensure equal opportunities. It would also provide high-level policy support to facilitate transformation in the social sector – particularly with regard to human capital development, education, health, nutrition and social protection – and across the economy to facilitate access to loans and funding. Those measures would provide people with a sense of hope and would ensure that they were emotionally invested in protecting their societies.

**The Chair** said that it was important for parliamentarians to act as well as to engage in discussions. They carried out work with regard to legislation and budgets but they also ensured that their parliaments represented national populations aptly.

### **Elections to the Bureau**

**The Chair** announced that the Standing Committee had before it the candidatures of two new Bureau members: for the African Group, Ms. R. Tonkei (Kenya), and for the Group of Latin America and Caribbean Countries, Mr. E. Bustamante (Peru). He took it that the Standing Committee wished to endorse those candidacies.

*It was so decided.*

**The Chair** said that no formal candidature had yet been put forward by the African Group for the presidency and so, as Vice-President, he was willing to continue chairing future meetings.

**Mr. P. Katjavivi** (Namibia), speaking on behalf of the African Group, said that it was better for the Vice-President to continue chairing meetings than to elect somebody new on a temporary basis. Such an arrangement would also allow time for consultations.

**The Chair** said that, in the absence of any comments or objections, he would chair the next meeting at the 146th IPU Assembly.

*It was so agreed.*

### **Any other business**

No other business was raised.

*The sitting rose at 17:35.*

## Forum of Women Parliamentarians

### SITTING OF TUESDAY, 11 OCTOBER

(Afternoon)

*The sitting was called to order at 14:00 with Ms. L. Vasylenko (Ukraine), President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, in the Chair.*

#### Opening of the session

**The President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians**, opening the session, said that she wished to welcome all participants and to thank the Parliament of Rwanda for hosting the 145th IPU Assembly. Rwanda had a rich but painful history. It had built back better and stronger, and had established the most gender-sensitive parliament in the world. It was a true example to all. She wished to pay tribute to all women parliamentarians who took leadership in difficult circumstances and environments, standing up for civil rights, political rights, for the right to say what they wanted, wear what they wanted and think what they wanted. She paid tribute to those fighting for the right to education for girls and women, and those who had been making difficult choices during the COVID-19 pandemic, and in the face of natural disasters and wars. Ukraine was being subjected to an aggressive war by its neighbour. Women in the Ukrainian Parliament were having to make difficult decisions as to whether to terminate their mandates to concentrate on caring for their children and elderly relatives, or whether to continue to serve their people and communities, and provide leadership during the most difficult of times. Women had the additional burden of maintaining caring roles when entering politics and decision-making roles. Tribute should be paid to those women and to the men who fought for women's rights alongside them. While gender parity and equality in parliament were essential, they could not be achieved without overcoming threats to human security and physical existence.

#### Election of the President of the 34th session of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians (FEM/34/1-Inf.1)

*As recommended by Ms. H. Ramzy Faye (Bahrain) and Ms. E.B. Anyakun (Uganda), Ms. E. Nyirasafari, Vice President of the Senate of the Republic of Rwanda, was, by acclamation, elected President of the 34th session of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians.*

*Ms. E. Nyirasafari (Rwanda), President of the 34th session of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians, took the Chair.*

#### Welcoming remarks

**The President of the Forum** said that she wished to welcome all participants and to thank them for entrusting her with the task of presiding over the 34th session of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians. The meeting was taking place on the occasion of the International Day of the Girl Child. As female leaders, women parliamentarians had a responsibility to set an example and inspire young women and girls the world over. Women's autonomy must always be a priority, and their rights must be protected and respected, to guarantee a future of equality for all societies. The Forum of Women Parliamentarians constituted a global platform from which women could contribute to international decision-making processes.

The Forum's discussions would focus on three important and pressing topics: eliminating discrimination against women; ending sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliament; and combatting all forms of trafficking in persons and violations of human rights in the context of international migration, including those that were perpetrated by States. Parliamentarians had a key role in finding solutions to those issues. All of those present must therefore participate actively in the work of the IPU and in seeking solutions to the aforementioned challenges. As the President of the Republic of Rwanda had said, women and men were equal in terms of ability and dignity. They must therefore also be equal in terms of opportunity, not just as a matter of human rights but as a matter of common sense. No one benefitted when women were held back. Mindsets, not just laws, must be changed.

**Ms. D. Mukabalisa** (Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies of Rwanda) said that she wished to thank the IPU, through its President and Secretary General, for having made gender equality a key value of the Organization. Rwanda's leaders had also acknowledged the crucial role of gender equality in achieving development of any sort. The theme of the 145th IPU Assembly, *Gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments as drivers of change for a more resilient and peaceful world*, was therefore particularly welcome, and would afford an opportunity for the world's parliamentarians to exchange views and share experiences. The discussions would give a clear overview of the situation in every parliament, and would show the leading role that parliaments must play in making societies inclusive and egalitarian. She encouraged all participants to make the most of the opportunities provided by the Assembly to learn from each other and ensure that the discussions were as rich and fruitful as possible, and to explore Kigali and its surroundings, to experience the culture and spirit of Rwanda.

**Mr. D. Pacheco** (President of the IPU) said that the Forum of Women Parliamentarians was a critical element of the IPU, which ensured that gender equality remained at the top of the Organization's agenda. Women were also at the top of the agenda of the host parliament. The Rwandan Parliament had the greatest proportion of women parliamentarians in the world: 61.3% of members of the Rwandan Chamber of Deputies were women. The Parliament of Rwanda was therefore an example and a source of inspiration for all. The Forum of Women Parliamentarians provided guidance to ensure that the perspectives of women were present in all aspects of the IPU's work, and would ensure the inclusion of a gender perspective in the Assembly's deliberations. In times of global crises, including pandemics, armed conflict and climate-related disasters, all of which had a disproportionate impact on women and girls, such a focus was particularly crucial. The situation in Ukraine provided daily examples of that impact. Yet it also gave daily examples of the brave resistance and resilience of women. In that regard, he acknowledged the President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, Ms. Vasylenko, whose presence at the current meeting was particularly welcome.

Such crises caused high levels of displacement and migration, exposing women and girls to gender-based violence and other forms of exploitation while they were on the move. Parliamentarians had a duty to ensure a rights-based approach to migration, which prevented human rights abuses. As well as tackling gender-based violence in societies, it must also be tackled in parliaments. Parliaments must be free from sexism, harassment and violence against women. Women comprised 26.5% of parliamentarians globally. More than 85% of women parliamentarians that the IPU had surveyed in Europe had faced psychological violence in the exercise of their duties. In Africa, 40% of women members of parliament surveyed had reported having been sexually harassed. Globally, 25% of women parliamentarians had faced physical violence. Violence against women members of parliament was perpetrated by their male colleagues, inside parliaments. Such violence was part of a structural tactic to dominate and silence women, and remove them from decision-making and leadership. Such tactics must not be allowed to be effective.

Gender-sensitive parliaments were key to women's full participation and to ensuring equality between men and women. Ten years had passed since the adoption of the IPU *Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments*. The Forum of Women Parliamentarians discussed how parliaments could be free from gender-based violence, and it did so not just for the benefit of current members of parliament, but also for generations of women and girl leaders to come. On the occasion of the 10th International Day of the Girl Child, the world's parliamentarians must use their leadership to take impactful action to fulfil the rights of women and girls. The 600 million adolescent girls around the world faced unique challenges and their diverse voices deserved to be heard. Parliaments must be safe, meaningful institutions for women, and promote and encourage political participation for future generations of girls. Parliamentarians around the world must all strive to move political commitment to the next level by prioritizing gender equality in their work, promoting equal participation of men and women in parliament and taking a zero-tolerance stance against gender-based violence.

#### **Adoption of the agenda** (FEM/34/A.1-rev)

*The agenda was adopted.*

## Activities to advance gender equality

### (a) Report of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians

**The President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians** presented the report on the work of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, which had met in March 2022 in Nusa Dua, Indonesia, and in Kigali, Rwanda, earlier that day. On the 10th anniversary of its adoption, the IPU *Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments* remained a unique, forward-looking strategic document, which aimed to transform parliaments into institutions that promoted respect for gender equality. The current Assembly would afford opportunities to take stock of the progress achieved thus far in developing gender-sensitive institutions, and to look at their future. The General Debate would serve to assess how far the world's parliaments had come in implementing the *Plan of Action*. It would also enable parliamentarians to deepen their commitment to building gender-sensitive parliaments to deal with crises and build resilience.

The Forum of Women Parliamentarians would hold a panel discussion on the linkages between gender-sensitive parliaments and the eradication of sexism and violence against women in parliaments. When such acts prevailed, parliaments failed to uphold their responsibility to be representative, efficient and effective, and failed to uphold their duty to serve the population in all its diversity. In conjunction with the panel, an exhibition would be held on parliaments free from sexism, sexual harassment and violence against women. On Thursday, 13 October 2022, the Forum would also organize a parity debate dedicated to rejuvenating parliaments and exploring why younger parliaments were more gender-sensitive and inclusive. The debate would examine the needs, expectations and aspirations of a more diverse generation of men and women parliamentarians. It would also consider how the use of new technologies in parliament could support or challenge gender equality. During the Assembly, a side event on 14 October would be held focusing on women's parliamentary caucuses, and identifying links between them and the transformation of parliaments into more gender-sensitive institutions.

In Nusa Dua, the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians and the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians had held a series of exchanges of views with the aim of better supporting women parliamentarians against acts of gender-based violence. Those joint efforts would continue, and would culminate in a special protocol for women parliamentarians, victims of gender-based violence. At its present meeting, the Forum would discuss the draft resolution to be considered by the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights, entitled *Parliamentary impetus to local and regional development of countries with high levels of international migration and to stopping all forms, including state-sponsored, of human-trafficking and human rights abuses*. The debate would focus on the gender aspects of the draft resolution, in particular: upholding a rights-based and gender-responsive approach to migration; addressing the root causes of trafficking in women and girls, especially for the purposes of sexual exploitation; and ensuring survivor-centred anti-trafficking legislation and enforcement. The Forum would consider amendments to the draft resolution from a gender-perspective. The debate would take place in plenary and would be chaired by Ms. A. Nassif Ayyoub (Egypt), with Ms N. Bujela (Eswatini) serving as Rapporteur.

The ongoing war in Ukraine was having a catastrophic impact on the rights of women and girls around the world. It was widening the gender gap, creating an alarming increase in food insecurity, and increasing violence against women and girls, including transactional sex in exchange for food, and trafficking in women and girls for the purposes of sexual exploitation. The war could only end when the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine was brought to an end and the Russian troops withdrew. Only then could Ukraine return to development and could gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments be properly established. The only way to bring an end to the suffering was to use the opportunity of the 145th IPU Assembly in Kigali to renew commitment to global solidarity in the name of peace.

### (b) Work and recommendations of the Gender Partnership Group

**Ms. Z. Hilal** (Secretary of the Forum) said that, since the Gender Partnership Group had not yet met, she wished to report on participation in the 145th IPU Assembly from a gender perspective. As at 10 October, 35.3% of registered participants in the Assembly were women. The figure was preliminary and would be subject to change by the close of registration. At the 144th Assembly in Nusa Dua, Indonesia, women had accounted for 38.9% of participants. There were

currently 101 delegations registered with two members or more, 18 of which were single sex delegations. Of those 18, 15 were male only, and 3 were all-female. The Gender Partnership Group, which comprised two male and two female members of the Executive Committee, would monitor the number of women participating in the Assembly closely. The Group would meet on 14 October and would assess additional statistics on the participation of women and men in the Assembly. It would also monitor the situation of parliaments around the world with no (or very few) women parliamentarians, and would continue to work to ensure that the IPU was as gender-sensitive as possible.

### (c) IPU activities for the promotion of gender equality

#### *Report of the 14th Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament*

**Ms. M.M. Chinomona** (Zimbabwe) said that on 8 and 9 September 2022, the 14th Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament (14SWSP) had taken place in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, and had been attended by more than 100 participants. The women Speakers had focused on priority action areas for parliamentary leadership to better deliver on sustainability and prosperity when anticipating future risks and responding to crises. Reflecting on experiences from the pandemic, participants had considered the global post-pandemic recovery from the perspective of sustainable development rooted in justice, inclusion and environmental protection. As economies recovered from recent crises, participants had agreed on the urgent need for a more inclusive, green economy that included recognizing the value of care and unpaid work.

The Summit had recognized the role of gender-sensitive parliaments in encouraging gender-responsive legislation and supporting the eradication of violence against women and girls, including online. Participants had highlighted the importance of parliamentary leadership in responding to such risks. The Summit had culminated in the adoption of the Tashkent Declaration, which called on parliaments to step up implementation of the IPU *Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments*. Immediate and robust action should be prioritized in all parliaments to ensure equal numbers of men and women MPs, mainstream gender across all aspects of parliaments' work, improve family-friendly infrastructures and culture, implement policies to end sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliament, and make gender equality a shared goal among men and women parliamentarians. The women Speakers of Parliament of the world would lead the way in building resilience by prioritizing the protection and advancement of women's rights and empowerment throughout their work.

**Ms. P. Maharani** (Indonesia) said that discussions at the Summit had also focused on assessing the pros and cons of new technologies for risk anticipation and economic resilience. Participants had agreed that advances in the digital economy were a key component of economic resilience and recovery, and afforded an opportunity for enhanced progress if implemented in a gender-sensitive way. Concerns had been raised regarding the risks posed by the growing digital gap, online harassment, fake news, hate speech and online violence, all of which hindered the rights and freedoms of women and girls everywhere. Those risks must be addressed through policies that bridged the digital divide and protected the rights of women and girls online. Participants had also recognized the role of gender-sensitive parliaments in encouraging gender-responsive legislation and supporting the eradication of violence against women and girls, including online. They had highlighted the importance of parliamentary leadership in that regard. The Tashkent Declaration reflected the commitment of women Speakers of Parliament to transforming parliaments into gender-sensitive institutions that enacted gender-responsive legislation, responding to growing risks and protecting the rights and freedoms of vulnerable groups of women and girls everywhere.

#### *Cooperation between the IPU and the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women*

**Ms. H. Ramzy Fayez** (Bahrain) said that the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee) had the essential mandate to monitor and guide States' implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). For two decades, the CEDAW Committee and the IPU had been working hand-in-hand to promote stronger involvement of parliamentarians in ensuring implementation of the Convention. Much remained to be done to ensure that the provisions of the Convention were transposed into national laws and policies, and most importantly, into the daily lives of women and girls.

In May 2022, she had chaired the first in a series of IPU webinars on parliamentary engagement in implementation of the Convention, reporting to the CEDAW Committee and follow-up to the Committee's concluding observations. The first webinar had brought together participants from 15 parliaments, with a focus on those from States parties to the Convention scheduled for review by the CEDAW Committee. Participants in the webinar had been briefed on the work of the Committee. CEDAW Committee members had provided information on the Committee's plans to renew its guidance on women's political participation, which was critical for ensuring all other rights enshrined in the Convention were observed. The CEDAW Committee was counting on the IPU and its Member Parliaments to champion the gender parity objective. During the webinar, inspiring examples were given by parliamentarians whose parliaments had integrated the Convention into their work, describing how the Convention had helped advance much-awaited legal reforms and policies at the national level. Specialized bodies, such as gender committees, had facilitated those measures. All parliaments should take part in future webinars to foster cooperation between the CEDAW Committee and the IPU, and should engage fully in the reporting process under the Convention and systematic follow-up to the Committee's concluding observations. The IPU Secretariat could be approached for support in all aspects of parliaments' efforts to implement the Convention and parliamentary involvement in States' efforts to uphold their reporting and follow-up obligations.

### Activities to promote gender equality

**Ms. Z. Hilal** (Secretary of the Forum) said that at the end of 2021, the IPU and the African Parliamentary Union (APU) had published the results of a study on sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliament in Africa. A year later, a regional conference for African parliaments, entitled *Preventing and responding to violence against women in politics and in parliaments*, was due to be held on 30 November and 1 December 2022 in Lomé, Togo.<sup>1</sup> The conference was being organized jointly by the IPU, APU and the National Assembly of Togo. All African parliaments would be invited to participate. The conference would afford an opportunity for participants to examine in depth how violence against women in politics and parliaments manifested itself, and which issues were at stake in Africa and around the world. It would allow for an initial assessment of measures taken to combat the problem. Delegations would be asked to share insights and best practices with regard to how the results of the study had been used to tackle sexism and violence in their parliaments. Particular mention should be made of the initiatives undertaken by the parliaments of Benin, Central African Republic, Gabon, Morocco, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone and South Africa, as well as the Arab Parliament, which had held events to share the study and launch a debate on sexism and violence against women in parliaments.

**The President of the Forum** said that she encouraged all African parliamentarians to participate in the conference, which would coincide with the 16 days of activism undertaken in the context of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

### Contribution to the work of the 145th Assembly from a gender perspective

**The President of the Forum** invited the Forum to consider, from a gender perspective, the draft resolution to be discussed by the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights, entitled *Parliamentary impetus to local and regional development of countries with high levels of international migration and to stopping all forms, including state-sponsored, of human-trafficking and human rights abuses*. The discussion would be moderated by Ms. A. Nassif Ayyoub (Egypt), with Ms. N. Bujela (Eswatini) serving as Rapporteur.

*It was so agreed.*

*Ms. A. Nassif Ayyoub (Egypt) took the Chair.*

**Mr. P. Beyer** (Germany), on behalf of Mr. J. Wadehul (Germany) co-Rapporteur for the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights, presenting the draft resolution, said that the Standing Committee had agreed the topic for the draft resolution at its meeting held during the 143rd IPU Assembly in Madrid, Spain. During and after the 144th Assembly in Nusa Dua, Indonesia, the co-Rapporteurs had prepared the draft resolution, which was currently before the

<sup>1</sup> The Conference was subsequently postponed to 2023.

Forum for discussion and the proposal of amendments from a gender perspective. Broad international debate on many aspects of migration had led to the adoption, in December 2018, of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees. The draft resolution was not intended to reopen that debate or duplicate the work done in that regard, but rather aimed to complement those agreements. The text focused on eliminating misuse and abuse, including by State actors, of refugees and migration for political purposes.

**The Chair** said that she wished to invite the Forum to consider the draft resolution from a gender perspective, with a focus on how to uphold a gender-responsive, rights-based approach to migration, and how to ensure the adoption and enforcement of survivor-centred anti-trafficking legislation. The Forum would consider amendments to propose to the draft resolution, looking at best practices and ensuring that the requisite legal and organizational measures were taken to protect women and girls against forced and early marriage, sexual exploitation and trafficking, and what practices should be in place to protect survivors of trafficking without revictimization.

### Debate

**Ms. T. Samrejvanich** (Thailand) said that many Thai women migrants had been deceived by employment agents, promising good salaries and opportunities to work abroad. Women fell into traps of exploitation, often through online job offers on social media platforms, advertising for work as nannies, housekeepers, masseuses and carers. Those women were vulnerable to trafficking and gender-based violence. Many of them entered countries of destination illegally, and as such, they did not report having been trafficked. They worked against their will, while simultaneously trying to find a way back to their home country. One of the greatest barriers to arresting and prosecuting the perpetrators of such crimes was that they operated outside Thailand's jurisdiction. Trafficking in persons therefore required cross-border cooperation and information sharing. Networks of women migrants should be established in countries of destination to provide peer support for victims. Parliaments should increase their efforts to ensure human rights-based and gender-responsive implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. Reliable and accurate sex- and age-disaggregated data on human trafficking, as well as gender-responsive identification of victims were essential to assess trends in trafficking.

**Ms. S. Nahar** (Bangladesh) said that, in Bangladesh, education for girls, in particular in information technology, sciences and vocational training, had been enhanced. Efforts were being made to bolster women's empowerment at all levels of society. Women held high-level political and decision-making positions in Bangladesh; the Prime Minister, the Speaker of Parliament and the leader of the opposition were women. Bangladesh could therefore serve as an example for women's empowerment.

**Ms. E. Azad** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that women's empowerment and protection was a complex matter. Women were striving for political change and build professional opportunities, without exploitation, while upholding family values. Migration policy must be human rights-based and prevent exploitation of women and children, in particular trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation.

**Ms. L. Gumerova** (Russian Federation) said that with regard to refugees and migrants, the Russian Federation upheld the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, international human rights law and the Geneva Conventions, and its national policy was fully in line with preambular paragraph 13 of the draft resolution. Women migrants needed legal support. In the Russian Federation, legislation on migration was under review by a national commission; a comprehensive migration bill had been prepared, which would fully regulate migration policy. With the adoption of the bill, medical and social care would be provided for women migrants, including the provision of early childhood education, food and medical care for children. The Russian Federation could not support preambular paragraph 5 of the draft resolution, which was an attempt by several countries to blame the Russian Federation for the crisis situation in Europe and to accuse it of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

**Ms. A. Lotriet** (South Africa) said that migration was a way for many women and girls to fulfil their potential, support themselves and their families, and escape deeply entrenched gender inequalities, including sexual and gender-based violence, and lack of access to resources.

However, being both a migrant and a female exposed them to violence, discrimination and other human rights violations, throughout the migration cycle. Gender-responsive migration policies provided an opportunity to support migrant women and girls and empower them to thrive in their host communities.

Her delegation wished to add a preambular paragraph to the draft resolution expressing deep concern about reports of grave abuses and violence committed against migrant women and girls, including gender-based violence, sexual violence, domestic and family violence, discrimination, abusive labour practices, exploitative conditions of work, and all forms of forced labour and trafficking in persons. It also wished to add a new operative paragraph, urging governments to develop, enforce and strengthen effective gender-sensitive measures to combat and eliminate all forms of trafficking in women and girls, including sexual and economic exploitation, as part of a holistic, human rights-based anti-trafficking strategy. In the majority of countries, poverty was the primary driving force behind trafficking in persons, with poor education standards and lack of employment opportunities propelling vulnerable people into the hands of traffickers. South Africa was also a transit and source country for the international market in trafficking in persons.

**Ms. M.M. Chinomona** (Zimbabwe) said that women were lured into trafficking by promises of attractive, well-paying jobs offered by agents of criminal networks. Most job opportunities for women migrants were in unregulated sectors such as farming, domestic and care work, and the sex industry. Zimbabwe was party to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and had incorporated some of its provisions into national law, including on the protection of the privacy and identity of victims. Women from Zimbabwe had been lured by traffickers with promises of highly-paid domestic work in other countries. Over recent years, the Government had learned of 200 female Zimbabwean citizens who had fallen prey to human trafficking schemes. Despite the Government's efforts to rescue them with the assistance of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), only 128 of the victims had been repatriated. Women should be educated and encouraged to seek adequate information before embarking on such perilous journeys. As legislators, parliamentarians had a responsibility to share information with their constituents about human trafficking, to prevent women and girls from falling victim to such schemes.

**Ms. S. Raskovic Ivic** (Serbia) said that the Serbian Parliament comprised 40% women, and women held high-level political positions, including the Prime Minister and several ministers. Gender budgeting had been applied by the Serbian Parliament to enhance women's political participation. At the local level, however, women remained underrepresented in high-level positions. With regard to migration, Serbia was a country of transit. While Ukrainian refugees were being welcomed around Europe, double standards were being applied; refugees from Afghanistan, Pakistan or Africa were not welcomed in the same way. Women parliamentarians had a key role in bringing an end to racist and discriminatory approaches to refugees and migrants.

**Ms. G. Katuta Mwelwa** (Zambia) said that migration was fuelled by factors including conflict, economic crisis, natural disaster, fear of persecution, and search for better jobs and economic opportunities. Migrants often fell prey to human trafficking and human rights abuses. Women and children were trafficked for sexual exploitation, and were deprived of their most fundamental rights, including the right to health. As illegal immigrants they were treated like slaves. A recent case of the abduction of 13 Zambian girls for trafficking had been particularly disturbing. Although the victims had been rescued, they had needed significant counselling and psychosocial support. Such support was generally lacking for victims of trafficking. Parliamentarians, through their constitutional functions, must ensure that the requisite protections were in place to guarantee well-regulated migration, prevent trafficking, and to provide essential care and support for victims.

**Ms. L. Reynolds** (Australia) said that she wished to draw attention to orphanage trafficking, an issue on which Australia had taken the lead. Trafficking of children into orphanages was a form of trafficking and slavery that could be addressed. A reference to such trafficking should be included in the draft resolution, to ensure that donor supply countries changed the behaviour of their donors to stop supporting fake orphanages, and the trafficking of children.



**Ms. M. Mohammed Saleh** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that trafficking in persons was a transnational organized crime that constituted a grave violation of human rights and could only be tackled through political will. Efforts must be made to address the root causes of displacement, such as poverty, which led to conflict. Trafficking in persons must be addressed through concerted and coordinated efforts between countries of origin, transit and destination. Women and girls were subject to discrimination that made them more vulnerable to traffickers. Corrupt government employees and civil servants exacerbated the problem and facilitated the impunity of organized crime networks. In the Syrian Arab Republic, steps had been taken at the political level, including through accession to international instruments and the adoption of national anti-trafficking legislation, to define the measures to protect victims. Obstacles persisted, however, including lack of collaboration from neighbouring countries in the exchange of information, and lack of reporting on trafficking in persons. International cooperation was therefore crucial and must be stepped up.

**Ms. S. Falaknaz** (United Arab Emirates) said that parliaments had a key role to play in legislating to guarantee the effective political participation of women and to protect their rights. The United Arab Emirates had taken specific measures to promote women's political empowerment, by introducing quotas for women's representation in Parliament, promoting the appointment of women to high-level political positions, and encouraging and incentivizing women to play a greater role in business, investment and entrepreneurship and thereby boosting their contribution to the national economy.

**Ms. Z. Yildiz** (Türkiye) said that trafficking in persons constituted a major challenge to security and development, which could only be tackled through international cooperation. The Government of Türkiye supported and contributed to international mechanisms in that regard and was party to the relevant international conventions. Administrative and legal measures had been taken at the national level, to ensure that perpetrators of trafficking in persons were brought to justice. The crime of trafficking had been incorporated into the Code of Criminal Procedure, which had strengthened judicial processes in that regard. Information- and experience-sharing between countries was essential to improve and consolidate efforts to counter trafficking in persons, in particular to protect women and girls at all stages in migration, since they were particularly vulnerable to human rights violations and gender-based discrimination. Parliaments had a particularly important role to play.

**Ms. W. Qamar** (Pakistan) said that Pakistan was a developing nation with a substantial percentage of its population surviving below the poverty line. When faced with hunger and want, many vulnerable people fell victim to exploitation. The situation in Pakistan had become even more serious with the recent flooding crisis, which was threatening to push a further nine million Pakistani people into poverty. Those people looked to migration as an answer to their hunger. Forced labour and trafficking in persons were prohibited under the Constitution of Pakistan, and legislation to prevent trafficking and transnational organized crime had been enacted. The Government and Parliament of Pakistan remained committed to bringing an end to trafficking. Yet challenges persisted while poverty and porous borders prevailed. The international community must work together to stop the trafficking of vulnerable people, in particular women and children. No nation could succeed alone.

**Ms. H. Baldwin** (United Kingdom) said that she welcomed the debate and the draft resolution. Her delegation wished to include a reference to modern day slavery in operative paragraph 1. Since 24 February 2022, nearly four million people had fled from Ukraine, many of whom were women and children, as result of indiscriminate attacks on civilian targets. Her delegation therefore wished to urge the representative of the Russian Federation to take home a message of peace from the Assembly and from the women parliamentarians of the world, who wished to see an end to the Russian Federation's aggressive and unwarranted attack on a neighbouring sovereign State.

**Ms. A. Albashir** (Jordan) said that in 2009, the Parliament of Jordan had enacted anti-trafficking legislation and set up a national committee to oversee its implementation. A national anti-trafficking strategy had also been adopted, based on four pillars: prevention, protection, prosecution and partnerships. A coalition of women parliamentarians from the Arab world had been established to take action to protect women and girls against falling prey to traffickers. Action was being taken at the national level to discuss and amend discriminatory laws to protect and empower women, provide them with safe working conditions and prohibit all forms of gender-based discrimination and sexual exploitation, violence and harassment.

**Ms. A. Larouche** (Canada) said that trafficking in persons was a sensitive and critical issue, in particular for women. The Canadian Parliament had established a non-partisan parliamentary group to combat modern slavery and trafficking in persons, which brought together parliamentarians from both houses to discuss and raise awareness on the matter and take appropriate legislative action. The Canadian Parliament had dedicated 22 February each year since 2007 as National Human Trafficking Awareness Day. It was more important than ever to raise awareness and promote legislative action, both at the national and international levels.

**Ms. C. Kafantari** (Greece) said that climate change was a key driver for women's migration. Half of humanity was in danger from floods, drought, extreme storms and wildfires. Humanity had a choice: collective action or collective suicide. In 2022, the extreme heatwaves and droughts across Europe, humanitarian crisis in the Horn of Africa, disease in Haiti and the climate carnage in Pakistan had made climate change visible. According to recent research, women were more affected by the negative impacts of climate change than men: the probability of death from climate-related catastrophe was 14 times higher for women. Climate change resulted in less food, limited access to drinking water, poor sanitation and unsafe living conditions. As well as being severely vulnerable to such threats, women were instrumental in overcoming them.

**Ms. E. Jailosi Jolobala** (Malawi) said that trafficking in persons and modern slavery were human rights violations from which the people of Malawi had not been spared. The Government of Malawi had launched a national plan of action in 2017 and set up a fund for survivors of trafficking. In 2015, legislation had been enacted to prohibit and criminalize trafficking in persons, and sexual and labour exploitation. Such crimes were punishable by deprivation of liberty for up to 14 years if the victims were adults, or up to 21 years if the victims were minors. Malawi was also party to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the protocols thereto. The Constitution of Malawi clearly stipulated that no person should be held in slavery or servitude. Slavery and the slave trade were prohibited. Other legislation, including on marriage, divorce and family relations, and on cybersecurity, contained provisions that indirectly contributed to tackling trafficking in persons.

**Ms. L. Vasylenko** (Ukraine) said that trafficking in persons and sex crimes had increased significantly, especially against Ukrainian women who found themselves in a vulnerable position as refugees. Thus far, the Russian Federation's aggression had caused 14 million Ukrainian women to abandon their homes and 7 million people to flee Ukraine in search of safety. Russian missiles, bullets and artillery had killed 386 children and wounded a further 700. Over the previous 24 hours, further attacks were making Ukraine uninhabitable; 83 missiles had been launched in attacks on 12 regions, conducted using drones of Iranian origin. The attacks had damaged critical infrastructure, heat and power stations and had killed 19 people. In total over the previous 230 days of escalated Russian aggression, educational facilities, including schools and kindergartens, had been destroyed, sometimes with children in them, and 150 hospitals had been damaged, including maternity wards. Attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure constituted war crimes. All those guilty of such crimes and those who had endorsed those crimes with their political decisions would pay for their actions. Such criminal, inhumane behaviour must stop. Ukraine would be rebuilt. For Ukrainians to return, their host countries must create opportunities for them to maintain links with their homeland. Her delegation therefore wished to amend operative paragraph 8 of the draft resolution to read, "*urges* IPU Member Parliaments to promote the adoption and implementation of specific programmes protecting the rights of refugees, paying specific attention to the needs of women and children, by facilitating employment and ensuring education in their native language and preserving the cultural ties of refugee children to their homeland".

**Ms. H. Al-Sulaiti** (Qatar) said that the Government of Qatar placed great importance on eliminating trafficking in persons. Legislation had been enacted at the national level in that regard, taking a victim-centred approach. Every effort was also made to implement the relevant international instruments. A committee had been set up under the aegis of the Ministry of the Interior to oversee implementation of national anti-trafficking legislation. The anti-trafficking committee worked across ministries, including with the national labour authority, to prevent trafficking in persons, and in particular labour exploitation, and ensure the punishment of any crimes in that regard.

**Ms. C. Muyeka Mumma** (Kenya) said that Kenya hosted one of the greatest refugee populations in the world. It was also a country of transit for migrants and victims of trafficking in persons. Her delegation therefore commended the draft resolution to be adopted by the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights. The draft resolution should expressly prohibit racism. Migrants from African countries were treated as the scum of the human race. Young African girls were trafficked to the Middle East, mistreated, sexually abused and subjected to other physical abuse, including cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. Such violations of human rights could only be resolved through international cooperation; Kenyan laws could not protect the labour rights of Kenyans abroad. Every parliament must legislate to protect migrants, refugees and all foreigners seeking employment.

**Ms. S. Freizer Gunes** (Regional Advisor for Governance, Peace and Security, UN Women) said that trafficking in women and girls must be recognized as a form of gender-based violence. States should ensure that all responses to crises addressed the risk of trafficking of women and girls. Efforts to eliminate trafficking should include measures to address the demand that gave rise to sexual and other forms of exploitation, by investing in education and community-based programmes that challenged harmful social norms, male domination and sexual entitlement. The economic drivers and vulnerability factors that pushed women and girls to take high-risk opportunities must also be addressed. Response teams in settings for internally displaced persons, refugees and migrants, must be able to identify victims of trafficking. Survivors must be given long-term, comprehensive reintegration support, including economic empowerment and psychological support. They should also be granted asylum if they wished. Safe and orderly migration must be guaranteed during crises, in particular by providing temporary humanitarian and family reunification visas. Due consideration should also be given to the increasing role of technology in facilitating trafficking. Lastly, collection of data disaggregated by age, gender and disability, among others, was essential.

**Ms. U. Karlsson** (Special Adviser on Health to the IPU, Partnership for Maternal, New Born and Child Health (PMNCH)) said that migration, displacement and trafficking in persons had a significant impact on women, adolescents and children. Displaced women and girls were vulnerable to gender-based violence, poor reproductive health and unwanted pregnancies. The impacts of displacement on maternal and child health were serious; countries affected by conflict had the worst maternal mortality rates. Targeted action was needed urgently to ensure that victims of violence had access to essential health services, including mental health support. Half of the 1.4 billion people living in countries affected by crisis were under 20 years of age. Adolescents required critical health services, and sexual and reproductive health services, including rights-based interventions, to prevent unwanted pregnancies and unsafe abortions. The resolution should therefore include specific language on women, adolescents and children, with a focus on the urgent need for comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights, adolescent health and well-being, and mental health services. Members of parliament had a critical role to play in ensuring that the health and well-being of women, children and adolescents were prioritized.

**Mr. M. Rezakhah** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the allegations of use of Iranian drones in Ukraine were baseless. Since the beginning of the conflict, the Islamic Republic of Iran had upheld a principled and clear policy, and active impartiality and opposition to any undermining of a political resolution to disputes, without recourse to violence. Over recent months, the Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran had held numerous meetings with his Russian and Ukrainian counterparts, and had reiterated the importance of resolving disagreements in a peaceful manner. The Islamic Republic of Iran encouraged disarming of all parties and bringing an end to the conflict.

**Panel debate on Gender-sensitive parliaments:  
Parliaments free from sexism, harassment and violence against women**

**The President of the Forum** said that parliaments that accepted violence and harassment against women were not representative. The panel discussion would highlight policies and mechanisms to prevent and respond to sexism and gender-based violence in parliaments, and to share experiences and best practices. The panellists would be: the Secretary General of the IPU, Chair of the Global Board of the International Gender Champions network; Ms. C. Mix (Chile); Ms. J. Dean (New Zealand); Ms. E.B. Anyakun (Uganda); and Ms. S. Childs, professor of politics and gender at the University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom.

**The Secretary-General of the IPU** said that the panel discussion would allow all participants to gain a better understanding of how gender equality could be achieved, in letter and in practice, by working together. The IPU *Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments* had been adopted, unanimously, by the 127th IPU Assembly in Quebec City in 2012. Now, 10 years later, much had been achieved on the path to gender equality. Yet the road had not been smooth, and significant barriers to women's political participation and emancipation persisted. The IPU was proud to promote gender-sensitive parliaments and political institutions that embodied gender equality. Such institutions, in their functions, composition and working methods, addressed the concerns of men and women in an equitable fashion, for the benefit of all in society. The movement to promote gender-sensitive parliaments had seen a shift in men's involvement in gender equality. In Rwanda, the national forum of women parliamentarians was not a caucus of women alone, but also included male champions of gender equality and served as an example to all. Gender equality was a matter for men as well as women, yet, unfortunately, there were very few men present in the current meeting of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians.

Gender-sensitive institutions were a safe environment in which women could feel respected and contribute to the deliberations of parliament. One of the foremost preconditions for a gender-sensitive parliament was a zero-tolerance approach to sexism and gender-based violence. Parliaments should be places where sexist language or behaviour was not tolerated, and where gender-based violence could not and should not exist or prosper in any form. Much progress had been made in the previous 10 years; sexual harassment policies for parliamentary staff and members of parliament had become a prominent feature in the work of gender-sensitive parliaments. The IPU not only continued to preach gender equality and a zero-tolerance approach to sexism and sexual harassment, but also to encourage parliaments to become gender-sensitive. Research had therefore been conducted to understand the phenomenon of sexual harassment in parliament. The findings had been very disconcerting, and had underscored that sexism, harassment and violence against women parliamentarians was more prevalent than had been anticipated. The study conducted in Europe, for example, had revealed that more than 85% of women parliamentarians surveyed had faced psychological violence in parliament. In Africa, close to 40% of women surveyed had been sexually harassed. The worldwide study had revealed that 25% of the women parliamentarians surveyed had faced physical violence, and that 33% had suffered from economic violence. The situation was compounded by vulnerability to multiple discrimination, such as in the case of women parliamentarians with disabilities or from minority groups. Political considerations were also important: women members of opposition parties were more likely to face gender-based violence than their colleagues in ruling parties. Violence against female parliamentarians took place mostly within parliament, and was perpetrated by male colleagues. Such harassment and sexism discouraged women from contributing to political life, and tarnished the reputation and image of parliament.

Guidelines and mechanisms were needed to address gender-based violence in parliament. Five years into the "Me Too" movement, it was no longer possible to tolerate silence and taboos around violence against women. The IPU Secretariat therefore wished to encourage Member Parliaments to become more gender-sensitive and to tackle violence against women parliamentarians, sexism and sexual harassment. The IPU Guidelines for the elimination of sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliament were simple, and were intended to encourage all parliaments to assess the situation, adopt specific policies to end sexism and gender-based violence, and offer assistance and support services for victims. The results of the studies had shown that violence against women in parliament was generally underreported, since victims did not trust the mechanisms in place to address their complaints effectively. Independent complaints mechanisms, disciplinary sanctions and awareness-raising measures were therefore crucial, along with training programmes. The IPU wished to take the lead in that regard, and was proposing a policy for addressing harassment, including sexual harassment, during IPU assemblies and events, to ensure a zero-tolerance approach to sexism of any kind. Many national parliaments and regional parliamentary organizations were taking similar measures, and there was a coalition of the willing that could be developed. In that regard, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe had launched a "Not In My Parliament" campaign. The Speaker of the Parliament of Slovenia had begun the "Red Shoes" movement having endured sexist remarks on account of her clothing. Such movements should be encouraged; women's contribution to politics and governance, not their clothing or appearance, should be the subject of comment.

As the Chair of the Global Board of the International Gender Champions network, he had been strict in implementing the network's pledges: gender parity and the fight against gender-based violence. From the parity perspective, the present panel was a little disappointing: ordinarily

he would only participate in a panel with equal representation of men and women. With regard to overcoming gender-based violence, however, the IPU had worked hard to adapt its policies and practices. The IPU was not paying lip service to gender equality; it would do its utmost to support Member Parliaments in their efforts to become more gender sensitive.

*An awareness-raising video made by the Chamber of Deputies of Mexico was shown, drawing attention to behaviours that constituted sexual harassment in the workplace.*

**Ms. C. Mix** (Chile) said that she wished to present the protocol that had been adopted by the Chilean Parliament for the prevention and elimination of sexual harassment in the Chamber of Deputies. The protocol was available in three languages and copies were available in the room for all participants to take and use as an example in their own parliaments. In 210 years of history, the Chilean Parliament had only had 150 women parliamentarians, as opposed to over 3,000 men, and over the course of its history had only had four female speakers. In 2019, a parliamentary group had been established to tackle sexual harassment in the Chamber of Deputies, which had drafted and adopted the aforementioned protocol. Efforts were being made to increase women's representation to over 35% in the period from 2022 to 2026, and ultimately to reach parity. The Parliament of Chile was proud to have its first transgender parliamentarian, which constituted significant progress with regard to ensuring that the Chamber of Deputies was truly representative. A study of gender issues in parliament had been conducted over a period of 20 years, which was due to be published on 8 March 2023. Of the 28 ministers in the Chilean Government, 14 were currently women, which constituted a significant achievement in respect of women's political representation.

**Ms. J. Dean** (New Zealand) said that sexual harassment and bullying occurred within the New Zealand Parliament, yet went largely unseen. The impact on victims was, however, profound. In 2019, the Speaker had commissioned an independent review of bullying and harassment in the workplace which had involved interviewing women parliamentarians and parliamentary staff. After the results of the survey had been assessed, 85 recommendations for action had been issued. To oversee their implementation, the Speaker had formed a subcommittee, which worked collaboratively and cohesively across Parliament. Several of the recommendations had been implemented, including on the provision of pastoral care and on facilitating complaints procedures. A behaviour statement for parliamentarians had also been issued, which set out clear expectations for behaviour while allowing for free speech in Parliament. Failure to comply with the statement, however, bore no consequences.

The most significant recommendation from the review had been on the need to establish the post of an independent commissioner to handle complaints involving employees. The position had been approved earlier in 2022, and the role had been taken up by a well-respected auditor general. The commissioner's main function was to receive complaints from people who had been subjected to victimization or harassment, and who had not felt satisfied by the existing mechanisms in place in Parliament. The commissioner was empowered to undertake a thorough, confidential investigation. An attempt would be made to resolve the situation through mediation. If that approach was not successful, a report would be made to Parliament. Consequences were severe. It was crucial that the leaders of political parties supported the work being done. In that regard, compulsory training was given to the leaders of the two main political parties in New Zealand on bullying and harassment. Efforts were being made to ensure a wider delivery of leadership training to members of parliament, both on induction into Parliament and as part of their continuing professional development. A review of employment relationships was being considered, and measures were being taken to look into the role of the media and the press gallery in bullying and harassment, and to consider how to bring the media into the regime of accountability in that regard.

**Ms. E.B. Anyakun** (Uganda) said that any parliamentarians who were conducting parliamentary business while responding to the needs and interests of both men and women, in a parliament comprising male and female parliamentarians, and involving a gender dimension in its methods of work, were working in a gender-sensitive parliament. In Uganda, a study had been commissioned by the Ugandan Women's Parliamentary Association. Conducted by the department of research, it had shown that specific challenges and factors affecting women existed in the Ugandan Parliament, and were impeding women's execution of their parliamentary duties. Under the rules of procedure of the Parliament of Uganda, the Speaker must ensure that at least 40% of parliamentary committee chairs were women. In the previous Parliament, 16 of 41 leadership

positions had been occupied by women. Three of the seven members of the current Parliamentary Commission were women, and the Commission was chaired by the Speaker of Parliament, who was a woman. Gender sensitivity training was organized for members of parliament to prevent inappropriate conduct and harassment, and promote respectful professional relationships in the workplace. Managers were given similar training, to tackle psychological and sexual harassment in their teams. In a democracy, parliament must be a model institution in every respect, where women and men could fulfil their duties on all equal footing. That was important not only for the effectiveness of parliament, but also for its image in the eyes of the public and for the role it could play as a model for achieving equality in society. Parliaments should be family-friendly environments, where men and women's needs for work-life balance were considered. Sexist language and behaviour must not be tolerated. Being sensitive to gender made parliaments effective, efficient and legitimate.

**Ms. S. Childs** (Professor of politics and gender, University of Edinburgh) said that she had undertaken an independent survey in the British House of Commons to study the composition of Parliament, parliamentary infrastructure and parliamentary culture. Codes of conduct of specific rules about sexual harassment, gendered bullying, abuse and violence against women must be created, to address when the rules and norms had been broken. Parliaments, as institutions, had a responsibility to reduce the prevalence of such abuse. Abuse, violence and bullying were one end of the spectrum; micro-aggressions occurred daily and were tolerated by women and minorities in their daily work. Parliaments must feel inclusive so that parliamentarians and staff from diverse backgrounds felt that they belonged. If parliamentarians felt cared for, they would have the confidence to call out misconduct and uphold critical complaints procedures. While in the past, women victims of harassment had not known how to address the situation, anti-harassment policies and information were now widely disseminated in public places in the House of Commons, so that even the visiting public were aware of the measures in place.

Buildings, architecture and furniture could affect behaviour. Assumptions about working conditions in parliament and behaviours that one must simply "put up with" must be tackled. The wider facilities in which staff worked, had an impact. In the British House of Commons, for example, Prime Minister's Questions was usually a full house, with insufficient seating for all members of parliament. Such arrangements put members of parliament at risk and left the vulnerable at the mercy of their colleagues. If a parliamentarian was pregnant, or was in a wheelchair, consideration must be given to where they would sit. Late nights in parliamentary sessions, and "village culture" must be turned into relations based on professionalism, rather than service and hierarchy. People in parliaments must work together to produce the most effective and strong institutions, with mutual respect between colleagues and respect for boundaries.

The IPU gender-sensitive framework was crucial for helping members of parliament question and criticize the practices and preferences of parliamentarians that might not be for the good of the institution overall. The redesigning of identity passes could be a useful way of preventing questions and challenging assumptions with regard to roles and rights, based on gender and ethnicity. Small, practical changes could make a significant difference to how it felt to be in parliament, and would support those who experienced offensive behaviour, sexist behaviour, misogyny, violence, abuse or bullying, and give them the confidence to take up codes of conduct and invoke independent complaints procedures. She commended the IPU for championing the cause.

**The President of the Forum** recalled that there was an exhibition about awareness-raising mechanisms designed by various different parliaments to prevent and combat sexism and harassment against women in parliament.

*A PowerPoint presentation was shown, detailing tools developed and used by parliaments around the world to address gender-based harassment and violence in the workplace.*

### Debate

**Ms. S. Lucas** (South Africa) said that the IPU studies had clearly shown the pervasive and deep-seated nature of the regressive patriarchal norms and values that sought to undermine women's role in society. The eradication of patriarchy required all forces of society, particularly because it survived under even the most progressive political systems. It was complex and entrenched in society and permeated through all spheres of life. Acts of sexism, harassment and misogyny were intended to silence women, and must be recognized as an indictment to the

advancement of gender equality, particularly in legislatures, which were supposed to embody freedom and equality. Those acts must be effectively sanctioned. Strong, effective and responsive policies, structures and mechanisms were needed, in particular in parliament, including in political parties. Parliaments' rules of procedure must be strengthened and made gender sensitive. Lastly, rules on parliamentary immunity should be reviewed to ensure that they did not afford parliamentarians protection against prosecution for sexual harassment, violence against women and other forms of discrimination.

**Ms. M. Stolbizer** (Argentina) said that she wished to draw attention to the importance of considering the economic dimension of crimes against women and girls, in particular trafficking in persons, which was perpetrated by criminal networks underpinned by drug trafficking and money laundering. Up to 80% of unpaid care work was carried out by women, which left them in precarious situations when joining the labour market. Parliaments must be gender-sensitive, and obstacles to women's political participation must be minimized. The economic dimension of gender equality was also critical in parliament. There could be no policy for women's empowerment without gender-sensitive budgets.

**Ms. T. Suzuki** (Japan) said that the Parliament of Japan had conducted a self-assessment using the toolkit created by the IPU to evaluate gender equality in parliament. The results had shown a gap in perception between male and female parliamentarians with regard to representation: 56.7% of male members of parliament had responded that female representation was insufficient, compared to 84.6% of female members. She hoped that the results of the assessment would dispel those preconceptions and enable male and female parliamentarians to work together to achieve gender equality. She had faced significant stereotyping during pregnancy, in which it had been suggested that being a mother constituted a dereliction of her parliamentary duties and that she had given up on her career. Based on that experience, she had advocated for the introduction of proxy and remote voting, to allow female parliamentarians to continue to exercise their voting rights when absent during pregnancy and childbirth. When female parliamentarians exercised their rights, their constituents were able to exercise theirs. She would therefore continue to advance efforts for gender equality in Japan through her position as an elected parliamentarian, in solidarity with all women around the world.

**Ms. E. Azad** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that there were clear manifestations of gender-based violence in society. Women must be protected against sexual violence and abuse. Governments must create mechanisms to address that scourge. Victims must be protected. Every effort must be made to protect women in the workplace. Parliamentarians must set an example in that regard, to pave the way to eliminate discrimination and abuse against women in the workplace. Civil society also had an important role to play. Women's care role in the family must be taken into account.

**Ms. C. Kafantari** (Greece) said that gender equality was essential to a successful society. Women's equal participation in leadership was a matter of justice and human rights. No global problem could be solved without the contribution of half the world's people. Yet sexism and violence against women in parliament continued to hamper women's access to leadership positions and impaired their ability to fulfil their elected mandate. Historically, women's access to education and the right to vote had been restricted. Equal participation of women and men in political leadership and decision-making were fundamental for gender equality and for democracy. Violence against women, and in particular femicide, had increased significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic, as a result of lockdown measures and restrictions. Violence against women must be tackled immediately. Parliamentarians had a key role to play.

**Ms. A. Nassif Ayyoub** (Egypt) said that women in Egypt faced violence in many aspects of their lives, regardless of their political or educational status. Violence against women and sexism in politics undermined democracy and women's right to participate fully in political life, express their opinions and hold high-level decision-making positions. Awareness-raising and public discussion on gender equality were crucial. Parliaments must be gender-sensitive and must take account of the interests of women and men alike in their structure, methodology and work. Women's participation in politics must be boosted and laws promulgated to eliminate violence against women in the political sphere. The Egyptian Government was taking measures to protect women against violence at all levels of society. Legislation was being amended to include gender aspects and

sanction all perpetrators of discrimination against women. The Parliament of Egypt was asking women to raise their voices and was taking measures to ensure that women parliamentarians and parliamentary staff were protected and supported at all times.

**Ms. K. Slassi** (Morocco) said that it was a pleasure to be in Rwanda, a country where progress had triumphed and women's rights had been advanced. Violence against women in parliament was inextricably linked to the prevalence of violence against women in all spheres of public life, including in the home. In Morocco, progress had been made with respect to female political representation; 26% of Moroccan parliamentarians were women. Yet, despite the efforts of a strong feminist movement, inequalities and injustice persisted. Cultural constraints must be addressed. Parliaments had a key role to play in that regard. Culture always impacted women's leadership. A cultural revolution was therefore needed, to facilitate power-sharing between women and men and a fairer world in which women's performance and skills would be recognized.

**Ms. S. Mukunyaidze** (Zimbabwe) said that she agreed with many of the findings in the 2021 IPU/APU joint study on sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliaments in Africa. In Zimbabwe, there had been instances in which male legislators used demeaning and offensive language towards their female colleagues in parliamentary debates, thereby discouraging women from participating. Zimbabwe, like many African countries, had a patriarchal society, in which women's voices were often restricted in key decision-making events at every level of society. Parliaments should put in place policies to combat sexism and sexual harassment, and to ensure that independent complaints mechanisms were available. Discussions in that regard were under way in the Parliament of Zimbabwe, where, in addition to the national gender policy, a sexual harassment policy was being developed to ensure a confidential space where complaints could be raised, with access to counselling and support for victims. The Parliament of Zimbabwe also had an institutional agenda for cooperation, with gender focal points in each department, to address complaints of sexism and sexual harassment. Women legislators and parliamentary staff must be empowered with the knowledge of their rights, and must be guaranteed redress when those rights were violated.

**Ms. M. Baba Moussa Soumanou** (Benin) said that Benin had shown the political will to promote gender equality and women's rights as a vehicle for sustainable development. Legislation had been amended and enacted to foster positive discrimination and set quotas for women's participation in parliament. Efforts were being made to tackle sexism, harassment and violence against women. In that regard, a law had been enacted to prohibit and punish crimes committed on grounds of sex and to protect women against sexual harassment and all forms of discrimination. An institution had been created to tackle all kinds of violence against women and other challenges that women faced, including moral, psychological and economic violence.

**Ms. T. Samrejvanich** (Thailand) said that the Parliament of Thailand had been applying the IPU *Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments* since its adoption. Specific legal instruments were in place to protect women in parliament, and both the House of Representatives and the Senate had issued codes of conduct. The provisions therein set standards for expected behaviour, and had come into force in 2020. While sexual harassment was not mentioned specifically, provisions of the codes of conduct prohibited all forms of discrimination and any inappropriate remarks or gestures or insulting or defamatory statements. Both chambers of parliament had ethics committees in place, which could receive complaints from parliamentarians and parliamentary staff, who felt that any of their rights had been violated in the workplace.

**Ms. J.A. Felipe Torres** (Mexico) said that legislative reforms to tackle gender-based violence and promote gender parity were essential to consolidate true, egalitarian democracy. Constitutional and legislative amendments had been enacted in Mexico to promote women's participation in all aspects of public life. Clear sanctions were also in place in the event of a failure to uphold those provisions. Mexico was also party to international instruments to support women's civil and political rights. Harmonizing laws would allow a consolidated approach to guaranteeing women's rights. The current lack of access to justice for women in cases of political violence was unacceptable. Women in politics often had no recourse to complaints mechanisms to be able to speak out when they had been victims of injustice. Women must be represented on tribunals and in political parties to eliminate the impunity surrounding discrimination against women. Concrete measures were needed to promote women's participation and leadership, and ensure that they had



full freedom to exercise their rights. In many respects, progress had halted or was being reversed. All women in politics must commit to ensuring that further gains were made for the rights of women the world over.

**Ms. G. Mussagy** (Mozambique) said that sexism, harassment and violence against women were becoming increasingly prominent in society; war and economic inequalities were leading to denigration of women and violations of their rights. Legislative enactments were essential to guarantee a zero-tolerance approach to sexism, gender-based violence and harassment. Sanctions against such violations of women's rights should be strengthened, and awareness-raising measures should be taken to educate women on their rights and discourage men from discriminatory behaviour. Decision-makers and political leaders should set an example in that regard. Cultural aspects of violence and discrimination against women must be addressed. Attitudes should be changed through education, from the earliest age possible, to ensure that women were viewed with respect and were not objectified.

**Ms. Yen Pham Thi Hong** (Viet Nam) said that a gender-sensitive parliament responded to the needs and interests of men and women alike, and eliminated barriers to women's full participation in politics, offering equality in that regard for men and women. The Parliament of Viet Nam appreciated the active work done by the IPU to promote women's rights and political participation. Member Parliaments must enhance their cooperation and share experiences with regard to promoting gender equality and ending violence against women. The Parliament of Viet Nam attached great importance to gender equality and women's empowerment. The National Assembly encouraged women to participate in politics and had taken active measures to increase women's representation, which stood currently at 26%. Efforts were being made to legislate to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, and to eliminate gender bias in legislative content and regulations. The National Assembly also focussed on mainstreaming gender equality in legislation. A forum for women parliamentarians had been established, to allow women in parliament in Viet Nam to meet and share experiences, and women's parliamentary groups had been in place since the twelfth legislature.

**Ms. W. Qamar** (Pakistan) said that Pakistan's political glass ceiling for women had been broken relatively early, with trailblazing women at the forefront of Pakistan's political life. That having been said, women's political empowerment had not been easy, and struggles persisted. A quota for women's participation in parliament was still in place. With regard to harassment in the workplace, the Parliament of Pakistan had passed three major acts: one on the protection of women against harassment at the workplace; the prevention of sexual harassment under the Criminal Code; and a law on the prevention of electronic crimes. Together those pieces of legislation ensured protection for women in all spheres of life, including online. Specific legislation was also in place to protect the rights of transgender persons. Measures were taken to prevent discriminatory language in the media, and ombudspersons and harassment focal points were obligatory in all corporate entities. Consideration must be given to what constituted harassment; in that regard, legislative amendments had been made to broaden the definition of harassment in Pakistani law to include not only sexual harassment and physical conduct, but also demeaning attitudes, gestures and expressions.

**Ms. D. Astudillo** (Chile) said that trafficking in persons was one of the worst expressions of human cruelty and constituted a modern form of slavery. The crime of trafficking exploited the suffering and constituted forced displacement which took advantage of economic, political and environmental crises. Criminal networks were being established which were taking advantage of the most vulnerable people, in particular women and children, for economic and sexual exploitation. In the north of Chile there was a history of displaced women being exploited for prostitution and used as drugs mules, which had resulted in prisons being full of women who had committed crimes against their will, while the criminal networks into whose hands they had fallen, continued to function with impunity. Trafficking in Chile had been on the rise for the past three years, emanating from Venezuela, with victimization rates comparable with rates of forced displacement caused by the war in the Syrian Arab Republic. The global community must commit to fighting trafficking and solving the structural problems that facilitated it.

**Ms. T. Lungu** (Zambia) said that in Zambia, legislation had been enacted to prevent sexism, harassment and violence against women, including a law against gender-based violence, a law on gender equity and equality, and an amendment to the Criminal Code to criminalize all forms of

violence. The national gender policy also sought to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women. Yet gaps and challenges persisted; Zambia remained a patriarchal society. Respect would increase as women became more involved in politics and were viewed as equal to men. Traditional gender roles must be challenged. While Zambia's policy and legislative frameworks were adequate, they must be implemented and greater public awareness-raising efforts were needed.

**Mr. K. Sharma** (India) said that the IPU's work on sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliament around the world provided important data and examples of good parliamentary practices. The data showed that much remains to be done to ensure gender-sensitive parliaments. All parliamentarians had a role to play in considering how to eliminate sexism, violence and harassment against women in the parliament context. Gender equality was enshrined in the Constitution of India, and progressive laws had been enacted to prevent women against discrimination, violence and atrocities. Quotas of 33% had been set for women in local governance bodies and in some Indian states, the quota had been raised to 50%. There had been a paradigm shift from women's development to women-led development; a new political vision had been set, in which women were equal partners and occupied the highest offices in the country.

**Ms. L. Fehlmann Rielle** (Switzerland) said that she wished to commend the IPU on its efforts to promote gender-sensitive parliaments. It was particularly important to raise awareness of violence against women in all contexts. Women victims of violence and harassment tended to feel ashamed and did not wish to report incidents or submit complaints. The time had come to shift the shame to the perpetrators, who must be brought to account. Around the time of the start of the "Me Too" movement, women in Switzerland had begun to dare to speak out, and media campaigns had helped raise awareness of the need for action. A group of Swiss parliamentarians had started a support network for victims of harassment, which had culminated in the publication of a guide for victims, providing support and guidance in the event of harassment, sexual assault, threatening behaviour and insulting language. The network had been extended to social media; victims were heard and, where necessary and appropriate, encouraged to file complaints with the police.

**Ms. M. Ruiz Flores** (Plurinational State of Bolivia) said that the Constitution of Bolivia and its legislative framework guaranteed the rights of women and promoted gender equality. It also promoted women's political rights and provided for their equal political representation. Over recent years, women's political representation had increased, not only as a result of the establishment of quotas. Bolivia had become one of the first countries in Latin America to legislate for sanctions against political violence against women. While several laws and legislative provisions provided for the protection of women's rights in all spheres of life, much remained to be done.

**Ms. A. Shkrum** (Ukraine) said that in Ukraine, women parliamentarians and staff were no longer able to attend their place of work, which had come under attack by the Russian Federation some days previously. Over the course of the war, 84 Russian missiles had landed in Ukraine, targeting women and children. The question of violence against women in Ukraine was not only a matter for women in parliament. When one member of the IPU brutally and openly attacked another, such behaviour should be condemned. Her name was on a list of individuals targeted by the Russian Federation and she feared for her life. The leader of the Russian delegation to the present IPU Assembly had openly stated on social media that all parliament and government shelters in Ukraine should be bombed. Despite such calls for deliberate and direct aggression against Ukrainian women and parliamentarians, he remained on the delegation to the IPU. His incitement to violence against the people and parliament of Ukraine was horrifying. The life of the President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, Ms. Vasylenko, a fellow Ukrainian parliamentarian, had also been threatened, and she had been forced to leave her children in a situation of war to be able to carry out her parliamentary functions.

**Ms. N. Durra** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that the Syrian Arab Republic continued to face a war that was affecting the whole of Syrian society. The impact on women was disproportionate. The Syrian Parliament had adopted gender-sensitive policies to promote women's empowerment, including through the amendment and enactment of legislation to protect the rights of women and children. Women's rights were also enshrined in the Constitution. Yet much remained to be done to achieve gender equality. Sanctions in the event of violations of women's rights were still not provided for by law. Gender-sensitive parliaments and laws were essential to redress the injustices suffered by women and to uphold their interests and their rights. Women in Syria continued to make efforts to participate in politics, as parliamentarians and contribute to legislating and monitoring the work of the executive.

**Ms. F. Ilimi Haddouche** (Algeria) said that she welcomed the IPU's efforts to promote gender equality and to address the situation of harassment and violence against women in parliament. The IPU was an important forum for exchanges of experience and best practice, which could help national parliaments to develop effective strategies to respond to women's needs and aspirations. Women were key contributors to sustainable development. In Algeria, legislative measures had been taken to promote gender equality, in particular through the Constitution and the ratification of pertinent international instruments. The Algerian Parliament had played a key role in that regard, and had continued to promote women's empowerment.

**Ms. H. Mohsin** (Arab Parliament) said that legislation was the first step towards moving forward to a better future. Parliaments were therefore crucial. They must not only legislate for women's empowerment but must also provide a sound environment in which women could work. A decade since the adoption of the IPU *Plan of Action*, the time had come to review and assess progress made in its implementation, identify gaps and seek solutions. The Arab Parliament encouraged the assessment of parliaments in the region to understand what more could be done to fight sexism, harassment and violence, and ensure that parliament was a safe place of work. The Arab Parliament remained committed to fighting sexism, harassment and violence against women, and sought to promote women's participation in politics and in all levels of society.

**Ms. S. Giacoppo** (Latin American and Caribbean Parliament (PARLATINO)) said that in its 60-year history, she was the third woman to preside over the Latin American and Caribbean Parliament. "Sextortion", or corruption and extortion of women through sexual activity and the use of sex as a bartering tool by men in positions of power, was a severe violation of women's rights, which should be the subject of greater awareness-raising. Such crimes affected women and children, and often went unreported. Such crimes must be identified, made visible and fought against in the context of efforts to eradicate corruption. Independent and confidential complaints mechanisms must be in place, with guarantees of protection for victims. Data and information on such crimes was lacking, which made them particularly difficult to tackle.

**Mr. V. Chandra-Mouli** (Scientist, World Health Organization (WHO)) said that WHO strongly believed that every human being had a right to survive, the right to grow and develop to their full potential and live as long as nature permitted them to in every country. Some communities, some families and some individuals did not have that experience. WHO believed that while the social determinants of health must be considered, health services had an important role to play. Universal health coverage was therefore central to WHO's mission. Victims of sexual harassment and violence must have access to health services and to counselling services. The rights of women and girls could only be upheld if they had access to sexual and reproductive health care, menstrual hygiene products, contraception, maternal health care, HIV care and many other services. WHO would be hosting a side event the following day, entitled "Unlocking gender equality in universal health coverage: the role of parliamentarians". He encouraged all participants to attend.

### **Report of the rapporteur of the discussion on the draft resolution**

**Ms. N. Bujela** (Eswatini) said that during its debate, the Forum had heard the views of 20 delegates from IPU Member Parliaments and two observer organizations. Participants had made frank and substantive contributions on the main drivers of migration and trafficking, the gender dimensions and the human rights challenges. Climate change and conflict affected women in disproportionate and differentiated ways, and they fled for their lives. Throughout the migration cycle, women faced gender-based discrimination and violence. Demand for labour in domestic and care work affected women in particular. Women often fell victim to trafficking and abuse in the context of displacement and migration, owing to poverty and pre-existing gender inequalities, as well as weak legislative frameworks and lack of protection with respect to migration, asylum and labour rights. Women who fell victim to modern slavery and sex trafficking in the context of migration often did not receive proper psychological support. Participants in the discussion suggested specific measures to address those challenges, in particular by ensuring that national laws and regulations were in line with international instruments and standards on human rights, labour rights, migration and anti-trafficking. Legal and other measures must be taken to combat trafficking and tackle the use of technologies and online platforms as drivers of trafficking. Efforts must also be made to reduce the demand that led to trafficking in women and girls for the purposes of sexual exploitation. Victims and survivors of abuse and trafficking must be protected and receive

the support they needed, regardless of their migration status, including the provision of reproductive health support, mental health support and economic empowerment measures. Gender disaggregated data on trafficking and migration should be collected, to enable measures to be tailored to those most in need. Networks of women migrants should be created in host countries to discuss and address racism, gender discrimination and harmful norms that drove abuse and pushed women into the hands of traffickers. Abuse in the context of migration required concerted efforts at the international level, with a focus on rights-based, gender-sensitive and child-protection measures. Amendments to the draft resolution would be prepared on behalf of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians, on the basis of the discussion.

*The report was adopted.*

### **Elections to the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians**

**The President of the Forum** said that the Forum was called upon to elect two new members of the Bureau, one for the Twelve Plus Group and one for the African Group. For the African Group, the Bureau had received the nomination of Ms. C. Muyeka Mumma (Kenya), and for the Twelve Plus Group, it had received the nomination of Ms. R. Kavakci Kan (Türkiye). In the absence of any comments or objections, she said she would take it that the Forum wished to approve those nominations.

*It was so agreed.*

### **Venue and date of the 35th session of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians**

**The President of the Forum** said that the 35th session of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians would take place on the occasion of the 146th IPU Assembly, due to be held in Bahrain in March 2023.

*It was so agreed.*

**Ms. H. Ramzy Fayez** (Bahrain) said that her Parliament was looking forward to hosting the 146th IPU Assembly in Bahrain, a small island State in the Arabian Gulf, which was well known for its hospitality. She encouraged all participants to attend. Her delegation looked forward to welcoming all participants.

**The President of the Forum** declared the 34th session of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians closed.

*The meeting rose at 18:20.*

## Forum of Young Parliamentarians

### SITTING OF WEDNESDAY, 12 OCTOBER

(Afternoon)

*The sitting was called to order at 14:30 with Mr. M.A. Rakotomalala (Madagascar), Member of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians, in the Chair.*

#### **Adoption of the agenda** (FYP/145/A.1-rev)

*The agenda was adopted.*

#### **Opening remarks**

**The Chair** welcomed all participants and outlined the proposed order of work for the meeting.

**The President of the IPU** said that when first elected, he had been 25 years old and the youngest member of the Parliament of Portugal. The work of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians was therefore close to his heart. As a teacher for many years he had appreciated discussions with young people, and the way the young people's perspectives challenged long-established thinking. Young parliamentarians were the future; the world that young and old were building together was for future generations. Young minds in politics and in parliaments were therefore crucial. The IPU had a tradition of commitment to youth empowerment and participation in politics. If young people did not feel represented in their parliaments, they would be vulnerable to extremism and populist ideologies. The IPU had launched its *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign to involve all parliamentarians in encouraging greater representation of young people. Representation of young women was particularly important and should be promoted at every opportunity. Parliaments must work together to boost youth participation to strengthen democracy, in the knowledge that the IPU was on hand to provide all the necessary guidance and support.

**The Secretary General of the IPU** said that intergenerational dialogue was crucial for taking forward the work of the IPU. On the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the IPU *Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments*, the youth perspective on women's political participation was particularly relevant. Parliaments required continuous updating. With youth involvement came innovation. Young people had a critical role in driving progress and ensuring representative and inclusive parliaments, with a focus on work-life balance and provision of childcare facilities to facilitate youth participation. The COVID-19 pandemic had driven parliaments to innovate and take up new technologies to improve their working methods. Young people had a key role in that regard, and in ensuring that parliaments' working methods were greener and provided impetus to the global effort to stem the tide of climate change. Parliaments must take the lead in climate action. He looked forward to the Forum's contributions to the work of the 145th IPU Assembly. He assured the Forum that its views would be taken into account in the Organization's efforts to support its Member Parliaments in fashioning a parliamentary ecosystem consistent with current global challenges. He encouraged all young parliamentarians present to contribute to the deliberations of the Assembly and in so doing make the IPU ever younger.

**Ms. J. Wickramanayake** (UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth), guest speaker, focusing on the crucial role of youth in advancing gender equality in politics, said in a pre-recorded video message that over one half of the world population was under 30 years of age, yet only about 2% of parliamentarians belonged to that age group and, of those, under 1% were women. Democratic institutions could and should be more inclusive and diverse, with greater gender equality and youth participation. In that context, the gender-sensitive approach in national parliaments should include a youth lens to combat ageism, sexism and the exclusion and discrimination facing young women. Moreover, building back better from the COVID-19 pandemic implied that political spaces, systems and institutions should be modernized to make them attractive to the younger generations, especially women, and resonant with their aspirations and realities.

To encourage youth participation in national parliaments, the workspace must support a cycle in which building a career and a family life were no longer mutually exclusive. Structural and cultural barriers to that end must be removed, above all to prevent young people at the forefront of demanding change, including gender equality, from being marginalized in the political decision-making process. All young people had a right to participate in public affairs, which was the *raison d'être* of the global *Be Seen, Be Heard* campaign recently launched by her Office and the Body Shop. Recognizing that decision-makers had a responsibility to secure a bigger say for youth in policy development, the United Nations was committed to working for and with young people. For their part, parliamentarians must scrutinize the strategies and actions being taken in their institutions to promote gender equality and youth participation.

### Updates on youth participation

**The Chair** said that since the Forum's previous meeting, several events had taken place, including the Eighth Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians, which had been attended by over 170 young parliamentarians from around 60 countries. The Conference had focused on the contribution of young parliamentarians to take action on climate change, with a focus on human rights. The conclusions of the Conference would be presented to the forthcoming 27th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27). Efforts to promote the *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign had continued; some 1,000 change makers had pledged support to the campaign, including 28 Speakers of parliament and around 400 parliamentarians. All members of the Forum were encouraged to support the campaign. A goal had been set to sign up a further 100 members of parliament and 10 Speakers during the course of the 145th IPU Assembly in Kigali. International Youth Day had been celebrated in August, with online media campaigns and an online briefing on the *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign. The positive impacts of the campaign had been widely noted, with legislation passed by several IPU Member Parliaments to boost youth participation. Laws had been enacted to lower the minimum age of eligibility to stand in municipal elections. In South Sudan and Zambia, youth caucuses had been set up. The IPU had provided training for young parliamentarians on leadership, communication and mentoring.

**Ms. T. Lungu** (Zambia) said that Zambia's parliamentary youth caucus had been established in March 2022. Despite efforts to encourage youth participation, youth representation in Zambia's National Assembly was still lacking. Measures to rectify that would require not only building capacity among young people, but also supporting them financially; political careers were expensive. The funds required to move from campaigning at the local to the national level could be prohibitive for young politicians. Civil society organizations should provide support to enable young people to represent their communities and participate in national politics.

**The Chair** congratulated the Zambian National Assembly on its youth caucus and encouraged all IPU Member Parliaments to approach the IPU Secretariat for any support required with regard to launching initiatives to promote youth participation in politics. Since the Forum's previous meeting, Board members had participated in numerous international meetings and discussions. The President of the Board had spoken at the World Bank Group Global Young MP Initiative event on innovation to eliminate learning poverty, and had participated in a roundtable at the launch of the joint IPU/UNDP *Global Parliamentary Report 2022*. She had also participated in an event at Columbia University on youth and climate action. Board member Ms. T. Jutton (Mauritius) had participated in an international conference on science, ethics and human development in Viet Nam, in the context of the International Year of Basic Sciences for Sustainable Development.

Looking ahead, the Board would continue to promote and support implementation of the *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign and would also continue to hold information briefings on empowerment. It would also begin research for the IPU flagship report on youth participation and would begin preparations for the next Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians.

He invited participants to share their experiences of promoting youth participation in parliament since the Forum's previous meeting.

## Debate

**Ms. S.J. Marri** (Pakistan) said that young people had always been at the forefront of movements for change, protesting against authoritarian regimes, corruption and inequalities. Yet their political representation in many forums remained limited. Young people were increasingly calling for more meaningful participation in decision-making processes to give them greater control over their lives and their future. Two-thirds of the population of Pakistan was below the age of 35. Most of the young population were politically conscious and vocal about their rights and needs. They were not only a dynamic source of innovation and creativity but had also contributed to important changes in the political system, power-sharing and economic opportunities. An undemocratic government had banned youth engagement and prohibited student unions which had constituted a severe setback to young people's participation in public life. That trend was being reversed; political parties in Pakistan had active youth branches to recruit, support and champion young political aspirants and build talent. Quotas had been set for youth representation in local government. However, neither the lower nor upper house of Parliament had specific quotas in place. Currently 33% of the members of the lower house and 22% of the members of the upper house were under 45 years of age. Financial and social constraints remained the biggest hurdle for young people's political engagement, and educational support was lacking in comparison with that afforded to young politicians in developed countries. Consideration should be given to increasing support for young people from developing countries by facilitating their access to international learning opportunities.

**Ms. M. Grisoul** (Monaco) said that at 34 years of age she had been the youngest woman elected in Monaco, and was Chair of the Commission for Education, Youth and Sport. In that capacity, she had established a youth parliament, comprising members aged 12 to 18 years, each with a one-year mandate. The youth parliament was tasked with drafting resolutions and proposals for specific measures to be taken for young people. In 2021, the youth parliament had adopted a resolution on environmentally responsible behaviour to protect the planet. Female participation was prominent at 60%, and young people were very interested in political involvement. The question remained as to whether that engagement and level of women's participation would continue as their careers progressed. Every effort must be made to support and promote women in expressing themselves in politics and building and maintaining their self-confidence in that regard.

**Mr. S. Patra** (India) said that he was the youngest Vice-Chairperson of the Indian Senate. India was one of the youngest nations in the world, with young people aged 15 to 25 years comprising 27.5% of the total population. To capture that demographic dividend, the Government of India had been making efforts to empower young people through education and health care, among others, to strengthen democracy and inculcate healthy habits of discipline, tolerance and political awareness. An annual youth festival was held to help build awareness on the importance of an active citizenry and promote youth engagement through leadership and nation-building. Yoga was promoted in India as part of Indian ancient wisdom, with the belief that it brought peace and harmony in body and mind. The promotion of sport was used to develop young people's potential. National programmes in that regard were fostered to develop team spirit and analytical thinking. India encouraged peace and respect through youth leadership and participation in public life.

**Mr. M.A. Bouchouit** (Algeria) said that in Algeria, new legislation had been enacted on elections to promote youth participation. Young parliamentarians currently accounted for 34% of the Algerian Parliament. A youth council had been established under the authority of the President to harness the capacities of young people and integrate them into the political sphere. Every effort was being made to promote the *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign and to promote young people's political engagement.

**Ms. O. Rudenko** (Ukraine) said that the Parliament of Ukraine was the second youngest, with 60% of members of parliament aged under 40. Youth movements in the Ukrainian Parliament were strong, and every effort was made to encourage youth engagement in politics. Those efforts, however, were being severely undermined by the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine that had been ongoing since 24 February 2022. Hundreds of young people and children had been killed, and thousands wounded. Millions had fled the country in search of safety. Schools and universities had been destroyed, depriving young people of their right to education. Young people were either studying online, or from bomb shelters. All of Ukraine's young parliamentarians were under sanctions by the Russian Federation and their lives were in danger.

**Ms. J.A. Ramírez Padilla** (Mexico) said that today's young parliamentarians were the grandchildren of the young revolutionaries who had risen up in 1968 to break down barriers and face up to dictatorships and authoritarianism. However, they had inherited public debt, neoliberalism, interventionism, and inequalities caused by the irresponsible actions of people and nations who wanted to create a privileged world for themselves. Young people had been made invisible, stigmatized and forgotten. Yet they would not tolerate discrimination. They would fight against patriarchal culture and would not stand down. While not responsible for inequality and violence, young people would take responsibility for ending those scourges and building a fairer world for all. Parliaments should have clear rules to guarantee youth representation. They must fight to end poverty, corruption and war, and must adapt to new technological realities. Young people had a key role to play.

**Ms. A.A. Rodríguez Montero** (Plurinational State of Bolivia) said that she was a young parliamentarian from the Bolivian Amazon with many indigenous people and one of the world's richest regions for biodiversity much of which was under threat of extinction, owing to over-exploitation and extraction of natural resources. In Bolivia, standards for parity had been set, yet the participation of young women in elections at the national level was not guaranteed. There was no parity in the Senate or the Chamber of Deputies. Women must be able to enter parliament without persecution. Yet in Bolivia, their freedom of expression had been curtailed and they were subject to sexist attacks and defamatory language and images on social media. Fear of such attacks discouraged women from entering politics. Women and young people had a key role in decision-making for the future and for the protection of the planet. She was therefore proud to be present at the 145th IPU Assembly and called on all parliaments to encourage women and youth participation.

**Mr. D.A. Ali Malou** (South Sudan) said that 72% of South Sudan's population was under 40 years of age. There were 138 young parliamentarians across the two houses of the South Sudanese National Legislature. After the 145th IPU Assembly, two important exercises would be conducted in the National Legislature of South Sudan: the first would be the establishment of a young parliamentarians' caucus, and the second would be the official launch of the national *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign.

**Ms. M. Djenom Micheline** (Chad) said that in Chad, a legislative framework had been put in place that provided for the participation of women and young people in the Transitional National Council. Youth representation in the Council had increased as a result, and gender parity on electoral lists would be obligatory at the next legislative and municipal elections. Networks of women parliamentarians had been established to promote women's and young people's participation in decision-making. Awareness-raising measures had contributed to transforming the Chad's Transitional National Council into a more gender-sensitive institution from the perspective of its working methods, structures and functions. Young people and women were represented on the councils and committees. Legislation had been enacted to promote women's and young persons' empowerment, including on the prevention of early marriage. While the adoption of legislative measures was a positive step, implementation remained a challenge. Partnerships and exchanges of experiences and good practice were essential.

**Ms. S. Unnopporn** (Thailand) said that despite not having youth quotas, young parliamentarians had gained several seats in the Thai National Assembly in elections in 2019; currently, 24% of members of the National Assembly were under 45 years of age. Many Thai political parties had been recording more younger candidates who wished to pursue careers in politics. In 2020, a caucus of young parliamentarians had been set up to promote young people's inclusion in public decision-making and foster intergenerational dialogue between parliamentarians of different ages. The rules of procedure of the caucus were being drafted and would be shared with the IPU when completed. Under the aegis of the caucus, several initiatives for youth participation had been launched, including promotion of the *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign. A roundtable for young parliamentarians would be held in the context of the forthcoming Annual meeting of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum, which would be hosted by the National Assembly of Thailand. It was hoped that the event would galvanize youth participation in decision-making across the Asia-Pacific region.



**Mr. U.Y.I Kagbara** (Togo) said that several young parliamentarians had been elected in the recent legislative elections in Togo. Such progress, while welcome, must be supported by legislation and the provision of resources. Many young people in Africa did not have sufficient resources to survive, let alone run for office. Without tackling the challenges of resources, young people would remain underrepresented in politics. Despite those challenges, Togo had young parliamentarians, including an education secretary who was 42 years old and a female Speaker of the National Assembly who was under 50.

**Mr. J. Kiarie** (Kenya) said that peaceful general elections had been conducted in Kenya in August 2022; young Kenyans had upheld the principles of peace, despite a hotly contested election. The representation of young people in the Kenyan Parliament was at an all-time high, with the youngest parliamentarian elected – beating eight other candidates to the post – at the age of 23. The parliamentary youth caucus had been revived and would be participating actively in the work of the Kenyan Parliament. Having reached 43 years of age, he would no longer be eligible to participate in the IPU Forum of Young Parliamentarians. Youth was fleeting. Young parliamentarians must seize the opportunities before them and ensure that the youth agenda knew no borders.

**Ms. D.E. Dlakude** (South Africa) said that the three largest political parties in South Africa had coordinated youth structures, some of which were represented in Parliament and were active in advocating for young people's rights. They held high-level positions in Parliament and in the executive as ministers and deputy ministers. South Africa's young parliamentarians were formalizing a youth caucus. Local government elections in 2021 had seen young people elected as mayors and as chief whips of councils. In the coming months, the structure for youth participation in Parliament in South Africa would be formalized.

**Mr. B. Almomani** (Jordan) said that the King of Jordan had taken measures to empower young people and enhance their capacities to participate in decision-making. Legislative changes had been made, starting from constitutional amendments, and updates to the law on political parties and electoral law, to focus on empowering young people and women. Quotas had been established to ensure that at least 20% of members of parliament were young people and 20% were women. Currently just over 50% of Jordan's parliamentarians were aged 50 or below. Thus, young people were becoming more active and influential in decision-making and political life. Laws on electoral lists provided for the inclusion of female candidates and young candidates, which was contributing significantly to the empowerment of young people and women. Lastly, he wished to draw attention to the plight of young people and women in Palestine, which were being persecuted and required the support of the international community.

**Mr. I.E. Mohamed** (Somalia) said that young people were the backbone of nations. They were the present and the future, especially for Africa, a continent rich in resources. Somalia was one of the first African countries to have empowered its young people and built their capacities. The young people of Somalia had led the movement towards independence and resistance of colonization. More than 60% of Somalia's parliamentarians were young people who had chosen to represent Somali society and were playing a key role in enhancing unity. Young people in Somalia were resisting extremism and undertaking efforts to preserve security and the rule of law. As the youngest Somali parliamentarian, he had been selected to represent the youth of Somalia on his Parliament's delegation to the 145th IPU Assembly, which was testament to the trust his Parliament placed in young people.

**Mr. V.H. Musowa** (Malawi) said that with the support of the Speaker of National Assembly of Malawi, a woman who was a strong supporter of young people, a parliamentary youth caucus had been established and was performing successfully. It had worked with the National Youth Council and had contributed to parliamentary decision-making, including successfully advocating for an increase to the Constituency Development Fund from the national budget, which provided secondary education grants to vulnerable young Malawians. Several young people had been appointed to the Cabinet, including the Finance Minister and the Minister for Youth, and the leader of the opposition was also young. The youngest Malawian parliamentarian was 24 years old. Despite the progress made, challenges persisted; the younger generation of Malawi had inherited a legacy of corruption. There was, however, a sense of confidence that young people would overcome those challenges.

**Mr. A. Bakr** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that he had served two consecutive mandates in the Syrian People's Assembly. A parliamentary youth committee had been established which was working successfully and was appreciated by the Syrian people. Significant challenges persisted, however, which could only be overcome through cooperation and concerted efforts to build a better future. Young people must be empowered to participate in efforts to build peace, tackle climate change and overcome global crises. They must be given a voice. Terrorism was, however, impeding young people's progress and impacting their work. Fighting terrorism on a large scale involved multiple challenges and placed a heavy burden on the whole of society. Women and young people were disproportionately affected. They wanted to live in peace. Syrians seeking refuge and asylum elsewhere were dying en route or facing discrimination in host communities. The European Union and the United States persisted in imposing sanctions on the Syrian Arab Republic, thereby depriving young people of development opportunities.

**Ms. F. Mohamed Hamadou** (Djibouti) said that she had been a member of parliament since 2018, thanks to a quota that had been put in place to allocate 25% of seats in parliament to women. Efforts to promote youth participation in the National Assembly of Djibouti had yielded significant progress, with 32% of parliamentarians currently under the age of 45 years. The IPU's support and collaboration had been key. Capacity-building for young people was crucial, and with that in mind, to increase public awareness and acceptance of the importance of young people's participation in politics, a children's parliament had been established to which young representatives were elected for a two-year mandate. The children involved would be able to raise awareness about politics among their schoolmates. Djibouti was ready to accept more young people into its National Assembly. The IPU should also serve as a forum in which young people could meet to share their experiences.

**Ms. Y.-O. Rhie** (Germany) said that she was 35 years old and was testament to the fact that the German Bundestag was moving away from the stereotype of middle-aged white men. There were currently 193 German parliamentarians under the age of 40, and the youngest was 23. The increase in youth participation had not been achieved strategically but was perhaps the result of a combination of factors: Germany had strong youth organizations combined with the retirement of several members of parliament in the run-up to the most recent elections, which had given younger politicians the chance to run for office. With the election of so many young people, the Bundestag had not known how to respond. Young parliamentarians were often mistaken for interns. They were, however, changing the face and culture of politics in Germany. The fact that they were high in number meant that they could not be overlooked or remain unheard in parliament. It was hoped that Germany's young parliamentarians could set an example for a young parliamentary revolution worldwide.

**The Chair** thanked all participants for their contributions and encouraged them to keep striving to promote youth participation in their parliaments. He invited the representative of the Partnership for Maternal and Child Health (PMNCH) to brief the Forum on the forthcoming Global Forum for Adolescents.

**Mr. M. Pramanik** (Technical Officer, PMNCH) said that PMNCH was running an advocacy campaign to elevate adolescent and youth well-being in global, regional and national discourses and plans. A bold target had been set to spark a youth-led global movement to mobilize action for adolescent and youth well-being, targeting the 1.8 billion adolescents and young people in the world whose needs had been largely unseen by policy-makers. A digital advocacy campaign would be run, anchored by youth leadership, youth voices and youth experience. In that context, the Global Forum for Adolescents would be convened on 11 and 12 October 2023. The Forum aimed to drive strengthened political commitment to adolescent and youth well-being at every level. PMNCH would support young parliamentarians in contributing to the campaign by sharing evidence and knowledge resources, supporting and engaging its partners, and aligning them to support the campaign's demands. It was estimated that around a million participants and 1,250 PMNCH partners from more than 130 countries would participate in a series of national events and a two-day virtual main stage. Young parliamentarians were encouraged to participate. They had a key role in heightening the visibility of the campaign by focusing attention on policy and financing gaps, and raising awareness in that regard. They could hold discussions to share experiences and learn about parliamentary actions to address the challenges related to adolescent and youth well-being. They could meet in a dedicated side space of the Global Forum for Adolescents to discuss how to

scale up legislative and investment efforts for young people, and could take the lead in organizing and participating actively in events at the national level, which would be key to achieving the objectives of the Global Forum. PMNCH looked forward to the involvement, engagement and leadership of young parliamentarians in the Global Forum.

*A short video was shown, previewing the events that would take place in the context of the Global Forum for Adolescents.*

### **Contribution to the work of the 145th Assembly**

**The Chair** invited the Forum to consider the theme of the General Debate of the 145th Assembly, *Gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments as drivers of change for a more resilient and peaceful world*. Gender equality and gender sensitivity in parliament were central drivers for a more resilient and peaceful world. Young parliamentarians must be a force for change, to ensure more representative parliaments in a fairer world. The global voices of young parliamentarians could shape the future of parliaments in challenging times.

*A short video was shown on gender-sensitive parliaments*

### **Debate**

**Mr. T. Morishima** (Japan) said that the world was facing unprecedented challenges, including the global COVID-19 pandemic and the effects of climate change. Women and children were particularly vulnerable and tended to be victimized more severely than men. Parliament must be representative of the whole of society. To facilitate access to work in parliament, online services and working modalities should be arranged to ensure greater flexibility for parliamentarians, in particular those with families and children, promote work-life balance, and facilitate continuity of work in crisis situations. Opportunities to participate in parliamentary life online would boost accessibility for women and young people, and ensure that parliaments were inclusive and fair.

**Mr. V. Tsvangirai** (Zimbabwe) said that equal rights and opportunities for young women and men had helped them to fulfil their potential as leaders. However, according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), nearly one in four girls between the ages of 15 and 19 are neither employed nor in education or training, as compared to one in 10 boys. UNICEF had also reported that one in 20 girls aged 15 to 19 had experienced forced sex. In times of peace and conflict alike, adolescent girls faced the highest risk of gender-based violence. Allowing girls and women to reach their potential was an effective way to address poverty, make societies more inclusive and reduce violence in communities. Parliamentarians had a key role to play in removing barriers to women's political participation and empowering young men and women as partners in achieving gender equality. In Zimbabwe, Parliament was working to promote gender equality, not only by promoting quotas for women's participation, and ensuring a family-friendly environment in the workplace, but also by legislating to empower young women, in particular by criminalizing early marriage and setting the minimum age for marriage at 18 years. Despite efforts to make the Parliament of Zimbabwe gender-sensitive, challenges persisted and young women remained underrepresented in party politics. Societal misconceptions regarding the capacities of young women, along with high rates of youth unemployment, teenage pregnancy and early marriage, hampered women's political participation. Every effort must be made to uphold international human rights standards, and to strengthen partnerships with organizations led by young men and women as partners for gender equality. Education must be made affordable and accessible for young women and girls.

**Ms. A. Shkrum** (Ukraine) said that she was 34 years old. During the past eight months she had been unable to exercise her parliamentary functions normally, owing to the constant shelling and bombing in Kyiv, the capital of Ukraine, inflicted by the Russian Federation, an IPU Member. Ukraine had the second youngest parliament in the world and had made significant progress with regard to gender equality in Parliament. However, for the past eight months the Ukrainian Parliament had been attempting to operate in a situation of war. Ms. L. Vasylenko, President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, and a fellow young member of the Ukrainian Parliament, had been forced to leave her one-year old child in an apartment in Kyiv, at the height of Russian aggression, while she went to exercise her parliamentary duties by attending Parliament to vote.

Another fellow young female parliamentarian had been widowed when her husband, performing a humanitarian role, had been killed by a bomb aimed at civilians. She had been forced to leave Ukraine and take her children to safety, and as such was no longer able to exercise her parliamentary mandate. The largest attack against Kyiv and the Parliament had taken place only a few days previously, and parliamentarians were no longer safe to attend Parliament, owing to the risk of parliamentary shelters being bombed. The leader of the Russian delegation to the 145th IPU Assembly had called for such bombings on his social media pages. The role of Ukrainian women and men in Parliament during times of war was an important topic of discussion. More important, however, was how to stop the illegal annexation of territories by other States and to ensure that it could never happen on any continent again.

**Mr. D. Carden** (United Kingdom) said that for people in the United Kingdom, women's political representation dated back to the Suffragette movement, which had been a fight by women and civil society to secure first the vote, and then representation. The Labour Party, the opposition in the United Kingdom Parliament, currently had more women in Parliament than men. Change in Parliament had given rise to change in policies, bringing family-friendly issues, such as childcare and paid parental leave, onto the political agenda. Most recently, women's health and well-being issues, such as the menopause, had been championed by Labour backbench women, to bring changes to the workplace and changes in decision-making. A youth perspective should not look only at women's representation, but the equality agenda as a whole. The last Labour government in the United Kingdom had passed the Equality Act, which enshrined protection for women but also for all persons, on the basis of age, disability, race and sexuality. He hoped that at IPU Assemblies in the future, the Forum of Young Parliamentarians would have the courage to debate the full gamut of the equality agenda, including LGBTQ+ rights, and the rights of people of all races and religions.

**Ms. Z. Yildiz** (Türkiye) said that women's empowerment was a matter of high priority for the Government of Türkiye, and significant progress had been made in that regard, in particular through investment in girls' education in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Measures had been taken to boost women's participation in the labour market and to improve their working conditions. With regard to women's representation in politics, their numbers in the Grand National Assembly had more than quadrupled since 2002. A national strategy and action plan for the empowerment of women had been issued in 2018, to allow women to contribute to economic and political life, and to participate in the work of civil society, academia and the private sector. Since those measures had been taken, the ratio of Turkish women to men in science and technology had surpassed the European Union average. Raising girls with technological skills for the twenty-first century would not only empower them but would also contribute to the country's economic competitiveness. Over the past 20 years, significant investment had been made in girls' education. In addition to traditional education, science centres had been set up around the country, to introduce children to technological concepts such as robotic coding, artificial intelligence and industry 4.0.

**Ms. N. Acora Odonga** (Uganda) said that in Uganda, any person aged 18 or above could stand for election. There were currently 181 women members of parliament in Uganda, and women held high-level government positions, including several ministers, the Prime Minister and the Speaker of Parliament. Around 48% of seats in the Ugandan Parliament were held by young parliamentarians. Childcare and breastfeeding facilities were made available for mothers in Parliament in Uganda. Women took centre stage in law and policymaking. A Ugandan women's parliamentary association had been established, which brought together all women parliamentarians irrespective of their political affiliation, to discuss issues affecting women and girls. The COVID-19 pandemic, however, had caused setbacks to efforts to empower girls through education. A parish development model had been under implementation in all districts in Uganda, with a view to alleviating poverty at the grassroots level, and empowering people to earn more than US\$ 1 per day. The scheme had, however, been severely challenged by the effects of the pandemic. Such setbacks would hamper development progress and efforts might not be successful. The world was looking to young leaders to bring change. Young parliamentarians must be peace builders and work together for a better future.

**Mr. J.M. Likando** (Namibia) said that Namibia had taken the lead on women's and youth empowerment. The President had made particular efforts to incentivize youth participation in politics. It was highly likely that the next President of Namibia would be a woman: elections were

forthcoming and two competent female candidates were running for office. The 50:50 policy was fully implemented in the Namibian Parliament and a gender-sensitive budget had been approved. Young people must be empowered to participate in political life; currently, in Namibia, it was exceptionally expensive to run for office, either as a party member or as an independent candidate. Support was required in that regard.

**Ms. Z. Hilal** (Secretary of the Forum) said that she also served as the Secretary of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians. In that context, she wished to inform the Forum that aside from the General Debate, other activities would be taking place during the Assembly on the topic of gender equality. She particularly wished to draw attention to the parity debate, organized by the Forum of Women Parliamentarians, which would take place the following day to bring together men and women parliamentarians to discuss issues of gender equality. The debate would focus on how parliaments were transforming owing to a younger and more diverse generation of parliamentarians and new technologies. Participants would be invited to present their parliament's experiences and to consider the benefits and disadvantages for gender equality of the use of new technologies in parliament. Another event, due to take place on 14 October, was a panel to discuss the work of women's parliamentary caucuses to advance the work of gender-sensitive parliaments. All participants were encouraged to attend.

**The Chair** thanked all participants for their contributions and encouraged all young parliamentarians to participate in the General Debate and share their perspectives.

The Forum was called on to examine the draft resolution, entitled *Parliamentary impetus to local and regional development of countries with high levels of international migration and to stopping all forms, including state-sponsored, of human trafficking and human rights abuses*, to be considered by the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights. The President of the Board had prepared a youth overview report which considered the issues of migration, trafficking in persons and human rights from the perspectives of organized crime, human rights and development. The report highlighted the strategies adopted by various countries, including Canada, Colombia, Egypt, Germany and the United Arab Emirates. The report also contained recommendations, including on the need to provide better legal recourse for migrants, with gender sensitivity and in full respect of international human rights treaties. It also recommended greater investment in youth employment and in specialized services for child migrants and victims of trafficking.

### Debate

**Mr. A. Golroo** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that more than 60% of the population of the Islamic Republic of Iran was under 30 years of age. Of 290 members of parliament, 60 were young parliamentarians, 10 of whom were women. The role of young people in Iranian society and their empowerment were promoted, with a particular emphasis on scientific education and academia. Women and children were particularly vulnerable to trafficking. To prevent and combat that scourge, the Islamic Parliament of Iran had enacted legislation on combating trafficking in persons and had drafted a bill on the prevention and punishment of trafficking in human organs, which was under consideration and expected to be ratified soon. Close cooperation between countries of origin, transit and destination was required to prevent trafficking in persons, with measures in place to protect the rights of victims and prosecute perpetrators. Public awareness-raising measures were also required, through the media, and specialized police and judicial units should be strengthened. All parliaments should ratify and implement the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

**Mr. M. Almheri** (United Arab Emirates) said that it was important to have national legislation and practices that were in line with international conventions, to support local development and prevent migration and "brain drain". The culture of democracy must be promoted among all young people, who must be granted a role in decision-making. The United Arab Emirates was making efforts to promote youth empowerment and political representation, which had resulted in an increase in youth representation in the Federal National Council, with 15 members now under the age of 45 years, and 8 young members of the General Secretariat of the Federal National Council. The Government had included young people on its delegations to the United Nations and other international organizations, in an effort to include them in decision-making also at the international level.

**Mr. K. Sharma** (India) said that international migration had surged in recent decades. Young people, who were the most dynamic, educated and aspiring segment of the population constituted a major proportion of migrants. Globalization, liberalization and technological advancements had opened up new possibilities for young people, who were migrating for better education and employment opportunities. Their eagerness to migrate, however, made them vulnerable to trafficking and human rights abuses. India had the largest global diaspora, amounting to around 32 million people. The Government had taken steps to facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration, including the launch of an e-Migrate portal, for information sharing. Bilateral arrangements were in place with various countries in the European Union, as well as the Gulf Cooperation Council, Japan and Jordan, among others, to facilitate the safe, legal movement of people. Host countries must have legislation in place to protect the human rights of migrants, while not hindering the mobility of migrants across borders and pushing them into the hands of traffickers. All lives were precious and required protection.

Trafficking in persons was prohibited under India's Constitution and carried heavy criminal sanctions. Legislation had been enacted to prevent and punish trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation, child labour and trade in human organs. A scheme was in place for the rescue, rehabilitation, repatriation and reintegration of victims of trafficking. Measures were in place to protect migrants, to provide financial support for self-employment and to encourage employment generation in infrastructure development. A draft national policy and action plan on migrant workers was being developed to regulate migration in India as a receiving country. A parliamentary committee on home affairs, which oversaw decisions on migration and trafficking, had recently undertaken a study on crimes and atrocities committed against women and children, which had culminated in several recommendations to the Government. The world's parliamentarians must work to remove bottlenecks in legal systems that could give rise to opportunities for traffickers, and build a safer world for all, in particular migrants and young people.

#### **Putting the *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign into action: Q&A session on mentoring and empowering young aspirants to parliament**

**The Chair** said that, since the launch of the *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign, the Forum had been holding a series of discussions to look in depth at the six campaign pledges. In that context, the Forum was invited to consider pledge 5 Of the campaign pertaining to mentoring young aspirants to parliamentary office. Three invited panellists would describe the activities undertaken in their parliaments to encourage youth engagement through mentorship programmes: Ms. A. Muzana (Rwanda); Mr. J.M. Likando (Namibia); and Mr. W. Cervini (Uruguay).

**Ms. A. Muzana** (Rwanda), panellist, said that the President of Rwanda had been at the forefront of efforts to empower youth. Civic and citizenship education were instrumental in familiarizing young people with democratic processes and providing them with the necessary skills for active citizenship. Parliament could engage young people through public consultations, participatory budgeting programmes, innovative and deliberative processes, affiliating advisory youth councils to government and specific structures, and through national and subnational youth councils. Despite those opportunities, youth participation and representation in public and political life remained limited. While Rwandans under 30 years of age accounted for approximately two-thirds of the national population, they had historically lacked meaningful opportunities to engage in politics.

The young people of Rwanda wished to channel their untapped power into productive and peaceful political exploration. Youth participation had been encouraged through the Constitution, and young people had taken up leadership roles in public institutions, political parties and parliamentary bodies. Youth quotas had been set in the Chamber of Deputies, and a National Youth Council had been established. Currently 50% of parliamentarians elected to the Chamber of Deputies were aged under 45 years. The Parliament of Rwanda regularly hosted visits of young people from universities, high schools and youth organizations, so that they could experience parliamentary life and learn about parliament's processes, procedures and practices. Through its oversight role, the Parliament of Rwanda influenced national budget allocation and implementation, taking account of youth empowerment in national development programmes. The National Consultative Forum of Political Organizations empowered young partisans through political education, and the Youth Political Leadership Academy organized training programmes to prepare young people to join political parties in leadership roles and equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to meaningfully participate in national governance and development.

**Mr. J.M. Likando** (Namibia), panellist, said that Namibia had made significant progress with regard to empowering young people, in particular women. The Government had established structures to promote youth participation in politics, irrespective of political affiliation. The National Youth Council had an independent constitution and received its budget from the Government. Its secretariat was elected for a period of five years. The Council had substructures, including a regional youth forum and constituents' youth forums across the country, including in rural areas. Given Namibia's vast area and low urbanization, young people were often isolated from mainstream politics. He had become mayor of his small town at the age of 26 and had made active efforts to inspire young people. There were several young members of the ruling party. Presidential elections were forthcoming. Contenders included the current Prime Minister, who was aged 55, female, and had been involved in politics from an early age, having been appointed Executive Director of National Planning Commission at the age of 27 years. Another contender was the former Secretary-General of the National Youth Council, who was currently the Minister for the Environment. The current President wholeheartedly supported youth participation and empowerment, and had appointed a young woman, aged 25 years, as Minister of Information, Technology and Communication. The struggle for independence had not been easy, but Namibia was united and was ready to pass its leadership to the next generation.

**Mr. W. Cervini** (Uruguay), panellist, said that he had been 17 years old when he had become involved in youth activism, through a youth election organized by the main political parties in Uruguay as a form of outreach to young people aged 14 to 30, to encourage them to run for office. His political journey had begun under that scheme and he was now the youngest member of parliament in his party. The scheme allowed young people to have a voice and a vote, making a career in politics a reality and building a truly representative democracy. Such support and mentorship were essential. Having been involved in the scheme, which had launched his career, he was proud to now be an ambassador for the IPU's *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign. Efforts were being made to increase the representativity in the Uruguayan General Assembly, which comprised 25.5% women, and 36% youth. While those figures constituted progress, more remained to be done and efforts to boost young people's inclusion in political life and on the electoral lists of political parties would continue. The General Assembly of Uruguay was committed to all six of the campaign pledges and had run its own advocacy campaign to publicize them. A parliamentary hearing for rural youth had been held on 27 August 2021 to give representatives of rural youth a voice and to hear their needs. Issues raised by young participants in the hearing had focussed on education, basic infrastructure, connectivity, health and employment opportunities, all of which were critical issues for young people, particularly in the context of recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. On 15 September 2021, International Day of Democracy, a parliamentary day had been held with young members of political parties, to allow them to participate in Senate hearings and be legislators for a day. Young people's involvement in politics was crucial to keep parliaments at the forefront of contemporary issues in a rapidly changing world. Young people were the world's future legislators and leaders. They must be encouraged to participate.

**Mr. W.S. Magagula** (Eswatini) said that he wished to express his support for the *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign. Young people faced many challenges in life, but in politics the main obstacle was access to campaign resources. Financial restrictions from participating in politics could result in frustration and young people seeking other means of expressing their opinions, ranging from peaceful protest to criminal behaviour. To truly facilitate youth participation in politics and say "yes" to youth in parliament, aspiring leaders must have access to the financial resources required to run an election campaign.

**Ms. C. Imaniriho** (Rwanda) said that she was the youngest member of the Rwandan Parliament and had been elected four years previously at the age of 23 years, newly graduated from university. In Rwanda, young people were at the centre of transformation. A variety of platforms had been set up to empower young people, and to raise their awareness of matters of culture and values. She said "yes" to youth in parliament; there could be no decisions about young people without young people.

**Ms. A. Muzana** (Rwanda), panellist, said that the Rwandan Parliament would remain active in the *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign and encouraged other parliaments to adopt youth quotas to ensure equal representation of young people in parliaments around the world.

**Mr. J.M. Likando** (Namibia), panellist, said that having served for two terms, he would be leaving politics in 2026 and was currently working with young people to encourage them to take the reins.

**Mr. W. Cervini** (Uruguay), panellist, said that the time had come to double down on efforts to increase youth participation in parliaments around the world. Without having been invited to participate in youth elections, his political career would never have begun. Legislators had a responsibility to commit to offering such opportunities to young people, share their experience and invite and encourage young people to participate in politics.

### **Preparations for the 146th Assembly (March 2023)**

**The Chair** said he wished to inform the Forum that two draft resolutions would be considered at the next IPU Assembly in March 2023: *Cyberattacks and cybercrimes: The new risks to global security*, to be considered by the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security; and *Parliamentary efforts in achieving negative carbon balances of forests*, to be considered by the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development. The Forum was required to appoint a rapporteur to prepare a youth overview report on those subjects. The Board recommended the appointment of Mr. U. Lechte (Germany) to serve as rapporteur for the draft resolution on cyberattacks and cybercrimes, and himself, Mr. M.A. Rakotomalala (Madagascar) as the rapporteur for the draft resolution on achieving the negative carbon balances of forests. In the absence of any comments or objections, he would take it that the Forum wished to approve those appointments.

*It was so agreed.*

### **Election to the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians**

**The Chair** informed the Forum that it was required to elect one member of the Board for the Arab group to replace Mr. M. Alajmi (Kuwait). Since no candidatures had been received, the seat would remain vacant. It was hoped that a candidature would be received from the Arab group at the next IPU Assembly.

*The Forum took note.*

### **Closure of the meeting**

**The Chair** thanked all participants for their contributions to the work of the Forum and encouraged all young parliamentarians to be agents for change, to build a better future for all. He declared the meeting closed.

*The meeting rose at 17:35.*



**Open session of the Committee to Promote Respect  
for International Humanitarian Law**  
***Parliamentary good practices: Inclusion of refugees,  
internally displaced and stateless persons***

**SITTING OF FRIDAY, 14 OCTOBER**

(Morning)

*The sitting was called to order at 11:30 with Mr. J. Kiarie (Kenya), President of the Committee, in the Chair.*

**The Chair** said that, at the end of 2021, there were 89.3 million people who had been forcibly displaced worldwide as a result of persecution, violent conflict, human rights violations or other events seriously disturbing public order. Among them were 27.1 million refugees, 83% of whom were being hosted in low- and middle-income countries that were already facing their own economic development challenges. In addition, 4.3 million people were known to be stateless. Those were unprecedented numbers. While the vulnerability of displaced populations was a major concern, efforts to facilitate their inclusion had proven to be a powerful way to alleviate the impact of displacement both on those fleeing and on host communities. Policies that supported effective inclusion enabled forcibly displaced and stateless persons to actively participate in all aspects of life in their host societies which in turn reinforced social cohesion. Inclusion was the way to peaceful development.

Türkiye hosted the largest refugee population in the world and had taken a number of measures to facilitate inclusion. He invited Ms. Kavakci Kan, Member of the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye, to share some insights.

**Ms. R. Kavakci Kan** (Türkiye), panellist, said that Türkiye hosted the greatest number of refugees in the world. A total of 4 million refugees were living in the country, including 3.7 million Syrians and 460,000 Ukrainians. Some refugees were also entering from Afghanistan while others were in Türkiye as a result of pushbacks from Europe.

Türkiye had had an open-door policy at first. In response to an extreme influx of people, it had set up the Directorate General for Migration Management under the Ministry of the Interior and created a subcommittee on migration and harmonization under the parliamentary committee on human rights. It had also passed a law granting Syrian refugees temporary legal protection.

Syrian refugees had access to free healthcare, education and social services in Türkiye. The school enrolment rate of Syrian children had risen from 35% in 2014 to 65% in 2022. The aim, however, was to reach 100%. In addition, statistics had shown that 95 million medical referrals had been made for Syrians. Three million Syrians had also received inpatient treatment. Unfortunately, Türkiye had had little support from the international community.

Another important matter was resettlement. Türkiye was looking at ways to help those who could to return home in as safe a way as possible. It had taken a number of measures in Syria to facilitate return, such as training local security forces and building new homes in safe areas. So far, around 500,000 refugees had returned home. She was grateful to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for increasing resettlement quotas. The European Union had helped by resettling a significant number of Syrians, including about 2,300 in 2020 and 4,000 in 2021.

The refugee crisis was not only affecting Türkiye but also Jordan and Lebanon. The only way to address the crisis sustainably was to resolve the root causes. No refugee left their home voluntarily.

**The Chair** asked how Türkiye facilitated links between host communities and refugee and migrant populations.

**Ms. R. Kavakci Kan** (Türkiye), panellist, said that Türkiye was still working on building better relations with refugees and migrants. It had always welcomed refugees with an open heart but was experiencing more problems as time went on, including nationalist concerns. The approach of Türkiye was to harmonize rather than assimilate. Refugees were encouraged to hold onto their own values. It was also important to break the language barrier. Civil society played an important role in

refugee integration, for instance, by helping them find jobs. Her country had not seen the level of racist attacks that had been observed elsewhere but did its best to stop them whenever they did occur, including on social media. Overall, she believed that Türkiye was doing a good job. It was, however, a work in progress.

**The Chair** said that Djibouti hosted a large number of refugees in proportion to its total population. The country had adopted a law on the status of refugees and two implementing decrees which set out rights for refugees, particularly socioeconomic rights. He invited Mr. Omar Mohamed, Member of the National Assembly of Djibouti, to present the key aspects of the law relating to inclusion.

**Mr. H. Omar Mohamed** (Djibouti), panellist, said that Djibouti was a haven of peace in the heart of an unsettled region and had attracted many refugees fleeing conflicts in neighbouring countries. To ensure national cohesion, a comprehensive law had been adopted on the status of refugees, which was accompanied by two implementing decrees. The law offered rights and protections to all refugees without discrimination, be it on the basis of race, gender, religion or nationality. Under the law, refugees had the same rights as any Djiboutian national, including the right to nonrefoulement, the right to non-discrimination, the right to free movement, the right to civil registration, the right to buy property, the right to naturalization and the right to file a lawsuit. Those rights also came with obligations, including the need to respect the law in the same way as a Djiboutian national.

**The Chair** said that Djibouti had put a great deal of weight on including refugees in the education system. He asked Mr. Omar Mohamed to say a few words about that.

**Mr. H. Omar Mohamed** (Djibouti), panellist, said that refugees in Djibouti had a right to education which was set out in law. They had access to primary, secondary and higher education as well as vocational training free of charge and on an equal footing with Djiboutian nationals. In 2020, the President had signed a decree setting out the criteria for refugees to obtain the school certificates required to get into university.

Adult refugees were also able to work. Many were highly qualified and should have the chance to use their skills. Allowing refugees to work benefitted the refugees themselves but also Djibouti.

Djibouti had an inclusive vision for its refugee population and hoped to make them feel welcome. Refugees were human beings just like everyone else. They had been through a great deal and deserved to be treated with dignity.

**The Chair** said that civil registration was important to provide people with services and rights. It was a key element in the prevention of statelessness. He invited Mr. Uwizeyimana, Member of the Senate of Rwanda, to present the measures taken in Rwanda to facilitate civil registration.

**Mr. E. Uwizeyimana** (Rwanda), panellist, said that the Government of Rwanda had embarked on a process to upgrade its Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) system following a 2016 assessment which had identified a number of gaps. The aim of the upgraded system was to “make every life known and count”. The process had resulted in an amendment of the Law Governing Persons and Family giving health facilities the power of a civil registrar and allowing them to record births and deaths that occurred on their premises. The amendment applied to all health facilities, including those located in refugee camps, and had enabled Rwanda to register 100% of babies born in refugee communities.

The data was entered into two different systems, namely the CRVS and the health information management system, and then transferred automatically to the national population register. Citizens were able to request their data, including birth, death and marriage certificates, via the Government’s online portal, Irembo.

It was a priority for Rwanda to eliminate statelessness by 2024. The Government of Rwanda had made eight commitments at the High-Level Segment on Statelessness organized by UNHCR in 2019. Among them was a commitment to improve access to late birth registration for refugees and a commitment to establish a national task force on statelessness. The said task force had already been set up. It had been provided with an action plan, assigned funding and was currently in the process of training personnel.

**The Chair** asked whether any groups or communities remained at risk of being excluded from civil registration and how parliamentarians could address remaining barriers.

**Mr. E. Uwizeyimana** (Rwanda), panellist, said that no group or community was excluded from civil registration in Rwanda.

Social cohesion was the best way to ensure security in any society. Refugees must have the chance to integrate and contribute for the time that they were in a given country. They must, for instance, have access to education, health care and work. Civil registration was important in that regard. It was not a good option for refugees to be depending solely on humanitarian aid.

Rwanda had been a producer of refugees during the genocide but was now hosting about 127,000 refugees itself. It was always trying to find sustainable solutions to support refugees. Solutions included safe voluntary return, local integration and resettlement.

Rwanda adhered to the Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration as well as the Geneva Convention and its additional protocols. Refugees were therefore well-protected in Rwanda.

**The Chair** invited Mr. Abdi Affet, Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, UNHCR, to clarify why the Global Compact on Refugees placed such a strong emphasis on inclusion. He should also indicate any recent developments that had occurred in his region.

**Mr. M. Abdi Affet** (Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, UNHCR), speaking via video link, said that the Horn of Africa was currently home to 20-25 million displaced persons, which was a quarter of total global displacement. Ordinarily, displacement should be a temporary situation. However, the Horn of Africa was seeing protracted refugee flows with refugees unable to return home for over 30 years. It was important to find innovative ways of dealing with the needs and aspirations of refugees. Refugees were the same as anyone else and deserved opportunities to grow and thrive. They had also proven to be an asset to host communities.

Countries in the Horn of Africa were making efforts to include displaced populations in their national plans as set out in the Global Compact on Refugees. The Government of Kenya had initiated a regional conversation in conjunction with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to find inclusive solutions. The conversation had led to a number of sectoral initiatives such as the Djibouti Declaration on Refugee Education, the Mombasa Declaration on Refugee and Cross Border Health Initiatives and the Kampala Declaration on Jobs, Livelihoods and Self-Reliance for Refugees, Returnees and Host Communities. He called on the international community to provide support so that the obligations under those instruments could be fulfilled.

Parliamentarians could play a very important role in advocating for refugee protection. He encouraged them to replicate the measures taken by Kenya and IGAD more broadly in East Africa. UNHCR was ready to offer its support if necessary. There was also a need to allocate resources to ensure the inclusion of refugees.

**The Chair** asked what challenges the Horn of Africa had been facing in terms of inclusion.

**Mr. M. Abdi Affet** (Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, UNHCR), speaking via video link, said that insufficient budgetary resources were one of the biggest challenges faced by the region. The displacement crisis was a global phenomenon, with refugees fleeing a number of different situations, including the wars in Syria, Ukraine and Yemen. Host countries needed support to cope with the influx of so many refugees. Another challenge was securing the political goodwill of governments and parliaments to facilitate inclusion of refugees in their national plans. There was also a problem of implementing legislation. The Kenyan Parliament, for instance, had developed a very robust and progressive law on refugees but needed help implementing it. Lastly, the main challenges causing displacement in the first place were wars and droughts.

**The Chair** said that innovative approaches were needed to address the abovementioned challenges. He opened the floor to delegates.

**Ms. A. Vadai** (Hungary) said that parliamentarians had a key role to play in ensuring the inclusion of forcibly displaced persons. They must speak out loudly for them and pass laws against hate speech and xenophobia. Budgets were also important. The international community was encouraged to provide funds wherever necessary. There was a need to encourage the participation of society, particularly women and young people, in the process of refugee inclusion. Women could

bring different perspectives while young people were not concerned with nationality, religion or skin colour. Parliamentarians had a responsibility to continue the work on refugee inclusion even if they felt fatigued by the problem. It was important to understand that refugees were not numbers or statistics but real people with dreams.

**A representative of Pakistan** said that his country had hosted the largest number of refugees over the longest period in history. Among them were 4 million Afghans who had been fleeing to Pakistan since the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Following the Taliban takeover in 2021, Pakistan had hosted a further 100,000 Afghan refugees and allowed 30,000 foreign representatives to exit Afghanistan through the Pakistani border. It had also welcomed 5,000 refugees from Bosnia during the Balkan wars. In 2009 and 2010, one million people had become internally displaced in Pakistan due to domestic terrorism and extremism. They had been taken in temporarily by their own people without UNHCR support but had been able to return home once the terrorists had been defeated.

It was clear that Pakistan had a good track record on refugee support. Its relationship with the refugee community had always been friction-free and many refugees had been registered.

**Mr. T.C.K. Iijambo** (Namibia), speaking as a former refugee, said that many host countries had nationalistic tendencies and looked after their own nationals before protecting refugees. In addition, some solutions to the problem were not real solutions. Voluntary repatriation, for instance, was problematic given the danger that refugees might face upon return. Resettlement was not a good solution either as it did not address the root causes of displacement.

The world was one people but had been wrongly configured, which had in turn led to divisions. For example, Africa had been carved up into artificial States. Those decisions had divided communities and were now affecting the refugee crisis.

**Mr. A. Al-Salihi** (Iraq) said that refugees had the right to live in dignity in their host countries until they were able to go back home. However, it was important to distinguish between true refugees and refugees who were part of criminal organizations.

It was not always necessary for refugees to go to other countries; they could instead be moved to safe areas within their own countries. Some Iraqis fleeing the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) had been hosted in refugee camps located in safe areas in Iraq.

Every country should have institutions in place responsible for refugee affairs. It was important that host countries did not impose their beliefs, traditions or cultures on refugees or force them to integrate.

Without international support, Iraq would find it very difficult to repatriate Iraqi refugees living abroad because of economic difficulties. The international community should not send people with links to ISIL back to Iraq in order not to proliferate terrorism.

**Mr. I. Omer** (New Zealand) said that New Zealand had a world-class resettlement system that took in about 1,500 refugees per year. It also had an emergency resettlement quota under which it had recently accommodated 1,800 Afghans. He commended those countries that were resettling large numbers of refugees, such as Djibouti and Türkiye.

Based on his experience as a refugee from Eritrea, it was important to address the root causes of displacement, such as brutal regimes and climate change, while also mobilizing resources for resettlement. The number of forcibly displaced persons worldwide had reached 100 million and only 1% of those would get to be resettled. While resettlement was important, the numbers of displaced people would not stop without going to the source of the problem.

**A representative of India** said that, since independence, India had welcomed a wave of refugees and migrants from neighbouring countries and had taken a holistic approach towards addressing their concerns. Besides employment schemes and benefit transfers, the Government had announced a programme to provide free food and cooking gas to millions of vulnerable people, including refugees.

India was committed to a fair and equitable international system based on multilateralism and the rule of law. It had developed an approach to global governance based on five principles, namely respect, dialogue, cooperation, peace and prosperity.

He drew attention to the IPU Handbook for Parliamentarians on International Humanitarian Law and encouraged parliamentarians to reengage with the areas of action set out therein.

**A representative of Bahrain** said that it was not possible to end displacement as long as hatred and war persisted in the world. Refugees were victims who had fled extremely difficult circumstances but were often treated as criminals. Treating refugees as such was a form of discrimination. The countries hosting large numbers of refugees must receive support from the international community. With enough support, they would be better placed to integrate refugees into their societies. Integration of refugees was important for humanitarian reasons but would also benefit host countries. Indeed, refugees had many skills that could enhance sustainable development and economic growth.

**Mr. O.O. Lawiri** (South Sudan) thanked neighbouring countries for hosting South Sudanese refugees over the past four decades. South Sudan had now achieved a certain level of peace and was itself hosting refugees, for instance, from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sudan. It would soon be asking its own refugees to return home. The country did not have sufficient legislation to support refugees but would put some in place soon. There was, however, a new commission on refugee affairs and a relief and rehabilitation commission for refugees.

**The Chair** said that Rwanda and South Sudan were prime examples of countries that had leapfrogged from being refugee producing countries to refugee hosting countries. He invited the panellists to make their concluding remarks.

**Mr. E. Uwizeyimana** (Rwanda), panellist, said that international cooperation and multilateralism were needed to resolve the refugee crisis. It was a global problem that countries would not overcome on their own. Parliamentarians had a crucial role to play in finding sustainable solutions.

**Mr. H. Omar Mohamed** (Djibouti), panellist, said that Djibouti would continue hosting refugees from neighbouring countries while treating them with dignity and enabling them to thrive. He hoped that the same would occur in other countries. It was important to remember that everyone was human regardless of religion or skin colour. He agreed with Mr. Omer on the need to find solutions to the root causes of displacement while also looking at resettlement.

**Ms. R. Kavakci Kan** (Türkiye), panellist, drew attention to the Rohingya refugees who were being hosted in Bangladesh. She had witnessed the dire situation they faced when she had visited the camps. All human beings were equal regardless of skin colour or nationality and deserved to be treated with respect and dignity. Refugees were not numbers but real people.

**The Chair** said that parliamentarians must always remember that every refugee statistic represented a human life. It was important to take the discussion forward and follow up on commitments.

*The sitting rose at 13:15.*

## The Call of the Sahel: A global response meeting series on counter-terrorism

### *Addressing environmental degradation and its effects on the proliferation of terrorism*

THURSDAY, 13 OCTOBER 2022

(Afternoon)

*The event was called to order at 15:15 by Mr. M. Omar, Senior Adviser to the IPU Secretary General, as the Moderator.*

**The Moderator** said that the IPU had been increasing its efforts to raise awareness about the victims of terrorism in Africa since 2016. Many hundreds of meetings on the topic of terrorism in the Sahel region had taken place at the international level. Such a high number of meetings raised questions about their impact on making concrete improvements to the region. Over the last few years, the IPU had encountered difficulties in responding to key questions about the Sahel, and it was a tragedy that the needs of the region's people had not yet been sufficiently met.

Many people, including most international organizations, viewed the Sahel as a region that was rife with terrorism, coups d'état and limited to no governance. The issue of governance was used as an excuse not to provide help. Misunderstandings had led to solutions being put forward for problems that did not in fact exist. Governance was just one of many reasons for the proliferation of terrorism in the region. Other aspects included development, education, security and environmental degradation. It was difficult to determine which issue should be the starting point for action. An evidence-based, scientific approach would facilitate understanding and lead to concrete action. Work was currently under way to study the connectors and dividers within the region as a basis for action.

In light of the war in Ukraine, focus had turned away from the Sahel. It was worth noting that the media had described the situation in Ukraine as "a war". Some 10 years ago, the terminology used to describe the deaths of thousands and the displacement of millions in the Arab world was described as the "Arab Spring". For the Sahel, the phrase used most frequently was "an internal conflict". The present meeting was therefore an opportunity to raise awareness of the issues affecting the region and counter certain misunderstandings. It was important to change perspectives and present real solutions based on African perspectives. Local input and experience were the starting points for action. He called on delegates to provide their thoughts about the direction of travel to ensure there would be effective impact.

**Mr. B.N. Tankoano** (Executive Secretary, G5 Sahel Inter-Parliamentary Committee) said that, since the First Global Parliamentary Summit on Counter-Terrorism held in September 2021, the IPU had taken the initiative to coordinate and direct parliamentary action to where it was most needed. Countries around the Sahel region were united in action. The IPU could count on such regional unity. He praised the inclusive and holistic approach taken by the IPU, in particular as the impact of terrorism went far beyond the Sahel region. The Call of the Sahel concerned everyone and was an opportunity for collective action. The plan did not just focus on providing weapons or military support to combat terrorism, but also on addressing the root causes, such as education, environmental matters, community issues, development and health infrastructure.

News organizations and social media depicted the Sahel as the global epicentre of terrorism and violent extremism. Acts of terrorism had significantly increased in number in the Sahel. Thousands of people had died, and millions had been internally displaced. But since the start of the war in Ukraine, people had turned their backs on the Sahel. The extent of mobilization by the West in Ukraine was reminiscent of the Second World War, yet countries had remained silent in regard to the situation in the Sahel.

In the last few years, many high-level meetings had taken place, with strong proposals put forward on democracy, good governance and socioeconomic development. The present meeting would consider the issue of environmental degradation and the effect it had on the proliferation of terrorism. It was clear that degradation of the environment caused an upward trend in the number of armed conflicts. He called for the participation of African parliamentarians to ensure that the action plan of the Call of the Sahel would be a success.

**Ms. S. Markiewicz** (Consultant for Interfaith and Intercultural Dialogue/Prevention of Violent Extremism, IPU) said that the IPU was exploring the challenges faced by countries in the Sahel region in a holistic manner to develop a sustainable approach to address them. Her role was to provide support and investigate ways of involving communities, such as religious and local leaders. She hoped that she would be seen as the focal point for the sharing of information and knowledge.

Work was currently under way to study the connectors and dividers within the region as a basis for action. The process of producing the analysis started with background research into each country. The dividers and connectors were then examined through the systems, institutions, attitudes, actions, values and experiences in each country. The goal was to provide parliamentarians with a condensed assessment of the context of the region and the different drivers of conflict. Such a concise analysis would reduce the amount of contextual information to more manageable levels. The snapshot analysis would therefore help to identify areas of work, with a focus on education, development, security, community and the environment. Actions could subsequently be put forward that would help the people of the Sahel.

At present, the IPU had a general understanding of what was happening in the region, but local experts and interest groups were needed to provide input so as to localize the analysis further. She invited delegates to share their knowledge, especially on how communities organized themselves, how people used resources to meet their needs and to confirm if the understanding of dividers and connectors had been accurately represented. Such input would subsequently be incorporated into the analysis.

**Mr. M. Bouden** (Algeria) expressed his support for the Call of the Sahel initiative. He said that there had been an almost total lack of support for the region from other countries, despite the proliferation of terrorism. The region was still in crisis. Terrorist activities currently seemed to be linear in direction and were moving from the north into Central Africa. Libya had become a significant source of arms into the continent.

The proliferation of terrorism in the region was directly linked to both development and climate change. Desertification had undermined food security and access to water. As a consequence, terrorist groups had evolved into alternative State-like structures, and countries lacked the necessary capacities to combat their growth.

It was important to recognize that solutions for the region needed to be multidimensional, which considered security, as well as education, religion, culture and development. From a security perspective, military support and training was needed. Algeria had significant experience in counter-terrorism, which could be shared with other armies in the region. Similarly, Egypt could play a vital role, as it had one of the strongest armies. There was a need to consider the situation in Libya, which represented a big market in the supply of arms and had the perfect conditions to propagate terrorism.

The people of Africa needed to be the starting point for actions in the region. Western countries could subsequently support such solutions. He hoped that the present meeting could pave the way for tangible solutions that would solve the multiple crises affecting the Sahel.

**The Moderator** said corruption and governance issues were not the only root causes of the proliferation of terrorism in the region. Environmental degradation was also to blame.

**Mr. S. Stroobants** (Director, Europe and MENA, Institute for Economics and Peace), panellist, accompanying his remarks with a series of digital slides, said that 48% of the world's terrorist attacks in 2021 had occurred in sub-Saharan Africa, with Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger amounting collectively to 35%. The fastest growing and most lethal terrorist groups in the Sahel region were Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin and Islamic State. The number of terrorist attacks occurring in sub-Saharan Africa had increased by about 600% between 2000 and 2010.

In 2021, the Institute for Economics and Peace had published its Ecological Threat Report, which studied the levels of resilience of States in relation to ecological degradation and their capacities to address its effects. One of the main conclusions of the report was that ecological degradation and levels of conflict were intimately related. Ecological damage was a major driver of conflict, which in turn resulted in further damage to the environment. The situation was only getting worse. Of the 15 countries with the worst scores in the Ecological Threat Report, 11 were experiencing conflicts. Some 28 out of 30 countries with the worst scores appeared in the bottom half of the Global Peace Index. Sub-Saharan Africa was at the greatest risk. Over 1.26 billion people lived in the 30 countries categorized with the lowest levels of resilience and the worst ecological threat scores. The 30 countries were distributed across three geographical zones, with two in sub-Saharan Africa.

The problems encountered in such hotspot countries were systemic, with influencing factors going beyond just governance and corruption. The Institute for Economics and Peace was working to address such challenges so that practical solutions could be implemented.

International and multilateral stakeholders seemed to operate in separate silos, and therefore were unable to adequately provide solutions to the systemic problems found in the region. The Institute for Economics and Peace was ready to facilitate the connection between the strategic actions of international organizations and local initiatives that were achieving extraordinary results. There could be no solutions to the problem of the interaction between ecological degradation and conflict without the support of local communities. The link between multi-billion-dollar regional initiatives and micro-financed local initiatives was missing. There were almost no solutions that costed between US\$ 0.5 million and US\$ 1 million. It was important to establish a connection between very strategic political solutions and local solutions.

In recent years, his organization had developed the capacity to collect and access provincial-level data within countries. It was now possible to draw comparisons between different provinces and cities, and their responses to specific issues. Such granular data could be connected to the wider location of events so that appropriate local and national solutions could be put forward. In the specific case of the Sahel region, ecological degradation and terrorist activity were transnational and intersected at country borders and friction zones.

Some 47 countries had faced high to extremely high ecological threats in 2021. Over 3 billion people currently lived in such countries. By 2050, the figure was expected to increase to 4.7 billion. According to projections, those regions with the lowest levels of peace would experience the highest increases in population. Some 1.4 billion people were expected to be born in the 40 least peaceful countries, with a significant concentration in sub-Saharan Africa. Of the 11 countries predicted to double their population by 2050, all were located in sub-Saharan Africa. Ecological degradation was a consequence of an increasing population. The number of food-insecure people was expected to increase to 3.4 billion people by 2050. The figures had been increasing for many years, but the war in Ukraine and the COVID-19 pandemic had worsened the situation. In 2021, 82.4 million people had been forcibly displaced as a result of conflicts and natural disasters, with the number having doubled over the last 10 years. Since the war in Ukraine, the figure now likely amounted to over 100 million.

Trends regarding the perception of the impact of ecological degradation and climate change were concerning. Less than 50% of people were worried about the effects of climate change. Of particular note were very low levels of concern in China, the Russian Federation and India. It was clear that the world's biggest polluters had the greatest impact on the evolution of ecological degradation.

**Mr. K. Darwish** (Egypt) asked Mr. Stroobants if he could provide any information about illegal migration, in particular any figures in that regard.

**Mr. S. Stroobants** (Director, Europe and MENA, Institute for Economics and Peace), panellist, said that it was important to understand the many reasons why people left certain areas. A combination of factors, such as conflicts and ecological degradation, permanently reinforced the process of forced displacement. Resources in certain areas would deplete more quickly because of migration. The floods in Pakistan – exacerbated by climate change and ecological degradation – had resulted in mass displacement. It was important to understand the connection between resilience and the impact of climate change. As an example, Haiti and Japan had suffered similar natural disasters, but people had been able to return to their homes more quickly in Japan. It was unlikely that people would ever be able to return to their homes in Haiti.

The legality of migration was a separate issue that was not part of the discussions of the present meeting. The level of resilience of countries was a major driver of migration. Many countries in hotspot regions did not have the capacity to organize or manage the flow of refugees. It was therefore important to focus on the resilience of countries in organizing and managing forced migration.

**Mr. Y. Nassef** (Director, Adaptation, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change), panellist, quoted UN Secretary-General António Guterres, who had said that climate change had a multiplier effect and was an aggravating factor for instability, conflict and terrorism. The associated challenges must be addressed in an integrated manner to create a virtuous circle of peace, resilience and sustainable development. Climate impacts compounded conflicts and exacerbated fragility. When the loss of livelihoods left populations in despair, the promises of protection, income and justice became more attractive.



In their use of land and energy, certain economic activities produced greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide. Increases in the concentrations of such gases in the atmosphere had led to changes in average global temperatures, which disrupted atmospheric pressure and wind patterns. Such disruption caused more intense and extreme floods, droughts and hurricanes. The negative impacts of climate events were not evenly distributed around the world. The poorest and most vulnerable communities were disproportionately affected, not only because of their geographical exposure, but also because of their limited capacities to adapt. The factors that exacerbated such vulnerabilities were very similar, rendering communities more susceptible to conflicts and terrorism.

Climate change was a threat multiplier, which fuelled escalations in conflicts and radicalization and increased competition for resources. There was a clear correlation between climate change and conflicts. According to the International Committee of the Red Cross, 14 of the 25 countries most vulnerable to climate change were plagued by violent conflicts, which hampered the capacity of communities to adapt. Climate change also rendered communities more vulnerable to conflict, with cases of terrorist groups exploiting water shortages to impose control. A shortage of water was itself a manifestation of climate change.

Common solutions and actions were needed to mitigate climate change and improve resilience. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions was commendable, but advanced risk reduction methods implemented before the occurrence of an external shock or event were important to mitigate climate change-related losses. Key solutions were already ingrained in the Sustainable Development Goals, such as reducing poverty and inequality, as well as improving human development. Climate change was anthropogenic, so there was a global responsibility to support the most vulnerable. Countries could acknowledge their responsibility by providing funding, strong technical support and infrastructure development at the regional, national and global levels. The annual finance pledge of US\$ 100 billion for developing countries was insufficient. It was also critical to consider risk reduction actions after the occurrence of an external shock or event. Following certain weather events, the assets of many countries were destroyed entirely. The system of support currently in place could not intervene after the fact and provide resources for rehabilitation and reconstruction. Discussions were under way to consider loss-and-damage financial resources.

Long-term outlooks regarding climate change were gradually evolving. There had been a shift from a problem-solution mindset towards one of creative designs for the future. Today, the outlook was generally to focus on short-term solutions to immediate problems. There was limited consideration of the significant implications of the techno-economic shift that was currently under way and its effects on satellite technology, Big Data and the Internet of Things. Visualizing a different world based on peace, prosperity, equity, human well-being and sustainability in light of present vulnerabilities was a markedly different way of thinking compared to the current problem-solution perspective. An aggregation of short-term actions did not constitute a long-term plan.

There was a substantial desire at the international level to adopt global minimum resilience standards through concrete, implementable global projects. United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres recently launched an initiative for the universal coverage of early warning systems within the next five years. Implementing such steps was logical for all countries, regardless of their risk exposure or vulnerabilities. Parallels could also be drawn in regard to conflicts. He hoped that further action would be replicated in other areas at the upcoming session of the Conference of the Parties in Egypt.

Many countries across the Sahel region had noted that climate change was exacerbating certain vulnerabilities associated with conflict. For example, in South Sudan, the impacts of climate change were likely to undo the hard-fought gains that the country had achieved in building peace and unity. In Togo, there would be a greater potential for conflict over land and water resources between pastoralists and agricultural communities. Certain countries had considered conflict- and terrorism-related vulnerabilities and taken appropriate action. First, there was a project in Burkina Faso to establish a national observatory of pastoralism that would design and implement adaptation actions specifically targeting the reduction of tensions around resource competition. Second, Sudan had initiated a national education plan that brought opposing groups together to focus on how to sustainably manage shared water and land resources, and how to mitigate any resulting conflicts. Third, there were proposals in Cameroon to improve government land systems as a result of land and resource degradation.

Parallels could be drawn between vulnerabilities to climate change and vulnerabilities to conflict and terrorism. By working together and addressing both issues, countries could manage their vulnerabilities in unison and optimize resources.

**Ms. S.J. Marri** (Pakistan), recalling that Pakistan had recently been experiencing unprecedented flooding, said that many other countries around the world had experienced natural disasters. Climate change was a reality. It was not clear whether countries were ready to accept that and treat climate change as a priority issue. Although events such as the present meeting were crucial, it was time to act; countries needed to walk the talk. Climate change was not going to stop, and many other countries would feel the effects. It was important to talk about both adaptation and risk reduction. Support and resources were needed. Environmental degradation affected the socioeconomic status of people living in any given country, which in turn led to increased vulnerability and attracted undesirable groups.

She was pleased to see that the present meeting was focusing on the Sahel region. She hoped that it would lead to actions that would provide solutions and ultimately address the problem of terrorism and extremism.

**Mr. M. Karimipour** (Terrorism Prevention Branch, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)), panellist, speaking via video link, said that it was important to address the linkages between the proliferation of terrorism and the ways in which environmental degradation affected the Sahel and the Horn of Africa. Terrorist recruitment and violence occurred more frequently in countries that were most vulnerable to climate change, especially in Africa. Even when the interplay between environmental degradation and terrorism was indirect, violent conflicts in the Sahel were the result of increased competition over diminishing land, water and grazing resources, as well as human migration. Climate change made ecologically vulnerable areas more fragile, threatening the livelihoods of local populations. Climate change also had the potential to exacerbate competition over resources, fuelling escalations in conflict and radicalization. The Sahel and Lake Chad Basin regions were the perfect illustration of such issues. With that in mind, climate change had been recognized as a risk to security at the international level.

The UN Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate launched its Trend Alert for 2022 that focused on concerns over the use of proceeds from the exploitation, trade and trafficking of natural resources for terrorism financing. Among the challenges identified in the Trend Alert were insufficient cooperation among relevant environmental agencies, gaps in the regulation and licensing of the trade in natural resources, and a lack of information on the scope and scale of the use of proceeds. As the linkages between environmental degradation and terrorism remained unclear, UN agencies needed to focus on indirect tangible consequences, such as those identified in the Trend Alert.

UNODC's approach in responding quickly to new dynamics and providing assistance to parliamentarians could benefit those countries most affected. UNODC could support UN Member States in: (1) developing and revising national legislation to comply with international legal frameworks on counter-terrorism issues; (2) developing national counter-terrorism strategies; and (3) encouraging whole-of-society responses. He welcomed the opportunity to forge partnerships so as to scale up the support offered by UNODC on environmental matters and the related effects on terrorism and violent extremism.

**Mr. K. Darwish** (Egypt) said that the Egyptian House of Representatives had agreed to host a regional counter-terrorism office in Cairo to facilitate interaction between Egypt and the Sahel countries. The aim of the agreement was to bring the Sahel countries together to exchange information, enhance counter-terrorism capabilities, and build peace and security in the region. Environmental aspects were a key part of the work of the regional office.

The information provided during the present meeting would prove useful to parliamentarians in their efforts in drafting applicable legislation. Terrorism affected all regions, so it was important to put forward actions and translate them into laws. Parliamentarians needed to ensure that their governments listened. His thoughts and prayers were with the people of Pakistan.

**The Moderator** said that the creation of a regional office to facilitate interaction between the Sahel countries and the Government of Egypt was an encouraging initiative. He hoped that there would be discussions and cooperation between the regional office and the IPU.

**Mr. G. Migliore** (Italy) said that the situation in the Sahel was changing every day. Climate change threatened to cause further instability and undermine security in the region. Action was needed immediately. The Call of the Sahel represented a critical challenge for the IPU, in particular as the issue was not simply a regional problem, but a worldwide problem. It was important to discuss actions to prevent misunderstandings regarding the multiple dimensions and aspects involved. Education was a key mechanism to effect change in the region. Parliaments around the world needed to show real commitment to the Call of the Sahel.

**Mr. N. Hounkonnou** (President, Network of African Science Academies) said that the challenges identified needed a global approach, with input from all stakeholders. No solutions could be put forward without cooperation between all parties. Science education was needed as part of the overall holistic and multidisciplinary approach to facilitate inclusive and balanced development. Democracy, the environment, global development and inclusiveness were closely related to the level of science education. A lack of science education exacerbated the problem of terrorism.

In the Sahel region, adult literacy rates were unequal, ranging from about 82% in Algeria to about 30% in Niger and Mali. Such varying rates exacerbated economic, political and social crises. The COVID-19 pandemic had exacerbated such issues. As a result, people in those regions were marginalized, with a severe lack of infrastructure and basic services on offer. They were particularly susceptible to the discourse of certain groups that claimed to provide basic services, with such groups seemingly playing the role of the State. The region was suffering from the impact of climate change, but combating climate change needed an educated population. The proliferation of terrorism and terrorist groups was caused by a lack of education, with the region being fertile ground for the expansion of certain dogmas. Many children did not attend school or were learning far less than they should be. School children were therefore easy and valuable targets for abuse, exploitation and recruitment. There were also high levels of illiteracy among adult females in sub-Saharan Africa. Without education, people had limited career options, resulting in high levels of unemployment and exacerbating poverty and gender inequality. It also affected a person's ability to discern right from wrong and make wise choices, which terrorist groups could exploit. Without an educated population, social cohesion, tolerance, civic engagement and peace could not be achieved. Science was the only common language spoken by all, regardless of culture, religion and race.

**Mr. D. Naughten** (Ireland) wished to extend his thoughts to the people of Pakistan. He said the international community could help to deliver the Great Green Wall Initiative. He urged countries from the Sahel region to engage with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in the development of transformative projects along the Great Green Wall.

Ireland had shown that local communities, women and young people – the main drivers of change – needed to be actively involved in conflict-resolution mechanisms so as to build peace among communities that comprised different religious and traditions. By addressing the issues of climate change, people could come together, regardless of ethnicity and religion, to focus on shared goals.

**Ms. Á. Vadai** (Hungary) said that there was a tendency to view problems in the region as an issue that only affected Sahel countries. Such a belief was false. Any problems that occurred in the region could also affect other countries around the world.

The concept of “security” no longer solely consisted of military action, but also referred to the environment, access to food and living standards. Every group working on the issue would eventually discuss one or more aspects of this updated definition, and their work was likely to be interconnected.

Parliamentarians needed to lead from the front by providing examples and practical options that included contributions from different stakeholders, including women and young people. The Forum of Women Parliamentarians and the Forum of Young Parliamentarians of the IPU could help to raise awareness of the Call of the Sahel in the search for solutions. Young people were open-minded in terms of ideas about the future. The needs and desires of local people should also be taken into consideration.

It was important to remember that adequate funding was needed. Raising awareness among countries would help to secure long-term financing for projects in the region. It would be easier to initiate programmes and secure funding if there was a strong focus on the needs of the people of the Sahel countries.

**Mr. R. Shambash** (Libya) said that his country was a gateway into Africa from the north and was a neighbouring country to the Sahel region. Libya had seen extremism, especially following the revolution in 2011, and the subsequent collapse of its institutions. He disagreed with previous remarks that Libya had the conditions to produce extremism. Libya had taken unprecedented counter-terrorism action since 2017, and was cooperating with neighbouring countries and the whole world to address the problem of terrorism. Countries in the Sahel, and in Africa more generally, encountered terrorism as a result of significant underdevelopment and marginalization. Libya would continue to support stability and development in Africa.

**Mr. M. Bouden** (Algeria) agreed that Libya was heading in the right direction. The country was not a host of terrorism, but the issue of the supply of arms and weapons had not yet been sufficiently addressed. The security situation in Libya affected Algeria.

**Ms. M. Eza** (Senior Adviser, Parliamentary Assembly of the Francophonie) said that terrorism affected everyone. She recalled that the APF was not an initiative that originated from France, but rather a forum that used the French language as a communication medium. The APF consisted of 91 parliamentary assemblies across four continents. Many members had been affected by terrorist attacks, such as those seen recently in Niger and Senegal. Terrorism was of direct importance to all APF member countries. It was for that reason that the APF had been part of the Call of the Sahel since it was established.

Many meetings on counter-terrorism had taken place; it was now time for measurable, concrete actions. It was important to ensure that the same ideas on the vision and direction of travel were shared equally. Action could only be taken around a single, endogenous vision, with ideas being put forward from countries that were suffering from terrorist attacks internally and on their borders.

The APF was ready to share its resources and stood ready to build a strong convergence of ideas.

**Mr. N. Bako Arifari** (Benin) said that the Call of the Sahel had come at a very appropriate time. Since the start of the war in Ukraine, billions of dollars had been allocated and distributed to help the country. Such efforts contrasted with the lack of financial resources mobilized to address certain vulnerabilities and the issue of terrorism in the Sahel. Although the region was not currently the focus of international attention, it experienced the greatest number of terrorist attacks.

A recent study found that most terrorist situations originated from an external form of aggression, which when combined with internal groups or endogenous phenomena, caused greater instability. Access to resources, such as grasslands and pasture lands, also caused more widespread conflicts. It was important to incorporate human rights and access to resources into any potential solutions. Parliamentarians needed to consider the issue of environmental degradation as a cause of further instability.

**Mr. A. Kharchi** (Algeria) said that climate change constituted a multidimensional risk that affected the capacities of States to address security, health and environmental issues. Climate change was a key issue in the search for solutions to multiple regional and international crises. The impact of climate change was felt most acutely in Africa. The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development represented the frameworks of action for the international community to address the climate crisis. Climate change also significantly affected peace and security at the international level, posing significant challenges both politically and operationally. Political strategies and peace efforts across Africa needed to consider climate-related challenges. There was still much work to be done on a clear strategy that would address the multiple issues involved. Climate change also caused extreme environmental degradation, desertification, deforestation, loss of biodiversity and food insecurity. There was a distinct lack of financing and sharing of technology and capacities. Africa only received about 4% of climate funding worldwide, which was far below what was needed. Various stakeholders needed to fulfil their commitments and create new mechanisms that could guarantee a long-term version of adaptation for the people of Africa, with initiatives that focused on climate change and development.

The root causes of conflict and aggravating factors needed to be adequately addressed. It was vital to include climate risks when discussing the security situation and applicable mechanisms. In its work with regional partners, Algeria had been able to incorporate climate change into both its own development plans and regional strategies. The needs of countries in the region should form the basis for international, multilateral action. Investment needed to focus on development, peace and security and economic growth.

**The Moderator** thanked all those who had contributed to the discussion.

*The event ended at 18:15.*

## Panel discussion

### *Towards gender equality: Celebrating and understanding the accomplishments of women's parliamentary caucuses*

**SITTING OF THURSDAY, 13 OCTOBER**

(Morning)

*The event was called to order at 11:40 by Ms. H. Fayez, Member of the Shura Council of Bahrain and First Vice-President of the IPU Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, who moderated the event.*

**The Moderator** said that the discussion would be aimed at strengthening and influencing women's parliamentary caucuses to make parliaments more gender-sensitive. The aim of the presentations and contributions would be to share parliamentary practices and improve the creation, functioning and role of those caucuses.

**Ms. Z. Hilal** (Manager of the IPU Gender Partnership and Youth Participation Programmes), accompanying her remarks with a digital slide presentation, said that the importance of women's parliamentary caucuses was widely accepted. They allowed women parliamentarians to rally together across party lines, thereby improving their work, increasing their cooperation and providing an example of democracy at work within parliaments. The forums and caucuses compensated for the small number of women in some parliaments by uniting them and providing an opportunity to speak with one voice. In turn, that challenged and redressed gender imbalances in parliamentary spaces and facilitated women's empowerment.

Through collaboration, women could share skills with each other and work towards common goals concerning women's and girls' empowerment and gender equality. Having a structure within parliaments to facilitate collaboration with civil society and women's movements outside national parliaments was particularly valuable.

It was clear that women's caucuses and women's rights committees could work in harmony, despite differences in their characteristics. Committees were closely regulated by parliaments and wielded more legislative power, whereas caucuses were more informal and could carry out advocacy work outside of parliaments. Together, they were ideal for advancing gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment. Parliamentary rules of procedure often determined the choice between a caucus or a committee and, in some parliaments, it was impossible to create a new committee. In those cases, a women's parliamentary caucus was essential.

Gender-sensitive parliaments made promoting gender equality the responsibility of both men and women. Those parliaments took charge of promoting and protecting gender equality and could become champions of gender equality among other State institutions and within society. The more gender-sensitive the parliament, the more gender equality would be reflected in its communications and workplans, providing society with an example of how to promote equality and demonstrating that gender equality was an important national issue. In 2012, the IPU *Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments* had been adopted unanimously at the 127th IPU Assembly, which meant that every parliament represented at the current Assembly had adopted the plan of action and should have been implementing it since. Gender-sensitive parliaments ensured equal gender representation among their members and within their committees, including those dealing with finance, defence and gender equality. Those parliaments removed barriers to women's presence and influence and prevented gender-based harassment and violence. They adopted measures to deal effectively with gender equality issues and to produce laws, policies and budgets that improved gender equality. They had the skills, resources and will to promote gender equality through their work and to foster it within society. They responded to the different needs and interests of men and women within their own structures, operations and work methods.

Many women's parliamentary caucuses had made, or had contributed to making, the responsibility to protect women's rights and promote women's empowerment a common cause. In addition to the initiatives taken by the parliaments represented at the present event, the Sudanese

Women Parliamentarians Caucus had improved professional relationships by bringing together women from different political parties after the conflict. In Estonia, Indonesia and Poland, women's caucuses had advocated for legislation to increase women's political participation and to stop violence against women. In Ecuador and Mongolia, they had provided legislation in the areas of education and health, which included the health of mothers and girls. Women's caucuses had provided capacity-building for women parliamentarians in Kenya, Laos and Morocco, where seminars had been held and training for new members had been provided. Some caucuses had also worked on leadership issues and conflict resolution.

**The Moderator** said that representatives from the parliaments of Djibouti, Ireland and Rwanda had been invited to discuss how women's caucuses influenced parliaments and created partnerships with stakeholders. By sharing their accomplishments and the challenges that they had encountered, the representatives would set the scene for a discussion allowing a deeper understanding of the factors that contributed to women's political influence.

**Ms. F. Mohamed Hamadou** (Djibouti), panellist, said that the Caucus of Djiboutian Women Parliamentarians had worked to adopt a law ensuring that at least 25% of members of the National Assembly were women. The President of Djibouti, Mr. Ismaïl Omar Guelleh, had spearheaded that initiative and helped women reach the highest political and decision-making spheres in the country. He had also enabled the creation of the Caucus of Djiboutian Women Parliamentarians, which had been an important step, and had ensured that women would occupy 25% of positions in the Government and public bodies. Those initiatives had ensured that many cultured and educated women had had the opportunity and honour to serve their country as elected representatives. Women actively took part in the socio-economic development of Djibouti and were present in the Government, Parliament and decision-making processes.

The Caucus of Djiboutian Women Parliamentarians brought together all women members of parliament, transcending party lines as well as community and generational differences to promote women's role inside and outside parliament. The Caucus helped women parliamentarians create a work environment where they could find their place and fully exercise their parliamentary duties.

A workplan had been adopted in which the importance of improving mothers' and children's health was emphasized. In 2020, the Parliament had adopted a law to prevent violence against women and girls. During the vote, the demonstration of female solidarity had prompted other members of parliament to vote in favour of the legislation. Similar work was encouraged to set an example within parliaments.

**Ms. L. Clifford-Lee** (Ireland), panellist, said that the vision of the Irish Women's Parliamentary Caucus was equal gender representation in the Parliament and on city and county councils. It brought together women members of parliament and Irish women members of the European Parliament from across party lines to promote and support women's participation in politics. It also developed and advocated for legislation, policies and other initiatives regarding women's issues and society.

The Irish Women's Parliamentary Caucus had held discussions on period poverty in both houses of parliament, catapulting the issue onto the national political agenda. In 2020, the programme of government had included commitments on period poverty, which had led to legislation and the establishment of pilot projects to provide free period products in selected schools and vulnerable communities ahead of a national rollout. The Irish Women's Parliamentary Caucus had also campaigned for maternity leave for politicians in parliament and local governments. The work of the Caucus had ensured that the issue was no longer taboo and, while there was no formal structure for women politicians to take maternity leave, informal arrangements could be made, which demonstrated a significant change in the culture. It was hoped that the actions and support of the Caucus would encourage other women to stand in national parliamentary elections. The Speaker of the lower house had established a forum for recommendations to make the Parliament more inclusive, family friendly and gender-sensitive. The Caucus had been active in that regard and it had presented a roadmap for how the Parliament could achieve its aims.

In 2018, Ireland had hosted the first International Congress of Women's Parliamentary Caucuses, bringing together over 200 delegates in Dublin to discuss their work and build relationships. Ireland had 31 local authorities, some of which had established women's caucuses, which was a significant step towards increasing women's participation in politics. Since many Irish women parliamentarians started their careers in local government, it was necessary to increase the

number of women elected to local government to see more women in the national parliament. Only 25% of local politicians in Ireland were women and representation varied between urban and rural areas. Given the gender imbalance in Irish politics, regional and local caucuses could provide a space for women, irrespective of their political or ideological views, to discuss key issues and to provide support, informal mentoring and information. Such a space was particularly valuable for newcomers. It was important that, once elected, women stayed in politics and sought re-election.

The Northern Ireland Assembly Women's Caucus, as a cross-party forum for women members, was even more important in a post-conflict society dealing with trauma. Its work was commendable, as reconciliation and collaboration to maintain peace were of paramount importance.

**The Moderator** agreed that it was important to foster links among women's caucuses around the world and with other actors.

**Ms H. Murangwa** (Rwanda), panellist, said that the Rwanda Women Parliamentary Forum (FFRP) had been founded in the wake of the Rwandan genocide. The fabric of Rwandan society had been destroyed, every sector of Rwandan society had needed to rebuild, and sexual violence had been used as a weapon of war against women. In that context, the 12 founding members of the Forum had put aside their political differences, stood in solidarity with women, and provided a strong voice to address women's issues and the consequences of the genocide while empowering women. They had envisioned a united, peaceful, prosperous and gender-responsive society in which citizens were equal before the law, enjoyed equal rights and opportunities, and women were empowered. That vision continued to guide the work of the Forum.

Political leadership had been key to the Forum's positive impact on socio-economic transformation. As a supporter of the HeForShe movement, President Paul Kagame had championed gender equality and women's empowerment in Rwanda. Including men in the Forum had strengthened the gender agenda, as they had advocated to challenge stereotypes, patriarchal mindsets and negative masculinity. Strategic partnerships with national institutions and public and private stakeholders, including national and international actors, continued to make the Forum a relevant and efficient agent for change. Women had contributed to rebuilding Rwanda and negotiating for peace, and development partners had proven to be assets in all aspects of capacity-building.

The Forum had worked in a strategic location of the Rwandan parliament and had been instrumental in producing legislative changes. A constitutional quota of 30% women had been introduced, leading to higher numbers of women in the Cabinet, Senate, Chamber of Deputies and local governments. Through the *gacaca* law, cases of rape and sexual violence against women that had taken place during the genocide could be classified as first-degree crimes. The law on the prevention and punishment of gender-based violence had been passed, which criminalized gender-based violence and challenged the notion that it was a family matter. Disclosures were increasing and the Forum could facilitate access to justice for victims. The law on children's rights, which enshrined the right to equal opportunities for girls, boys and children with disabilities had been passed. The organic law instituting gender-responsive budgeting had made producing a gender budget statement obligatory for all budget agencies, which enhanced gender equality and women's empowerment. There had been tangible results on socio-economic development indicators, with over 80% of men and women able to access community health services. Early childhood development centres were available at workplaces to address the issue of human capital. Sixty-four per cent of women aged between 15 and 49 could access family planning services and 98% could access antenatal care from a skilled provider. Girls' inheritance rights had been made equal to those of boys. The family law promoted gender equality and had been revised to ensure that babies were registered at birth and in health centres. The revision had facilitated access to paperwork for women and streamlined the entry of their children into the health system. Labour legislation had been improved to ensure equal pay for men and women and to prohibit violence in the workplace. Land law ensured equal rights to land ownership. The loss of men during the conflict had facilitated women's ownership of land which, in turn, had increased their access to production resources, bank loans and collateral.

Work needed to continue with regard to the disproportionate amount of domestic work performed by women, the persistence of patriarchal attitudes determining power relations between men and women, the lack of women leaders, and the higher number of women working informally. The Forum would continue to act as a think tank, work towards a gender-sensitive parliament, and influence and mobilize social transformation without leaving anyone behind.

**The Moderator** invited participants to discuss factors contributing to the successful integration of caucuses into the work of parliaments, the influence that women's parliamentary caucuses had on the transformation of parliaments into more gender-sensitive institutions, obstacles to introducing women's parliamentary caucuses, success stories, and the role that partnerships played in the creation and success of women's parliamentary caucuses.

**Ms. W. Qamar** (Pakistan) said that the commitment of Pakistan to human rights emanated from its constitution and its duty to its people. Every Pakistani citizen should enjoy equality, dignity and freedom. The Parliament attached great importance to furthering development, human rights and democracy goals, which all mutually reinforced each other. Political commitment in that regard was strong and unequivocal.

Women had helped to develop Pakistan and had always participated in the legislative assemblies. They could be elected directly and the constitution of Pakistan ensured that there were quotas of 17% and 16% in the National Assembly and the Senate respectively. Since its creation in 2008, the Women's Parliamentary Caucus had gradually weighed in on a variety of issues within the male-dominated houses of parliament. The Women's Parliamentary Caucus had focused on introducing gender-responsive legislation, influencing policy and gender-sensitizing both houses of parliament. Work was carried out on legislation in key areas, including workplace harassment, lawsuits for assets and women's protection. The Caucus had reviewed issues and challenges in the implementation of programmes and laws, and it had proposed solutions. Key accomplishments included work to protect the rights of persons with disabilities, increase the number of female police officers and introduce electoral reforms with a gender perspective. The Caucus was currently focusing on scrutinizing existing programmes and legislation, ensuring gender budgeting and rehabilitating the victims, especially women, of the recent floods. The efforts of the Caucus had led to 60% of graduates from university medicine courses being women. A team of over 100,000 trained female community workers delivered basic health services door-to-door, which had been key to reviving the immunization programme of Pakistan. Acid attacks continued to decrease and it was hoped that they would be eliminated by the following year.

Women represented a quarter of the Pakistani labour force, with 5% holding senior positions. That figure was growing and the Caucus was committed to increasing it to 50%. The State Bank of Pakistan had committed to ensuring that women represented at least 20% of its workforce by 2023 and there was a separate bank for women only. During the past decade, there had been a 20% increase in the number of women working in the federal and provincial bureaucracy system, with many holding important positions. Seventeen per cent of judges were women.

**Ms. N. Lesuuda** (Kenya) said that women were indispensable to governance and they should not be left behind. To that end, the pursuit of gender equality at national and global level was essential.

Although the first woman had been elected to the Kenyan Parliament in 1969, men had continued to dominate politics. Initiatives had focused on ensuring that women had access to equal opportunities, including in the political sphere. In that regard, Kenya had adopted a robust constitution in 2010 which had included provisions to remove all formal barriers preventing women from participating in politics. Groups had continued to work to increase the quota of women in elected and appointed positions.

In 2002, following the formation of the Kenya Women Parliamentary Association (KEWOPA) which transcended party lines and covered both houses of parliament, the campaign for women's empowerment in politics moved to within the Parliament. The Association promoted and protected democracy, advocated for women's rights and promoted a society in which women and men were equally represented in Parliament and in decision-making processes in the public and private spheres. KEWOPA had been instrumental in parliamentary debates, particularly on matters concerning women, children, people with disabilities and other marginalized groups. The Association had ensured that women parliamentarians received opportunities to participate in legislative work and, in that context, a crèche had been made available in the new parliamentary building. The Association had enhanced debates and worked to meet the constitutional requirement that no more than two thirds of the members of elected or appointed bodies would be of the same gender. Over 700 women leaders and members of county assemblies had been mentored.



A women's office had been established to coordinate targeted programmes for women parliamentarians following the 2016 gender assessment that had been carried out in collaboration with the IPU. Throughout the 12th Parliament, the office had carried out inductions and capacity-building to increase women's participation in plenary debates. It had sponsored legislative business. KEWOPA would remain committed to the office during the 13th Parliament.

The Parliament of Kenya continued to support KEWOPA and the Kenya Women Senators Association. Gender inclusivity set a positive example by promoting gender equality and women's empowerment nationally and internationally.

**Ms. A. Larouche** (Canada) said that the COVID-19 pandemic had paused caucus activities. *Women and Gender Equality Canada* had studied how women had been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and had analysed governmental measures. Other issues, such as food security, continued to have a greater impact on women and those issues could be highlighted in official parliamentary bodies.

Local governments, such as the Quebec National Assembly, had women's parliamentary caucuses. There were also working groups that were spearheaded by women and that brought together men and women from across the political spectrum to discuss sensitive issues, including violence against women. Over 100 proposals had been made in *Rebuilding Trust*, a report on the governmental strategy to counteract sexual violence and domestic violence. Such initiatives were the result of women joining forces across party lines and having women's spaces. The massacre of 14 women engineering students at Polytechnique Montreal in 1989 had highlighted the issue of violence against women and the need for non-partisan spaces to work on women's issues.

**Ms. A. Sarangi** (India) said that, given the diversity within India, addressing inequality was of the utmost importance. The primary policy objective of the government was to develop all segments of the population, including women. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had overseen a paradigm shift from women's development to women-led development. It was hoped that women would be equal to men in the fast-paced and sustainable development of India, and that India would become self-reliant. The Constitution of India had been amended to ensure that at least 33% of those employed in grassroots movements were women. Currently, women represented 46% and they were present in the State legislative assembly, the provincial legislative assemblies and the Parliament.

The Indian Government was undertaking capacity-building initiatives to help elected women act as catalysts for social change in the field. Since 2005, gender budgeting had been institutionalized and many state governments had followed suit to provide gender-sensitive schemes and programmes. The mandate of the National Commission for Women covered almost all aspects of women's development. It advised on the socio-economic development of women, the representation of women in all spheres, and the identification and removal of discriminatory practices. The National Commission for Women developed programmes to empower women, facilitate access to opportunities and help women make their own decisions.

Gender-neutral language had been adopted in the parliamentary rules of procedure and in everyday business. Women had access to gender-sensitive facilities, such as a crèche and a ladies' lounge. A committee had been established to deal with complaints of sexual harassment. The House of the People had taken measures to enable women to participate in deliberations.

**Ms. V.K. Bhatnagar** (Fiji) said that Rwandan women were inspiring. Their efforts to recover from the horrors of the genocide and their achievements – Rwanda had the highest number of women in parliament in the world – were commendable.

The Constitution of the Republic of Fiji (2013), the Five-year and 20-year National Development Plan and the National Gender Policy enshrined the commitment of Fiji to promote gender equality and empower women and girls. They guided the work of the government and were aligned with international commitments and frameworks, including the Sustainable Development Goals, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Government policies and strategies across ministries advanced gender equality and further embedded opportunities for women and girls. According to part one of CEDAW, States shall introduce policies and legislation condemning all forms of discrimination against women. Fiji had complied by providing a bill of rights that mandated the freedom of all legal persons in its constitution. Fiji had enshrined its commitment to gender equality in its legislation and policies, which included the Domestic Violence Act 2009, the Child Welfare Act 2010, the Crimes Act 2009, the Family Law Act 2003 (amended in 2005), the

Employment Relations (Amendment) Act 2018, the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2018, the Online Safety Act 2018, the Climate Change Act 2021 and the 2007 National Policy on Sexual Harassment in the Workplace. Parliamentary processes and standing committees were mandated to give full consideration to gender equality and to consider the impact on men and women.

The Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Fiji Group had been established to address issues for women parliamentarians and to mainstream gender equality into parliaments and parliamentary committees. Fiji had carried out a whole-of-government gender assessment, which had been the first initiative of its kind in the Pacific region and had demonstrated the commitment of Fiji to leave no one behind. Improved data and statistics were expected to provide a more accurate representation of the lives of women and girls in Fiji, which would facilitate the development of evidence-based policies.

Fiji was the first Pacific island country, and the only country alongside Australia, to introduce a whole-of-government evidence-based approach to preventing violence against women and girls. Since 2021, it had included consultations across the government and communities in 13 key settings. It had identified the causes and consequences of violence against women and girls in Fiji and had explored how to prevent violence.

The Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Group had held a hybrid meeting with women across Fiji, which had been an opportunity to put questions to parliamentarians.

Education was the key to success and all children, regardless of gender, were entitled to an education in Fiji. Free education was available up to tertiary level and loan schemes were available for further education.

**Ms P. Appiagyei** (Ghana) said that the formation of women's parliamentary caucuses was vital to uniting female legislators from different political parties. They improved the status of women in parliament, increased women's influence in political decision-making and provided support to women legislators. Women's caucuses provided mentorship opportunities for new members of parliament, allowing them to expand their professional networks. They also carried out work in the areas of parliamentary advocacy, training, outreach and awareness-raising.

The capacity-building support that the IPU had provided to the Parliamentarian Women's Caucus was appreciated. The Caucus had been established to increase women's presence in the Ghanaian legislature. All 40 women parliamentarians had participated in training to increase their participation in the public sector and prepare them for any assignment. The Caucus had been instrumental in championing laws, such as the intestate succession law, that supported women and vulnerable people in households. It was currently advocating for an affirmative action bill and a spousal bill. The Caucus had provided financial support to students and the elderly. Young people and vulnerable individuals also received financial support and training to gain skills and become financially independent.

Members of the Parliamentarian Women's Caucus promoted women's interests in their respective political parties and constituencies. The Caucus had been key to preventing outmoded cultural practices, such as female genital mutilation, domestic violence, rape, child marriages and widowhood rites, among others. The Caucus had been leading efforts to ensure that girls received an education in Ghana and it urged the Government of Ghana to sign CEDAW.

The Parliamentarian Women's Caucus analysed the gender implications of parliamentary bills and national policies. Despite successes with regard to gender-sensitive legislation, the need to work across party lines made it difficult to find common ground among members. Caucuses required hard work and dedication, and the low number of women in parliaments around the world affected the ability of caucuses to address gender inequality issues. In addition to managing day-to-day matters, members had to raise funds which could reduce the effectiveness of caucuses and leave constituents dissatisfied. A solution would be to include men in such caucuses and reach gender parity.

**Ms. Z.D.Mohamud** (Somalia) said that there was a women's caucus in the upper and lower houses of parliament. Women were underrepresented in both houses and the caucuses had been working to pass a bill, which was pending approval, to establish a quota of women and enshrine women's educational, health and labour rights. Equal opportunities for men and women had to be ensured in every sector.

Somali women were reluctant to become involved in politics, and the caucuses had focused on reversing that trend in order to change the country. Somalia was experiencing political instability, economic issues and conflict and it was hoped that involving women in politics would create solutions, as had been the case in Rwanda.

**Ms. E. Jailosi Jolobala** (Malawi) said that the Parliamentary Women's Caucus had been formed to encourage women to take part in politics. As there was no funding for caucuses in Malawi, the Parliamentary Women's Caucus had been recognized as a parliamentary committee, which had secured it a place to meet. It had helped to pass legislation, such as the Gender Equality Act and the Marriage Divorce and Family Relations Act. The National Assembly had elected its first female Speaker. The Parliamentary Women's Caucus had carried out an inquiry to help rape victims receive justice and had carried out outreach campaigns to promote the benefits of electing women representatives for constituencies. They had visited primary schools to demonstrate how, through education and hard work, students could also become members of parliament. The Caucus had collaborated with civil society and the Ministry of Gender. A consultant had been hired to analyse the parliamentary budget and assess whether it was gender-responsive. Work was underway to include men in the Caucus and to introduce a quota for women in the Parliament.

**Ms. F. Cham** (Gambia) said that the Gambia was fortunate to have a ministry and a committee for gender, children and social welfare. The ministry and the committee collaborated on issues affecting women and children, such as rape, female genital mutilation, gender- and sex-based violence, and the trafficking and exploitation of children. The ministry offered women agricultural or entrepreneurial training. Advocacy helped women win elections to parliament or local governments.

The women's caucus had met with partners that supported Gambian women. Twenty per cent of the Gambian Cabinet were women, and it was hoped that that figure would rise to 30%. Advocacy work was underway to ensure that schools and curriculums would show women in positions of political power to children. Social norms, which dictated that women should perform domestic work and not make decisions within households, presented barriers to women participating in politics, and some Gambian women did not show solidarity with other women. In response, the women's caucus was raising awareness of the possibility for women to participate in politics.

**Ms. M. Saleh** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that gender disparities decreased the role of women in public spaces. In 2019, the People's Assembly of Syria had implemented gender-based policies and amended the Personal Status Law to reflect a new age at which one could marry and to give women guardianship over their children. To keep abreast of changes that had taken place over the previous decade, the amendments had also ensured that both spouses would be equal in the eyes of the law. It was significant that the legislation was gender-sensitive, and it represented a starting point from which further changes could be introduced. Syrian law protected women from gender-based violence, but did not protect women from domestic violence, and women could still not pass on their nationality to their children. Women should be part of legislative and parliamentary processes and the Government of Syria was committed to implementing international laws and conventions with regard to women's rights.

**Ms. E.N. Matiko** (United Republic of Tanzania) said that, 10 years after the Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments had been introduced, Tanzania had made progress with regard to gender equality. It had elected its first female President, who had quickly prioritized the issue of gender. Before her election, gender issues had fallen under the scope of the Ministry of Health, but the President had created a specific ministry for gender and a standing committee on gender issues was about to be established in the parliament.

Education had become a priority and a member of parliament had been appointed to oversee girls' education. The government was building a secondary school in each region for girls studying the sciences. Those efforts had led to 12% of engineers being women in Tanzania. The proportion of women in the legal and administrative professions had also increased since the President had taken office.

There was a women's caucus in the parliament, which acted as a think tank to analyse issues before any steps were taken with regard to capacity-building for members of parliament. The caucus worked closely with male MPs. The government was providing girls with sanitary products to ensure that they had the same rate of school attendance as boys.

**The Moderator** invited the panellists to give their concluding remarks.

**Ms. L. Clifford-Lee** (Ireland) said that the contributions had been inspiring and that there was much to learn from them. The outreach meetings taking place in Malawi were of particular note. The achievements of the women of Rwanda in the development of their country were commendable.

**Ms. F. Mohamed Hamadou** (Djibouti) said that she was inspired by the fruitful discussion that had taken place.

**Ms H. Murangwa** (Rwanda) said that leaders and legislation were not enough. There had to be a strategic direction to all actions. At every level of leadership, there had to be consistency to ensure that the gender agenda was implemented in accordance with the law and as agreed by leaders.

**Ms. Z. Hilal** said that men's engagement in caucuses and the role of women speakers were topics that the IPU would explore further. The IPU offered its support to establishment women's caucuses. It could also facilitate access to resources and the sharing of skills, knowledge and experience between people.

*The event ended at 13:15.*

## Workshop on Climate Change

### SITTING OF FRIDAY, 14 OCTOBER

(Afternoon)

*The event was called to order at 15:05 by Ms. A. Mulder, President of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, who acted as Moderator.*

**The Moderator** said that it was imperative that parliamentarians engaged with climate change, which was one of the most pressing global issues, because they were able to make a difference.

**Mr. A. Gajadien** (Suriname), President of the Committee on Democracy and Human Rights, said that, although multilateral organizations were taking action, it was important to have a free and open discussion about what could be done to tackle climate change. He asked participants what was concerning them most about climate change and what the IPU and its Members should do.

**The Moderator**, speaking in her capacity as a member of the House of Representatives of the Netherlands, said that she was particularly concerned about job security for younger generations, but the circular economy could offer a solution. It was hoped that there would be an entirely circular economy in Europe by 2050 but collaboration would be necessary. As a parliamentarian, she could pressure her government to create a new economic plan that would create jobs and benefit all of society.

**Mr. A. Gajadien** (Suriname) said that humans were dependent on each other and on nature. Humankind's influence on nature affected homes, livelihoods and particularly food security. Where there was hunger, there was an impact on nature. It was predicted that there would be enormous food shortages in the coming years so immediate action was needed.

The Parliament of Suriname had to act in the national interest but also raise awareness across the world because global action was needed. Suriname was one of only three carbon negative countries in the world but climate change had increased flooding in the country, which threatened food security.

**Mr. K. Tontisirin** (Thailand) said that climate change had affected people and livelihoods around the world with regard to food security and disease. It was important to understand costs, mitigation and support. The IPU Working Group on Science and Technology had found that the cooperation of some 100 large companies would be necessary to reduce emissions from the energy, housing and agriculture sectors. Action at the grassroots level would involve people and communities. Forests, mangroves and seagrasses could absorb carbon dioxide and provide a way for people to earn a living. The possibility of living in the forest could create an economy therein.

**Mr. V.D. Ram** (India) said that climate change was one of the biggest threats facing humanity. It affected the environment, the fabric of society and human health. In that regard, India had developed a national programme on climate change and human health to reduce morbidity and mortality and to improve health-care infrastructure.

India had suffered acute food shortages but the Green Revolution had led to surpluses. Some 800 million people had received free rations for 18 months as part of the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Ms. E. Jailosi Jolobala** (Malawi) said that natural disasters often affected women disproportionately. The Parliament of Malawi was currently debating a disaster management bill and it was hoped that better population management would improve disaster responses.

The signing of the Paris Agreement had led to discussion among States but little action. The Parliament of Malawi had introduced a tree-planting policy that was coordinated by the Ministry of Forestry and Natural Resources.

**The Moderator** agreed that the issue of women in relation to climate change was important.

**Mr. D. Naughten** (Ireland), member of the IPU Working Group on Science and Technology, said that he was the first Climate Minister of Ireland. The Irish government had dealt directly with communities affected by climate change to avoid the issues that Ms. Jolobala had mentioned.

Many people felt disheartened by the scientific evidence of climate change and could not see how they could introduce practical measures. Efforts had been made to reach people in rural farming communities, particularly women and young people, whose livelihoods were threatened and whose culture had to adapt. Those communities were the most reluctant to adapt, despite being the most vulnerable to frequent flooding, because they could not see the link between practical action and climate change. Helping them to adapt by themselves, understand how the science impacted them, and engage with policymakers and parliamentarians would drive change.

During the previous election campaign in Ireland, it was clear that awareness of climate change had increased through the engagement that had taken place on the ground. It was hoped that that model would be replicated in other areas.

**Ms. R. Abunayyan** (Saudi Arabia) said that she acknowledged that oil-producing nations, such as Saudi Arabia, had increased global emissions and that those nations should do more to protect the environment. Saudi Arabia was implementing environmental initiatives, introducing a circular economy, applying the latest carbon-capture and hydrogen technologies, producing green ammonia, halving fossil fuel consumption in the energy sector and diversifying the energy mix by increasing the use of renewables to 50%. The Shura Council had an environmental committee that followed up on commitments that the government had made with regard to the environment, and it was amending and passing environmental legislation. Children were being educated about the environment in schools. Global partnerships and cooperation were necessary for research and development for new technologies.

**Ms. A.D. Gomashie** (Ghana) said that she was a member of parliament for a coastal community. Climate change had led to greater erosion of coastal villages and towns, which particularly affected women. The main source of income in those areas was fishing and smoking fish but if men could not fish, women could not work. She hoped that the discussion would provide solutions for such communities.

**Ms. P. Appiagyei** (Ghana) said that discussing climate change was critical, especially with regard to the loss of livelihoods. In Ghana, there had been serious floods, one of which had been caused by a flood in a neighbouring country. The Bagre Dam had been unable to prevent the flooding and farmers had lost their produce. Members of parliament should be aware of such vulnerable groups and should consider them in national food security agendas.

**Mr. S. Tsang** (Suriname) said that the unfairness of climate change was concerning. The Amazon rainforest, which was a huge carbon sink, covered 93% of Suriname and it had been shielded from logging and mining.

Climate change did not respect national borders, and deforestation in any part of the world affected everyone. In 2019, Suriname had hosted the High Forest Low Deforestation (HFLD) Conference on Climate Finance Mobilization and it was hoped that attention would be refocused towards that Conference at the 27th Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27). The HFLD Conference had led to the adoption of the *Krutu* of Paramaribo Joint Declaration, which allowed Suriname and other countries with high forest coverage to claim debts as part of climate finance.

Parliamentarians should explore ways to preserve forests within their countries but also in other developing countries whose only source of revenue was deforestation and mining.

**Ms. G. Katuta Mwelwa** (Zambia) said that action needed to be taken following climate conferences and conventions. Farming across Africa and charcoal production in Zambia, which was a key source of income in the country, required deforestation. Little had been done to increase awareness of the effects of cutting down and not replanting trees. As a result, the government had failed to prepare for flooding during the rainy season and many peasant farmers had lost their produce, leading to food insecurity.

Governments should look into whether their discussions were helping people on the ground. New farming methods should be explored and technology should be shared to facilitate farming in environments without water. Discussions about climate change should centre on farming technology to ensure food security.

**Ms. H. Alhelaissi** (Saudi Arabia) said that 38% of Saudi Arabia was desert and that water security was an issue. Saudi Arabia was heavily dependent on desalination and it was running out of ground water. Climate change had led to summer temperatures that exceeded 50 degrees Celsius, which increased the use of air conditioning and thereby further contributed to climate change. Half a billion trees would be planted through the Saudi Green Initiative, which would help the environment and create opportunities in the private sector and for innovative young scientists.

**Mr. R. Lozano** (Uruguay) said that the parliament had transformed the national directorate for the environment into a ministry to demonstrate the importance of the protecting the environment and tackling climate change. Uruguay only produced 0.04% of global greenhouse gases but it had changed its energy matrix. Since 2010, hydraulic energy and fossil fuels had been replaced with wind, solar and biomass energy, making the energy sector almost entirely sustainable. The quantity of energy available was considerable, and exports were made to Argentina and Brazil.

Efforts were currently focusing on green hydrogen and reforestation. In 1987, laws had been passed to promote investment and reforestation – including with native species – which had led to 982,000 hectares of reforestation. It was hoped that a circular economy could be introduced and waste management was being explored in that regard.

**Mr. R. Mancienne** (Seychelles) said that he felt impelled to share the perspective of small island States. If predictions concerning sea level rises were correct, the Seychelles would be completely destroyed by climate change.

Everyone was partly responsible for climate change because consumption drove energy use. It was hoped that humanity could tackle the difficulties of reducing excessive consumption. In the Seychelles, advice was being followed to move towards green energy and avoid energy consumption, which was a small contribution towards mitigating climate change.

**Mr. K. Ballah** (Chad) said that Chad was mostly desert and that grasslands were dwindling. Food security and peaceful cohabitation between farmers were concerns because they were competing for water and fertile land to grow crops and graze livestock. Lack of water compounded the difficulty of rearing cattle. There was a growing population of young unemployed people who could not work in the agricultural sector and who were resorting to migration, crime or terrorism.

Efforts to fight climate change were implemented by specialists and those with literacy skills, but little had been done to increase understanding of climate change among the wider population. The Parliament had created a committee for sustainable development and the environment to advocate for government intervention.

**Ms. M. Baba Moussa Soumanou** (Benin) said that climate change impacted water supplies, agriculture and food processing. It also presented challenges with regard to gender equality and the eradication of poverty, which particularly affected girls, single women and the elderly. However, women played an important role in raising awareness of climate change and, with government funding and support, they worked on climate change projects and managed natural resources.

The Parliament had a committee for the environment and members of parliament – particularly those from areas where desertification was an issue – raised awareness and provided advice with regard to the effects of climate change. They explained the link between disease and flooding, and the importance of managing natural resources. The Ministry of Agriculture ran a project to promote the use of drought-resistant crops, specific seeds and intensive farming to increase revenue. Farmers were prevented from deforesting and there was a national tree day in Benin.

**Mr. R. Cutajar** (Malta) said that, as the smallest member state of the European Union and as an island, Malta was particularly vulnerable to climate change and, in that regard, the National Renewable Energy Action Plan had been introduced.

There were three main contributors to climate change in Malta: construction, transportation and waste management. In 1988, the delegation of Malta had drawn attention to the issue of climate change at the 43rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly but discussions had not yet been translated into concrete actions. It was hoped that lessons would be learned from those mistakes and that future generations would make the right decisions and not pay the price for the current lack of political commitment.

**Mr. K. Wongtrangan** (Thailand), a member of the IPU Working Group on Science and Technology, said that he agreed with the representative of Benin that poor and vulnerable constituents were the most affected by climate change. Different solutions were required for the national and global aspects of climate change, and national policies and practices were necessary to tackle country-specific challenges. Sharing best practices to create shortcuts to solutions was important and a document should be drafted gathering together the best practices of members of the Bureau of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development. The Working Group on Science and Technology had studied the ethical responsibility of countries and had explored the responsibility of governments with regard to climate change. The Standing Committee on Sustainable Development and the Working Group on Science and Technology could hold a joint session to share best practices at the 146th IPU Assembly.

**Mr. C. Hoffmann** (Germany) said that the world had warmed by 1.3 degrees Celsius, and that it was on track to reach four degrees Celsius of warming, which humankind would not survive. Markets influenced fossil fuel consumption, and the lack of Russian oil deliveries to Germany had increased prices and decreased consumption. In that context, the market for producing and selling electricity had been opened up and bureaucratic hurdles that had impeded the use of solar panels had been removed. The challenge for the future would be ensuring that Europe and Africa could produce their own solar panels.

**Mr. C. Law** (United Kingdom) said that it had been an honour for his country to host COP26 in Glasgow. Previously, at COP22, it had been clear that there could be up to one billion climate migrants by 2050. If every nation in the world did not make a unilateral decision within the next five years to reach net zero by 2050, life for humans would be very difficult for the next thousand years. COP27 would present an opportunity to make the voices of IPU Members heard and to put pressure on governments to achieve net zero emissions.

In Scotland, 97% of electricity was produced from renewable sources and, despite being an oil-producing nation, hundreds of thousands of jobs were being created in the renewables sector because large companies were no longer investing in fossil fuels.

**Ms. S. Attia** (Egypt) said that, despite efforts by all countries, no real progress had been made with regard to climate change and the effects were becoming ever more serious. Rather than focusing on responses for specific sectors, it was important to have an overarching strategy.

In 2015, the National Council for Climate Change had been established and had promoted the use of renewable energy. In desert and coastal areas, some 20 new sustainable cities had been built that would use desalinated water and renewable energy as part of a green economy. The Egypt National Climate Change Strategy 2050 encouraged the use of green hydrogen and solar panels by small businesses.

International financing institutions funded climate change solutions and projects, and there was over US\$ 200 billion available for projects to adapt and mitigate climate change over the coming 28 years. Small electric cars had started to be manufactured in Egypt, and coastal protection and water desalination remained priorities.

**Mr. E. Marfo** (Ghana), speaking on behalf of the Climate Vulnerable Forum, a group of 58 countries particularly impacted by climate change, said that the necessary climate interventions were likely to be included in national programmes, projects and nationally determined contributions but that funding was an issue. The time for discussing the effects of climate change had ended and COP27 would be an opportunity to ascertain how the world could negotiate a standalone financing plan to mitigate climate change. The IPU should take a stand, unite countries under one banner at COP27, and emphasize that developed countries needed to take responsibility and increase climate financing.

**Mr. V. Tsvangirai** (Zimbabwe), aligning himself with Mr. Marfo, said that drought had reduced the Victoria Falls to a trickle and that natural world heritage sites, such as the Great Barrier Reef, were in danger. Countries needed to put pressure on governments to take climate change seriously, particularly at COP27.

It was regrettable that the United States of America and China, the biggest emitters of greenhouse gases, were not present because other countries could have urged them to stop polluting and to implement measures to combat climate change. It was hoped that the IPU would do more to bring them to the table.



**Ms. A. Camara** (Guinea) said that the workshop was an important opportunity to share how climate change was affecting different countries. Guinea had been known for its vast water resources but many had now dried up. Seventy per cent of the population made a living from subsistence farming but drought had made agriculture an unappealing industry. In terms of renewable energy, development had focused on solar panels and hydroelectric dams, but there was little water.

Despite those challenges, it was important not to be fatalistic. It was necessary to implement a climate change adaptation strategy in Africa and to create funds in that regard. Each COP produced recommendations, but they were never implemented at national level and some were repeated at each conference. Young Guineans were forced to migrate within the country and make dangerous journeys across the desert or the Mediterranean, creating an irreplaceable loss of human capital. Finding a long-term, sustainable and collective solution to climate change was essential.

**Mr. A. Gryffroy** (Belgium) said that many factors influenced climate change, particularly energy. Despite plans and targets, housing in Europe was no more energy efficient than 10 years previously. Low income groups could not afford the energy transition whereas high income groups would adapt their homes to avoid increasing energy costs. The Government of Belgium had introduced 0% loans, which were to be paid back within 25 years, and subsidies to make the energy transition economically viable for low income groups. Using less energy was the cheapest, cleanest and greenest way to protect the climate.

Efforts were being made to share solar power wirelessly to ensure that apartment residents, who did not own the roof of their building, could still access green energy. Even in wealthier global regions, it was difficult to reach lower income groups.

**Mr. G. Nouri Ghezal** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that climate change had led to dust storms, droughts and desertification in Iran. Sanctions and lack of international cooperation were the main obstacles to dealing with those issues.

**Ms. F. Ilimi** (Algeria) said that climate change should be addressed at the international level and parliamentarians should help design international policies and integrate them into national laws. The climate was changing quickly and, as temperatures increased due to human interference in nature, natural disasters were worsening. Algeria had become more prone to desertification, drought and flooding.

Algeria had ratified all international climate conventions and it polluted little. It had participated in climate discussions since 1992, including those that had culminated in the Paris Agreement, which it had ratified. With support from developed countries, greenhouse gas emissions in Algeria would be cut by 7% by 2030.

Developed countries were urged to take responsibility for worsening climate change and to create a fund to assist developing countries in their fight against climate change and to achieve economic development.. Parliamentarians should introduce policies to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change. Awareness should be raised within all communities in order to involve them in climate action. A parliamentary network on nature, the environment and the climate had been created to face climate challenges.

**Mr. F. Notari** (Monaco) said that conservation efforts in Monaco focused on the sea and that traffic, heating and waste management were issues.

Climate change affected everyone through floods, storms and fires. It was important to consider how infrastructure would be rebuilt following natural disasters because governments and insurance companies were not currently able to cover the cost of rebuilding bridges, roads, schools or energy infrastructure.

**Mr. T. Sokun** (Cambodia) said that Cambodia was particularly vulnerable to climate change because it had an agrarian economy. Although its carbon emissions were low, and agriculture produced almost half of those emissions, Cambodia was committed to developing an equitable, knowledge-based society that was green, climate-resilient and sustainable. The climate crisis offered an opportunity to develop smart agriculture, which would produce more food, decrease water and land use, and release less carbon. Agriculture should be discussed at COP27 in order to maintain global temperature increases below two degrees Celsius. Climate change was a global crisis that required a global response, but that response had to start locally. It was hoped that the Government of Cambodia would introduce REDD+ in its current term.

**Ms. A. Larouche** (Canada) said that she appreciated Mr. Sokun's remark that a global response with local action was needed. It was only a matter of time before the effects of climate change were felt around the world. Efforts were being made in Canada to develop green infrastructure through greater use of public transport, car sharing and electric vehicles. Programmes were being implemented to adapt infrastructure to higher temperatures and stronger winds.

Quebec was a pioneer in hydroelectric power and electric vehicles. COP27 would be crucial for setting ambitious goals to decrease greenhouse gas emissions and maintain global temperatures to below two degrees Celsius compared to pre-industrial levels. Governments needed to act swiftly and be held accountable to their commitments. It was concerning that doubts about the reality of climate change persisted.

**Mr. A. Gajadien** (Suriname) said that it was important to see which measures countries were implementing to tackle climate change. The climate was worsening and hopes had been pinned, once again, on COP27. Discussions had to translate into action, and the IPU President had made it clear that that action needed to be immediate. It was important to ensure that humans were safe, to achieve the sustainable development goals and to protect human rights.

**The Moderator** said that sharing examples, even if they applied to different regions or societies, could be inspiring and that new opportunities to share best practices should be explored. Pressure on governments had increased since the signing of the Paris Agreement. In Europe, the legal obligation to reduce carbon emissions by 40% had increased to 55% by 2030, which required investment in societies. Damage, loss and adaptation measures could be aligned. It was important to put pressure on governments and to consider the impact of the climate on women's rights, agriculture and jobs.

*The event ended at 16:30.*

## Workshop on nutrition

### *How parliamentary action can help safeguard nutrition gains*

(Organized jointly by the IPU, the SUN Movement and AUDA/NEPAD)

FRIDAY, 14 OCTOBER

(Morning)

*The event was called to order at 09:15 with Ms. S. Mbaya (Team Lead, Campaigns and Partner Engagement, Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health) as the Moderator.*

**The Moderator** said that one in three people globally suffered from at least one form of malnutrition or dietary-related, non-communicable disease. Women, children and adolescents were particularly affected. Numerous regional and global initiatives had helped to raise the profile of the importance of nutrition for development. However, the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and ongoing conflicts had exacerbated the negative effects of poor nutrition. In that context, it was important for parliaments to continue to focus on nutrition and actions to fulfil national and global nutritional commitments.

**Mr. M. Chungong** (IPU Secretary General), recalling his recent nomination as a member of the Scaling-Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement Lead Group, said that he wanted to mobilize parliaments so that they could exercise the political commitment required to drive up nutritional standards. Nutrition was a major health challenge in the world today. The present workshop was an opportunity to discuss how parliaments could improve nutritional standards in accordance with the SDGs. Partnerships were particularly important, as no single stakeholder could do everything. Each partner brought their own experience and expertise.

Together with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the IPU had recently produced the *Handbook for parliamentarians on food systems and nutrition*. He called on delegates to use the handbook to stimulate national parliamentary action. Global debates were important, but action had not trickled down to country level. It was important for delegates to think collectively about how to mobilize the potential of parliaments. Parliamentarians should establish legislative frameworks and allocate the resources necessary to improve nutritional standards. The present workshop should help to identify what actions could be taken nationally to live up to the commitments made at the United Nations Food Systems Summit.

**Ms. G. Verburg** (Coordinator, SUN Movement), speaking via video link, said that the SUN Movement was delighted to have the IPU Secretary General as a member of its Lead Group. The SDGs were important in mitigating the impacts of climate change and improving development, equality and education. Without nutrition, however, a person could not nourish their body. It was important to remember that nutrition supported cognitive development. The first 1000 days of life were the most important period in the development of cognitive infrastructure and potential in children. The best gift to provide children – and the primary imperative of parents – was to ensure that they were well nourished. In light of recent climate events and price increases, providing nourishment to children and families was not an easy task. She called on delegates to continue focusing on children during the first 1000 days of life. It was imperative for parliaments to use their institutional power of drafting legislation to achieve better nutrition.

Many countries provided social welfare systems to protect vulnerable groups. It was important to ensure that nutrition services formed an integral part of such systems. Social welfare packages should not focus on supporting people through a single crisis, but rather on allowing people to gain or regain resilience so as to be less vulnerable to subsequent crises. Investment in that regard helped people to reclaim their dignity and unlock their own prosperity. Such action was the humanitarian signature of governments and partners.

The transformation of food systems would be at the heart of the agenda for the first time at COP27 in November. In light of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and ongoing crises, nobody could doubt the importance of the need for alternative nutritious foodstuffs to be produced locally. The IPU and parliaments could play an important role in establishing food

systems that focused on three things: (1) producing safe, healthy and nutritious food; (2) utilizing biodiverse and climate-smart methods; and (3) ensuring that the food production industry provided decent incomes and jobs to encourage people to stay and create prosperity in local communities.

Nutrition and poverty were closely linked. In accordance with World Bank guidelines, the current poverty line was US\$ 1.90 per day. In light of the dollar becoming more expensive, that figure was likely to change to US\$ 2.15. Surprisingly, the mechanisms used by the World Bank focused on calories, as opposed to nutrition. The focus on calories addressed short-term problems, but it created challenges in the long term, as people would be malnourished. It also hindered social and economic development and limited opportunities for people to escape poverty. The World Bank was now working on a nutrition-informed poverty line. She invited parliaments to call on the World Bank to finalize its efforts on a nutrition-informed poverty line and distribute all applicable information as soon as possible. Action taken in regard to the new poverty line would cost more money, but it would create prosperity in the long term.

**Mr. K. Tontisirin** (Thailand), accompanying his remarks with a digital slide presentation, said that nutrition was fundamental for good health and wellbeing. It was the link between food and health. One third of the global population suffered from some form of undernutrition. Overnutrition and diet-related diseases were problematic in the world today. Low food safety standards and low food quality also posed significant challenges.

Parliamentarians needed to be cognizant of the strategies and actions needed to promote optimum nutrition. There was no single solution. He recommended several actions. First, multiple stakeholders needed to be involved. Second, food systems should be improved to ensure food security, accessibility to food and sustainability in food production. Fortification and supplementation for particularly vulnerable groups would help in that regard. Third, health systems, public sanitation and water supply should be improved to eliminate the burden of disease. Fourth, continued monitoring, evaluation, development and capacity-building were also needed.

Community-based approaches were vital, with national nutrition improvement strategies and goals orientating the focus of such approaches. Community programmes would only be successful if they focused on providing basic services via mass mobilization, actively engaged community leaders, established community-level goals and took remedial action to mitigate any problems. A step-by-step approach was crucial.

Thailand had focused on improving antenatal care coverage, then worked up to food supplementation. Stunting was used as the monitoring tool to evaluate improvements in that regard. A reduction in stunting had been achieved; however, overnutrition was now becoming an issue in children under five years of age.

Schools were also a key focus area to promote optimum nutrition. Schools could monitor the growth of children, provide lunches, promote physical activity and exercise, and educate children about agriculture and food systems. Gardens at home and in schools allowed children to learn more about food and engage in food production. Recent initiatives in Thailand had helped to promote local food production.

Parliaments needed to understand first and foremost the context of their countries so as to design appropriate strategies at all levels, followed by the implementation of legislation and allocation of appropriate budgets. Particular emphasis should be given to vulnerable groups, such as children and the elderly. Parliamentarians needed to oversee such policies and projects, and form partnerships with stakeholders, with a view to promoting social safety nets and local economies through the lens of nutrition.

**A representative of Malawi** said that Malawi was one of multiple developing countries experiencing a high prevalence of both undernutrition and obesity. Parliaments had three main roles to address the issue of nutrition: representation, law-making and oversight. Parliamentarians in Malawi would use those three functions to represent people who were most affected by nutrition-related issues. If the health of a population was affected, actions on development could not move forward.

There was widespread support in Malawi for legislation to put an end to nutrition-related issues. A nutrition and food security bill had been in the pipeline since 2004. Parliamentarians had been working with civil society organizations and other partners to ensure the Government in Malawi brought the bill before the National Assembly. The Speaker of the National Assembly was championing the issue of nutrition. She expected the bill to be tabled at the National Assembly's next session in November. Parliamentarians would ensure that an adequate amount of money was allocated. There were nevertheless certain challenges in that regard, as Malawi had suffered from multiple disasters, and poverty levels and the cost of living were very high.

**The Moderator** said that she was pleased that the Speaker of the National Assembly of Malawi was a nutrition champion and had been an enabler for parliamentarians in Malawi.

**A representative of India** said that malnutrition was not solely about undernutrition. The World Health Organization defined the term “malnutrition” as deficiencies, excesses or imbalances in a person’s intake of energy and/or nutrients. Being overweight, obese or suffering from diet-related noncommunicable diseases, as well as micronutrient deficiencies, were equally critical.

The core strength of countries resided in their populations. It was imperative to fulfil their nutritional needs to ensure their holistic wellbeing. Nutrition was one of the 41 focus areas identified as part of the Strategy for New India@75. In 2013, the National Food Security Act was introduced, which changed the approach to food security from a welfare-based issue to a rights-based issue. The law ensured that households in up to 75% of the population in rural areas and 50% in urban areas received adequate quantities of quality food. In 2018, the National Nutrition Mission aimed to deliver a package of high-impact interventions in the first 1000 days of a child’s life. In light of the debilitating food security situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government had provided 800 million people with 5 kg of foodgrains and 1 kg of preferred pulses for free every month since April 2020. The Government was also enhancing the nutritional levels in produce by making agricultural and water resources more productive, inclusive and sustainable. Concerted efforts, guided policies and strong implementation held the promise of a better and healthier world. Achieving the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under five years of age by 2025, which was Target 2.2 of the SDGs, should serve as a source of inspiration.

**A representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran** said that his country had low levels of undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies and overnutrition; however, one third of children and adolescents were overweight or obese. His country had increased the capacity of its health ministry and state welfare organization to adopt and implement an evidence-based mother and child nutrition approach. The aim was to promote key nutrition-related interventions and national food fortification programmes. The adoption of an effective approach would help to improve brain development, reduce disparities in health and education, and reduce the risk of chronic diseases in children.

**The Moderator** asked Mr. Tontisirin what interventions would provide parliamentarians with the biggest impact in terms of delivery.

**Mr. K. Tontisirin** (Thailand), said that interventions depended on the context of constituents and the localization of activity. He recommended that actions should start with a single problem, such as iron deficiency or stunting, in a specific area, then gradually move to broader issues. Step-by-step actions would eventually lead to actions and issues becoming part of public policy.

**The Moderator** recalled that the overriding theme of the 145th IPU Assembly was gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments. She asked Ms. Verburg how progress on gender equality could be made through the lens of nutrition.

**Ms. G. Verburg** (Coordinator, SUN Movement) said that parliaments should focus efforts on promoting breastfeeding; breast was best in the first six months of a child’s life. Parliaments also needed to be strong champions of equality. Women were brilliant agents of change, but all too often, the burden of bringing solutions to the table fell on their shoulders. She agreed with Mr. Tontisirin on the importance of focusing on community-based actions. There was still a culture in many communities where women ate last, even when pregnant. Improvements could be made by working with families, especially fathers, and raising awareness through education initiatives. Nevertheless, it was important for parliaments to use their institutional powers and allocate appropriate budgets.

**The Moderator**, recalling that the elderly were often left out of the conversation on nutrition, and in light of the remark on women eating last, said that the two topics could be combined. Increasing numbers of women were staying in the workplace for longer. Women also experienced the menopause, which had specific nutritional implications. She asked what parliamentarians needed to know and what they should be doing in regard to the nutritional needs of older women.

**Mr. K. Tontisirin** (Thailand), responding to the Moderator, said that nutrition was fundamental for good health and wellbeing. No population groups should be ignored. The elderly also required nutritional guidance, both within households and in communities. Various age groups could be the focus of additional step-by-step actions. An excellent and effective health programme would promote longevity and quality of life.

**Ms. G. Verburg** (Coordinator, SUN Movement) said that older women were generous, because if asked, they would prefer for investment to focus on young women, as they believed younger women were still able to bring life into the world.

Nutrition in the workplace should be a key focus point. Employers needed to invest in nutritious meals for employees and ensure that pregnant women had suitable places to breastfeed their children. Companies that provided workforce nutrition viewed the issue as an investment, which resulted in less sickness leave and facilitated recruitment. There was nothing more beautiful than producing products that could serve happy and well-nourished people.

**The Moderator** encouraged participants to share their experiences on leveraging partnerships or on strengthening the roles of parliamentarians and parliaments.

**Ms. G. Verburg** (Coordinator, SUN Movement) said that preventing hunger and malnutrition was a matter of political will that started with the accountability of governments, followed by the institutional power of parliaments. Governments and parliaments could not act alone. There was a need for intersectoral and inter-ministry initiatives. The SUN Movement had helped to build capacity and facilitate cooperation between various stakeholder groups in 65 countries.

She made several suggestions to leverage partnerships further. First, stakeholders and civil society organizations needed to work together to lobby governments and raise awareness. Second, action from the private sector was needed to ensure food was more nutritious, with lower levels of fat or sugar. Obesity was becoming a devastating problem all around the world. Third, donors, investors and the United Nations needed to work together. Partnerships were vital. When progress had been made, it was important to celebrate the contributions of all stakeholders to build trust.

**Mr. M.H. Syed** (Pakistan) said that his country was suffering from very severe and devastating floods. Millions of children were suffering from chronic hunger and malnutrition. Pakistan had established an informal troika, comprising the Government, national civil society organizations and international non-governmental organizations. Food kitchens were very common in his country. Additional kitchens had been established to ensure that nobody died of hunger. The troika had been very successful, but it was nevertheless a work in progress. He thanked the international community for their solidarity and support during the difficult times faced by his country.

**The Moderator** asked how individual parliamentarians could champion the issue of nutrition.

**Mr. K. Tontisirin** (Thailand), responding to the Moderator, said that compassion and empathy were the starting points in understanding the complex issue of nutrition. Remedial actions should subsequently be adopted, followed by local, national and global partnerships. Support from professionals and civil society were needed, in addition to public-private partnerships. He urged delegates to focus on the quality of life of their populations. It was easy to talk about nutrition, but action was needed.

**Ms. G. Verburg** (Coordinator, SUN Movement) said that nutrition was a very complex issue. She wanted all parliaments to consider nutrition as the engine of life. She encouraged participants to follow up with Mr. Tontisirin on the components of a successful community-based programme and on how to find community-level champions in their own countries. Further pragmatic and action-oriented guidance could be found in the *Handbook for parliamentarians on food systems and nutrition*.

**The Moderator** thanked all participants for their contributions.

*The event ended at 10:30.*

## Workshop on the Rights of the Child

### *Child-friendly parliaments: The case for stronger parliamentary action in support of child rights*

FRIDAY, 14 OCTOBER 2022

(Afternoon)

*The event was called to order at 14:35 by Ms. S. Kiladze, member of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, as the Moderator.*

**The Moderator** welcomed participants and commended the IPU for its efforts in putting child rights at the heart of its activities. Parliaments could play a crucial role in the protection and promotion of child rights. She drew attention to four important areas in that regard. First, parliaments made and changed laws. There was significant opportunity to develop holistic approaches to child rights and mainstream the issue. Second, parliaments monitored the activities of the executive and judicial branches, any gaps could therefore be identified and addressed accordingly to better protect children. Third, their budgetary function allowed for sufficient resources to be allocated. Lastly, parliaments helped to raise awareness and understanding of child rights among constituents. She encouraged participants to share good practices from their countries as to how parliaments could be strengthened as institutions to mainstream all issues affecting child protection and child rights, so as not to depend on individual enthusiastic parliamentarians.

**Mr. P.H. Katjavivi** (Namibia) said that giving a voice to young people was not a new idea. All United Nations organizations had previously spoken about focusing on the needs and aspirations of young people, as well as providing the means for them to have a voice. Young people needed to be heard. Parliaments could only be considered child-friendly if they allowed young people to speak for themselves. Children should be provided with the means and opportunity to share their views. Furthermore, the views of young people needed to be communicated to the executive branch and government ministries so they could influence the decision-making process. Children were the future custodians of the universe, therefore decisions needed to be taken in their best interests. Parliaments should be more accessible and relate to young people.

The Children's Parliament programme at the National Assembly of Namibia, supported by non-governmental organizations, provided such a platform for young people. Children from across Namibia came together on an annual basis to debate issues that affected them. They could talk about the challenges they faced and compel the Government to take appropriate action. Through the programme experience, many young people had grown in confidence and become much more focused on championing specific issues. Previous participants now occupied key positions in the government or within the private sector. The involvement of children helped in the process of identifying issues and adding value to decisions. The programme played a prominent role in allowing children to endorse issues that were important in promoting the welfare of young people, in addition to reinforcing key international conventions, such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Laws could not be shaped in a vacuum. The involvement and experience of young people added value to the process of creating legislation. Over the years, various IPU programmes had allowed young people to interact with peers from around the world, learn from one another and benchmark different experiences.

Successful child-friendly parliaments had given young people the opportunity to express their views, providing a framework within which to solve societal issues and promote the rights and welfare of children. Namibia had benefited from its child-friendly parliament; a programme that could be emulated by others. Parliaments were an important vehicle in engaging young people and establishing a sense of responsibility and accountability.

**The Moderator** said that Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child focused on the participation of young people and the consideration of their views. It was very often underestimated.

**Mr. L. Dushimimana** (Chair of the Committee on Political Affairs and Governance of the Parliament of Rwanda) said that, as the main institutions representing populations, parliaments needed to represent the interests of all groups in society. Such representation should translate into relevant policies that were applied effectively. Parliamentarians needed to be the first champions in protecting children, with the rights of the child being a key focus in the policies of all countries. The role of parliamentarians was to influence the actions and decisions of governments, adopt laws and reorient public opinion. Parliaments should also consider the allocation of sufficient financial resources for the effective application of policies and actions.

The Government of Rwanda had adopted numerous policies that focused on education, food and nutrition, and the right to be registered at birth. The policies had the aim of protecting children and reinforcing the essential role of families. The Parliament of Rwanda had appointed a network of parliamentarians to ensure that appropriate health care for mothers and children was provided, as well as raising awareness and the need to register newborns. Midterm evaluations ensured that the programme was taking appropriate actions.

Rwanda had acceded to and ratified several international instruments on the rights of the child. It was important for parliaments and national laws to offer the best protection to children. The Constitution of Rwanda guaranteed the rights of the child. In that context, various legislative instruments had been adopted to implement those constitutional rights. A national agency had also been established to coordinate the actions that contribute to the protection of children and their wellbeing.

Parliaments should not have reservations on collaborating with civil society organizations, in particular on the issue of protecting children. Such collaboration provided access to significant amounts of data and experience. Parliaments needed to provide for the active participation of children and young people in their work.

He wished to quote former UNICEF Executive Director Carol Bellamy, who had said: “History will judge us harshly if we refuse to use our knowledge, our resources and our will to ensure that each new member of the human family arrives into a world that honours and protects the invaluable, irreplaceable years of childhood”. The resulting judgement would be more severe if parliaments did not make child-friendly decisions.

**Ms. E. Jailosi Jolobala** (Malawi), recalling that Malawi was a party to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, said that her country had organized youth parliaments, in coordination with development partners, to mainstream the issues faced by children. Following sessions of the youth parliaments, children could put forward their own resolutions for consideration by the National Assembly. Malawi also worked with civil society organizations, including a children’s commission board. As the board was established on behalf of children, they needed to be represented. Young people could become part of the board.

Further work was needed within communities and constituencies to raise awareness of the importance of child rights. Some children were being denied education at certain schools based on religious principles. The National Assembly needed to be able to reach out to leaders of those schools and other stakeholders to ensure that access to education remained uninhibited. To that end, parliamentarians in Malawi were in the process of establishing a caucus to give a platform for community-level issues and traditions to be raised.

**The Moderator** said that the inclusion of children in national parliaments was very important. The issue of child rights in relation to religion was very significant in many countries.

**Ms. E. Azad** (Islamic Republic of Iran), recalling that Iran had ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, said that her country had acceded to the Convention’s Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. Children needed to be considered as equal human beings in order to ensure respect for human dignity.

Her country was deeply concerned about the situation of children in armed conflicts and unrest in various parts of the world. The instigation of war by certain countries and their efforts to sell weapons to those governments had deprived children of financial, developmental, educational, health and security infrastructure. Unilateral coercive measures and economic warfare were other examples of how the economic, social, educational and developmental rights of children were being violated. Parliamentarians needed to take action in dealing with gross violations and prevent crimes from being committed by dictators who had mocked human and child rights.



More than 22 million people were under the age of 18 in Iran, representing about 30% of the total population. In that context, the Parliament of Iran had taken legislative action in recent years to recognize and consider the rights of young people.

**Ms. M. Baba Moussa Soumanou** (Benin) said that, traditionally, children in Benin were not granted rights as such. In certain regions, children were given to distant family members or friends in the promise of receiving a good education. In certain cases, children needed to contribute to the household and were forced to work. Work deprived children of their rights. Poverty was the primary cause. Along with many non-governmental organizations, the Government in Benin was working on combating such practices and raising awareness among parents.

Benin had ratified several international conventions, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Further legislative actions had been planned on a minimum age for workers to prevent children from working. Numerous poverty-related projects working with women and children in particular had been put in place. Child labour was a form of mistreatment and abuse. It was important to combat child labour to ensure the full respect of child rights. Intervention by the Government, along with assistance from non-governmental organizations, would have an impact in the long term by ensuring that future generations did not grow up believing that such practices were accepted. It was important for parents to provide for the needs of their children.

**The Moderator** said that child labour and child abuse had damaging effects on the rights of children and were significant issues that affected many societies. She hoped that the National Assembly of Benin would undertake measures to bring down the high number of such cases.

**Mr. K. Sharma** (India), recalling that 39% of the population of India was under the age of 18, said that children were the most important assets to any country. The Constitution of India set out obligations for the government to make necessary provisions to advance the rights and wellbeing of children. The need to promote greater child responsiveness had been recognized in national policy on children. It was crucial that attention was focused on vulnerable children and child labour. COVID-19 had increased the risk to and vulnerabilities of children. Applicable welfare measures and additional financial resources were needed in that regard.

India upheld a range of international instruments and decisions on the rights of children, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention of the International Labour Organization. Additional measures had been taken to eliminate the worst forms of child labour and deliver on the basic rights of children.

It was widely acknowledged that investing in children contributed significantly to inclusive and sustainable human development. Progress on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) required the involvement of children. The Parliament of India had enacted legislation that focused on the welfare, development and interests of children. The problems faced by children, in particular on matters relating to health, education, and protection from exploitation and abuse, had been brought to the attention of the Government by parliamentarians.

Legislatures were one of the key political arenas to effectively advocate for greater and equitable allocation of resources to advance child rights. They played a crucial role in preparing legal and fiscal frameworks and incorporating the needs of children into government policies. Parliamentarians at all levels needed to unite in their efforts to create a peaceful and more productive environment that was conducive to the development of children.

**Ms. A.D. Gomashie** (Ghana) said that it was clear that many countries had ratified conventions on issues that affected their countries. Ghana had done the same. In her role as a parliamentarian, she not only focused on what Ghana was doing for children, but also what the world was doing for children in light of current circumstances. The world had changed and become more technologically advanced. Children were exposed to the internet and social media. While those tools presented opportunities, they also had an impact on mental wellbeing. She was interested to see what the Committee on the Rights of the Child would do in that regard. She asked if what children were being exposed to online would ensure they became responsible adults and not put them at a disadvantage.

Every child in Ghana had the right to go to school. However, not every child was able to access education. Her country was working hard in that regard. Consideration should also be given to the fact that education was not only what was taught in schools, but also what was taught by parents. Children learned about trade, commerce, business and skills from their parents. She asked if such actions in Ghana would be considered as child labour. Labelling education actions

conducted in developing countries as child labour was dehumanizing. It was important to talk about that issue alongside discussions on the rights of the child. Children needed to learn about their responsibilities, not just their rights.

In recent times, her constituency had faced the effects of climate change and global warming, which were affecting the livelihoods of parents. If a State was not in a position to assist under such circumstances, then parents would not be able to care for their children. The world needed to think about ways of engaging parents and creating more opportunities for decent work to ensure parents could take care of their children.

**Ms. W. Aljumaily** (Iraq) said that children represented the future of the life of all nations. Iraq had signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child but had previously expressed reservations in regard to Article 14 of the Convention, as it contravened Islamic teachings in terms of the freedom of the child to choose a religion other than that of the parents.

Children in Iraq were suffering as a result of the terrorist attacks by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), also known as Daesh, especially in areas it occupied. Children were being recruited and used as part of their attacks. Attempts had been made to pass laws on violence within families because of the ill treatment suffered by children. He called for coordination of efforts between parliaments so that legislation and views about the welfare of children around the world could be exchanged.

**Ms. L. Witbooi** (Namibia) said that the needs and interests of children were always put first in Namibia. New legislation had recently been introduced to address issues that affected children, as well as to workshops to make improvements to other laws. She recalled several actions that Namibia had implemented in regard to child rights. First, Namibia was part of international instruments, such as the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child. Second, Namibia organized children's parliaments. Third, the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare was working specifically on the different challenges faced by children, in coordination with other stakeholders and ministries. Fourth, government- and private-run children's homes had been set up to take care of neglected children. Fifth, her Government was working with various non-governmental organizations to help children and women who found themselves in abusive circumstances. Sixth, the country celebrated the International Day of the African Child on 16 June and the Day of the Namibian Child on 28 September every year. Seventh, there was active discouragement of child marriages. A report in that regard and its impact on children would be published soon. Eighth, multiple grants were in place to address specific needs, such as disability or maintenance. Recent work had also looked at specifically addressing the challenges of child trafficking.

**Mr. D. Nzeyimana** (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa) said everyone in the world needed a legal identity. Theoretically speaking, a child's rights began at birth. Newborns needed to be added to national registers so they could be visible, recognized and counted. It was a human right to be recognized and counted. Only 50% of children were visible in Africa, and 30% globally. The root cause for such figures was that legal frameworks did not reflect current realities. Certain national laws did not allow women to register a birth with a civil registration authority without her husband. Political will was also weak. No proper resources were allocated to systems that could provide real-time data. Governments needed to invest resources to ensure people were registered accurately. The registers could similarly be used during elections, for planning or on health-care programmes. The issues of child marriage and child labour could not be prevented if a child's age remained unknown. Investment of resources was needed to combat such issues.

**The Moderator** said that civil society organizations played an important role in identifying challenges. Cooperation could provide very tangible results. There was sometimes disagreement on views, but that was part of the democratic process.

**Ms. O. Aymadji** (Chad) said that Chad was experiencing multiple issues in relation to the rights of children. First, children were often faced with the prospect of death at birth. Infant mortality was a significant problem, with about 80 deaths per 1000 live births. There were layers in society where many men did not want their wives to be treated by male medical staff at health-care facilities. Second, schooling remained almost theoretical, as children were often needed to support families and households. Third, many older children ended up being exploited or forced into work if they moved away from rural areas into urban centres in search for a better life. Fourth, girls in

particular were forced into marriages or underwent female genital mutilation, which was considered a tradition and frequently took place in rural areas. Fifth, about half of children in Chad did not have a birth certificate and did not officially exist. There was no mandatory rule to register children at birth.

Progress was being made on those issues. Chad had signed many international conventions and agreements. However, implementation remained problematic because of traditions that contrasted with legislation. In terms of education, a specific focus had been placed on girls, with spaces being established specifically for them. Boys were also encouraged to take up tasks around the home. There was also a law against child marriage. Girls now needed to be at least 18 years of age before they could marry. Child marriages, however, were still taking place, as ages on documents were being changed to circumvent the law. A bill had also been introduced to protect children in polygamous families. In some religions, children were not recognized if born outside of a marriage or if families did not accept certain marriages.

**Ms. L.T. Kandetu** (Namibia) said that the Children's Parliament programme in Namibia provided the opportunity for children to tell the nation what they wanted to see and what they wanted to change, in particular on issues such as abortion, child marriage and teenage pregnancies. The topic of providing grants, as mentioned previously, had come from the programme. The Children's Parliament programme had therefore proved to be successful in Namibia. To that end, her country stood ready to share its experience and any pertinent information with other delegations.

**The Moderator** thanked all participants for their contributions. Many good examples of initiatives had been taken by both parliamentarians and parliaments to promote child rights and protect children. Challenges remained to be addressed in order to deliver tangible results in protecting child rights.

*The event ended at 16:05.*

## Workshop organized jointly by the IPU and the Association of Secretaries General of Parliament

### *Indicators for democratic parliaments: Indicator 1.1: Parliamentary autonomy*

**SATURDAY, 15 OCTOBER**

(Morning)

*The event was called to order at 11:20 with Mr. A. Richardson (IPU Secretariat) in the Chair.*

**Mr. J.P. Montero** (Uruguay), Vice-President of the Association of Secretaries General of Parliament (ASGP), welcomed participants to the workshop on the topic of parliamentary autonomy. The workshop would be an opportunity for participants to discuss the level of parliamentary autonomy in their own parliaments on the basis of the preliminary version of the new *Indicators for democratic parliaments based on SDG Targets 16.6 and 16.7*.

**The Chair**, accompanying his remarks with a digital slide presentation, said that the IPU had been working with a number of international and civil society organizations to develop a framework of indicators for democratic parliaments. The indicators had grown out of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Target 16.6 on effective, accountable and transparent institutions and Target 16.7 on responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making, which were specifically relevant for parliaments. The aim of the indicators was to assist parliaments in assessing their performance and capacity in the areas covered by the two SDG targets. The assessment process would be owned and led by parliaments themselves. It was not an external judgment or ranking of parliaments. The framework was broken down into several levels (SDG targets, sub-targets, indicators, dimensions and assessment criteria) and would be valid for all parliaments as well as for the parliamentary community as a whole.

The main focus of the current workshop was to test indicator 1.1 on parliamentary autonomy. Indicator 1.1 fell under sub-target 1 on effective parliaments, which in turn fell under SDG Target 16.6. The indicator had four dimensions, namely institutional autonomy, procedural autonomy, budgetary autonomy and administrative autonomy. The workshop would be a practical session in which participants would work in small groups to assess their own parliaments against the different dimensions of the indicator. They should also provide feedback on the indicator itself and consider how the indicator could be useful for parliaments.

A preliminary version of the framework of indicators was in the public domain. The IPU had been gathering feedback in online focus groups and testing exercises. He invited Mr. Laurence Smyth, who had participated in one of the online focus groups, to provide an idea of what the testing process looked like.

**Mr. L. Laurence Smyth** (United Kingdom) said that he had participated in an online focus group for indicator 3.3 on access to parliaments. Participants had been able to see where their parliaments were doing well and where they were not. Several concerns had been raised, including the need to define limits on democratic protest. Parliaments must be open to everybody but must also be safe.

It was incredibly valuable to have an external benchmark towards which to strive. The IPU wished to give parliaments a structure while also allowing them flexibility to adapt to their own realities. As such, the indicators contained a mix of description and prescription.

**The Chair** said that the Senate of Pakistan was one of the first to be conducting an assessment of its own institutions based on the preliminary indicators. He invited Mr. Salman (Pakistan) to offer a few remarks about the process.

**Mr. M. Salman** (Pakistan) said that the Senate of Pakistan was the first parliamentary institution in Asia to be testing the preliminary indicators. It had set up a steering committee made up of three Senators to oversee the process and tasked a specialized parliamentary development

unit with carrying out the assessment. The unit had recently classified the targets, sub-targets, indicators, dimensions and assessment criteria in accordance with the directorates of the Senate. It would disseminate all the assessment documents to the directorates by mid-October 2022 with a view to gathering input. A follow-up consultation would be held with directorates once the inputs had been received. The final report was expected to be ready by mid-November 2022.

**Ms. T. Chugoshvili** (IPU Secretariat) said that she wished to proceed to the practical part of the workshop. She drew attention to the document entitled *Indicator 1.1 – Parliamentary Autonomy*. Four dimensions fell under indicator 1.1, namely institutional autonomy, procedural autonomy, budgetary autonomy and administrative autonomy. Participants would first test the dimension on institutional autonomy.

The section entitled *Dimension 1.1.1 Institutional autonomy* was divided into three parts: “About the dimension”, “Assessment” and “Recommendations for change”. Participants were invited to read the part entitled “About the dimension” and offer their feedback on the content and format of the text. They were encouraged to indicate the following: (1) whether the paragraphs and text box on the aspiring goal were clear; and (2) whether any part of the text was not applicable to their parliament.

**Mr. L. Laurence Smyth** (United Kingdom) said that the language around having a clear separation of powers was based on the United States Congress and did not reflect the realities of many countries. Indeed, the United Kingdom and many Commonwealth countries had a blended model where the functions of government and parliament overlapped. In that model, ministers, for instance, were full voting members of the legislature.

**Mr. A. Thimbo** (Senegal) agreed completely with what had been said on administrative and budgetary autonomy. In Senegal, parliamentary sessions, including inaugural sessions, were convened on the initiative of the Bureau of the National Assembly.

**A representative of India** agreed with Mr. Laurence Smyth that many democracies did not have a strict concept of the separation of powers. In India, the separation of powers between the executive, legislature and judiciary was enshrined in the Constitution. However, ministers were also elected Members of Parliament.

**Mr. C. Robert** (Canada) said that the executive and legislature had separate responsibilities but were blended together in the Westminster system. The only part of the system with a clear separation of power was the judiciary.

**Mr. B.R. Gautam** (Nepal) said that, in the Westminster system, political parties issued the whip, compelling their parliamentarians to follow the party line or otherwise face sanctions. It was very difficult to achieve parliamentary autonomy in that situation.

**Ms. M.J. Costa** (Portugal) said that the concept of the separation of powers set out a clear distinction between the executive and legislature. It meant that no one could be a Member of Parliament and a member of the government at the same time. The constitutional court guaranteed the separation of powers and should be the one to ensure balance if competencies overlapped.

**Ms. T. Chugoshvili** (IPU Secretariat) said that there was another dimension under a different indicator which assessed the role of the judiciary.

The next part of the section on institutional autonomy was “Assessment”. It laid out three assessment criteria, namely constitutional authority, legislative framework and practice of the legislature. Each assessment criterion was accompanied by a grading scale, which ranged from non-existent to excellent. There was also a list of evidence that could be used to back up the grades. Participants should read the part entitled “Assessment” and indicate: (1) whether it was clear and easy to grade their parliaments; and (2) whether it would be manageable to collect the evidence suggested.

**Mr. M.I. Etman** (Egypt) said that, as per the Constitution, the legislative power was completely separate from the executive power in Egypt. The executive did not interfere in the work of the legislature except in the calling of inaugural sessions, which was done by the President.

**Mr. A. Manaa** (Egypt) said that the separation of powers was enshrined in the Constitution of Egypt which expressly affirmed the autonomy of the legislature. As such, it was prohibited for any Member of Parliament to be a member of government. The separation of powers could also be observed in practice.

**A representative of India** said that legislative autonomy was enshrined in the Constitution of India. The House of the People and the Council of States were separate entities with autonomous secretariats that could regulate their own functions. There was no interference in the passing of laws or in the preparation of the budget. That said, the President was able to promulgate ordinances whenever the house was not in session.

**Ms. M.J. Costa** (Portugal) said that assessment criteria No. 1 and 2 were relatively easy to apply because they were concerned with concrete measures, such as laws. However, assessment criterion No. 3 was more abstract, making it difficult to collect evidence. A clearer explanation should be provided, accompanied by tangible examples.

**Ms. P. Tyawa** (South Africa) said that a description of each of the grades should be provided so that participants were clear on their meaning. She agreed that assessment criterion No. 3 could pose some challenges.

**Mr. B.R. Gautam** (Nepal) said that the grading scale would be easier to understand if accompanied by a numerical system. Participants should be able to score their parliaments from 0 to 10. The IPU might wish to align “0”, “1 to 2”, “3 to 4”, “5 to 6”, “7 to 8”, “9 to 10” with “non-existent”, “poor”, “basic”, “good”, “very good” and “excellent” respectively.

**Ms. T. Chugoshvili** (IPU Secretariat) said that the final part of the section on institutional autonomy was “Recommendations for change” which aimed to encourage parliaments to think about improvements. There was not enough time to discuss the final part in the present meeting. However, participants were usually asked to identify whether the assessment exercise had helped them identify potential improvements in their parliaments.

**The Chair** said that participants would next be divided into small groups to discuss the three remaining dimensions under indicator 1.1 on parliamentary autonomy. They were *Dimension 1.1.2 – Procedural autonomy*, *Dimension 1.1.3 – Budgetary autonomy* and *Dimension 1.1.4 – Administrative autonomy*. The testing process would be exactly the same as above. He invited participants to challenge themselves by going deep into the assessment criteria and evidence rather than simply stating what was set out in their constitutions.

*The participants were divided into groups to discuss the remaining indicators.*

**The Chair** invited participants to share their observations.

**Ms. B.N. Dithapo** (Botswana), making her remarks about procedural autonomy, said that the part entitled “About the dimension” covered almost everything regarding house procedures. However, the reference to the “consequences of legislation” was rather ambiguous and should be further refined.

Assessment criteria No. 1 and 2 were adequate. It was easy to identify evidence for those criteria, such as legislation or constitutional provisions.

Overall, the grading scale should be further refined. One possible solution could be to link the scale to the evidence. There was a need to define what exactly was meant by the grades so that all participants were on the same page.

**Mr. J. Nyegenye** (Kenya) said that concerns had arisen regarding assessment criterion No. 4 of the dimension on procedural autonomy, particularly regarding the word “consistency”. A parliament did not need to be consistent in its procedures to be considered autonomous. As long as the parliament itself was making and implementing the procedures then it could be said to have procedural autonomy.

**The Chair** said that Mr. Nyegenye had highlighted an important nuance. From the point of view of the drafters, consistency was about predictability, where established procedures were expected to be followed.

**Mr. S. Touré** (Guinea) said that his group was composed of Canada, Chad, Guinea, Madagascar, Rwanda and Senegal. All countries had enshrined the separation of powers in their constitutions and recognized the concept of budgetary autonomy. Administrative personnel were autonomous in all countries except Rwanda.

Canada had a system close to the British one but was planning to introduce electoral reforms that would improve the separation of powers.

In Madagascar, a gap existed between what was enshrined in law and what was done in practice. For instance, the separation of powers was enshrined in law but exercised at the discretion of the executive.

Chad had an autonomous budget but was financially dependent on the oil industry. There was a parliamentary committee that monitored the budget. Government ministers were not always available for parliamentary scrutiny but provided documents for examination instead.

In Senegal, the executive did not interfere in the appointment of the Secretary General, which was done by the parliamentary bureau. Ministers could stand for election but must resign from their ministerial position to do so.

Guinea was currently in a transition phase with a transitional charter that provided for the separation of powers. The Transitional National Council was therefore independent. Administrative autonomy did exist in Guinea. However, the budget process was carried out under the surveillance of the President of the Transitional National Council.

In Rwanda, the executive did not interfere in the work of the legislature, as set out in the rules of procedure. The management of staff fell under the public administration function.

**The Chair** said that Mr. Touré had drawn attention to the gap that could exist between law and practice. It was important to consider ways to reduce that gap.

**A representative of Algeria** said that his group was composed of representatives from Egypt and Algeria who had looked at budgetary autonomy. Regarding assessment criterion No. 1, the separation of powers was enshrined in the Constitutions of both countries. Financial autonomy was not explicitly mentioned in the Constitution of Egypt but did appear in an organic law of Algeria related to the relationship between government and parliament. Assessment criterion No. 2 was not completely clear. Neither country had a clear framework that defined the extent to which the legislature had control over its own financing and resources. Regarding assessment criterion No. 3, the Parliament of Egypt carried out all controls of the budget internally. There was no external body with the power to do so. The Parliament of Algeria had internal bodies that carried out the controls as well as an external body called the Accountability Council. Regarding assessment criterion No. 4, the parliament was the body responsible for expenses in the case of Egypt and Algeria.

**Mr. A. Manaa** (Egypt), referring to assessment criteria No. 1 and 2 under institutional autonomy, asked whether there were any countries with a non-existent legislative framework because he did not believe there were.

**The Chair** said that participants had provided some very interesting comments, particularly with regard to the grading scale. The scale had initially been a numerical scale but had been changed to words. It was difficult to create a scale that was clear and usable across the board. Participants should share any further observations with the IPU Secretariat after the meeting. In closing, he asked participants to indicate how they might conduct an exercise to test the indicators in their own parliaments.

**Mr. C. Robert** (Canada) said that it would be tremendously valuable as an audit exercise for each parliament to assess their own effectiveness based on the indicators. Different parts of the administration could look at the indicators and make a judgment. The indicators were very comprehensive even if they did not fully match the realities of every country. He would be quite willing to put the idea of conducting such an audit to the provincial and territorial legislatures of Canada.

**Ms. P. Tyawa** (South Africa) said that, for audit purposes, her Parliament had a strategy with indicators which was driven administratively. However, the IPU indicators on aspects such as law-making and oversight should be the responsibility of members of parliament. Her Parliament was working on developing a strategy for members but would need to take baby steps in that regard. It would mean evaluating committee work, measuring public participation and assessing impact on the community.

**The Chair** said that the indicators were for parliaments in all their components, both administrative and legislative, and thus would necessarily involve members.

The IPU would be holding more online focus groups in the coming weeks and encouraged Secretaries General to take part. Any parliament wanting to conduct an assessment of their institutions should get in touch. The IPU would be happy to provide support.

*The event ended at 13:00.*



## Adoption of resolutions, final documents and reports

### SITTING OF SATURDAY, 15 OCTOBER

(Afternoon)

*The sitting was called to order at 16:35 with Ms. D. Mukabalisa, President of the Assembly, in the Chair.*

#### Presentation of the IPU Cremer-Passy Prize

**The President of the IPU** said that the IPU was, for the first time, giving out the IPU Cremer-Passy Prize. The prize was named after the two founders of the IPU and would be awarded to parliamentarians who had made an exceptional contribution to IPU values, such as peace and diplomacy. A selection committee had been set up which was composed of former IPU Presidents. Usually, the prize would be awarded to one parliamentarian. However, for its first edition, as an exception, the selection committee had chosen two winners – one parliamentarian of each gender. The winners were: Ms. Cynthia Iliana López Castro (Mexico) and Mr. Ruslan Stefanchuk (Ukraine).

Ms. López Castro had been a Member of the Chamber of Deputies of Mexico since 2018. She was a firm believer in the power of youth as an agent for positive change. In 2017, at the age of 30, Ms. López Castro had helped draft a new Constitution for Mexico City. She was also one of the main supporters for the inclusion of a youth quota in the city's electoral law. At the IPU, Ms. López Castro actively promoted the engagement of youth in politics through her membership of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians. She was also an active member of the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs and had represented the IPU in several high-level UN meetings. Overall, she was a champion of youth participation in politics.

Mr. Stefanchuk, Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, had been awarded the prize on behalf of all Ukrainian members of parliament. The prize recognized their commitment to their parliamentary duties despite the ongoing war in their country. Even in such difficult circumstances, they continued to represent their constituents and to debate and make laws. Special mention went to IPU office holders, including Ms. Vasylenko (Ukraine), President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians.

**Ms. C.I. López Castro** (Mexico) said that, at eight years old, she had visited the Mexican Congress for the first time and had known then that she would return one day as a congresswoman. Now, she had been a congresswoman on four different occasions at both the local and federal levels. A large part of her work had been about advocating for youth quotas in elections. Young parliamentarians were not always able to get their voices heard but, by joining efforts, they could make a place for themselves in politics. She encouraged young parliamentarians to keep up their good work. Parliaments needed fresh minds and ideas.

It was a proud moment to receive the Cremer-Passy Prize in recognition of the struggle for youth representation. She thanked the IPU, especially its President and Secretary General, for giving voice to young parliamentarians. She dedicated her prize to young parliamentarians around the world, including those with whom she collaborated at the IPU.

**Mr. A. Gerasymov** (Ukraine), speaking on behalf of Mr. Stefanchuk, wished to express his sincere gratitude to the IPU for recognizing the extraordinary efforts of Ukrainian parliamentarians. On 24 February 2022, the first day of the full-scale invasion, Ukrainian parliamentarians had convened in the parliamentary building to take all necessary decisions despite the risk of a missile attack. They had continued to do the same throughout the entire invasion. That said, he wished to dedicate the prize, first and foremost, to the Ukrainian people. Ukrainians had shown great resistance and courage in the fight for peace and security. They were fighting not only for Ukraine but for the entire world.

Emergency item

**The President** said that, during the Assembly, delegates had adopted the emergency item resolution entitled *Condemnation of the invasion of Ukraine and of the subsequent annexation of territories, in defence of the territorial integrity of all States*. It was a matter of urgency to end the suffering and destruction happening in Ukraine and to return to the rules-based order set out in the Charter of the United Nations. The situation was very serious with global implications at several levels – financial, environmental, humanitarian and from the perspective of peace and security. Parliamentarians must redouble their efforts to overcome the unprecedented crisis, including by tapping into the full potential of parliamentary diplomacy. She encouraged the IPU Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine to pursue efforts in the exercise of its very important mandate.

Item 3 of the agenda

**Kigali Declaration on Gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments  
as drivers of change for a more resilient and peaceful world**  
(A/145/3-DR)

**The President** said that substantive and robust deliberations had taken place on the theme of the General Debate with some 150 interventions from close to 120 national parliaments and partner organizations. She invited Ms. Nyirasafari (Rwanda) and Mr. Flores (Chile) to introduce the outcome document entitled the Kigali Declaration – *Gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments as drivers of change for a more resilient and peaceful world*.

**Ms. E. Nyirasafari** (Rwanda) and **Mr. I. Flores** (Chile) said that the Kigali Declaration was the outcome of the rich, insightful and inspiring General Debate that had taken place during the 145th IPU Assembly. The topic of gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments was in need of urgent attention. Indeed, the world was going through a number of crises none of which were gender neutral. Gender equality was key to confronting any crisis, whether it be a pandemic, conflict or economic recession.

Parliaments must take five actions on gender equality with a view to driving peace and resilience: (1) achieve gender parity in political decision-making, including by using 50/50 quotas; (2) ensure that law-making, law-enforcement and budgeting were gender-sensitive across all policy areas; (3) put vulnerable populations at the centre of parliamentary work; (4) end gender-based discrimination, violence and other harmful practices, and ensure access to sexual and reproductive health, rights and justice for all women and girls; and (5) advance equality in caring responsibilities and set an example by undertaking 50% of the daily care work in families of MPs regardless of gender.

The 10th anniversary of the IPU *Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments* was a good time to recommit to the cause of gender-sensitive parliaments. Parliamentarians must be more ambitious than they had been 10 years ago. For instance, gender-sensitive parliaments must now be tech-savvy and environmentally friendly. The Member Parliaments of the IPU had pledged 10 actions to make parliaments more gender-sensitive over the next 10 years: (1) assess the level of gender-sensitivity in parliament; (2) create a steering committee to drive gender-responsive reforms; (3) include women from all socioeconomic groups; (4) empower gender equality committees and women's groups; (5) establish gender-balance across all parliamentary structures; (6) engage men as allies of gender equality; (7) incorporate gender perspectives in all parliamentary work; (8) conduct gender audits of legislation, policies and budgets; (9) build caring parliaments as models for society by providing for the needs of male and female parliamentarians and staff; and (10) eliminate sexism, harassment and violence against women from parliament. Parliamentarians were encouraged to be bold and determined in their efforts.

**The President** took it that the Assembly wished to endorse the Kigali Declaration.

*It was so decided.*

Item 4 of the agenda***Parliamentary impetus to local and regional development of countries with high levels of international migration and to stopping all forms, including state-sponsored, of human-trafficking and human rights abuses***

(Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights)  
(A/145/4-DR)

**Mr. A. Gajadien** (Suriname), President of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights, said that the draft resolution entitled *Parliamentary impetus to local and regional development of countries with high levels of international migration and to stopping all forms, including state-sponsored, of human-trafficking and human rights abuses* had been prepared by three co-Rapporteurs from Germany, Indonesia, and Uruguay. On 11 October, the Committee had held a debate on the resolution followed by a discussion on amendments. A total of 91 amendments had been received from 19 delegations and 2 from the Forum of Women Parliamentarians. There had been a great deal of discussion about whether to include references to specific countries. The matter had been resolved through a vote.

On 14 October, the Committee had adopted the revised resolution by consensus without objections. However, a number of delegations had expressed reservations. The Czech Republic had expressed a reservation on operative paragraph 3. India had expressed a reservation on preambular paragraph 21. Kazakhstan had expressed a reservation on preambular paragraphs 9 and 10 as well as on operative paragraph 9. Qatar had expressed a reservation on the reference to labour mobility in operative paragraph 5. The Syrian Arab Republic had expressed a reservation on preambular paragraph 9. Türkiye had expressed a reservation on preambular paragraph 19. Hungary and Indonesia had expressed a reservation on the entire resolution while the Russian Federation had opposed the entire resolution. The resolution was an important step forward in the fight against human trafficking.

The Committee had agreed on the theme of its next resolution, namely *Orphanage trafficking: The role of parliaments in reducing harm* as proposed by Australia. A debate would be held at the next Assembly. A debate would also be held on the theme of disinformation and cyber harassment which would not lead to a resolution. Lastly, Members had received a document on the Committee's contribution to the IPU strategy 2022-2026 and had been encouraged to submit feedback.

**The President** took it that the Assembly wished to adopt the resolution.

*The resolution was adopted by consensus.*

**The President**, referring to Article 32.2 of the Rules of the Assembly, asked whether any delegation wished to explain their position.

**A representative of India** reiterated its reservation on preambular paragraph 21 of the resolution.

Item 5 of the agenda**Reports of the Standing Committees**

**Mr. M.M.A. Al-Ahbab** (Qatar), President of the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security, said that his Committee had met on 13 October and undertaken two activities. The first activity was a panel discussion on the theme, *The impact of war and atrocity on civilian populations*. The aim of the discussion was to show that war did not only affect soldiers but also civilians, particularly women and young people. The discussion had consisted of a moderated round table involving three experts who had addressed the topic from three perspectives: women, child soldiers and international humanitarian law. The round table had been followed by a debate with parliamentarians.

The second activity of the day had been a panel discussion on the theme *War and climate change as triggers of global food insecurity*. The discussion had also consisted of a moderated round table of experts followed by a debate. The experts had provided several recommendations on how parliaments could build resilience.

On 14 October, the Committee had held an expert hearing on the theme of the next resolution, *Cyberattacks and cybercrime: The new risks to global security*. The co-Rapporteurs Mr. Falaknaz (United Arab Emirates) and Mr. Cepeda (Spain) had updated the Committee on their work thus far. Their work had included participating in UN meetings, conducting a desk review and carrying out country visits. Three remote experts had then provided an overview of the cybersecurity situation worldwide. Lastly, parliamentarians had been given the floor to report their views and experiences.

The Bureau of the Committee had also met on 13 October where it had been presented with a working document on the Committee's contribution to the new IPU Strategy. Members had agreed to provide feedback as soon as possible. The Bureau had confirmed that it would allocate all its time at the 146th IPU Assembly to the negotiation of the next resolution. Two new members from France and Chile had been elected to the Bureau.

*The Assembly noted the report.*

**Ms. A. Mulder** (Netherlands), President of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, said that her Committee had met on 12 and 14 October. The first sitting had included a debate on the theme of the next resolution, *Parliamentary efforts in achieving negative carbon balances of forests*. The resolution had been introduced by some well-respected academics and the co-Rapporteur from Germany. A total of 29 parliamentarians had taken part in the discussions. Participants had stressed the importance of securing budgets for forest protection initiatives and rejuvenating forests by establishing planting circles. They emphasized the need to raise awareness of the importance of forests for green development and disaster reduction as well as the need to engage local communities when making decisions on forest protection. The principles of common but differentiated responsibility and climate justice had also been raised.

In the same sitting, the Committee had discussed preparations for the parliamentary meeting at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP27) in Egypt. Members had been briefed on the main elements of the draft outcome document and given the opportunity to provide further inputs. Among the most prominent themes were loss and damage and climate finance.

The second sitting of the Committee had consisted of a panel discussion on the theme *Reconnecting local communities with a local sustainable inclusive economy to achieve the targets of the SDG 8*. An expert from the International Labour Organization (ILO) had presented his views, highlighting the need to empower micro, small and medium-sized enterprises. Participants had considered: (1) how to translate economic growth into jobs for local people; (2) how to acknowledge the importance of local communities for national economies; and (3) how to target vulnerable populations such as women, youth and low-income populations.

In addition to its regular sittings, the Committee had organized a climate change workshop in conjunction with the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights. The workshop provided a platform for parliamentarians to share their concerns ahead of COP27. Participants had identified regional and global cooperation, public engagement and solidarity as practical solutions to many climate-related problems.

Lastly, the Committee had held elections to fill one vacancy on the Bureau and adopted a workplan for the next Assembly agreeing to dedicate all sittings to the drafting of the resolution. Members had expressed the need to align the work of the Committee with the IPU Strategy and to cooperate with the United Nations.

*The Assembly noted the report.*

**Mr. M.T. Bani Yassin** (Jordan), Member of the Committee on United Nations Affairs, said that several members of the Committee Bureau had joined a visit led by the World Food Programme (WFP) in Rwanda. They had visited a local cooperative farm as well as a school participating in the government school feeding programme. The programme aimed to enhance nutrition in schools and support local farmers by sourcing food locally and investing money in the local market.

The Committee had met on 14 October where it had held two panel discussions with high-level UN officials. The first panel had focused on the UN response to growing hunger and famine worldwide. Representatives from the WFP and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) had presented a mid-year update of the *2022 Global Report on Food Crises*, paying particular attention to food security and their work in Rwanda. It was clear that a global food crisis was unfolding. Today, over two billion people across 45 countries were food insecure – an increase

of 30 million since 2020. Food insecurity was driven by several factors, including conflict, economic shocks and weather extremes. Recent developments, such as the sharp increase in global food prices, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the conflict between the Russian Federation and Ukraine, had further exacerbated the situation.

During the second panel, the new UN Resident Coordinator for Rwanda had shared a good practice applied in the country: significant engagement between different UN agencies. The biggest constraint to effective development was a lack of integrated mechanisms. Countries could avoid repeating past mistakes by sharing best practices. The United Nations was prepared to offer governments high-level technical and strategic policy advice as well as insight into the practices used in Rwanda and elsewhere. A total of 30 delegations had been present, including 20 that had taken the floor. Members had shared concerns about the impact of climate change on food security and highlighted the importance of producing local food using a sustainable process. It was necessary to invest in household resilience, support local farmers and advocate for climate adaption.

Lastly, the Committee had decided that Mr. Wehrli (Switzerland) would continue as Interim President until a new President had been elected at the next Assembly.

*The Assembly noted the report.*

#### Item 6 of the agenda

#### **Approval of the subject item for the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights at the 147th IPU Assembly and appointment of the Rapporteurs**

**The President** said that the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Right was proposing the following subject item for its next resolution: *Orphanage trafficking: The role of parliaments in reducing harm*. Ms. Reynolds of Australia had been designated as co-Rapporteur. Consultations would be pursued with the geopolitical groups to identify one or two additional co-Rapporteurs. She took it that the Assembly wished to approve the above subject item.

*It was so decided.*

#### 146th IPU Assembly in Bahrain (March 2023)

**Mr. J. Fakhro** (Bahrain) invited IPU Member Parliaments to the 146th IPU Assembly to be held from 11 to 15 March 2023 in Bahrain. Bahrain was glad to be contributing to the long, rich history of the IPU. The theme chosen for the General Debate was fully aligned with the national values of Bahrain, such as tolerance, civilization, co-existence, dialogue, respect and peace. His Parliament had already started preparing for the Assembly and would do everything possible to make it a worthwhile event. He thanked the IPU for investing its trust in Bahrain.

## Closure of the Assembly

**Ms. T. Ackson** (United Republic of Tanzania), speaking on behalf of the African Group, said that, over the course of the Assembly, the African Group had designated representatives to fill vacancies on the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, the Bureau of the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs and the High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism. It had also designated representatives for the drafting committee on the emergency item.

The African Group wished to raise a number of issues pertaining to the work of the IPU. First, it was important to review the Statutes and Rules of the IPU in a number of respects. The President of an Assembly should be elected at the end of the preceding Assembly so as to give him or her a place at the table during the preparations. Membership of the Steering Committee should be extended to the Chairpersons of the Standing Committees. There should also be a clear deadline for submissions of emergency items so that geopolitical groups had ample time to consider them.

Second, it was necessary to improve the channels of information dissemination within the IPU given that some countries had not received details about meetings in time.

Third, guidelines and criteria should be established prior to piloting the IPU regional offices. The African Group had concerns about establishing regional offices in countries that had membership of more than one geopolitical group. It was important to decide whether to consider geographical location of a country or political affiliation. The IPU should not have two or more regional offices in the same geographical location.

**Ms. Pham Thi Hong Yen** (Viet Nam), speaking on behalf of the Asia-Pacific Group, thanked the Parliament of Rwanda for their hospitality and the IPU Secretariat for their diligence in organizing the Assembly. She commended Rwanda on its accomplishments in the areas of gender equality and environmental protection.

**Mr. E. Bustamante** (Peru), speaking on behalf of the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC), thanked the Government and Parliament of Rwanda for their hospitality during the Assembly.

He recognized the efforts of the IPU, particularly the President, to reinforce its presence in the GRULAC region. The President of the IPU had visited a number of countries in the region and agreed to pilot a regional IPU office in Uruguay. With the help of Guyana, GRULAC would continue bringing the IPU closer to the Caribbean islands.

He congratulated Ms. López-Castro (Mexico) for winning the Cremer-Passy Prize. Special mention should also go to Mr. Edwards (Chile) for his commitment as a young parliamentarian, particularly to the cause of Ukraine.

It was a proud moment to have celebrated the International Day of Parliamentarianism in South America. There was no doubt that the IPU would gain more visibility over the coming years. The role of parliaments was to exercise political control over governments and the IPU must do the same.

**Ms. A. Gerken** (Netherlands), speaking on behalf of the Twelve Plus Group, said that the Group had met on 10 October for a long meeting, where it had discussed the war in Ukraine, and every morning from 11 to 14 October. It had also held a number of side events, including one on the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people. She commended some parliamentarians from Kenya and Eswatini who had had the courage to support the cause. There had also been a side event on genocide organized by Ukraine. Twelve Plus Group members had been active in several committees including the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights which had accepted the proposal of Australia as the topic of its next resolution. Lastly, the Twelve Plus Group had elected a new President from Belgium.

She condemned the Russian Federation for its senseless war of aggression in Ukraine, including the recent attacks on Kyiv, the murder of innocent citizens, the abduction of children and the organized rape of women, men, girls and boys. The Russian Federation must bring an end to the war and restore the borders of Ukraine from before 2014.

**Mr. J. Fakhro** (Bahrain), speaking on behalf of the Arab Group, applauded the IPU for its role in addressing issues that affected the entire world. There was a pressing need for dialogue to resolve problems and leave no one behind. He hoped that the various resolutions adopted at the Assembly would serve as a road map for future work. He thanked Rwanda for its hospitality as well as the President and Secretary General of the IPU for their efforts in coordinating the Assembly.

**The President of the IPU** thanked the Parliament of Rwanda for hosting an excellent Assembly. He also thanked the Secretariat for its collaboration and all delegations for their participation.

Participants should be happy with the results of the Assembly. He drew particular attention to the Kigali Declaration which contained not only words but concrete actions on gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments. The resolution on the emergency item was also significant in that it clearly condemned the invasion of Ukraine and the annexation of Ukrainian territories by the Russian Federation. The IPU must repeat again and again that it would not accept the behaviour of the Russian Federation in the hope it would deter others. It was vital to defend the rule of law, protect internationally-recognized borders and promote dialogue, not war, as the solution to conflict.

Over the course of the Assembly, approximately 200 bilateral meetings had taken place in addition to the official agenda. The first edition of the Cremer-Passy Prize had been launched. Members had discussed ways to reinforce the Organization, deciding to set up regional offices that worked closely with the geopolitical groups. There had also been discussions about revising the IPU Statutes and Rules. He was of the view that the Statutes and Rules should allow delegates to hold votes on emergency item proposals in addition to adopting a resolution. For instance, delegates should be able to hold a vote of solidarity or a vote of condemnation.

Parliamentarians must never stop their work. They had many opportunities to engage with each other over the coming months. The parliamentary meeting at COP27 was an opportunity to pressure governments on climate change. The FIFA World Cup 2022 in Qatar was an opportunity for dialogue among different civilizations.

The IPU would continue to work for peace, development and democracy for all. He looked forward to meeting again at the 146th IPU Assembly.

**The President** said that it had been a pleasure and an honour to host the 145th IPU Assembly. A wide range of topics had been covered with everyone given a voice to express themselves – a clear example of democracy in action. The General Debate on gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments, which culminated in the Kigali Declaration, was a particularly significant outcome of the Assembly. Other important outcomes included the emergency item resolution on the war in Ukraine and the resolution by the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights. It was now up to each parliamentarian to implement those outcomes in their home countries based on national specificities.

She expressed her sincere gratitude to the IPU leadership and Member Parliaments who had accepted Rwanda's offer to host the Assembly. She thanked the participants, without whom the meetings would not have been possible. Participants had shown great dedication to the debates, making lively contributions and helping to make the meetings as productive as possible. The spirit of mutual respect that had characterized the meetings was much appreciated. Lastly, she was grateful to the IPU Secretariat for having worked hand in hand with the Parliament of Rwanda to ensure smooth coordination of the Assembly. The Assembly had been a memorable experience that had left Rwanda richer in terms of knowledge, acquaintance and culture.

After an exchange of courtesies, she declared the Assembly closed.

*The sitting rose at 18:35.*

## Kigali Declaration

### *Gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments as drivers of change for a more resilient and peaceful world*

*Endorsed by the 145th IPU Assembly  
(Kigali, 15 October 2022)*

We, Members of Parliament from around the world, gathered at the 145th IPU Assembly in Kigali, Rwanda to discuss the theme *Gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments as drivers of change for a more resilient and peaceful world*, to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the IPU's Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments, and to recommit to advance gender equality in our institutions and in society.

We recognize that we live in a special time, wrought with global challenges. After two years of confronting the COVID-19 pandemic, we know that crises are never gender neutral. On the contrary, crises exacerbate existing gender-based inequalities and create new ones, and put vulnerable populations in an even more precarious situation. Women and girls pay a heavy toll in situations of crisis, since gender-based discrimination and violence increase, holding back gender equality and our societies in general.

However, we take confidence knowing that our collective commitment to the Sustainable Development Goal of gender equality has led to greater attention to and respect for equal rights among men and women, and women's and girls' empowerment. We also believe that the current generation of parliamentarians is more diverse and is therefore showing even more support for the advancement of gender equality and inclusivity.

We affirm that gender equality is essential in confronting pandemics, conflicts, economic recessions and climate change. From the perspective of the economy, gender equality means equal pay, financial inclusion, universal social protection, valuing care work, and protection from discrimination and violence. Equality in the economy also means that more women participate in the work force, leading to greater prosperity and productivity. Gender equality in politics allows us to respond better to crises by taking into account the diverse and intersectional needs of all, thereby delivering more effective results. From the perspective of peace-building and diplomacy, women's leadership is a driving force, as peace agreements signed by female delegates lead to more durable peace. From the perspective of political decision-making, women leaders have been proven to drive more stringent climate action. In short, when responding to global challenges, it is more likely that no one is left behind if women participate and lead.

We note, as seen through our General Debate, that there are advancements in parliaments from around the world from which we can draw inspiration. In Kigali, at this 145th Assembly, we acknowledged that gender equality is a right for everyone, everywhere and agreed to make a step change for gender equality and to make our parliaments gender-sensitive for a more resilient and peaceful world.

To step up our action for gender equality, we will look to address profound structural gender inequalities that are driving vulnerabilities instead of building resilience. To do so, we commit to take the five following key actions:

1. Achieve parity in political decision-making, including by using electoral gender quotas and ensuring that other electoral quotas always have a gender parity provision.
2. Ensure our law-making, law-enforcement, and budgeting are gender-responsive across all policy fields.
3. Put vulnerable populations at the centre of our parliamentary functions of legislation, oversight, resource allocation and representation.



4. End gender-based discrimination, violence and other harmful practices, and ensure access to sexual and reproductive health, rights and justice for all women and girls.
5. Advance equality in caring responsibilities among men and women and set an example in our societies by undertaking 50% of the daily care work for our families, regardless of whether we are male or female MPs.

Driving structural transformational change for gender equality will require us to continue and enhance our action to build gender-sensitive parliaments. It is only by doing so that our parliaments will meet the needs of the modern era, respond to crises and remain resilient. Gender-*ins*sensitive parliaments cannot redress inequalities and vulnerabilities. In contrast, gender-sensitive parliaments, that are by definition more representative and have power, structures and capacities to promote gender equality, are better able to reverse gender inequalities and address vulnerabilities.

In the last decade, we have witnessed progress in gender equality in parliaments, following the roadmap set out by the *Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments*:

- In parliamentary participation and leadership, the proportion of women in parliament has jumped from 20 to 26%. Several parliaments have internal quotas to ensure leadership positions and membership of committees are shared equally among men and women. At present, 23% of Speakers or Presiding Officers of parliament are women.
- Looking at parliamentary infrastructure, 50% of all parliaments currently have a women's caucus and 68% of all parliaments have a women's or gender equality committee.
- In terms of gender-responsive internal policies, 23% of all parliaments now have a gender equality policy in their parliamentary administration.
- There are more family-friendly provisions and measures to facilitate work-life balance such as remote or proxy voting and childcare arrangements.
- The existence, forms and prevalence of violence against women in parliament are now widely acknowledged, and some parliaments have started taking action to eliminate such violence, including by using the IPU *Guidelines for the elimination of sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliament*.

Gender-sensitive parliaments are needed now more than ever against a backdrop of ever more urgent political, economic, social and ecological crises, which are themselves gendered. Facing the reality of the climate crisis, this next chapter of gender-sensitive parliaments must also be green, both in how parliaments undertake their daily work, and in parliamentary outputs and outcomes. New technologies and their rapid development have also opened up new opportunities which must be exploited when they support rather than harm gender equality.

Transformative institutional change towards a gender-sensitive parliament does not just happen by itself. It requires political will, leadership, self-questioning, strategic planning, reform, resources and accountability.

Our commitment to gender-sensitive parliaments today must be more ambitious than it was 10 years ago. Looking forward, we pledge the following 10 actions to make many more parliaments gender-sensitive over the next 10 years:

1. Assess the level of gender-sensitivity of our parliaments twice to ensure progress in-between the two milestones.
2. Create a gender-balanced steering committee to follow up on the findings and recommendations of the gender sensitivity assessments that has the power, resources, and mandate to lead reforms.
3. Recognize the individual differences among women and prioritize the inclusion of underrepresented groups such as young women, indigenous women and women with disabilities.

4. Create, resource and empower a gender equality committee or similar body which can effectively hold government and parliament to account, and a women's caucus that can effectively support women MPs in their parliamentary work.
5. Adopt formal rules to establish gender-balance across all parliamentary leadership positions, ensure the parity of participation of women and men across all parliamentary activities, and prohibit single-sex committees and groups.
6. Engage men MPs and other men active in the parliamentary ecosystem to act as allies for gender equality, including by co-sponsoring bills, initiatives and actions with women MPs, across the legislative, oversight and representation fields.
7. Ensure that gender sensitivity, gender equality and gender mainstreaming and budgeting guide all of a parliament's work at all times.
8. Conduct gender audits of legislative, budgetary and oversight actions but also of initiatives aiming to introduce or reform, inter alia, parliamentary technology, measures to make parliaments greener, initiatives to engage citizens' in the work of parliament, and implement the respective recommendations from such audits.
9. Become caring parliaments by providing fully for the caring needs of men and women MPs and staff as they carry out their parliamentary duties.
10. Introduce stringent policies with the objective of zero tolerance of violence against women, sexual harassment and bullying in parliament, and establish independent and efficient grievance procedures with strong sanctions.

## Parliamentary impetus to local and regional development of countries with high levels of international migration and to stopping all forms, including state-sponsored, of human-trafficking and human rights abuses

*Resolution adopted by consensus\* by the 145th IPU Assembly  
(Kigali, 15 October 2022)*

The 145th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

*Noting* that the term "migration" generally reflects various means by which people and individuals are displaced across international borders, voluntarily or involuntarily, and that the terms "refugee" and "asylum-seeker" are sub-categories of migration with particular policy and legal frameworks,

*Expressing its deep concern* at the rise of the people smuggling and human trafficking industries as a means of migration, affecting people in vulnerable situations,

*Reaffirming* the objectives and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Geneva Conventions, as well as the values and principles of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

*Recalling* the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees, endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly,

*Recalling also* the IPU resolutions *Migrant workers, people trafficking, xenophobia and human rights* (adopted at the 118th Assembly, Cape Town, April 2008), *Strengthening inter-parliamentary cooperation on migration and migration governance in view of the adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration* (adopted at the 139th Assembly, Geneva, October 2018),

*Reaffirming* the sovereign right of States to determine, in accordance with international law, their national migration policy and their prerogative to govern migration within their jurisdiction,

*Reaffirming also* that every State must ensure the protection of the human rights of all migrants, particularly unaccompanied migrant children within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction, without discrimination of any kind, including in particular on the basis of national origin,

*Acknowledging* that breaches of humanitarian law by belligerents resulting in war crimes and crimes against humanity, as well as the crime of genocide, are a major cause of forced displacement and the flow of refugees,

*Stressing* that war and violence are among the main drivers of migration and displacement, as has been witnessed following the unjustifiable and unprovoked war of aggression unleashed by the Russian Federation in 2014 and radically escalated by the full-scale military attack on 24 February 2022 against the sovereign nation of Ukraine and its people; and *recalling* the subsequent IPU resolution *Peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine, respecting international law, the Charter of the United Nations and territorial integrity* (adopted at the 144th Assembly, Nusa Dua, March 2022), which addresses the migration and displacement that has resulted from that war,

*Regretting* that, apart from massive loss of human life, the ongoing aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine has triggered one of the largest displacement crises in the world, with more than 7 million Ukrainian refugees and more than 6.9 million internally displaced persons so far,

*Underlining* that migration is linked to poverty, climate change, natural disasters, inequitable socioeconomic structures, persecution, armed conflict, human rights violations and identity factors such as race, ethnicity, religion, age, sex and gender; that peace, security and development are closely interlinked; and that people on the move, irrespective of their legal status, are entitled to full access to their human rights, as set out in the relevant international treaties and covenants,

*Noting* the insecurity and the political, economic and social instability and violence that various regions in the world are currently experiencing that forces their populations to flee and seek refuge in other countries,

*Affirming* that intensified international cooperation is needed to address these structural and transnational causes of migration, bearing in mind that women and children are particularly vulnerable in migration crises and that these groups are in need of extra protection and support,

*Noting* the prominently gendered aspect of migration, whereby women and men leave their origin country and move to another for different reasons and under different circumstances, facing different risks during transit and different challenges, including access to legal and social protection and health services,

*Noting also* the high proportion of youth migrants, which rises in an inverse relationship to the level of economic development of the originating country, and that the wide range of reasons for youth migration includes education and employment opportunities,

*Noting further* that youth migrants are heavily represented as refugees and unaccompanied minors, and thereby face particular challenges and risks, increasing their vulnerabilities compared to their adult counterparts,

*Condemning in the strongest terms* the criminal human-traffickers and people smugglers around the world who exploit the vulnerabilities of migrants and refugees, especially women and children, for their own individual purposes,

*Condemning also* the grave abuses committed against migrant women and girls, including all forms of gender-based discrimination and violence, forced labour, exploitation and trafficking,

*Noting with great concern* a worldwide trend towards the exploitation and human rights abuse of vulnerable migrants for political and economic purposes, including to foment xenophobia and to spread misinformation,

*Regretting and condemning* the tragic deaths and disappearances of refugees and migrants along different migration routes,

*Seeking to guarantee* the rights of refugees under the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol,

*Recalling* the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, which provide a framework to effectively prevent and combat trafficking and the smuggling of persons,

*Reaffirming* the role of the UN Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, as established by the UN Commission on Human Rights (Decision 2004/110), and *calling on* States to cooperate with their mandate,

*Recalling* the various resolutions of the Security Council of the United Nations that condemn any form of human trafficking and people smuggling in the strongest possible terms, and *acknowledging* the partnership work of the International Organization for Migration and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime within the European Union funded initiative *Global Action against Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants* in Asia and the Middle East,

1. *Requests* that the United Nations makes the topic of human trafficking, people smuggling and modern day slavery a specific point of focus of the next United Nations General Assembly;
2. *Calls on* States and their respective parliaments to consider ratifying or acceding to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, and *also urges* States parties to those instruments to implement them fully and effectively;

3. *Urges* States and their respective parliaments to endorse if they have not done so already and to make full use of the Global Compact for Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees as roadmaps for improving international cooperation and migration governance;
4. *Calls on* parliaments, in cooperation with their governments, civil society groups and diverse stakeholders, including women and youth, to promote people's access to comprehensive and up-to-date information on opportunities, limitations, risks and rights in the event of migration, thus enabling prospective migrants to make informed choices based on realistic expectations;
5. *Urges* parliaments, in cooperation with their governments, to secure and to enhance the availability and flexibility of legal pathways and regularization options for regular migration to facilitate labour mobility and skills training, family reunification, and migration for reasons such as armed conflict, gender-based violence, natural disasters and climate change, thereby undermining smuggling and trafficking networks, and to eliminate discriminatory policies that deny migrant children access to essential services, including education and health care; and to protect and respect the basic rights of migrants;
6. *Calls on* parliaments as well as regional and sub-regional inter-parliamentary organizations to actively engage in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to optimize migration governance and address the major drivers of forced and irregular migration that inherently fuel human trafficking – particularly wars, extreme poverty, severe inequalities between and within countries, climate change and natural disasters – and to promote measures aimed at raising awareness and maximizing the development benefits of safe and regular migration;
7. *Urges* States in the Sahel and Sahara regions, in particular the States of the G5-Sahel group, to step up their international solidarity and the coordination of their actions with a view to reducing the numbers of irregular migrants;
8. *Urges* parliaments to ensure that their governments comply with and implement relevant norms of international law and relevant resolutions of the international community and the United Nations Security Council, and contribute to the realization of fundamental human rights worldwide through active engagement and advocacy;
9. *Reaffirms* the right of every human being to be free from arbitrary deportation by a foreign power, such as the Russian Federation's forced displacement of Ukrainian civilians, including thousands of children, from the temporarily occupied territories to the Russian Federation;
10. *Requests* the strengthening of international solidarity with countries where social, economic and security conditions cause people to migrate and equally with those countries in the world hosting a considerable number of refugees;
11. *Calls upon* all parliaments and governments to design and implement development programmes that help eliminate inequality, poverty, lack of opportunities and violence, including gender-based violence, experienced by persons in countries with high levels of international migration and in migrant transit countries in order to develop opportunities in countries of origin so that there are fewer possible causes for people to migrate, and to ensure that such programmes reflect the particular needs of vulnerable groups, including vulnerable women; as it is only by fighting the roots of forced migration that it can be prevented;
12. *Calls on* States and their respective parliaments to take measures to prevent disappearances and deaths on global migration routes, to adopt the necessary laws and policies in order to be able to search for the disappeared, identify the dead and to re-establish family links, and to increase international cooperation on this matter;
13. *Urges* parliaments to promote adoption and implementation of specific programmes protecting the rights of refugees, paying specific attention to the needs of women and children, facilitating employment and ensuring education;

14. *Calls upon* all governments around the world to increase investment and promote international cooperation in youth and women's employment, empowerment and social protection programmes, including vocational training and entrepreneurship, high-quality education, health, to address their particular needs, offer greater opportunities both in countries of origin and in receiving States and to raise awareness on safe migration, and also to invest in systematic data collection, management and analysis to ensure reliable, accurate and disaggregated data on migration and human trafficking, and to develop programmes appropriate to gender and age groups;
15. *Calls on* all governments and parliaments to ensure that no obstacles, including immunities legislation or national procedural law, prevent forcibly displaced victims of aggression, war crimes, crimes against humanity or other serious human rights violations from seeking justice in domestic courts or receiving due compensation;
16. *Also calls upon* all governments and parliaments to take holistic meaningful and coordinated action, including enacting and enforcing legislation criminalizing trafficking and smuggling; raising awareness through media, including social media; and strengthening national law enforcement capabilities, to dismantle global smuggling and trafficking organizations and networks and to strengthen efforts to combat people smuggling and human trafficking as per their commitment outlined in Objective 10 of the Global Compact for Migration and ensure the effective implementation of relevant international conventions and treaties; and also to prevent the use of false passports and/or false entry permits;
17. *Encourages* governments to provide adequate support to victims of human trafficking and people smuggling, to develop and implement programmes to provide physical and psychological care, shelter and reintegration into society for victims of trafficking, including but not limited to facilitating access to justice, protection of victims, psychological counselling, including by providing access to gender-responsive and child-sensitive measures, and extension of residence permits during their recovery from the effects of their experiences;
18. *Calls on* parliaments to ensure adequate financial support to key State agencies and units that play an integral part in responding to the scourge of human trafficking, and to conduct awareness campaigns on human trafficking and people smuggling among their broad populations;
19. *Urges* governments and parliaments to address the demand side of trafficking, including trafficking in women and girls for the purpose of sexual exploitation, through law-making, law-enforcement and educational measures;
20. *Encourages* governments to strengthen international cooperation and national and international capacities to equip officials in law enforcement, the judicial process and other agencies concerned with training and the broad-ranging skills and competencies needed to effectively prevent, investigate, prosecute and combat smuggling and trafficking, including the practice of state-sponsored instrumentalization of human trafficking; and to identify and disrupt financial flows related to these activities and all kinds of money laundering related to them;
21. *Calls on* international organizations to play a more active and bolder role in alleviating the hardships of forcibly displaced persons, as well as in preventing and solving the root causes of such displacement;
22. *Urges* all governments and parliaments to critically assess the mandates of international organizations and initiate an open discussion on how international organizations, including the United Nations, its Security Council and General Assembly, may be reformed in order to become more effective and inclusive, and to fight the root causes of forced displacement;

23. *Requests* that countries of origin and transit fully investigate trafficking routes, fully cooperate with States sharing their borders and contribute to stopping the practice of organized human trafficking to other countries, as well as to monitoring social networks and online platforms, which have become facilitators of transnational trafficking activities, and to sharing intelligence on trafficking among countries in migration flows through secured communication channels, in full compliance with applicable national laws;
24. *Reminds* governments that, in line with the principle of non-criminalization of victims, smuggled migrants must not be prosecuted for having been smuggled;
25. *Urges* parliaments to strengthen legislation to ensure protection and assistance for trafficked persons in migration flows in a human rights-based, gender-responsive and child-sensitive manner by creating conducive legal and policy frameworks to make sure that victims and survivors of this crime are protected from punishment for illegal conduct as a consequence of being trafficked, as well as from stigmatization, racism and xenophobia and from re-victimization and re-trafficking;
26. *Declares* full solidarity with migrants and refugees who are forced by conflicts and security situations to flee and seek safe havens in other countries; *affirms* its support for the victims of human trafficking, and *commits* to provide them with a helping hand and assistance and to take effective measures to prevent and combat human trafficking, especially against women and children, in times of conflict and in line with the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and various relevant international covenants and instruments;
27. *Recognizes* the importance of cooperation, solidarity, exchange of experiences and partnerships at the international level between the various relevant authorities, as well as of strengthening governance at all levels, in a manner that achieves the objectives of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration;
28. *Urges* parliaments to assume their legislative and supervisory responsibilities and roles in confronting illegal immigration, in strengthening contractual relationship rights and mechanisms, and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals;
29. *Calls on* all parliaments and governments to take targeted measures to enhance security and stability, and to resolve disputes by peaceful means;
30. *Requests* that the IPU Secretary General transmit the present resolution to the IPU Member Parliaments, the United Nations Secretary-General and all relevant institutions;
31. *Invites* the IPU Member Parliaments to communicate to the IPU Secretariat by the 149th Assembly the measures taken to achieve implementation of this resolution.

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\* A number of delegations took the floor to express their reservations:

- **Czech Republic** on operative paragraph 3, **India** on preambular paragraph 21, **Kazakhstan** on preambular paragraphs 9 and 10 and operative paragraph 9, **Qatar** on the reference to labour mobility in operative paragraph 5, **Syrian Arab Republic** on preambular paragraph 9 and **Türkiye** on preambular paragraph 19
- **Hungary** and **Indonesia** on the entire resolution.

The **Russian Federation** expressed its opposition to the resolution.

## Report of the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security

*Noted by the 145 IPU Assembly  
(Kigali, 15 October 2022)*

The Standing Committee on Peace and International Security held two sittings on 13 and 14 October 2022 with its President, Mr. M. Al-Ahbab (Qatar), in the Chair.

On 13 October, after going through procedural items and official communications, the Committee held the first panel discussion on the theme *The impact of war and atrocity on civilian populations*. A moderated round table featured three experts who addressed the theme from different perspectives. Ms. M. Kiener Nellen, Member of the International Board of the NGO PeaceWomen Across the Globe and former Swiss MP, focussed her remarks on the impact of war on women who bear all consequences of conflicts: a disproportionate burden of care, the mourning of lost ones, and sexualized and gender-based violence. She also addressed the central role of women in conflict prevention and resolution, as well as in peacebuilding as formally recognized by UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. Mr. F. Safari, Director of the African Centre of Excellence for Children, Peace, and Security of the Romeo Dallaire Institute, spoke about the large numbers of children forcefully recruited as soldiers who are made to commit violence. The mechanism that aimed to prevent such violations was the Vancouver Principles on Peacekeeping and the Prevention of the Recruitment and Use of Child Soldiers in armed conflicts. He urged parliamentarians to consider endorsing and implementing those principles. Ms. J. Arman, Regional Legal Adviser for East Africa at the International Committee of the Red Cross, addressed issues related to urban conflict and, more specifically, the use of explosive weapons in densely populated areas and their impact on the civilian population. When war entered cities, it had a disproportionate impact on civilian communities because it destroyed infrastructures and so increased civilian casualties. In such environments there were many challenges regarding compliance with international humanitarian law, in particular the prohibition of indiscriminate attacks and assessments of proportionality.

The debate that followed, moderated by the Committee Chair, addressed the current situation in the world from the point of view of protecting the most vulnerable. The 17 delegates who took the floor referred to the conflicts in Ukraine, Palestine, the Sahel and Yemen, but also to what had happened in the 1990s in the host country, Rwanda. They agreed that war destroyed civilian populations and that the most effective way to protect civilians was to prevent armed escalation and to settle conflicts peacefully. To that end, the speakers called on all countries to have a human rights framework which would help eliminate all forms of conflict. They also urged parliamentarians to create environments that provide protection and social safety for vulnerable groups. Finally, for parliamentarians to contribute realistically to the prevention of violations and breaches of international law that impacted the most vulnerable in conflicts, they must apply international norms and treaties, champion them and ensure that they were signed, ratified and implemented. In this regard, the delegates valued the work undertaken by the IPU to promote treaties that can save lives and protect people.

The second panel on the theme *War and climate change as triggers of global food insecurity* was also organized around a moderated round table with three experts. Ms. E. Heines, Country Director at the World Food Programme (WFP) in Rwanda, provided an overview of the current global food crisis which increased in the last three years to unprecedented proportions. There were three drivers of the current food crisis: conflicts with ripple effects regionally and globally, climate shocks and the threat of global recession. One response to that was to work towards building population resilience and avoid the vicious circle of conflict due to poverty and competition for scarce resources. She elaborated on the Rwanda specific fragile context and its vulnerability to climatic shocks. Mr. W. von Trott zu Solz, Ambassador of the Sovereign Order of Malta to Kenya and South Sudan, referring to the world hunger index, stressed the importance of food security in maintaining peace and international security. War, climate change and food insecurity were the main causes of the displacement of populations. He gave examples of his organization's work in the region and of initiatives that parliamentarians could take on, such as adapting policies to contexts and providing



not only money but also know-how to support international assistance. Mr. M. Kapila, Professor of Global Health and Humanitarian Affairs, University of Manchester and Senior Adviser to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM), explained that since wars and climate change were not disappearing but rather increasing, countries should accelerate their work on mitigating the problems and empowering communities. The world can produce enough food for everybody but the problem lay with availability and quality which, in turn, impacted health and increased mortality. He urged parliamentarians to establish agro-food policies based on national criteria and resources rather than on global norms, and to include the right to food in national policies for countries to become self-resilient and more sovereign, and avoid competition for humanitarian assistance that made them dependent.

The eight delegates who took the floor, acknowledged the impact of war and climate change on food security as a result of which the world was facing skyrocketing food prices: growth of crops had decreased because of droughts and floodings, and several supply routes had become inaccessible because of fighting. Food insecurity had a major impact on poor and vulnerable countries. It was necessary to strengthen efforts to find solutions. Parliamentarians must address the root causes and prioritize work on making more resilient communities and on the prevention of humanitarian disasters. The speakers reiterated that peace, security and development must go hand in hand. Recommendations from the debate include: to review the structures towards a green economy; to secure food networks; to implement the Paris Agreement; and to increase peace dialogues and diplomacy to defuse tensions and end conflicts. Participants also requested that more legislative and oversight practices on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and engagement on conflict prevention be shared.

On 14 October, the Committee held a hearing of experts on the theme *Cyberattacks and cybercrimes: The new risks to global security*. The hearing was opened and closed by the co-Rapporteurs of the resolution on the same title, Ms. S. Falaknaz (United Arab Emirates) and Mr. J. Cepeda (Spain) who shared their perspectives on the matter and the work they had undertaken. The hearing featured three experts who all intervened remotely to share their perspectives about the nature, relevance, and importance of crimes in cyberspace, as well as national perspectives on the concrete actions parliamentarians could undertake to address those emerging threats. Ms. A.-M. Buzatu, Vice-President and Chief Operations Officer of ICT4Peace Foundation, in her opening remarks laid down a conceptual foundation for cyberspace and the human nature of the interactions in cyberspace, bringing forward the idea that applying human security to cyberspace could help parliamentarians address cybercrime and cyberattacks. She explained concretely the vulnerability of critical infrastructures and the consequent threat posed to the security of citizens who all rely on basic services like electricity, water, communication, banking, etc. Mr. J. Candau, Head of the Cybersecurity Department of the National Cryptologic Centre in Spain, welcomed the timely relevance of the topic, in the context of dramatic increases in cyberattack occurrences over the past decade and especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Spain had put in place systems of response that anticipate, address, and resolve vulnerabilities and risks. Parliamentarians had an important role in raising awareness, passing and applying legislation, and allocating adequate funds to the cyber resilience of nations. Mr. M. Al-Kuwaiti, Managing Director of the National Data Centre under the Supreme Council for National Security of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), gave an overview of the technological revolution and the digitalization of every aspect of society. In the UAE, the Cybersecurity Governance Framework relies on resilience, protection, awareness, and research while including human perspectives, partnerships and international collaboration.

The debate that followed, moderated by the Chair of the Committee, addressed the critical importance of cyberspace as a vulnerable domain of day-to-day interactions. Six delegates took the floor, mentioning topics ranging from emerging threats, the importance of applying international law in cyberspace, the increase of cyberattacks during the pandemic, the ways in which malicious actors online have ways to operate with impunity, and the inevitability of crimes in such a highly exploited domain. There were multiple references to the work and efforts of various parliaments in addressing cybercrimes and cyberattacks, notably through various private/public partnerships, international cooperation, and to the steps needed to improve resilience, especially regarding critical infrastructure.

The report on the work of the Committee was presented to the Assembly at its last sitting on 15 October by the President of the Standing Committee, Mr. M. Al-Ahbabi (Qatar).

The Bureau of the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security met on 13 October 2022. Thirteen out of 20 members and the representative of the President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians were present.

During the meeting, the Bureau discussed its workplan. It was agreed that the time allocated for the 146th Assembly would be devoted to negotiating the next resolution. This proposal was subsequently approved by the Standing Committee at the end of its last plenary sitting on 14 October.

## Report of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development

*Noted by the 145th IPU Assembly  
(Kigali, 15 October 2022)*

The Standing Committee on Sustainable Development held its sittings on 12 and 14 October. Both sittings were chaired by the Committee President, Ms. A. Mulder (Netherlands).

### **Debate on the theme of the next resolution entitled *Parliamentary efforts in achieving negative carbon balances of forests***

The debate was organized around the theme of the next Committee's resolution entitled *Parliamentary efforts in achieving negative carbon balances of forests*. The debate provided the co-Rapporteur with initial information about how IPU Member Parliaments approached the issue and an expert opinion on the resolution's subject matter. The theme and key issues for consideration and discussion were introduced by Mr. B. Kaiser, Rector and professor of Applied Economics at the Rottenburg University of Applied Forest Sciences in Germany; and Mr. P. Boeckx, Head of the Isotope Bioscience laboratory and professor in the Department of Green Chemistry and Technology of the Faculty of Bioscience Engineering at Ghent University in Belgium. Mr. C. Hoffman (Germany), co-Rapporteur for the resolution, was also present.

Mr. C. Hoffman introduced the topic noting that in 2019, the UN Secretary-General, Mr. A. Guterres, had called for action to turn the tide on deforestation. Even with ambitious emission reduction, it was unlikely, if not impossible, to meet the international goals of the Paris Agreement pledged in 2015 to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Therefore, negative emissions in terms of carbon sequestration were imperative. Climate goals could not be achieved without reducing carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Trees – the solar-powered engines that captured carbon from the atmosphere and stored it in the biomass, played an important role in achieving that goal. The world's forests did not only have a potential for climate change mitigation but were also very important for biodiversity conservation. That potential could be released only by stepping up global efforts. Parliamentarians must step up their legal processes to halt deforestation and forest degradation, as well as their efforts on conservation and afforestation, and sustainable forest management.

According to the panellists, forestry could become a source of income but, in order for that to happen, that income must: first, be as plannable as possible in natural, economic, political, and legal terms; second, be regulated at least annually; third, be sufficiently high for people to earn a living and be competitive with other land uses; and finally, secure the supply for the next stages of the value chain. The sustainable use of wood and the availability of further processing capacities for industrial or energetic wood use must also be guaranteed. To ensure forest protection, parliamentarians must ensure: (1) clear ownership of the forests; (2) the long-term use rights of the owner; (3) if possible, that users who only want to exploit the forest for a short period of time are excluded; (4) that the income function of forests is directly linked to the local population; and (5) that further (industrial) processing capacities for the wood is being promoted.

A total of 29 delegates took the floor to share the good practices their countries had put in place to sustain the forest cover in line with the commitments of the Paris Agreement, and their challenges and concerns in implementing international climate commitments.

It was pointed out that the most acceptable ways to increase carbon absorption were afforestation, sustainable forestry management, and deforestation reduction. Governments and global organizations must strengthen their cooperation and establish more partnerships. It was also important to rejuvenate forests by clearing them out and establishing planting cycles, and to have governments secure budgets for those environmental initiatives. Education on the importance of forests for green development and disaster reduction was underlined. Some parliamentarians said that they were raising awareness to that effect among local communities and on the sub-national levels to ensure that all individuals were equipped with the necessary knowledge to contribute meaningfully to a more sound decision-making process that considered their needs and ideas.

In terms of parliamentary functions, oversight of the commitments enshrined in the Paris Agreement, the allocation of budgets for green initiatives, and the enactment of laws to achieve carbon-negative forests were highlighted. The creation of carbon sinks, the enhancement of forest quality, and the restoration of mangroves were also themes raised in the discussion.

### **Preparations for the Parliamentary Meeting at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP27) in Egypt**

The Chair recalled that the IPU had been promoting parliamentary engagement in climate change for more than a decade and in line with that, she informed the Committee that the IPU was co-organizing with the Parliament of Egypt a Parliamentary Meeting at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP27), to give parliamentarians an opportunity to obtain first-hand information on the main issues to be discussed at the Conference. The meeting was to be held on 13 November, in Sharm El Sheik, Egypt. Mr. K. Darwish, the meeting's Rapporteur appointed by the Egyptian House of Representatives, spoke of the practical arrangements for the meeting and shared the main points of the draft resolution to be adopted at the meeting. The Standing Committee was invited to provide comments and ideas to further refine the text before its presentation at the Parliamentary Meeting.

The document would be constructed around the following elements: (1) enhancing the principle of human responsibility in non-human aspects such as the biodiversity of ecosystems; (2) asserting that knowledge and science are rights of humanity; (3) asserting the importance of enhancing the right of access to sustainable ecosystems; (4) increasing the use of tools, such as green budgets; (5) making decisions based on scientific evidence while acknowledging the importance of general policies and their linkages to efforts related to fighting climate change; (6) enhancing the capacities of the different institutions specialized in the field of risk analysis, and in particular in risks related to climate change; (7) enhancing the support provided to countries and communities that are in dire need, including through bridging the gap of climate funding, and also by consolidating collaboration with neighbouring countries to respond to challenges arising from climate change with greater coordination.

A total of nine delegates took the floor to share their ideas on the draft document. The debate highlighted that climate change was a borderless phenomenon. Emphasis must thus be placed on climate mitigation, climate justice, and climate finance. Good practices such as the creation of carbon neutrality laws to be reviewed every five years must be put in place. The impact of climate change on agricultural crops, the livestock sector, and migration were other critical points mentioned during the debate. It was noted that the consequences of climate change were mostly affecting poor countries, and that the commitments pledged during the previous COP meetings were not being respected. As regards parliamentary functions, parliamentarians were called to prioritize action on climate change, ensure appropriate budget allocation, and engage in robust oversight of government implementation of climate change activities. The need for capacity building for parliamentarians to better understand climate change was also emphasized.

### **Panel discussion on the theme: *Reconnecting local communities with a local sustainable inclusive economy to achieve the targets of SDG 8***

The discussion and key issues for consideration were introduced by Mr. A. Gryffroy (Belgium), and Mr. J. Chirove, employment specialist with the International Labour Organization (ILO).

A sustainable and inclusive local economy was important for prosperity and the local economic system. Mr. Gryffroy recalled that the COVID-19 pandemic had caused the loss of 255 million full-time jobs and that it had particularly affected young people and women with low levels of education working in the informal economy who also lacked a social safety net. During the pandemic, many micro and small businesses had to cease their activities. In the aftermath of the pandemic, many countries were expected to return to pre-pandemic levels as businesses started operating in normal conditions. However, some segments of the population and small local businesses would continue to experience difficulties to survive. Small businesses also had to compete with big companies, which made things even more difficult.

Mr. Chirove said that in order to stimulate more and better jobs in local economies, governments must implement a coordinated and comprehensive approach in the planning for employment creation; introduce macroeconomic policy frameworks that consider employment creation outcomes; allocate budgets for employment creation; provide an enabling environment for private sector growth; and involve employers and workers organizations in the development of socio-economic policies through social dialogue. The ILO could provide support to parliamentarians by encouraging more intensive discussions with parliamentary committees; providing capacity building on pro-employment macro-frameworks and budgeting; delivering employment measurement tools to assess the employment impacts of public investment programmes; and also assisting parliaments in the development of national employment strategies, policies, and targeted employment plans or strategies, focused on youth and other marginalized groups.

A total of 18 delegates took the floor to share their experiences in reconnecting local communities with a local sustainable inclusive economy. The need of establishing policies that benefitted developing countries with a focus on small and medium enterprises and low-income people was presented as a good strategy to respond to the economic crisis triggered by the pandemic. A mechanism should be established that allowed for regular and meaningful engagement between local communities and central governments to foster local, sustainable economic development. To enable such a mechanism and ensure that economic growth benefitted local communities it was important to have decentralized governments and structures, and to acknowledge the importance of sustainable and inclusive local economic growth for the national economy. In this regard, municipalities and local governments should be given greater independence in decision-making processes related to employment, proper financial funds, and human capital to support their local communities. Gender-based differences in terms of irregular and decent jobs were also highlighted.

The Committee held elections to the Bureau and approved the Bureau's proposal to dedicate the Committee's sessions at the 146th IPU Assembly to drafting the resolution.

## Report of the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs

*Noted by the 145 IPU Assembly  
(Kigali, 15 October 2022)*

The Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs met in plenary session on 14 October with the Vice-President Mr. L. Wehrli (Switzerland) in the chair as Ms. S.A. Noor (Kenya) had recently lost her election. Due to a parallel discussion in the main Assembly, related to the war in Ukraine, only 30 parliamentary delegations attended. The session consisted of two panel discussions with high-level United Nations officials.

The first panel focused on the UN response to growing hunger and famine. Mr. S. Krishnaswamy, Head of Research, Analysis and Monitoring for the World Food Programme's (WFP) East Africa Region, and Ms. B. Lazarus, Nairobi Regional Office of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), presented the 2022 Global Report on Food Crises (GRFC). They were joined by Ms. E. Heines, the World Food Programme's (WFP) Representative and Country Director in Rwanda, and Ms. C. Sow, FAO Country Representative in Rwanda.

The WFP is in the forefront of the humanitarian effort to provide food in urgent need. The FAO helps governments and development agencies coordinate their efforts to improve and develop agriculture as well as land and water resources.

The 2022 GRFC report set the stage for parliamentarians to better understand the worsening hunger and starvation around the world. The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) has five phases with the 3rd phase being Crisis, the 4th Emergency, and the 5<sup>th</sup> Catastrophe/Famine or Famine Likely. The report shows the world is experiencing the highest number of acutely food-insecure people in its history at Phase 3 or above, with over 205 million people in 45 countries in these three phases at the mid-point of 2022. 52 per cent of the people suffering are in five countries – Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Yemen. Acute food insecurity increased in 23 countries and of those, 19 countries saw double digit increases.

The presentation included data on specific areas of concern, including references to the conflicts in the region. According to IPC, some 38.6 million people in 34 countries are in the emergency category, of those at least one million are in ten countries. Consistently since 2016, three countries are in the top ten: Afghanistan, South Sudan and Yemen. Almost half a million people are in phase 5 or the catastrophe phase, with 400,000 people in Tigray Ethiopia alone.

Conflict is too often the cause of food insecurity, with all phase 5 countries in protracted conflicts, and many phase 4 countries experiencing the same.

Economic shocks, particularly the sharp rise in global food prices in the last two years, is visible at the global and country level. The impact of weather extremes also had a high impact. The worst drought in 40 years is having a disastrous impact in East Africa.

Tragically, newer data from UNICEF indicates that 7.5 million children are forecast to be wasted (instead of 6.1 million).

The panellists encouraged the parliamentarians to push for an urgent scaling up of humanitarian assistance. They highlighted the need to work on conflict prevention and to build climate resilience.

Ms. Heines noted that 20% of Rwandans are food insecure with most vulnerable populations spending 65% of their income each month on food. While chronic malnutrition had declined over the years, some 32.4% continue to experience chronic malnutrition. While the WFP was most well known as the emergency arm of the UN, it had a dual mandate – it was working with Rwandans to develop resiliency and human capital. The school feeding programme, which several committee members saw in action on 13 October was a good example of working to enhance farmers' success and food quality for students. A multi-year engagement was necessary, and she

encouraged parliamentarians to call for action, influencing their own governments to support aid, particularly in disasters, but also in drawing attention to food security and nutrition in their own countries. The WFP was building resilience and sustainable structures.

Ms. Sow noted that FAO was working on emergencies while also supporting governments to have the right food policy framework. In Rwanda, 70% of all food consumed was accessed in local markets and some 72% of the population was employed in agriculture. Some 12 million young Africans entered the labour market each year; the agriculture sector was the only one to absorb them. Young people were keen to produce high value products and benefit from the Africa Free Trade Area with products like coffee, tea, beans, rice and potatoes. FAO is working to ensure they can meet the high standards for export.

FAO and the WFP work jointly to ensure a coherent approach to government. In 30 districts they are specifically looking to address stunting issues. They engage with the National Parliamentary Alliance for Food and Nutrition Security which the Parliament of Rwanda supports.

Fifteen delegates intervened with comments and questions. They noted the need for conflict prevention, enhanced measures to address climate change, the need for South-South Cooperation, for follow up on the Maputo Declaration, and also, that FAO and WFP workers were often in danger. One Kenyan delegate noted “the death of one child anywhere in the world because of hunger is the death of political leadership everywhere in the world”.

The second panel focused on the UN field presence in support of national development: the case of Rwanda. The new Resident Coordinator (RC) for Rwanda, Mr. O. Ojielo, with just three months in Rwanda but with other UN experiences, called out for parliaments to have a deeper engagement with the United Nations through their RCs. The UN's role was to provide top notch strategic policy advice, and to support better accountability. He noted that budget oversight, tracking progress on Rwanda's Vision 2050, and addressing corruption issues were the key issues in their meetings with the Parliament. He encouraged parliamentarians to engage on the Voluntary National Reviews. Five delegates discussed their own engagement with the RCs and committed to working to enhance coordination and engagement upon their return.

In responding to one delegate, the RC noted that the United Nations was accountable to national authorities, and that included parliaments. He encouraged the delegate to demand that UN agencies in his country come to parliament to explain themselves and their work. The United Nations should be supporting the national development agenda defined by the country and was a big source of information. He noted that development should include everyone, and parliamentarians had a role to give voice to the voiceless.

Following the panel discussions, two new members to the Bureau: Ms. R. Tonkei (Kenya) and Mr. E. Bustamente (Peru) were elected. The committee thanked Ms. A. Noor of Kenya who had served as Chair until her recent election defeat and decided to ask Mr. Wehrli (Switzerland) to remain as acting Chair until the 146th Assembly in Bahrain.

## Creation of a global fund or financing facility for climate-vulnerable countries to address loss and damage associated with climate change

### Results of roll-call vote on the request of the delegation of Pakistan for the inclusion of an emergency item

#### Results

Affirmative votes..... 645      Total of affirmative and negative votes .. 1,078  
 Negative votes ..... 433      Two-thirds majority..... 719  
 Abstentions ..... 120

Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.
Albania		<i>Absent</i>		Germany		19		Paraguay		<i>Absent</i>	
Algeria		<i>Absent</i>		Ghana	4		10	Peru	14		
Andorra		10		Greece	5	8		Poland		15	
Angola	14			Guinea	13			Portugal		13	
Argentina			16	Guyana		<i>Absent</i>		Qatar	11		
Armenia		<i>Absent</i>		Hungary		13		Republic of Korea		<i>Absent</i>	
Australia		14		Iceland		8		Romania		14	
Austria		12		India	23			Russian Federation	20		
Azerbaijan		<i>Absent</i>		Indonesia	22			Rwanda			12
Bahrain	11			Iran (Islamic Republic of)	19			Saudi Arabia	14		
Bangladesh		<i>Absent</i>		Iraq	15			Serbia	12		
Belarus	8			Ireland		11		Seychelles	10		
Belgium		13		Israel		12		Sierra Leone			11
Benin		<i>Absent</i>		Italy		8		Slovenia		11	
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	11		1	Japan			20	Somalia	13		
Botswana			11	Jordan	12			South Africa	14		3
Brazil		<i>Absent</i>		Kazakhstan	10			South Sudan		<i>Absent</i>	
Burundi		<i>Absent</i>		Kenya	15			Spain		16	
Cambodia	13			Liechtenstein		10		Sri Lanka		<i>Absent</i>	
Cameroon	13			Madagascar	12			Suriname	10		
Canada		15		Malawi			13	Sweden		10	
Chad	13			Malaysia	10			Switzerland		12	
Chile	3		10	Maldives	10			Syrian Arab Rep.		<i>Absent</i>	
Côte d'Ivoire	13			Mali	10			Thailand	18		
Croatia		11		Malta		8		Timor-Leste		11	
Czech Republic		13		Mauritius		<i>Absent</i>		Togo		<i>Absent</i>	
Denmark		12		Mexico		<i>Absent</i>		Türkiye	19		
Djibouti		<i>Absent</i>		Monaco		10		Uganda	15		
Ecuador		<i>Absent</i>		Morocco		<i>Absent</i>		Ukraine		17	
Egypt		<i>Absent</i>		Mozambique			13	United Arab Emirates	11		
Equatorial Guinea	11			Namibia	11			United Kingdom		18	
Estonia		11		Nepal		<i>Absent</i>		United Republic of Tanzania	17		
Eswatini	11			Netherlands		13		Uruguay	9		
Fiji	10			New Zealand		12		Uzbekistan		<i>Absent</i>	
Finland		12		Niger		<i>Absent</i>		Viet Nam	19		
France		18		Nigeria	20			Yemen	11		
Gabon		<i>Absent</i>		Norway		12		Zambia	13		
Gambia (The)	11			Oman	11			Zimbabwe	10		
Georgia		11		Pakistan	21						
				Palestine		<i>Absent</i>					

N.B. This list does not include delegations present at the session which were not entitled to vote pursuant to the provisions of Articles 5.2 and 5.3 of the Statutes.



## Condemnation of the invasion of Ukraine and of the subsequent annexation of territories, in defence of the territorial integrity of all States

### Results of roll-call vote on the request of the delegation of Chile and the members of the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC) for the inclusion of an emergency item

#### Results

Affirmative votes..... 706  
 Negative votes ..... 130  
 Abstentions ..... 362

Total of affirmative and negative votes ..836  
 Two-thirds majority.....557

Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.
Albania		Absent		Germany	19			Paraguay		Absent	
Algeria		Absent		Ghana	14			Peru	14		
Andorra	10			Greece	13			Poland	15		
Angola	7		7	Guinea			13	Portugal	13		
Argentina	16			Guyana		Absent		Qatar	3		8
Armenia		Absent		Hungary	13			Republic of Korea		Absent	
Australia	14			Iceland	8			Romania	14		
Austria	12			India	23			Russian Federation		20	
Azerbaijan		Absent		Indonesia		22		Rwanda	12		
Bahrain			11	Iran (Islamic Republic of)		19		Saudi Arabia			14
Bangladesh		Absent		Iraq	1	14		Serbia			12
Belarus		8		Ireland	11			Seychelles	10		
Belgium	13			Israel	12			Sierra Leone	11		
Benin		Absent		Italy	8			Slovenia	11		
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	1		11	Japan	20			Somalia	13		
Botswana	11			Jordan			12	South Africa	3	10	4
Brazil		Absent		Kazakhstan			10	South Sudan		Absent	
Burundi		Absent		Kenya			15	Spain	16		
Cambodia	8		5	Liechtenstein	10			Sri Lanka		Absent	
Cameroon			13	Madagascar			12	Suriname	4		6
Canada	15			Malawi	13			Sweden	10		
Chad			13	Malaysia			10	Switzerland	12		
Chile	10		3	Maldives	10			Syrian Arab Rep.		Absent	
Côte d'Ivoire			13	Mali			10	Thailand			18
Croatia	11			Malta	8			Timor-Leste	11		
Czech Republic	13			Mauritius		Absent		Togo		Absent	
Denmark	12			Mexico		Absent		Türkiye	19		
Djibouti		Absent		Monaco	10			Uganda			15
Ecuador		Absent		Morocco		Absent		Ukraine	17		
Egypt		Absent		Mozambique			13	United Arab Emirates			11
Equatorial Guinea			11	Namibia			11	United Kingdom	18		
Estonia	11			Nepal		Absent		United Republic of Tanzania			17
Eswatini			11	Netherlands	13			Uruguay	9		
Fiji	10			New Zealand	12			Uzbekistan		Absent	
Finland	12			Niger		Absent		Viet Nam			19
France	18			Nigeria	15	5		Yemen		11	
Gabon		Absent		Norway	12			Zambia			13
Gambia (The)	11			Oman			11	Zimbabwe			10
Georgia	11			Pakistan		21					
				Palestine		Absent					

N.B. This list does not include delegations present at the session which were not entitled to vote pursuant to the provisions of Articles 5.2 and 5.3 of the Statutes. On 15 October 2022, the Yemeni delegation informed the Governing Council that its votes had not been recorded correctly. The IPU President promised to reflect their votes accurately in the Summary Records. After checking the recording, the IPU Secretariat corrected the Results as they appear on this page. The total number of Yes votes for the Proposal 2 decreased from 717 to 706 while the number of No votes increased from 119 to 130. However, these changes did not affect the overall outcome of the vote.

## Condemnation of the invasion of Ukraine and of the subsequent annexation of territories, in defence of the territorial integrity of all States

*Resolution adopted by consensus\* by the 145th IPU Assembly  
(Kigali, 14 October 2022)*

The 145th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

*Recalling* that the invasion of the sovereign State of Ukraine has resulted in the death and maiming of thousands of civilians and military personnel, the destruction of cities and infrastructure, and the displacement of millions of people as refugees of war,

*Considering* that the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) works for peace and cooperation among peoples, and for the promotion and defence of human rights, which are universal in nature and whose unrestricted respect is an essential factor for democracy and the development of all nations,

*Noting* the adoption on 23 March 2022 by the 144th IPU Assembly in Nusa Dua, Indonesia, of a resolution in favour of a *Peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine, respecting international law, the Charter of the United Nations and territorial integrity*,

*Bearing in mind* that the Charter of the United Nations states that “[a]ll Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state”,

*Having regard to* United Nations General Assembly Resolution ES-11/2 on the humanitarian consequences of the aggression against Ukraine, which calls for an immediate cessation of hostilities, in particular of any attacks against civilians and civilian objects,

*Noting* United Nations Human Rights Council Resolution 49/1 of 4 March 2022 on the situation of human rights in Ukraine stemming from the Russian aggression, as well as United Nations Human Rights Council Resolution S-34/1 of 12 May 2022 calling for investigations into war crimes committed on Ukrainian territory,

*Attentive to* the content of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, especially the Fourth Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, and their Additional Protocols,

*Aware* that the military aggression against Ukraine has continued for eight months now, despite multiple calls from the international community to put an end to the conflict and the resultant suffering of the civilian population,

*Alarmed by* the profound consequences of the invasion of Ukrainian territory by the Russian Federation, which point to a humanitarian, migration and refugee crisis affecting the entire world and, in particular: the sharp deterioration of the global economy, giving rise to major concerns; the situation in the Horn of Africa, with Somalia alone receiving 92% of its wheat imports from the Russian Federation and Ukraine; the upward spiral of food and fuel prices resulting from the war threatening to plunge the African population into a food crisis of potentially catastrophic proportions; and Europe meanwhile facing a cold winter with reduced gas supplies, with some 41% of this vital energy source coming from the Russian Federation,

1. *Reiterates* its call for an immediate end to the Russian military occupation of sovereign Ukrainian territory, restoring its territorial integrity back to its internationally recognized borders, extending to its territorial waters, and consequently the rule of international law;
2. *Condemns in the strongest terms* the serious violations of human dignity and the flagrant violations of human rights perpetrated in the regions of Kyiv, Kharkiv, Sumy, Chernihiv and others;

3. *Also condemns* the use of extrajudicial executions, sexual and gender-based violence, and inhuman or degrading treatment as a weapon of war, in open violation of the Geneva Conventions relating to the treatment of prisoners of war, the care and assistance of the wounded and sick, and the due protection of the civilian population;
4. *Reaffirms* the importance of respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States, in connection with Russia's territorial annexation;
5. *Supports* the resolutions of various international bodies to investigate and prosecute the perpetrators of possible war crimes committed in Ukraine, particularly the massacre in Mariupol, the evidence found of clandestine mass graves in Izium, the tragic events in Bucha, the hundreds of attacks on the country's health infrastructure, the use of unguided bombs and cluster munitions against the civilian population in Chernihiv and Okhtyrka, among others;
6. *Also supports* the creation of courts with specific jurisdiction to investigate possible crimes perpetrated in wars of aggression and to hear cases of war crimes and human rights violations committed on Ukrainian territory.
7. *Urgently appeals* to the international community to support the actions of UNICEF and other specialized aid agencies to alleviate the general deprivation suffered by 3 million children inside Ukrainian territory and another 2 million refugee children, who require rapid and life-saving assistance;
8. *Calls on* the parliaments of the world to:
  - raise awareness, as appropriate, among the competent national authorities of their States and civil society of the need to contribute, insofar as they are able, to a solution to the humanitarian crisis involving the migration of 6 million Ukrainian citizens as refugees;
  - encourage the support and cooperation of the international community in the process of reconstructing Ukraine, in solidarity with its people and respecting the principles, values and norms of international humanitarian law;
  - continue their commitment to climate change reduction targets, recognizing that the war of aggression is impacting energy supply;
9. *Calls on* the competent bodies of the United Nations system, the governments and parliaments of the world, and multilateral financial institutions to adopt and support effective and targeted social policies to address decisively global food insecurity resulting from the effects of the war, namely the rising prices of food, fuel and fertilizers, the supply of which has been severely disrupted or discontinued;
10. *Expresses* solidarity with all the victims of the armed conflict in Ukraine and *condemns* all war crimes, crimes against humanity and any other human rights violations;
11. *Urges* all States to address the humanitarian dimension of the conflict, to work together to reduce tensions and to exhaust all peaceful means available through mechanisms of peaceful settlement;
12. *Reaffirms* support for the ongoing work of the IPU Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine; *encourages* the Task Force to continue its efforts to bring the parties concerned to the table of political dialogue for the peaceful resolution of the war, in keeping with the Charter of the United Nations, territorial integrity and international law; and *encourages* both Parliaments to facilitate the Task Force's engagement to achieve its mission.

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\* After the adoption of the Resolution, the following delegations took the floor to abstain from supporting the resolution:

- India, Mozambique, South Africa, South Sudan and Yemen.

## **LIST OF PARTICIPANTS** ***LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS***

Mr./M. Duarte Pacheco

President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union  
*Président de l'Union interparlementaire*

Ms./Mme Donatille Mukabalisa

Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies of Rwanda  
*Présidente de la Chambre des Députés de Rwanda*

Mr./M. Martin Chungong

Secretary General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union  
*Secrétaire général de l'Union interparlementaire*

**I. MEMBERS - MEMBRES****ALBANIA - ALBANIE**

Mr. PALOKA, Edi	Member of Parliament (PD)
President of the IPU Group	
Leader of the delegation	
Ms. KRYEMADH, Monika	Member of Parliament (PL)
Mr. SAPHO, Florenc	Member of Parliament (PS)
Mr. SALIANJI, Ervin	Member of Parliament (PD)
Mr. GOLI, Genci	Official, Foreign Relation Service
Secretary of the Group	
Secretary of the delegation	
(PS: Socialist Party / Parti socialiste d'Albanie	
(PL: Freedom Party / Parti de la Liberté)	
(PD: Democratic Party / Parti Démocratique)	

**ALGERIA - ALGÉRIE**

M. CHIBANE Boumediene Lotf,	Vice-Président du Conseil de la Nation
Chef de la délégation	
M. BOUDEN, Monder, Membre,	Vice-Président de l'Assemblée populaire nationale
Groupe consultatif de haut niveau sur la lutte contre	(RND)
le terrorisme et l'extrémisme violent	
Ms. BENBADIS, Fawzia, Membre, Comité sur les	Membre du Conseil de la Nation, Commission des
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	l'homme (FLN),
Mr. BOUCHOUIT, Mohamed Anouar,	Membre de l'Assemblée populaire nationale
Membre, Commission permanente de la paix et de la	
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Ms. ILIMI HADDOUCHE, Farida	Membre de l'Assemblée populaire nationale (FLN)
Mr. KHARCHI, Ahmed	Membre du Conseil de la Nation (FLN), Membre,
Membre, Comité exécutif	Commission des affaires juridiques, administratifs
	et des droits de l'homme
Mr. TALBI, Ali	Membre du Conseil de la Nation (RND)
Mr. SAHLI, Abdelkader	Membre du Conseil de la Nation, Président,
	Commission des affaires juridiques, administratifs
	et des droits de l'Homme
Ms. BENZIADA, Mounia	Cadre administratif, Conseil de la Nation
Secrétaire de la délégation	
Mr. DJOUAHRA, Ahcene	Conseiller
(RND: National Democratic Rally / Rassemblement national démocratique)	
(FLN: National Libération Front / Front de libération nationale)	
(I: Independent / Indépendant)	

**ANDORRA - ANDORRE**

Mme COMA, Berna,	Membre du Conseil général (DA)
Leader of the delegation	Vice-Présidente de la Commission des affaires
	étrangères
	Commission de l'aménagement du territoire, de
	l'urbanisme et de l'environnement
	Commission de la santé
M COSTA, Ferran	Membre du Conseil général (L'A)
	Président de la Commission de l'éducation, de la
	recherche, de la culture, de la jeunesse et des sports
	Commission des finances et du budget
Mme RODRIGUEZ, Arantxa	
Secrétaire du groupe et de la délégation	
(DA: Democrats for Andorra / Démocrates pour Andorre)	
(L'A: Liberal Party / Parti Libéral)	

**ANGOLA**

Ms. VALENTE, Maria	Member of the National Assembly (MPLA)
Leader of the delegation	
Mr. VAN-DÚNEM, Kilamba	Member of the National Assembly (MPLA)
Mr. DINIS, Fernando	Member of the National Assembly (PHA)
Ms. BARRICA, Nildeice	Adviser
Secretary of the delegation	
(MPLA: Movement for the Liberation of Angola / Movement pour la libération de l'Angola	
(PHA: Partido Humanista de Angola / Parti humaniste de Angola)	

**ARGENTINA - ARGENTINE**

Ms. BRAWER, Mara	Member of the Chamber of Deputies, First Vice-President, Science, Technology and Innovation, Member, Education, Member, Women and Diversity (PJ)
Ms. STOLBIZER, Margarita,	Member of the Chamber of Deputies, Constitutional Affairs, Member, Foreign Affairs (GEN)
Mr. CHEPPU, Juan Manuel	Secretary General, Chamber of Deputies
Mr. TARASEWIEZ, Germán	General Director of Innovation, Chamber of Deputies
Mr. CINCUNEGI, Juan de Dios	Advisor, Senate
(PJ: Partido Justicialista / Parti justicialiste )	
(GEN: Partido GEN)	

**ARMENIA - ARMENIE**

Ms. VARDANYAN, Tsovinar	Member of the National Assembly (CC)
Leader of the delegation	Member, Standing Committee on Economic Affairs
Ms. HAKOBYAN, Hasmik	Member of the National Assembly (CC)
Member of the Bureau of the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security	Member, Standing Committee on Science, Education, Culture, Diaspora, Youth and Sport
Ms. TIGRANYAN, Heriknaz	Member of the National Assembly (CC)
Member of the Bureau of the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs	Chairperson, Standing Committee on Labour and Social Affairs
Mr. NARIBEKYAN, Vahan	Secretary General
Mr. KHANZRADYAN, Eduard	Deputy Secretary General
Ms. GHAZARYAN, Zabela	
Secretary of the delegation	
(CC: Civil Contract Party / Parti du contrat social)	

**AUSTRALIA - AUSTRALIE**

Mr. DICK, Milton,	Speaker of the House of Representatives (ALP)
Leader of the delegation	
Mr. ENTSCH, Warren	Member of the House of Representatives, Deputy Chair, Joint Select Committee on Northern Australia (LNP)
Mr. REID, Gordon	Member of the House of Representatives, Committee Member, Joint Standing: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Committee Member, House of Representatives Standing: Health, Aged Care and Sport (ALP)
Ms. PAYMAN, Fatima	Senator, Chair, Senate Standing Committee on Publications, Deputy Chair
Ms. REYNOLDS, Linda	Joint Standing Committee on Publications (ALP)
	Senator, Committee Member, Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, Committee Member, Joint Statutory Committee on Public Works, Deputy Chair, Joint Statutory Committee on Public Accounts and Audit (LP)
Mr. HIGGINS, Charlie	Chief of Staff to the Speaker of the House of Representatives

Ms. MATULICK, Toni  
Secretary of the delegation  
THOMSON, Jane  
Secretary of the delegation  
VIGIE, Dominique  
Diplomatic Staff

(LP: Liberal Party of Australia / Parti libéral australien)  
(ALP: Australian Labor Party / Parti travailliste australien)  
(LNP: Liberal National Party of Queensland / Parti libéral national du Queensland )

Clerk Assistant (Committees)

Committee Secretary

### AUSTRIA - AUTRICHE

Mr. LOPATKA, Reinhold  
Leader of the delegation  
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Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism

Ms. BAYR, Petra

Mr. DEIMEK, Gerhard

Ms. ERNST-DZIEDZIC, Ewa

Mr. SCHERAK, Nikolaus

Ms. RUND, Petra

Mr. MATUSCHEK, Matthias

Secretary of the delegation

Ms. GABRON, Nadine

Mr. FELLNER, Christian

Ambassador

(ÖVP: Austrian People's Party / Parti populaire)  
(SPÖ: Austrian Social Democratic Party / Parti social-démocrate autrichien)  
(FPÖ: Austrian Freedom Party / Parti de la liberté )  
(Grüne: The Greens / Les verts)  
(NEOS: Austrian Liberal Party / Parti libéral autrichien)

Member of the National Council (ÖVP)

Member of the National Council (SPÖ)

Member of the National Council (FPÖ)

Member of the National Council (GRÜNE)

Member of the National Council (NEOS)

Head of

International Affairs division

Adviser

Adviser

### AZERBAIJAN - AZERBAÏDJAN

Mr. MAMMADOV, Ramin,  
Leader of the delegation

Member of the National Assembly,  
Member, Committee on Family, Woman and Child  
Affairs, Member, Committee on International  
relations and Foreign affairs (YAP (NAP))

(YAP (NAP): New Azerbaijan Party / Parti du Nouvel Azerbaïdjan )

### BAHRAIN - BAHREÏN

Mr. FAKHRO, Jamal, Head of Delegation

Mr. ALABBASI, Mohammed,

Vice President of the Shura Council

Member of the Council of Representatives, Member,  
Youth Committee, member, Legislative and Legal  
Affairs

Member of the Shura Council

Ms. FAYEZ, Hala,

First Vice-President of the Bureau of Women  
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Ms. SALMAN, Jameela,

Member of the Committee to Promote Respect of  
International Humanitarian Law

Member of the Shura Council

Ms. ALENEZI, Hanadi

Secretary of the delegation

Ms. ALJEEB, Fawzia

Mr. HAMD, Saleh

Secretary of the delegation

Mr. MOHAMMED, Sayed Ali

Media specialist

Mr. SAEED, Hussain

Senior Parliamentary Relations Development

Specialist

Adviser

Public Relations

**BANGLADESH**

Mr. TUKU, Shamsul Hoque,  
Leader of the delegation

Mr. HAQUE, Md Mujibul

Ms. NAHAR, Shamsun

Mr. BABU, Md Akhteruzzaman

Mr. SHAHANDARA, Mannan

Mr. HOSSAIN, Md Amzad

Mr. HOSSAIN, Md Mamun

Mr. MAHMUD, Md Sabbir

Mr. MALEKA, Md Abdul

Ms. MUNIRA, Sirazoom

(BAL: Bangladesh Awami League / Ligue Awami du Bangladesh)

(JP: Jatiya Party / Parti Jatiya)

Deputy Speaker of Parliament (BAL),  
Chairman, Library Committee,  
Member, Standing Committee on Rules of  
Procedure  
Member, Standing Committee of Privileges  
Member of Parliament (JP),  
Chairman, Standing Committee on Ministry of Labor  
and Employment, Member, Committee on Private  
Member's Bills and Resolutions  
Member of Parliament (BAL),  
Member, Standing Committee on Ministry of Labor  
and Employment  
Member of Parliament (BAL)  
Member, Standing Committee on Ministry of Science  
and Technology  
Member of Parliament  
Secretary General  
Secretary General  
Secretary General  
Secretary General

**BELARUS - BÉLARUS**

Mr. RACHKOV, Sergei,  
Leader of the delegation,  
Member of the Bureau of the Standing Committee  
on Peace and International Security,  
Member of the High-level Advisory Group on  
Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism

Member of the Council of the Republic  
Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Council  
of the Republic of the National Assembly of the  
Republic of Belarus for Foreign Affairs and National  
Security

**BELGIUM - BELGIQUE**

Mr. COGOLATI, Samuel,  
President of Group,  
Leader of the delegation,  
Member of the Committee on the Human  
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Mr. GRYFFROY, Andries,  
Member of the Bureau of the Standing  
Committee on United Nations Affairs  
Ms. LANJRI, Nahima

Mr. ANCIAUX, Bert

Mr. VERCAMMEN, Peter  
Secretary of the IPU Group

Mr. DANG-DUY, Liêm  
Deputy Secretary of the IPU Group

Mr. DE GHELLINCK, Thierry

(Ecolo: Green Party / Les Verts)

(N-VA: New Flemish Alliance / Nouvelle alliance flamande)

(CD&V: Christian Democratic and Flemish / chrétien-démocrate et flamand)

Member of the House of Representatives,  
Vice-President, Foreign Relations,  
Member, European Matters

Vice-President of the Senate  
Member, Democratic Innovation, Citizenship and  
International Affairs  
Member of the House of Representatives  
Member, Social Matters, Labour and Pensions,  
Member, Naturalisations,  
Member, Petitions  
Member of the Senate  
Member, Institutional Matters  
Deputy Director, Senate

Deputy Director, House of Representatives

Advisor, Senate



**BENIN - BÉNIN**

Mr. SOSSOU, Dakpè,  
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Ms. BABA MOUSSA SOUMANOU, Mariama,  
Member of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians

Mr. BAKO ARIFARI, Nassirou,  
Member of the Committee on the  
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Mr. HOUNKONNOU, Mahout Nabout,  
Mr. TCHAOU Florentin  
Ms. NAGO Epse BOGNON, Ablavi Florine H.  
Christelle

(UP: Progressive Union / Union Progressiste)  
(BR: Bloc républicain)

Vice-President of the National Assembly  
(UP - R)  
Member of the National Assembly (BR),  
Rapporteur, Commission des finances et des  
échanges  
Member of the National Assembly  
Membre, Commission des relations extérieures, de  
la coopération au développement, de la défense et  
de la sécurité  
President of NASAC  
Member of the National Assembly  
Secretary of the delegation

**BOLIVIA (PLURINATIONAL REPUBLIC OF) - BOLIVIE (ÉTAT PLURINATIONAL DE)**

Mr. ARRIEN CRONEMBOLD, Carlos Hernán  
Leader of the delegation  
Ms. CAVALOTTY FORTÚN, Olga  
Ms. MERELIS GENARO, Ana  
Ms. RODRÍGUEZ MONTERO, Aleiza Alcira  
Ms. RUIZ FLORES, Martha  
Ms. TICONA QUISPE, Alicia Lisseth  
(CREEMOS: Movement for Socialism / Mouvement pour le socialisme)  
(MAS-IPSP: Movimiento al Socialismo)  
(CC: Comunidad Ciudadana)

Member of the Chamber of Deputies (CREEMOS)  
Member of the Chamber of Deputies (MAS-IPSP)  
Member of the Chamber of Deputies (MAS-IPSP)  
Member of the Chamber of Deputies (CC)  
Member of the Chamber of Deputies (MAS-IPSP)  
Member of the Chamber of Deputies (MAS-IPSP)

**BOTSWANA**

Mr. SKELEMANI, Phandu Tombola Chaha,  
President of the Group, Leader of the delegation

Ms. MAKWINJA, Wilhemina Tebogo

Mr. MOTAOSANE, Palelo K.

Mr. TSHABANG, Never

Ms. DITHAPO, Barbara Ntheeleng

Mr. KEEKAE, Lesedi  
Secretary of the delegation

(BDP: Botswana Democratic Party / Parti démocratique botswanais)  
(UDC: Umbrella for Democratic Change / Parapluie pour le changement démocratique)

Speaker of the National Assembly  
Committee of Chairpersons of Committees,  
Business Advisory,  
Committee of Selection,  
Member of the National Assembly (BDP),  
Parliamentary Caucus on Women  
Member of the National Assembly (BDP)  
Member, Agriculture, Lands and Housing  
Member, Local Governance and Social Welfare  
Member, Youth, Sports, Arts and Culture  
Member of the National Assembly (UDC),  
Chairperson, Statutory Bodies And State Owned  
Enterprises,  
Member, Health, HIV&Aids,  
Member, Communication, Works, Transport and  
Technology  
Secretary General  
National Assembly

**BRAZIL - BRÉSIL**

Mr. SILVESTRE, Irajá  
(PSD: Social Democratic Party / Parti démocratique social)

Member of the Federal Senate (PSD)

**BURUNDI**

M. NSHIMIRIMANA, Cyriaque, Chef de la délégation,	Vice-Président du Sénat (CNDD-FDD)
M. NIYUKURI, Gad,	Senateur (CNDD-FDD)
Mme NZIGAMIYE, Jacqueline	Senateur (CNDD-FDD)
Mme BARARWANDIKA, Imelde	Conseillère
(CNDD-FDD: Conseil National pour la Défense de la Démocratie- Force de Défense de la Démocratie)	

**CAMBODIA - CAMBODGE**

Mr. SUOS, Yara, Leader of the delegation	Member of the National Assembly (CPP), Chairperson, Commission of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation, Information and Media of the National Assembly
Mr. SOKUN, Ty	Member of the National Assembly (CPP), Secretary, Commission of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation, Information and Media
Ms. KHUN DY, Khoun	Member of the Senate (CPP), Member, Commission of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation, Information and Media
Mr. CHANDARA, Khut	Member of the National Assembly (CPP), Member, Commission on Planning, Investment, Agriculture, Rural Development, Environment and Water Resources of the National Assembly
Mr. DARA, Srun	Deputy Secretary General Adviser, National Assembly
Mr. THUL, Heang	Director, National Assembly
Ms. LEAKHENA, Sok	Adviser, Senate
Mr. HOK, Bunly	Adviser, National Assembly
Mr. KIMLONG, Chheng	Adviser, National Assembly
Mr. SAMBAT, Kheav	Adviser, National Assembly
Mr. THY, Seng	Chief of the Multilateral Office of the International Relations Department of the National Assembly
Secretary of the delegation	Adviser
Ms. YOUSIM, Pov	
Secretary of the delegation	
Ms. CHANMATIN, Phav	Officer of the Multilateral Office of the International Relations of the National Assembly
Secretary of the delegation	
(CPP: Cambodian People's Party / Parti du peuple cambodgien)	

**CAMEROON - CAMEROUN**

M. NIAT NJIFENJI, Marcel, Chef de la délégation	Président du Sénat, (RDPC)
Mme HANGLOG EPOUSE TJOUES, Genevieve	Vice-Présidente du Sénat (RDPC), Commission des Lois Constitutionnelles, des Droits de l'Homme et des Libertés
Mme EBANGHA épouse AGBOR, Johanna	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (RDPC)
M. EMAH ETOUNDI, Vincent de Paul	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (RDPC)
Mme NKEZE, Emilia Kalebong	Membre du Sénat (SDF), Commission des Résolutions et des Pétitions
Mme OUMMOUL épouse AHIDJO, Koulthoumi	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (UNDP)
M. ZANG OYONO, CALVIN	Membre du Sénat (RDPC)
M. WONGOLO, Bernard	Secrétaire général, Sénat
Mme MEDOUANE AWOLE EPOUSE ETOGA,	Sénat
Mme EDWIGE, Ursule	Secrétaire du Groupe
M. MVONDO, Médard	Directeur, Assemblée nationale
Secrétaire de la délégation	
M. NGANE, Gustave Leopold	Conseiller technique du Président du Sénat, Senate
M. Essissima, Ndi	
(RDPC : Rassemblement Démocratique du Peuple Camerounais)	
(SDF : Social Democratic Front)	
(UNDP: Union Nationale pour la Démocratie et le Progrès)	

**CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC – REPUBLIQUE CENTRAFRICAINE**

M. NGAMANA Evariste  
Chef de la délégation  
Mme PATASSE, Marie Christiane

M. NABIA, Abitel Karim

M. MORDJIM Guislain Junior  
Membre de l'ASGP  
M. LETOKOUZOU Alain Brice  
Secrétaire de la Délégation  
(MCU : Mouvement des Cœurs Unis)  
(CAN : Centrafrique Nouvel Elan)

Vice-Président de l'Assemblée nationale (MCU)

Députée (CAN)  
3ème Membre de Bureau de l'Assemblée Nationale  
Député (MCU)

Secrétaire Général de l'Assemblée nationale

Cadre Administratif, Point Focal IUP

**CANADA**

Mr. MCGUINTY, David  
President of the Group, Leader of the delegation

Ms. ATAULLAHJAN, Salma

Ms. LAROCHE, Andréanne

Mr. RAVALIA, Mohamed-Iqbal

Ms. REMPEL GARNER, Michelle  
Mr. ROBERT, Charles  
Mr. LEBLANC-LAURENDEAU, Olivier  
Ms. MYCHAJLYSZYN, Natalie  
Ms. PETRY, Shannon  
Secretary of the Group  
(LPC: Liberal Party of Canada / Parti libéral du Canada)  
(CPC: Conservative Party of Canada /  
(BQ: Bloc Québécois / Parti conservateur du Canada)

Member of the House of Commons (LPC),  
Chair, National Security and Intelligence Committee  
of Parliamentarians,  
Member, Joint Interparliamentary Council  
Senator (CPC),  
Member, Standing Committee on Fisheries and  
Oceans,  
Chair, Standing Committee on Human Rights  
Member of the House of Commons (BQ),  
Vice-Chair, Standing Committee on the Status of  
Women,  
Member, Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure  
of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women  
Senator  
Member, Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and  
International Trade, Member, Standing Committee on  
Fisheries and Oceans,  
Member, Joint Committee on Library of Parliament  
Member of the House of Commons (CPC)  
Secretary General, House of Commons  
Adviser, House of Commons  
Adviser, House of Commons  
Senate

**CHAD - TCHAD**

M. MAKKI, Mahamat Saleh  
Leader of the delegation  
Mme AYMADJI, Opportune

M. BALLAH, Keda

Mme DJENOM MICHELINE, Moguena  
M. ALGHASSIM, Khamis  
Membre de l'ASGP  
M. BEYOM, Malo Adrien

Vice-Président de l'Assemblée nationale

Membre de l'Assemblée nationale  
Rapporteur générale, Comité d'Evaluation des  
Politiques publiques  
Membre, Réseau des Femmes Ministres et  
Parlementaires

Membre de l'Assemblée nationale  
Rapporteur Général, Commission de  
Développement Rural, Environnement, Urbaniste  
Membre de l'Assemblée nationale  
Secrétaire général de l'Assemblée nationale

Secrétaire général du Conseil National de  
Transition

**CHILE - CHILI**

Ms. MIX, Claudia, President of the Group, Leader of the delegation, Member of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians	Second Vice-President of the Chamber of Deputies, (AD), Integrante de la Comisión, Cultura, Artes y Comunicaciones, Integrante de la Comisión, Desarrollo Social, Superación de la Pobreza y Planificación
Ms. ASTUDILLO, Danisa	Member of the Chamber of Deputies (PS), Integrante de la Comisión, Salud, Integrante de la Comisión, Gobierno Interior, Nacionalidad, Ciudadanía y Regionalización, Integrante de la Comisión, Vivienda, Desarrollo Urbano y Bienes Nacionales
Mr. CUELLO, Luis Alberto	Member of the Chamber of Deputies (PC), Integrante de la Comisión, Trabajo y Seguridad Social, Integrante de la Comisión, Vivienda, Desarrollo Urbano y Bienes Nacionales, Integrante de la Comisión, Zonas Extremas y Antártica Chilena
Mr. EDWARDS, José Manuel Rojo	Senator (Partido Republicano), Integrante de la Comisión, Gobierno, Descentralización y Regionalización
Mr. FLORES, Iván, Member of the Executive Committee	Senator (DC), Integrante de la Comisión, Agricultura, Integrante de la Comisión, Transporte y Telecomunicaciones, Integrante de la Comisión, Salud
Ms. LORETO, Carvajal Ms. PEREZ, Marlene	Senator Member of the Chamber of Deputies (UDI), Integrante de la Comisión, Desarrollo Social, Superación de la Pobreza y Planificación, Integrante de la Comisión, Personas Mayores y Discapacidad
Mr. RATHGEB, Jorge	Member of the Chamber of Deputies (RN), Integrante de la Comisión, Agricultura, Silvicultura y Desarrollo Rural, Integrante de la Comisión, Emergencia, Desastres y Bomberos
Ms. PEILLARD, Jacqueline Secretary of the delegation Secretary of the IPU Group	Secretary General, Chamber of Deputies
Mr. GUARDO, Flores (AD : Apruebo Dignidad) (PS : Socialist Party / Parti socialiste) (PC : Communist Party / Parti communiste) (UDI : Independent Democratic Union / Union démocratique indépendante) (RN : Renovación Nacional)	Adviser

**CONGO**

M. KIGNOUMBI KIA MBOUNGOU, Joseph Chef de la délégation	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (LCH)
Mme BOBRO née KOUMBA, Yacine Mfouma M. MOUGAMA NGOLALY, Urcelin Loïc Bruno	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (PCT) Conseiller aux Affaires Administratives et Juridiques du Président de l'Assemblée nationale
M. ITOUA, Guy Nestor (PCT : Parti Congolais du Travail) (LCH : La Chaîne)	Ambassadeur

**CÔTE D'IVOIRE**

M. BICTOGO, Adama Président du Groupe, Chef de la délégation	Président de l'Assemblée nationale (RHDP)
Mme DAO NÉE MACOURA, Coulibaly	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (RHDP) Membre Commission des relations extérieurs
M. KOUASSI, Koffi Kra Paulin	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (RHDP)

M. MERHY, Samy	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (RHDP) Membre, Commission des affaires économiques et financières
M. YOUTE, Wonsebeo Innocent	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (PPACI)
M. DAGO, Auguste	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (RHDP)
M. MEITE, Ben Abdoulaye	Député, Président de la Commission des Affaires générales et institutionnelles
M. EHOUE, Jacques	Député, Groupe Parlementaire (PDCI – RDA)
M. DIARRASSOUBA, Yassiriki	Chef de cabinet du Président
M. ADAMA, Diabate	Directeur du protocole
Mme CARMEN, Merheb	Directrice de communication
Mme DIABY NEE BARRY, Mouminatou	Directrice de la coopération
M. KOUASSI, Amani Sebastien	Chef de Service
Secrétaire du Groupe, Secrétaire de la délégation	
M. DIOMANDE, Aboubacar Sidiki	Secrétaire général de l'Assemblée nationale
(RHDP : Rassemblement des houphouetiste pour la paix et la démocratie)	
(PPA CI : Parti des Peuples Africains Côte d'Ivoire)	

**CROATIA - CROATIE**

Mr. ĆELIĆ, Ivan, Leader of the delegation, Member of the Health Advisory Group	Member of Parliament, (HDZ) Member, Health and Social Policy Committee, Member, Foreign Affairs Committee, Member, European Affairs Committee
Ms. MARTINČEVIĆ, Natalija	Member of Parliament (NS), Chairperson, Committee on Information, Computerisation and the Media, Member, Interparliamentary Co-operation Committee
Ms. RAUKAR GAMULIN, Urša	Member of Parliament (Možemo!), Member, Physical Planning and Construction Committee, Member, Interparliamentary Co-operation Committee
(HDZ : Croatian Democratic Union / Parti démocratique croate)	
(NS: People's Party – Reformists / Parti populaire – Réformistes)	
(Možemo!: We Can! – Political Platform / Nous pouvons ! - Programme politique)	

**CZECH REPUBLIC - RÉPUBLIQUE TCHÈQUE**

Mr. VOJTKO, Viktor, President of Group	Member of the Chamber of Deputies (STAN) Member, Committee on Social Policy, Member, Committee on Public Administration and Regional Development
Mr. FIFKA, Petr	Member of the Chamber of Deputies (ODS) Vice-chair, Committee on European Affairs, Member, Committee on Health Care
Ms. HORSKÁ, Miluše	Senator President, Committee on Social Policy
Mr. VÁCLAVEC, Ladislav	Senator Member, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Security
Ms. VOHRALÍKOVÁ, Jana Membre de l'ASGP	Secretary General of the Senate
Ms. TUCKOVA, Alena Secretary of the Group	Adviser, Chamber of Deputies
Ms. KOŠAŘÍKOVÁ, Kateřina	Adviser, Senate
(STAN : Mayors and Independents / Maires et indépendants)	
(ODS: Civic Democratic Party / Parti démocrate civique)	

**DENMARK - DANEMARK**

Ms. BLIXT, Liselott	Member of Parliament Vice Chairman, Supervisory Board in accordance with Section 71 of the Constitutional Act Member, Health Committee Member, Gender Equality Committee
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Ms. OETKEM, Fatma

Member of Parliament (V)  
Member, Foreign Affairs Committee  
Member, Gender Equality Committee  
Member, Cultural Affairs Committee

Mr. RIIS, Peter

Secretary of the Group

Mr. LARSON, Claudius

Higher Executive Officer

Assistant Secretary of the Group

(V : Liberal Party / Parti libéral)

(EL : The Red-Green Alliance / L'alliance rouge-verte)

**DJIBOUTI**

M. ALI HOUMED, Mohamed,

Chef de la délégation

Président de l'Assemblée nationale (FRUD)

Mme AHMED, Roda, Membre du bureau de la  
Commission permanente du développement  
durableMembre de l'Assemblée nationale (RPP), Membre,  
Commission pour le développement social et la  
protection de l'environnement

Mme BOULHAN HOUSSEIN, Nima

Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (RPP)

Mme MOHAMED HAMADOU, Fatouma

Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (FRUD)

M. OMAR MOHAMED, Hassan

Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (UMP)

Mme KAMIL ALEO, Hasna

Chargée du protocole du Président

Secretary of the delegation

M. MOHAMED AHMED, Idriss

Directeur adjoint

(FRUD: Front for the Restoration of Unity and Peace / Front pour la restauration de l'unité et de la paix)

(RPP : People's Rally for Progress / Rallye du peuple pour le progress)

(UMP: Union for the Presidential Majority / Union pour la Majorité Présidentielle)

**EGYPT – ÉGYPTÉ**

Dr. GEBALY, Hanafy,

Leader of the delegation

Speaker of the House of Representatives

Ms. ALBAZZAR, Sahar, Ex officio Member of the  
Executive Committee, President of the Board of  
Young ParliamentariansMember of the House of Representatives (Liberal),  
Deputy - Chair of the Foreign Relations Committee,  
The Foreign Relations CommitteeMs. ATTIA, Sahar, Vice-President of the Working  
Group on Science and TechnologyMember of the House of Representatives,  
Member, Committee of Education and Scientific  
research

Mr. ASAR, Abdallah

Member of the House of Representatives

Member, Constitutional and Legislative affairs  
committeeChairman of Constitutional and Legislative affairs  
committee

Mr. DARWISH, Karim

Member of the House of Representatives

Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee

Ms. NASSIF AYYOUB, Aida, Member of the  
Bureau of Women ParliamentariansSenator (Liberal),  
Secretary of the Committee, Foreign, Arab and African  
Affairs Committee

Mr. MANAA, Ahmed

Secretary General, House of Representatives

Mr. ETMAN, Mahmoud Ismail

Secretary General, Senate

Mr. NOUR EL-DEEN, Haytham

Director of the Office of the Speaker, House of  
Representatives

Mr. AHMED, Abdel Latif Farouk

Political Researcher in the Technical Office of Inter-  
Parliamentary Conferences, House of Representatives

Mr. SHAALAN, Sherif Elwy Abdel Hamid

Protocol official, House of Representatives

Ms. EL BANNA, Rania

Ambassador

(Liberal: Nation's Future Party / Parti de l'avenir de la nation)

**EQUATORIAL GUINEA – GUINÉE ÉQUATORIALE**

Mr. NTUGU NSA, Atanasio Ela

Membre du Sénat

Ms. OBONO EDJANG, Silvia Paloma

Membre du Sénat

Mr. ESONO ABE, Bienvenido Ekua

Secrétaire général, Chambre des Députés

(PDGE : Partie Démocratique de GEq)

**ESTONIA - ESTONIE**

Mr. KIVIMÄGI, Toomas, President of Group, Leader of the delegation	Member of Parliament (REF) Member, Constitutional Committee Chairman, Security Authorities Surveillance Select Committee
Ms. HELME, Helle-Moonika	Member of Parliament (EKRE), Member, Cultural Affairs Committee
Ms. KÜTT, Helmen	Member of Parliament (SOC), Chairman, Social Affairs Committee, Member, European Union Affairs Committee
Ms. TUUS-LAUL, Marika	Member of Parliament (KESK), Member, Social Affairs Committee Secretary General
Mr. HABICHT, Antero Ms. OTSTAVEL, Enel Secretary of the IPU Group (REF: Estonian Reform Party / Parti de la réforme) (SOC: Estonian Social Democratic Party / Parti social-démocrate estonien) (KESK: Estonian Centre Party / Parti estonien du centre)	

**ESWATINI**

Mr. MAVIMBELA, Petros Vusi Mr. MDLULI, Ndumiso Mfanukhona	Speaker of the House of Assembly Vice-President of the Senate Member, Health Committee Member, Foreign Affairs Committee Member, Finance Member of the Senate Member of the House of Assembly Member, Public Works and Transport Vice Chairman of Tinkhundla Administration and Development Committee Member, Justice and Constitutional Affairs Member of the House of Assembly
Mr. DLAMINI, Mkhululi Sibusiso Mr. MAGAGULA, Wilfred Sifiso	
Ms. BUJELA, Nokunceda	
Mr. SHABANGU, Treasure Sabelo Secretary of the delegation Mr. SHAHIN, Mostafa Mr. ABD EL HAEL, Ahmed	Committee Clerk, House of Assembly  Adviser Adviser

**FIJI - FIDJI**

Mr. NAILATIKAU, Ratu Epeli, Leader of the delegation Ms. BHATNAGAR, Veena Kumar	Speaker of Parliament  Deputy Speaker of Parliament Deputy Chair & Member, Standing Committee on Economic Affairs
Mr. LEAWERE, Mikaele Rokosova Ms. EMBERSON, Jeanette Tanari Mr. NAMOCE, Josua	Member of Parliament Secretary General Adviser

**FINLAND - FINLANDE**

Ms. JÄRVINEN, Heli, President of Group, Leader of the delegation Ms. FILATOV, Tarja Ms. KYLLÖNEN, Merja Ms. TANUS, Sari Mr. TYNKKYNNEN, Sebastian Ms. PAAVOLA, Maija-Leena Ms. LEHTIMÄKI, Outi Secretary of the delegation	Member of Parliament (Vihr.)  Member of Parliament (Sd.) Member of Parliament (Vas) Member of Parliament (Kd) Member of Parliament (PS) Secretary General Assistant for International Affairs
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Mr. VUOSIO, Teemu  
Secretary of the Group  
(Vihr: The Green League / Ligue Vert)  
(Sd: Social Democracy party / Parti social démocrate)  
(PS: The Finns Party / Parti des Finlandais)  
(VAS: Left Alliance / l'Alliance de gauche)  
(Kd: Christian Democratic Party / Parti démocrate-chrétien)  
(Kok: National Coalition Party / Parti de la coalition nationale)

Adviser

## FRANCE

M. JULIEN-LAFERRIERE, Hubert  
Président du Groupe, chef de la délégation  
M. BLANC, Etienne  
Membre du Comité des droits de l'homme  
des parlementaires  
M. MARCHAND, Frédéric

Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (NUPES)  
Membre, Commission des affaires étrangères  
Membre du Sénat (LR)  
Membre, Commission de l'aménagement  
du territoire et du développement durable  
Membre du Sénat (RDPI)  
Membre, Commission de l'aménagement du  
territoire et du développement durable  
Membre du Sénat (SER)  
Membre, Commission des affaires européennes  
Membre Commission des lois constitutionnelles, de  
législation, du suffrage universel, du Règlement et  
d'administration générale  
Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (Renaissance)  
Membre, Commission des affaires culturelles et de  
l'éducation  
Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (Renaissance)  
Membre, Commission des affaires étrangères

M. MARIE, Didier

Mme RIOTTON, Véronique

Mme SAINT PAUL, Laetitia

M. TAVERNIER, Éric  
Mme DOURNOVO, Nathalie

Secrétaire général, Sénat  
Directrice de l'administration générale et de la  
sécurité à l'Assemblée nationale  
Administrateur, Assemblée nationale  
Conseillère  
Conseillère

M. GUESDON, Pierre-Nicolas  
Mme LAMBRECQ, Cécile  
Mme CAPON, Capucine  
Co-Secrétaire ASGP  
Mme VELASCO, Karine  
Assistante, ASGP

Assistante de direction et de gestion  
à l'Assemblée nationale

(NUPES : La Nouvelle Union populaire écologique et sociale (Parti Écologiste)  
(RDPI : Groupe Rassemblement des démocrates, progressistes et indépendants  
(LR : Les Républicains  
(SER : Groupe Socialiste, Écologiste et Républicain  
Renaissance

## GABON

Mr. BOUKOUBI, Faustin, President of Group, Leader  
of the delegation

Speaker of the National Assembly (PDG)

M. NDOUMA-MBADINGA, Jean Victor

Sénateur (PDG)  
Quatrième Secrétaire du Bureau du Sénat

M. NWEKAYENDJOGA, Jean Bernard

Chef de service

(PDG: Gabonese Democratic Party / Parti démocratique Gabonais)

## GAMBIA (THE) - GAMBIE

Mr. NJIE, Hon. Seedy SK,  
President of Group, Leader of the delegation

Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, (NPP),  
Human Rights and Constitutional Matters,  
Defense and Security Committee,  
Tourism, Youths and Sports Committee,  
Member of the National Assembly, (UDP),  
Finance and Public Accounts Committee,  
Public Appointments Standing Committee,  
Gender, Children and Social Welfare Committee,

Ms. CHAM, Fatou



Mr. CHAM, Musa	Member of the National Assembly (PDOIS), Privileges and Ethics Standing Committee, Finance and Public Accounts Committee, Monitoring the Implementation of Government Projects Committee,
Mr. JALLOW, Kebba	Member of the National Assembly (NPP), Education, Training and ICT Committee, Assembly Business Committee, Regional Government and Land, Ombudsman and IEC,
Mr. TOURAY, Assan	Member of the National Assembly, (UDP) Member, Tourism, Arts, Youths and Culture Committee, Member, Agriculture and Rural Development Committee, Subsidiary Legislation Committee Adviser
Mr. MBOWE, Mamat	
(NPP: National People's Party/Parti National du Peuple)	
(UDP: United Democratic Party/Parti de l'Union Democratique	
(PDOIS: People's Democratic Organization for Independence and Socialism/L'Organisation démocratique du peuple pour l'indépendance et le socialisme	

**GEORGIA - GÉORGIE**

Mr. PAPUASHVILI, Shalva	Chairman of Parliament (GD)
Leader of the delegation, President of the Group?	
Mr. SAMKHARADZE, Nikoloz	Member of Parliament (GD) Chairman, Foreign Relations Committee Member, Committee on European Integration
Ms. TSILOSANI, Khatia	Member of Parliament (GD) First Deputy Chairperson, Environmental Protection and Natural Resources Committee Member, Committee on European Integration
Mr. RAKVIASHVILI, Alexander	Member of Parliament (Girchi)
Mr. MDINARADZE, Mamuka	Member of Parliament (GD) Member, Sector Economy and Economic Policy Committee Member, Budget and Finance Committee
Mr. MAKHASHVILI, Levan	Head of the Chairman's Cabinet
Ms. KOLBAIA, Tamar	Head of the Department for International Relations
Mr. PEIKRISHVILI, Mikheil	Head of PR and Information Department
Mr. BROKISHVILI, Irakli	
Secretary to the delegation	
(GD : The Georgian Dream-Democratic Georgia / Le rêve géorgien - la Géorgie démocratique	
(Girchi : Girchi)	

**GERMANY - ALLEMAGNE**

Mr. BEYER, Peter	Member of the Bundestag (CDU/CSU)
Leader of the delegation	Member, Foreign Affairs Committee Group coordinator, Study Commission Afghanistan
	Member, Committee on Education, Research and Technology Assessment
Ms. RHIE, Ye-One	Member of the Bundestag (SPD) Member, Committee on Education, Research and Technology Assessment
Ms. WALTER-ROSENHEIMER, Beate	Member of the Bundestag (Bündnis90/Die Grünen) Member, Petitions Committee Member, Committee on Human Rights and Humanitarian Aid
Mr. HOFFMANN, Christoph	Member of the Bundestag (FDP) Member and Deputy Chairperson, Committee on Economic Cooperation and Development
Mr. LECHTE, Ulrich,	Member of the Bundestag (FDP)
Member of the Board of Young Parliamentarians	Member, Foreign Affairs Committee

Mr. BYSTRON, Petr

Ms. ALBIN, Silke  
Member of the ASGPMs. ZÁDOR, Katalin  
Secretary to the delegationMs. BRAMMER, Claudia  
Assistant to the delegationMr. KURZ, Thomas  
Ambassador

Mr. KETTNER, Lars-Uwe

Diplomat

(CDU/CSU: Christian Democratic Union/Christian Social Union / Union chrétienne démocrate/Union chrétienne sociale)

(SPD: Social Democratic Party / Parti social-démocrate)

(Bündnis90/Die Grünen: Green Party / Les Verts)

(FDP: Free Democratic Party / Parti libéral démocrate)

(AfD: Alternative for Germany / Alternative pour l'Allemagne)

Member of the Bundestag (AfD)

Group coordinator, Foreign Affairs Committee

Deputy Secretary General for International Affairs

and Director-General for Research and External

Relations, German Bundestag

International Parliamentary Assemblies Department,

German Bundestag

International Parliamentary Assemblies Department,

German Bundestag

**GHANA**Mr. BAGBIN, Alban Sumana Kingsford,  
Leader of the delegation

Ms. APPIAGYEI, Patricia

Ms. GOMASHIE, Abba Dzifa

Mr. IBRAHIM, Ahmed

Mr. IDDRISU, Habib

Mr. IDDRISU, Haruna

Mr. KYEI-MENSAH-BONSU, Osei

Ms. LARTEY, Agnes Naa Momo

Ms. MENSAH, Ophelia

Mr. ACHEAMPONG, Richard Kwame

Mr. NSIAH, Cyril Kwabena Oteng

Ms. OSEI, Sheba Nana Afriyie

Ms. EFA-QUAYSON, Claris

(NPP: New Patriotic Party / Nouveau parti patriotique)

(NDC: National Democratic Congress / Congrès démocratique national)

Speaker of Parliament (NDC)

Chairperson, Committee on Selection,

Chairperson, Standing Orders Committee

Member of Parliament (NPP)

Member, Land And Forestry Committee

Member, Appointment Committee

Member of Parliament (NDC)

Member, Trade, Industry And Tourism Committee

Member, Poverty Reduction Strategy Committee

Member of Parliament (NDC),

Member, Special Budget Committee,

Member, Committee On Communication,

Member, Business Committee

Member of Parliament (NPP),

Chairperson, Committee Of Selection Committee,

Member, Food, Agriculture And Cocoa Affairs

Committee,

Member, Business Committee

Member of Parliament (NDC),

Ranking Member, Special Budget Committee,

Ranking Member, House Committee,

Ranking Member, Business Committee

Member of Parliament (NPP),

Chairperson, Special Budget Committee,

Chairperson, House Committee,

Chairperson, Business Committee

Member of Parliament (NDC)

Member, Committee on Gender And Children

Member, Local Government And Rural Development

Committee

Member of Parliament (NPP)

Vice Chairperson, Defence And Interior Committee

Member, House Committee

PAC, Speaker's Secretariat

Secretary General

Director, Parliamentary Relations and Protocol

Adviser

**GREECE - GRÈCE**

Mr. GKIKAS, Stefanos Leader of the delegation	Member of the Hellenic Parliament Member of Standing Committee on National Defense and Foreign Affairs Member of Special Standing Committee on Armament Programs and Contracts Member of Committee on Parliament's Finances
Mr. GIOGIAKAS, Vasileios	Member of the Hellenic Parliament Member, Standing Committee on Social Affairs Member, Standing Committee on Production Trade Member, Parliamentary Special Committee on Regional Policies
Ms. KAFANTARI, Charoula	Member of the Hellenic Parliament Vice Chairwoman of the Special Permanent Committee on Environmental Protection Member of Standing Committee on Production and Trade
Mr. MOUZALAS, Ioannis	Member of the Hellenic Parliament Member of Standing Committee on National Defense and Foreign Affairs Member of the Special Permanent Committee on Equipment Programs and Contracts
Ms. KARTSAKLI, Aikaterini Secretary of the delegation	Advisor
Ms. MICHA, Panagiota	Advisor
Ms. SOTIRIOU, Athanasia	Advisor

**GUINEA / GUINÉE**

Mr. KOUROUMA, Dansa	Président du Conseil national de transition
Mr. TOURÉ, Souleymane	Secrétaire général du Conseil national de transition
Ms. CAMARA, Aissata	Conseillère
Ms. CAMARA, Fingui	Conseillère
Mr. SYLLA, Sény Facinet	Conseiller
Mr. KOUROUMA, Abdourahmane	Conseiller
Mr. DIALLO, Abdoulaye	Conseiller
Mme DE BOIS FLEURY, Potiron	Conseillère
Mme BIRO DIALLO, Kadiatou	Conseillère

**GUYANA**

Mr. NADIR, Manzoor, President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	Speaker of Parliament Chairman, Parliamentary Management Committee Chairman, Committee of Privileges Chairman, Committee of Selection Member of Parliament (APNU/AFC)
Ms. HASTINGS-WILLIAMS, Dawn	Member, Parliamentary Sectoral Committee on Natural Resources Member, Assembly Committee
Mr. NANDLALL, Mohabir	Member of Parliament (PPP/C) Member, Parliamentary Management Committee, Chairman, Parliamentary Standing Committee for Constitutional Reform, Member, Special Select Committee on Hire Purchase Bill
Ms. PERSAUD, Vindhya, Member of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians	Member of Parliament (PPP/C) Member, Committee on Appointments Vice-Chairperson, Parliamentary Sectoral Committee on Social Services Member, Special Select Committee on Radiation Bill
Mr. ISAACS, Sherlock	Clerk of the Parliament of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana

Ms. CHARLES, Carlleta  
Secretary of the delegation  
Secretary of the IPU Group

Parliamentary Executive Officer

Mr. CAMPBELL, Kurt

Adviser

Mr. KIANE, Benjamin

Adviser

(PPP/C: People's Progressive Party/Civic)

(PNCR: Peoples National Congress Reform / Réforme du Congrès national du peuple)

(APNU/AFC: A Partnership for National Unity and Alliance for Change / Un partenariat pour l'unité nationale et une alliance pour le changement)

## HUNGARY - HONGRIE

Ms. BARTOS, Mónika

Member of the National Assembly (Fidesz),  
Member, Committee for Foreign Affairs, Member,  
Committee on Public Welfare

Ms. VADAI, Ágnes, Member of the Committee to  
Promote Respect of International Humanitarian  
Law, Member of the High-level Advisory Group on  
Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism

Member of the National Assembly, (DK),  
Member, Committee for Foreign Affairs

Ms. SOMFAINÉ ÁDÁM, Katalin

Head of Hungarian IPU Office

Secretary of the IPU Group

(Fidesz:

(KDNP: Christian-Democratic People's' Party / Parti populaire chrétien-démocrate)

(DK: Democratic Coalition / Coalition démocratique)

## ICELAND - ISLANDE

Mr. GUNNLAUGSSON, Sigmundur  
Leader of the delegation

Member of the Althingi (Center Party)

Member, Future Committee

Member, Foreign Affairs Committee

Mr. FRÍÐRIKSSON, Jóhann

Member of the Althingi (Progressive Party)

Member, Credentials Committee,

Member, Foreign Affairs Committee,

2nd Deputy Chair, Judicial Affairs and Education  
Committee

Secretary General

Ms. ÁRNADÓTTIR, Ragna

Ms. BANG, Arna Gerður

Adviser

Secretary of the Group

(CP : Centre Party / Parti du Centre)

(PP: Progressive Party / Parti progressiste)

## INDIA - INDE

Mr. HARIVANSH  
President of the Group  
Leader of the delegation

Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha

Chairman, Rajbhasha, Kshetriya Bhasha

Shabdawali Samiti (Committee)

Member, General Purposes Committee, Rajya  
Sabha

Member of Business Advisory Committee

Member of the Lok Sabha

Mr. RAM, Vishnu Dayal  
Member of the Bureau of the Standing  
Committee on Sustainable Development

Member of Parliamentary Standing Committee on  
Home Affairs

Member of Parliamentary Committee on Public  
Accounts

Member of the Rules Committee

Member of the Rajya Sabha

Dr. PATRA, Sasmit  
Member of the Committee to Promote Respect for  
International Humanitarian Law

Ms. KUMARI, Diya

Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs

Member of the Lok Sabha

Member of Parliamentary Standing  
Committee on Railways

Member of Parliamentary Consultative

Committee on Ministry of Culture and Tourism

Member of the Lok Sabha

Member of the Rajya Sabha

Ms. SARANGI, Aparajita

Mr. SHARMA, Kartikeya

Secretary General, Rajya Sabha

Mr. MODY, Pramod Chandra Gyandeo

Joint Secretary, Rajya Sabha

Mr. TIWARI, Mahesh Chandra

Mr. LINGALA, Venkata Ramana  
Secretary of the delegation  
Mr. ANAND, Rakesh  
Mr. SINGH, Yogendra  
Ms. RAJARAJAN Archana

Director and Secretary to the Delegation

Director, Lok Sabha  
Deputy Secretary, Lok Sabha  
Protocol Officer, Lok Sabha

## INDONESIA - INDONÉSIE

Ms. MAHARANI, Puan, Leader of the delegation  
Mr. ACHMAD Dara, Andi

Speaker of the House of Representatives (PDI-P)  
Member of the House of Representatives (Partai Golkar),  
Member, Committee for Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation,  
Member, Commission XI: Finance, National Development Planning, Banking and Non-Banking Financial Institutions

Mr. AIDI MAAZAT, Syahrul  
Mr. ALI SERA, Mardani,  
Member of the Committee on Middle East Questions

Member of the House of Representatives  
Member of the House of Representatives (PKS)  
Vice-Chair, Committee for Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation,  
Member, Committee II: Governance, Regional Autonomy, State Apparatus and Agrarian Affairs  
Member of the House of Representatives, (Golkar)  
Member, Committee for Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation,  
Member, Committee XI: Finance, National Development Planning, Banking and Non-Banking Financial Institutions

Mr. HONORIS Charles

Member of the House of Representatives (PDI-P)  
Vice-Chair, Committee for Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation,  
Member, Committee III: Laws, Human Rights and Security Affairs  
Member of the House of Representatives (PAN)  
Vice-Chair, Committee for Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation,  
Member, Committee XI: Finance, National Development Planning, Banking and Non-Banking Financial Institutions

Mr. DHIELAFARAREZ, Gilang

(Demokrat),  
Vice-Chair, Committee for Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation,  
Member, Committee VI: Trade, Investments, Cooperative, SMEs, and State-Owned Enterprises

Ms. YUSIANA ROBA Putri, Irine,  
Member of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians

Member of the House of Representatives (PDI-P)  
Member, Committee for Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation,  
Member, Committee I: Defense, Foreign Affairs, Communication and Information, Intelligence  
Member of the House of Representatives (Partai Gerindra),  
Chair, Committee for Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation  
Member, Committee I: Defense, Foreign Affairs, Communication and Information, Intelligence  
Secretary General

Mr. ZON, Fadli, Member of the Bureau of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights

Mr. ISKANDAR, Indra  
Ms. TJAHJANI DWIRINI RETNOASTUTI, Endah  
Ms. -, HARYANTI  
Secretary of the IPU Group  
Ms. DIANTI AMRIS, Elvira  
Secretary of the IPU Group  
Secretary of the delegation

Mr. NAUFAL, Fakhri Erlangga  
Secretary of the IPU Group  
Secretary of the delegation  
Mr. RAHBANDIYOSA SABRI, Beny  
Secretary of the IPU Group  
Ms. TANSIL, Yuliana  
Secretary of the IPU Group  
Mr. ILYAS, Mochamad  
Mr. JATMIKO, Triyogo  
Ambassador  
Ms. REPI, Melissa Yuanita  
Diplomat

Adviser

(PDI-P : Indonesian Democratic Party-Struggle / Parti démocrate indonésien en lutte)  
(Gerindra : Great Indonesia Movement Party / Mouvement pour une grande Indonésie)  
(PKB: National Awakening Party / Parti du réveil national)  
(PKS: Justice and Prosperous Party / Parti de la justice et de la prospérité)  
(Demokrat: Democratic Party / Parti démocratique)  
(PAN: National Mandate Party / Parti du populaire national)  
(Golkar Partai Golongan Karya)

### IRAN (ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF) – IRAN (REPUBLIQUE ISLAMIQUE DE)

Mr. REZAKHAH, Mojtaba  
President of the Group,  
Leader of the Delegation  
Ms. AZAD, Elham  
Member of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians  
Mr. GOLROO, Abbas

Member of the Islamic Parliament of Iran  
Member, Budget Committee

Mr. NADERI, Ahmad  
Member of the Bureau of the Standing Committee  
on Peace and International Security  
Mr. NOURI GHEZELJEH, Gholamreza

Member of the Islamic Parliament of Iran  
Member, Article 90 Committee  
Member of the Islamic Parliament of Iran  
Member, National Security Committee  
Member of the Islamic Parliament of Iran  
Member, Education Committee

Mr. GHASSEMPOUR, Amirabbas  
Secretary to the delegation

Mr. SHARIFI, Mostafa  
Secretary of the delegation

Ms. ABBASI, Fahimeh  
Mr. ABOULHASSANI CHIMEH, Jalal  
Ms. AGHAMOHAMMADI, Zahra  
Ms. AZARCHEHR, Maryam  
Mr. MOHSEN, Ghaneie

Foreign Ministry  
Protocol officer  
Foreign Ministry  
Advisor  
Foreign Ministry

### IRAQ

Mr. SHAKHWAN, Ahmed  
President of the Group, Leader of the Delegation

Vice-President of the Council of Representatives

Mr. ADNAN, Adnan  
Ms. FARHAD, Abdo

Member of the Council of Representatives  
Member of the Council of Representatives  
Member of the Standing Committee on Democracy  
and Human Rights

Mr. FATH ALLAH, Arshed

Member of the Council of Representatives  
Member of the Committee to Promote Respect of  
International

Ms. HAMMOOD, Siham

Member of the Council of Representatives  
Member of the Committee on Middle East Questions

Ms. MOHAMMED, Najwa  
Mr. SALIH, Mudher  
Mr. AL-SALIHI, Arshed

Member of the Council of Representatives  
Member of the Council of Representatives  
Member of the Council of Representatives  
Member of the Committee to promote respect for  
IHL

Ms. FAHAD, Wihda Mahmood  
Mr. AL-KHSHATI, Sadeq

Member of the Council of Representatives

Mr. KAMIRAN, Ibrahim

Mr. AL-JAMMRAIE, Farqad  
Mr. AL-RUBAYE, Saad

**IRELAND - IRLANDE**

Mr. O'REILLY, Joe  
Leader of the delegation  
Mr. AHEARN, Garret

Ms. CLIFFORD-LEE, Lorraine

Mr. HOWLIN, Brendan

Mr. NAUGHTEN, Denis  
Ms. LANGAN, Una  
Secretary of the delegation  
Mr. CROWLEY, Tom

Diplomat

Mr. HUGHES, Emer

Diplomat

(FF: Fianna Fail – The Republican party/ Fianna Fáil – Parti républicain)

(FG: Fine Gael/)

(LAB: Labour party/ Parti travailliste)

Deputy Chairperson of the Senate (FG)

Senator (FG),  
Member, Joint Committee on Enterprise Trade and  
Employment

Senator (FF),

Member, Joint Oireachtas Committee on Health,  
Member, Irish Language Gaeltacht and the Irish  
Speaking Community

Member of the House of Representatives (LAB),  
Vice-Chair, Joint Oireachtas Committee on

European Union Affairs,

Chair of the Joint Committee on Social Protection,  
Community and Rural Development and the Islands

Member of the IPU Working Group on Science and  
Technology

Member, Joint Oireachtas Committee on Justice

Member of the House of Representatives

**ISRAEL - ISRAËL**

Ms. SHPAK, Nira

Mr. DICTER, Avi

Ms. MARGALIT, Liat

Secretary of the Group

Mr. ADAM, Ron

Ambassador

(Likud: Conservative party / Parti conservateur)

(YA : Yesh Atid)

Member of the Knesset (YA),

Member, Foreign Affairs and Defence,

Member, Finance, Chair, Home Front Defence

Member of the Knesset (Likud)

**ITALY - ITALIE**

Mr. MIGLIORE, Gennaro

President of the Committee on Middle East

Questions

Member of the High-Level Advisory Group on

Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism

Ms. RADONI, Susanna

Secretary of the IPU Group

(IV: Italia Viva)

Member of the Chamber of Deputies (IV)

Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee

Adviser

Secretary of the delegation

**JAPAN - JAPON**

Mr. TANAKA, Kazunori Leader of the delegation Ms. SUZUKI, Takako	Member of the House of Representatives (LDP) Member, Standing Committee on Budget Member of the House of Representatives (LDP) Director, Special Committee on Okinawa and Northern Problems Member, Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs Member, Standing Committee on Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology Member of the House of Representatives (CDP) Member, Standing Committee on Environment Member, Commission on the Constitution Member of the House of Representatives (JIP) Member, Standing Committee on Internal Affairs and Communications Member, Special Committee for Regional Revitalization
Mr. KONDO, Shoichi	Member of the House of Councillors (LDP) Member of the Committee on Cabinet Member of the Committee on Audit Member of the Special Committee on Regional Revitalization and Formation of a Digital Society Member of the Special Committee on Consumer Affairs
Mr. MORISHIMA, Tadashi	Member of the House of Councillors (CDP) Member of the Committee on Education, Culture and Science Member of the Special Committee on Political Ethics and Election System Member, Commission on the Constitution
Mr. YAMADA, Taro	
Mr. KUMAGAI, Hiroto	
Mr. MIZUTANI, Kazuhiro Secretary of the Group Mr. TSUCHIDO, Shu Secretary of the Group Ms. NISHIHARA, Narumi Secretary of the Group Mr. MATSUMOTO, Akihiro Secretary of the Group Ms. AOKI, Moe Secretary of the Group Mr. KONDO, Tomoya Secretary of the Group Ms. YAZAWA, Akiko Secretary of the Group Mr. IMUTA, Ryohei Secretary of the Group Mr. IMAI, Masahiro Ms. OCHI, Yukako Ms. IKEDA, Yuko	Ambassador Diplomat Diplomat

**JORDAN - JORDANIE**

Mr. ALZIADIN, Haitham, Leader of the delegation, Mr. AL KHDAR, Abdulsalam,	Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives Member of the House of Representatives Member, Agriculture And Water Committee, Member, Labour, Social Development And Population Committee
Mr. ALABDALLAH, Khaled, Mr. ALBAKKAR, Khaled,	Member of the House of Representatives Senator Member, Energy And Mineral Resources Committee,
Ms. ALBASHIR, Amal,	Member of the House of Representatives The Economy And Investment Committee, The Women And Family Affairs Committee
Mr. ALHELALAT, Mohammad	Member of the House of Representatives



Mr. ALMASAEID, Dyab,	The Legal Committee,
Mr. ALMOMANI, Bilal,	Member of the House of Representatives The Tourism And Antiquities Committee, The National Guidance And Media Committee
Mr. ALNIMRI, Jamil,	Member of the House of Representatives The Youth And Sports Committee, The Education And Culture Committee
Ms. ALRIYATI, Tamam,	Member Of The Labor And Social Development Committee
Mr. MASADEH, Mohm,	Member of the House of Representatives The Labor, Social Development And Population Committee,
Mr. RABA', Raid,	Member of the House of Representatives The Foreign Affairs Committee, Member of the House of Representatives The National Guidance And Media Committee
Mr. ALALI, Ammar	
Mr. ALMASHAKBEEH, Adnan	
Mr. AL_ZOUBI, Belal	
Mr. ABU SAILIK, Mohammad	

**KAZAKHSTAN**

Ms. KUSPAN, Aigul, President of Group, Leader of the delegation	Member of the House of Representatives Chairperson of the Committee, Committee of the Mazhilis of the Parliament of the Republic Kazakhstan on Foreign Affairs, Defense and Security Adviser
Mr. TLEGENOV, Rustam	
Mr. SADYKOV, Barlybay	
Ambassador	
Mr. KETEBAYEV, Talgat	
Diplomatic Corps	
(Nur Otan : People's Democratic Party "Nur Otan" / Parti populaire et démocratique "Nur Otan") Amanat	

**KENYA**

Mr. KINGI, Amason Jeffah	Speaker of the Senate
President of the Group	Chairperson, Senate Business Committee
Leader of the delegation	Chairperson, Procedure and Rules Committee
Mr. ABOUR, Paul	Member of the National Assembly
Mr. KIARIE, John	Member of the National Assembly
Ms. LESUUDA, Naisula	Member of the National Assembly
Mr. KHAWALE, Boni	Member of the Senate
Mr. RAI, Gonzi	Member of the National Assembly
Ms. TONKEI, Rebecca	Member of the National Assembly
Ms. MUYEKA MUMMA, Catherine	Member of the Senate
Mr. NJATA, Stephen Mburu	Secretary General
Mr. NYEGENYE, Jeremiah	Secretary General
Mr. CHANIA, Daniel	Adviser
Secretary of the group	
Mr. INZOFU, Benson	
Secretary to the delegation	
Mr. KRISHNASWAMY, Siddharth	Diplomat

**LIECHTENSTEIN**

Ms. BÜHLER-NIGSCH, Dagmar	Member of Parliament (VU)
Mr. GASSNER, Sebastian	Member of Parliament (FBP)
Ms. WACHTER, Gabriele	Adviser
Secretary of the delegation (VU: Patriotic Union/ Union patriote) (FBP: Progressive Peoples Party/ Parti progressiste des citoyens)	

**MADAGASCAR**

Mr. RAKOTOMALALA, Miarintsoa Andriantsitonta, Chef de la délégation, Membre du Conseil du Forum des jeunes parlementaires	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale
Mr. EDIZARD, Edizard	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (IRD) Membre, Commerce
Mr. RAVONTY, Tam Téon Luc Urbain	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (IRD)
Mr. RANDRIAMAHAFANJARY, Calvin Adviser (IRD: Isika Rehetra District)	Secrétaire général

**MALAWI**

Ms. HARA, Catherine Gomezgani, Leader of the delegation	Speaker of the National Assembly (MCP), Member, Women's Caucus
Ms. JAILOSI JOLOBALA, Esther	Member of the National Assembly (UDF), Member, International Relations, Member, Natural Resources And Climate Change, Member, Women's Caucus
Mr. KANDODO, Kenny Edward	Member of the National Assembly (MCP), Member, International Relations, Member, Budget
Mr. KAPICHILA, Misolo Mussa,	Member of the National Assembly (UDF), Member, International Relations, Member, Legal Affairs
Mr. MLOMBWA, Claude Clement	Member of the National Assembly (MCP), Member, International Relations, Member, Legal Affairs
Mr. MUSOWA, Victor Hetherwick	Member of the National Assembly (DPP), Member, International Relations, Member, Public Appointments
Ms. KALEMBA, Fiona	Secretary General
Mr. MWENYEHELI, Jeffrey	Deputy Secretary General
Secretary of the delegation	
Ms. KOMBO DZIDEKHA, Gloria	Chief of protocol
Ms. CHIKANDIRA, Nancy	Adviser
(MCP : Malawi Congress Party / Parti du Congrès du Malawi)	
(UDF : United Democratic Front / Front démocratique unifié)	
(DPP : Democratic Progressive Party / Parti démocratique progressiste)	

**MALAYSIA - MALAISIE**

Mr. MD ARIP, Muhammad Zahid	Senator (BERSATU)
Ms. IBHARIM, Nurul Fadilah	
Secretary of the delegation	
Ms. HARIS, Fatin Zafirah	
Diplomat	
(PKR: People's Justice Party / Parti pour la justice du peuple)	
(BERSATU : Malaysian United Indigenous Party Parti autochtone uni de Malaisie)	
(AMANAH :: National Trust Party Parti du National Trust)	
(WARISAN: Sabah Heritage Party / Parti Warisan Sabah )	

**MALDIVES**

Ms. ABDULLA, Eva  
Leader of the delegation  
Member of the High-level Advisory Group on  
Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism  
Mr. DIDI, Hussain Mohamed

Deputy Speaker of the People's Majlis, (MDP),  
Member, Committee on National Security Services

Mr. SHAREEF, Adam

Member of the People's Majlis (MDP)  
Member, Government Oversight Committee,  
Vice Chairperson, Committee on State Owned  
Enterprises  
Member of the People's Majlis (PNC)  
Member, Committee on National Security Services,  
Member, Government Oversight Committee,  
Member, Committee on Member's Privileges and  
Ethics

Mr. LATHEEF, Hassan

Member of the People's Majlis  
Chair, General Purposes Committee  
Senior Foreign Relations Officer

Ms. HUSSAIN, Mariam Marin  
Secretary of the delegation

(MDP : Maldivian Democratic Party / Parti démocratique des Maldives )  
(PPM: Progressive Party of Maldives / Parti progressiste des Maldives)  
(MNP : Maldives National Party / Parti National des Maldives)

**MALI**

M. DIAW, Malick  
Président du Groupe  
Chef de la délégation  
M. TRAORE, Hamidou  
M. MAIGA, Amadou

Président de l'Assemblée nationale

Vice-Président de l'Assemblée nationale

Membre de l'Assemblée nationale  
Membre, Commission des Finances  
Membre de l'Assemblée nationale  
Membre, Commission Emploi

Mme SANOGO, Oumou  
Membre du Bureau du Forum des  
Femmes parlementaires  
M. SIDIBE, Modibo  
M. KEITA, Drissa

Secrétaire général  
Conseiller, Directeur adjoint

**MALTA - MALTE**

Mr. CUTAJAR, Robert

Member of the House of Representatives  
Opposition Whip, House Business Committee  
Member of the House of Representatives  
Manager II (Research)

Mr. DE BATTISTA, Randolph  
Mr. BAJADA, Ian Paul  
Secretary of the delegation

**MAURITIUS - MAURICE**

Ms. JUTTON, Teenah  
Member of the Board of the Forum of Young  
Parliamentarians  
(MSM: Mouvement Socialist Militant)

Member of the National Assembly (MSM)  
Gender Caucus, Young Parliamentarians

**MEXICO - MEXIQUE**

Ms. REYNOSO SÁNCHEZ, Alejandra Noemi Leader of the delegation Member of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians	Vice-President of the Senate (PAN) Member of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians,
Ms. GUERRA CASTILLO, Marcela	Deputy Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies
Mr. CANTÚ GONZÁLEZ, Mauricio	Member of the Chamber of Deputies (MORENA) Secretary, Committee on Climate Change and Sustainability Secretary, Committee on Science, Technology and Innovation Member, Committee on National Defense Member of the Chamber of Deputies (PRI) Member, Committee on Constitutional Issues Member, Committee on Education Member, Committee on the Interior and Population
Ms. LÓPEZ CASTRO, Cynthia Iliana Member of the Bureau of the Standing Committee on UN Affairs	Member of the Chamber of Deputies (PAN) Secretary, Committee on Constitutional Issues Member, Committee on Mobility Member, Committee on Gender Equality
Ms. FELIPE TORRES, Joanna Alejandra	Senator, (PT) Member, Committee on Administration, Member, Committee on Foreign Affairs (North America and Europe) Member, Special Committee in charge of monitoring cases of femicide of girls and adolescents
Ms. BAÑUELOS, Geovanna del Carmen, Member of the Committee to Promote Respect of International Humanitarian Law	Member of the Chamber of Deputies (MORENA) Member, Committee on the Interior and Population Secretary, Committee on Human Rights Member, Committee on Political-Electoral Reform
Ms. RAMÍREZ PADILLA, Julieta Andrea	
(PT: Labor Party / Parti travailliste) (PAN: National Action Party / Parti de l'Action nationale) (PRI : Institutional Revolutionary Party) (MORENA : Movimiento Regeneración Nacional)	

**MONACO**

M. NOTARI, Fabrice, Président du Groupe, chef de la délégation, Membre du Bureau de la Commission permanente du développement durable Mme GRISOUL, Marine (PRIMO: Monaco as Priority / Priorité Monaco)	Membre du Conseil national (PRIMO) Président de la Commission pour le suivi de la négociation avec l'Union européenne Membre du Conseil national (PRIMO)
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**MOROCCO – MAROC**

M. TOUIZI, Ahmed Chef de la délégation Président du Groupe Membre du Bureau de la Commission permanente de la paix et la sécurité internationale M. AIT MIK, Kamal	Membre de la Chambre des Représentants, (PAM)
M. CHOUMAIS, Hassan	Membre de la Chambre des Conseillers (RNI), Commission des secteurs productifs, Commission des finances et de la planification Membre de la Chambre des Conseillers (PAM), Commission des secteurs productifs, Commission des finances et de la planification Membre de la Chambre des représentants (RNI) Membre de la Chambre des représentants (USFP) Conseiller, Chambre des Conseillers
M. REDDAD, Mustapha Mme SLASSI, Khaddouj M. DRIOUCHE, Abdelwahad Secrétaire du Groupe, Secrétaire de la délégation M. SATRAOUI, Said Secrétaire du Groupe, Secrétaire de la délégation	Conseiller, Chambre des représentants

M. IMANI, Youssef

Ambassador

(PAM : Authenticity and Modernity Party / Parti Authenticité et Modernité)

(RNI : Rassemblement national des indépendants)

(USFP : Socialist Union of Popular Forces / Union socialiste des forces populaires)

## MOZAMBIQUE

Mr. MULEMBWE, Eduardo

Leader of the delegation

President of Group

Ms. MALEMA, Lucinda

Member of the Assembly of the Republic  
(FRELIMO)

Member of the Assembly of the Republic  
(FRELIMO)

Member, Standing Committee

Member of the Assembly of the Republic  
(RENAMO)

Advisor of the Assembly of the Republic

Advisor

Advisor

Ms. MUSSAGY, Gania

Mr. MADROBA, José

Secretary of the delegation

Mr. MANJATE, Narcisio

Secretary of the IPU Group

Mr. MIQUADARE, Amade

Ambassador

Mr. JOÃO, Manuel

Diplomat

Mr. NHANTUMBO, Helio

Diplomat

(FRELIMO : Mozambique Liberation Front / Front de libération du Mozambique)

(RENAMO : Mozambican National Resistance / Résistance nationale du Mozambique)

## NAMIBIA - NAMIBIE

Mr. KATJAVIVI, Peter Hitjitevi

Leader of the delegation

Member of the Bureau of the Standing

Committee on United Nations Affairs

Ms. KAUMA, Victoria Mbawo

Mr. LIKANDO, John Musialela

Mr. KARUPU, Sebastian

Mr. IJAMBO, Tangeni C.K.

Ms. WITBOOI, Lucia

Mr. JANE, Efraim Gwai

Ms. KANDETU, Lydia Tjihimise

Mr. MWIRA, Bernhard Mbangu

Advisor of the IPU Group

Ms. PHILEMON, Selma Theresa

Secretary of the delegation

(SWAPO : South West Africa People's Organization / Organisation du peuple du Sud-Ouest africain)

Speaker of the National Assembly

Committee on Privileges

Committee on Standing Rules and Orders and  
Internal Arrangements

Deputy Speaker of the National Council

Member of the National Council

Member of the National Assembly

Member of the National Assembly

Member of the National Assembly

Deputy-Secretary General, National Council

Secretary General, National Assembly

Advisor, National Council

## NEPAL - NÉPAL

Mr. TIMILSINA, Ganesh Prasad

Leader of the delegation

President of Group

Ms. CHAPAI, Nanda

Mr. PANTHA, Prakash

Ms. POKHAREL, Bina (Maoist Centre)

Mr. CHAPAI, Nanda

Mr. GAUTAM, Bharat Raj

Speaker of the National Assembly (NCP(MC))

Member of the National Assembly (NCP(US))

Member of the National Assembly (NC)

Member of the National Assembly (NCP(MC))

Member of the National Assembly

Secretary General, Federal Parliament

Mr. DHAMALA, Dasharath

Undersecretary in the Federal Parliament  
Secretariat  
Adviser

Mr. PHUYAL, Rajendra

Secretary of the National Assembly

(NCP(US) : Nepal Communist Party (Unified Socialist) / Parti communiste népalais (socialiste unifié)

(NCP(UML) : Nepal Communist Party (United Marxist Leninist) / Parti communiste népalais (marxiste-léniniste unifié)

(NC : Nepali Congress / Congrès népalais

(NCP(MC) : Nepal Communist Party (Maoist Centre) / Parti communiste népalais (Centre maoïste)

**NETHERLANDS - PAYS-BAS**

Mr. AT SMA, Joop

Leader of the delegation

Member of the Senate (C)

Vice-Chair, Economic Affairs and Climate /

Agriculture Nature and Food Quality

Member, Infrastructure Water Management and  
Environment (IWO)

Member, Education Culture and Science (OCW)

Member of the Senate (SP)

Deputy Speaker

Member, Economic Affairs and Climate / Agriculture

Nature and Food Quality

Member, Public Health Welfare and Sport,

Member, Kingdom Relations

Ms. GERKENS, Arda

Member of the Bureau of the Standing

Committee on Democracy and Human Rights

President of the Twelve Plus Group

Ms. MULDER, Agnes

Member of the Bureau of the Standing

Committee on Sustainable Development

Member of the House of Representatives (C)

Chair, Economic Affairs and Climate Policy

Member, Foreign Trade and Development

Cooperation

Member, Foreign Affairs

Mr. RAVEN, Ton

Member of the Senate (OSF)

Member, Foreign Affairs Defense and Development

Cooperation

Member, Economic Affairs and Climate / Agriculture

Nature and Food Quality

Member, European Affairs

Mr. VAN ROOIJEN, Martin

Member of the Senate (50PLUS)

Member, Foreign Affairs, Defense and Development

Cooperation

Member, Economic Affairs and Climate /

Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality

Member, European Affairs

Secretary General, Senate

Deputy Clerk of the House of Representatives

Mr. NEHMELMAN, Remco

Ms. DE VRIJ, Anna

Staff of the delegation

Ms. JONG, Femmy

Secretary of the delegation

Secretary General, House of Representatives

Mr. FONCK, Tim

Advisor, Senate

Staff of the delegation

Adviser

(C : Christian Democratic Appeal / Appel chrétien-démocrate)

(SP : Socialist Party / Parti socialiste)

(OSF : Independent Senate Faction)

(50PLUS : 50+ Party/ Parti 50+)

**NEW ZEALAND - NOUVELLE ZÉLANDE**

Ms. WALTERS, Vanushi

Leader of the delegation

Member of the House of Representatives (L)

Deputy Chairperson, Justice

Member, Regulations Review

Ms. DEAN, Jacqui

Member of the House of Representatives (N)

Member, Officers of Parliament

Chairperson, Petitions and Assistant Speaker

Mr. OMER, Ibrahim

Member of the House of Representatives (L)

Member, Education and Workforce

Member, Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade

Mr. SIMPSON, Scott

Member of the House of Representatives (N)

Member, Environment

Ms. WALTERS, Amber  
Secretary of the delegation  
(L : New Zealand Labour Party / Parti du travail néo-zélandais)  
(N : National Party / Parti national)

IPR Team Lead of the House of Representatives  
Adviser

### NIGER

M. KARIDIO, Mahamadou  
Chef de la délégation  
Membre, Groupe consultatif de haut niveau sur la  
lutte contre le terrorisme et l'extrémisme violent  
M. DOGARI MOUMOUNI, Oumarou

Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (PNDS Tarraya)

Mme HABIBOU, Aminatou

Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (MODEN  
LUMANA FA)  
Membre Commission des Affaires Economique et  
du Plan,  
Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (PNDS Tarraya)  
Membre Commission du développement Rurale et  
de l'Environnement,

Mme MADOUGOU, Ousseyna

Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (MDN FALALA)  
Membre Commission des Affaires Etrangères et de  
la Coopération,

M. MAHAMADOU, Abdallah

Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (MPR  
JAMAHURYA)  
Membre Développement Rural et Environnement  
Membre Affaires institutionnelles, Affaires  
Économiques et Plan

M. MOUSSA, Ousmane

Membre de l'Assemblée nationale  
Membre Commission des Finances et du Budget,  
Conseiller

M. TOUDJANI IDRISSE, Abdoulaye  
Secrétaire de la délégation

(PNDS Tarraya : Niger Party for Democracy and Socialism / Parti Nigérien pour la Démocratie et le Socialisme)  
(MODEN Lumana FA : Mouvement Patriotique Nigérien pour une Fédération Africaine)  
(MDN Fallala : Mouvement Démocratique pour l'Emergence du Niger)  
(MPR JAMAHURYA : Mouvement Patriotique Nigérien)  
(ANDP Zaman afia : Alliance nigériennne pour la démocratie et le progrès)

### NIGERIA - NIGÉRIA

Mr. GBAJA, Femi  
Leader of the delegation  
Mr. IDRIS, Ahmed

Speaker of the House of Representatives (APC)

Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives  
(APC)

Ms. APIAFI, Betty

Member of the Senate (PDP)  
Chairman, Senate Committee on Women Affairs  
Member, Senate Committee Health

Mr. BARKIYA, Kabir

Member, Senate Committee on Navy  
Member of the Senate (APC)  
Chairman, Senate Committee on Inter-  
Parliamentary  
Vice chairman, Senate committee on Labour,  
Employment and Productivity  
Member, Senate Committee on Airforce  
Member of the House of Representatives (APC)  
Chairman, House committee on Inter- Parliamentary  
Member, Federal Capital Territory Judiciary,  
Member, House Committee on North - Eest  
Development

Mr. GALADIMA, Zakariyau  
Member of the Bureau of the Standing Committee  
on Peace and International Security

Mr. MZONDU, Benjamin

Member of the House of Representatives (PDP)  
Member, House Committee on Appropriation  
Member, House Committee on Army

Ms. ONANUGA, Adewunmi

Member Basic Education and Services  
Member of the House of Representatives (APC)  
Chairman, House committee on Women Affairs  
Member, House Committee on Housing and Habitat

Mr. TUKURA, Kabir Member of the Board of Young Parliamentarians	Member of the House of Representatives (APC) Chairman, Young Parliamentarian Vice chairman, House committee on Judiciary Member, House committee on Appropriation Member of Parliament IPU Desk Officer Deputy Director of the House of Representatives Adviser
Mr. BEM MZONDU, Benjamin Ms. FOFAH, Florence Secretary of the delegation	Chief of staff to the Deputy Speaker Special Adviser Special Adviser
Mr. MALLE, Ibrahim Aminu Mr. IDRIS Musa Mr. BADMUS, Oly Funmilola (APC : All Progressive Congress / Congrès progressiste) (PDP : People's Democratic Party / Parti démocratique Populaire)	

**NORWAY - NORVÈGE**

Mr. MØRLAND, Tellef Inge Leader of the delegation	Member of the Parliament (L)
Mr. ERIKSEN, Even	Member of the Parliament (L)
Ms. HJEMDAL, Silje	Member of the Parliament (P)
Mr. KJERSTAD, Birgit Oline	Member of the Parliament (SP)
Ms. MYKJÅLAND, Gro-Anita	Member of the Parliament (CP)
Mr. TRELLEVIK, Ove	Member of the Parliament (C)
Mr. FRASER, Thomas Alexander Gotaas Secretary of the IPU Group	Advisor of the National Parliament Adviser
Ms. STOCK, Lisbeth Merete Secretary of the delegation (SP : Socialist Left Party / Parti Socialiste de gauche) (C : Conservative Party / Parti Conservateur) (P : Progress Party / Parti du progrès) (CP : Centre Party / Parti du centre) (L : Labour Party / Parti travailliste)	Advisor of the National Parliament Adviser

**OMAN**

Mr. AL MAAWALI, Khalid Hilal Nasser Leader of the delegation	Chairman of the Shura Council
Mr. AL AMRI, QASIM Marhoon Mohamed	Member of the Shura Council
Mr. AL GHAITHI, Ali Rashid Sultan Ali	Member of the Shura Council
Ms. AL JAHWARI, Amal Talib Humaid	Member of the Shura Council
Ms. AL LAMKI, Maha Sulaiman Barakat Mohamed	Member of the State Council
Mr. AL SAADI, Ammar Salim Mohammed	Member of the Shura Council
Ms. AL SAADOON, Muna Ahmed Ali	Member of the State Council
Mr. AL NADABI, Ahmed Mohamed Nasser	Secretary General
Mr. AL SAADI, Khalid Ahmed Said	Secretary General
Mr. AL HOSNI, Khalil Khalaf Habib Secretary of the delegation	Adviser
Ms. AL-AMRI, Sumaiya Issa Abdullah	Adviser
Mr. AL-HARTHI, Khalid Hilal Amur Hilal	Adviser
Mr. AL-RASHDI, Said Khalifa	Adviser

**PAKISTAN**

Mr. NAEK, Farooq Hamid Leader of the delegation	Member of the Senate
Ms. MARRI, Shazia Jannat Member of the High-level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism	Member of the National Assembly Member, Parliamentary Committee Constituted under the Right of Access to Information Act, 2017
Mr. CHEEMA, Nisar Ahmad	Member of the National Assembly
Ms. QAMAR, Wajeeha	Member of the National Assembly
Mr. SYED, Mushahid Hussain	Member of the Senate
Mr. TARAKAI, Liaqat Khan	Member of the Senate
Mr. HAYAT, Farhat	Section Officer (IPR-I), Senate
Mr. SALMAN, Muhammad,	A.D Research



Mr. ALI, Muhammad  
Secretary of the delegation  
Mr. ANWAR, Zahid  
Mr. KHAN, Mohammad Qasim samad  
Secretary of the delegation  
Mr. ISHAN, Amir Mohammad  
High Commissioner to Rwanda  
(PPPP : Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarian / Parlementaire du Parti du peuple pakistanais)  
(PML-N : Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) / Ligue musulmane du Pakistan (Nawaz))  
(MQM-P : Muttahida Qomi Movement (Pakistan))

Assistant Director, National Assembly  
Assistant Director, Protocol, National Assembly  
Adviser, Senate

**PALESTINE**

Mr. HADID, Musa Fateh  
  
Mr. SULAIMAN, Bashar  
Secretary of the IPU Group  
Secretary of the delegation

Deputy Speaker of the Palestine National Council  
Member, Political Committee  
  
Director of Interparliamentary relations Palestinian  
Legislative Council

**PARAGUAY**

Mr. LLANO, Blas  
Leader of the delegation  
President of Group  
(PLRA : Partido Liberal Radical Autentico)

Member of the Senate

**PERU - PÉROU**

Ms. ALVA PRIETO, Maria del Carmen  
  
Mr. BUSTAMANTE, Ernesto  
  
Mr. PAREDES, ALEX  
(AP : Acción Popular)  
(FP : Fuerza Popular)

Member of the Congress of the Republic  
President, Foreign Affairs Committee  
Member, Labour and Social Security Committee  
Member of the Congress of the Republic  
Past President, Foreign Relations  
Member, Foreign Commerce and Tourism  
Member, Science, Innovation and Technology  
Member of the Congress of the Republic

**POLAND - POLOGNE**

Mr. FOGIEL, Radoslaw  
Leader of the delegation  
Ms. BARTUS, Barbara,  
Ms. BUDNER, Margareta,  
  
Ms. MORAWSKA-STANECKA, Gabriela  
  
  
Mr. ZWIEFKA, Tadeusz  
Mr. GARGANISZ, Michal  
  
Ms. KACZMARSKA, Agnieszka  
Mr. NIEMCZEWSKI, Adam  
  
Ms. SKORUPA-WULCZYNSKA, Aneta  
Advisor of the IPU Group  
Ms. WÓJCIK-PAWLICZAK, Agata  
Secretary of the delegation  
Ms. KARWOWSKA-SOKOŁOWSKA, Agata

Member of the Sejm  
  
Member of the Sejm  
Member of the Senate  
Member, Science, Education and Sport Committee,  
Member, Agriculture Committee  
Member of the Senate  
Deputy Speaker  
Member, Human Rights, Rule of Law and Petitions  
Committee  
Member, Foreign and European Union Affairs  
Committee  
Deputy Chair, Special Committee on Climate  
Affairs  
Member of the Sejm  
Advisor, Sejm  
  
Secretary General, Sejm  
Secretary General, Senate  
  
Advisor, Sejm  
  
Advisor, Senate  
  
Advisor, Senate

Mr. BUZALSKI, Krzysztof Diplomat  
Ambassador  
(PPS : Polish Socialist Party / Parti Socialiste Polonais)  
(PSL : Polish People's Party / Parti populaire polonaise)  
(PO : Civic Platform / Plate-forme civique)  
(PiS: Law and Justice / Droit et justice)

## PORTUGAL

Ms. SOUSA, Carla	Member of the Assembly of the Republic Member, Committee on Education and Science, Party coordinator, Committee on Culture, Communication, Youth and Sport
Mr. SANTOS, Miguel,	Member of the Assembly of the Republic
Ms. GUERREIRO, Isabel	Member of the Assembly of the Republic
Ms. COSTA, Maria João	Deputy Secretary General, Assembly of the Republic
(SDP : Social Democratic Party / Parti social-démocrate)	
(PS : Socialist Party / Parti socialiste)	

## QATAR

Ms. AL-SULAITI, Hamda Leader of the delegation Member of the Bureau of the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs	Deputy Speaker of the Shura Council
Mr. AL-AHBABI, Mohammed Mahdi Ajayan President of the Bureau of the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security	Member of the Shura Council
Mr. AL-HEMEIDI, Nasser	Member of the Shura Council
Mr. AL-MANNAI, Mohammed Member of the Board of Young Parliamentarians	Member of the Shura Council
Mr. ALDOSARI, Sultan Member of the Bureau of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights	Member of the Shura Council
Mr. AL-FADALA, Dr. Ahmed Mr. AL SHAHWAN, Misfer Faisal Ambassador of Qatar to Rwanda	Secretary General

## REPUBLIC OF KOREA - RÉPUBLIQUE DE CORÉE

Mr. KIM, Jin-Pyo	Speaker of the National Assembly
President of the Group	
Leader of the delegation	
Ms. JIN, Sun Mee	Member of the National Assembly (DPK)
	Member of Strategy and Finance Committee
Mr. KIM, Taenyeon	Member of the National Assembly (DPK)
	Member of Strategy and Finance Committee
Mr. PARK, Yongjin	Member of the National Assembly (DPK)
	Member of the National Policy Committee
Mr. YU, Eui Dong	Member of the National Assembly (PPP)
	Member of the National Policy Committee
Mr. CHO, Koo Rae	Advisor
Mr. CHOI, Manyoung	Advisor
Mr. HWANG, Seung Ki	Director-General
Mr. Kim, Yun Choong	Program Officer
Ms. NAH, Ahjeong	Director
Ms. PARK, Seohyeon	Program Officer
Mr. CHO, Koo Rae	Advisor
Mr. CHAE, Jinweon	
Ambassador	
(DPK:	Democratic Party of Korea / Parti démocratique de Corée)
(PPP:	People Power Party / Parti du pouvoir populaire)

**ROMANIA - ROUMANIE**

Mr. MERKA, Adrian-Miroslav Leader of the delegation	Member of Chamber of Deputies (PGNM) Member, Committee for Budget, Finance and Banks
Mr. MACOVEI, Silviu Nicu,	Member of Chamber of Deputies (PSD) Member, Joint Standing Committee of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate for the exercise of parliamentary control over the activity of the Romanian Intelligence Service SRI Member, Validation Committee
Ms. DINU, Cristina-Elena	Member of Chamber of Deputies (PSD) Vice-Chairperson, Committee for Health and Family Member, Committee for Human Rights, Cults and National Minorities Issues Adviser
Ms. POTERASU, Teodora-Elena Secretary of the delegation	
(PSD : Social Democratic Party / Parti social-démocrate)	
(PGNM: Parliamentary Group of the National Minorities / Groupe parlementaire des minorités nationales)	

**RUSSIAN FEDERATION - FÉDÉRATION DE RUSSIE**

Mr. TOLSTOY, Petr Leader of the delegation Member of the Bureau of the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security	Deputy Speaker of the State Duma
Mr. KOSACHEV, Konstantin Leader of the delegation,	Deputy Speaker of the Council of the Federation Member of the Federation Council Committee on Foreign Affairs
Ms. BUTINA, Maria	Member of State Duma Member, Committee on International Affairs
Mr. GAVRILOV, Sergey	Member of State Duma Chairman, Committee on Property
Ms. GUMEROVA, Liliia, Member of the Working Group on Science and Technology	Member of Council of the Federation Chair of the Federation Council Committee on Science, Education and Culture
Mr. KLIMOV, Andrei	Member of Council of the Federation Deputy Chair, Federation Council Committee on Foreign Affairs
Mr. SLUTSKY, Leonid	Member of State Duma Chairman, Committee on International Affairs
Mr. VAINBERG, Aleksandr	Member of Council of the Federation Member, Federation Council Committee on Constitutional Legislation and State Building
Mr. KHODYREV, Oleg	Deputy Head of the Secretariat of the Deputy Speaker of the Council of the Federation
Mr. BORZOV, Andrei	Adviser, State Duma
Mr. RESHETNIKOV, Gleb	Adviser, State Duma
Ms. SHMACHKOVA, Olga	Adviser, State Duma
Ms. ZHOLOBOVA, Mariia Advisor / Secretary of Council of the Federation	Adviser, Council of the Federation
Mr. CHALYAN, Karen Ambassador	
Ms. KRYUKOVA, Anna	Diplomat of Council of the Federation
Mr. VOINOV, Aleksandr	Diplomat of Council of the Federation
(UR : United Russia / Russie unie)	
(CP : Communist Party / Parti communiste)	
(LDP : Liberal Democratic Party / Parti libéral démocratique)	

**RWANDA**

Mr. IYAMUREMYE, Augustin	Speaker
Ms. NYIRASAFARI, Espérance	Vice-President
Mr. DUSHIMIMANA, Lambert	Member of Parliament
Ms. MURANGWA, Hadija Ndingiza	Member of Parliament
Ms. MUZANA, Alice	Member of Parliament
Mr. UWIZEYIMANA, Evode	Member of Parliament
Mr. CYITATIRE, Sosthene	Clerk
Mr. T ULIKUMANA, Emmanuel	Deputy Clerk
Ms. KARAKE UWERA, Alice	Secretary of the delegation, Director General of Parliamentary Affairs
Mr. KABANDANA, Maurice	Adviser
Ms. KAYIBANDA, Hope	Secretary of the delegation, Director
Mr. MUSAFIRI, Aimable	Adviser
Mr. MUSHIMIRE, Olivier	Adviser
Ms. NYIRANEZA, Espéciose	Secretary of the delegation, Coordinator of Rwanda Women Parliamentary Forum
Mr. RUBIBI, Olivier	Secretary of the Group
Mr. SENGABO MULIGANDE, Charles	Secretary of the delegation, Parliamentary Diplomacy Specialist
Ms. UWONKUNDA, Claudette	Adviser

**SAUDI ARABIA - ARABIE SAOUDITE**

Ms. ALAHMADI, Hanan	Second Deputy Speaker of the Shura Council
Leader of the delegation	
Mr. ALMOFLEH, Ibrahim	Member of the Shura Council
Ms. ALHELAISSI, Hoda	Member of the Shura Council
Member of the Health Advisory Group	
Mr. ALHARBI, Abdulrahman	Member of the Shura Council
Ms. ABUNAYYAN, Raedah	Member of the Shura Council
Mr. ALANGARI, Saad	Adviser
Mr. ALSHARANI, Ahmed	Adviser
Mr. AL SAUD, Turki	Adviser
Secretary of the delegation	
Mr. BINSHALHOUB, Turki	Adviser
Mr. ALAJLAN, Abdulaziz	Secretary of the Shura Council
	Adviser
Mr. ALSHADI, Hasam	Adviser
Mr. ALHAMDAN, Salam	Adviser
Ms. AL MUFARRIH, Hanin	Secretary of the Shura Council
	Adviser
Ms. ALORAIJ, Afnan	Secretary of the Shura Council
	Adviser

**SERBIA - SERBIE**

Mr. ORLIC, Vladimir	Speaker of the National Assembly (SNS)
Leader of the delegation	
President of Group	
Ms. PAUNOVIC, Snezana, Ivica	Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly (SPS)
	Member, Committee on the Economy, Regional Development, Trade, Tourism and Energy
	Deputy Member, Committee on Finance, State Budget and Control of Public Spending
	Deputy Member, Committee on Kosovo-Metohija
Mr. DRAGICEVIC, Nikola	Member of the National Assembly (Zavetnici)
	Member, Defence and Internal Affairs Committee
	Member, Security Services Control Committee
	Deputy Member, Committee on Kosovo-Metohija

Mr. PAJKIC, Lav-Grigorije	Member of the National Assembly (SNS) Member, Culture and Information Committee, Deputy Member, Committee on Constitutional and Legislative Issues
Ms. RASKOVIC IVIC, Sanda	Member of the National Assembly (NS) Member, Committee on Kosovo-Metohija Member, Health and Family Committee Deputy Member, Foreign Affairs Committee
Mr. SMILJANIC, Srdjan	Secretary General of the National Assembly
Ms. DJURASINOVIC RADOJEVIC, Dragana	Senior Advisor, Foreign Affairs Department
Secretary of the delegation	
Ms. PETROVIC, Irena	Advisor to the Cabinet of the Speaker of the National Assembly
Ms. STANCIC, Kristina	Advisor to the Cabinet of the Speaker of the National Assembly
(SNS : Aleksandar Vucic Together We Can Do Anything Parliamentary Group)	
(Zavetnici : Serbian Party Oathkeepers Parliamentary Group / Groupe parlementaire des gardiens du serment du parti serbe)	
(SPS : Socialist Party of Serbia Parliamentary Group / Groupe parlementaire du Parti socialiste de Serbie)	
(NS : People's Party Parliamentary Group / Groupe parlementaire du Parti populaire)	

**SEYCHELLES**

Mr. MANCIENNE, Roger	Speaker of the National Assembly (LDS)
Leader of the delegation	Chairperson, House Committee Chairperson, Assembly Business Committee
Mr. WILLIAM, Waven	Member of the National Assembly (LDS)
Vice-President of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development	Chairperson, International Affairs Committee
Ms DIDON, Emma	
Secretary of the delegation	
(LDS: Linyon Demokratik Seselwa)	

**SIERRA LEONE**

Mr. BUNDU, Chernor Abass	Speaker of Parliament
Leader of the delegation	
President of the Group	
Ms. SIAFA, Hawa Roselyn	Member of Parliament (SLPP) Member, Transparency & Accountability Committee, Member, Health & Sanitation Committee, Member, Public Accounts Committee
Mr. GEORGE, Edward	Member of Parliament (SLPP)
Ms. THOLLEY, Zainab	Parliamentary Relations and Protocol Officer
Secretary of the delegation	Adviser
(SLPP : Sierra Leone Peoples Party / Parti populaire de la Sierra Leone )	

**SLOVENIA - SLOVÉNIE**

Mr. MOJSKERC, Zoran	Member of the National Assembly (CP)
Leader of the delegation	Member, Commission for the Rules of Procedure Member, Committee on European Union Affairs Member, Committee on Justice
Ms. PANDEV, Tatjana	Director of the National Assembly
Secretary of the delegation	Adviser
(SP : Socialist Party / Parti socialiste)	
(LP : Liberal Party / Parti Libérale)	
(CP : Conservative Party / Parti conservateur)	

**SOMALIA - SOMALIE**

Mr. HAID, Said Mohamed Mohamud	Member of the House of the People
Leader of the delegation	
Mr. BISHAR, Farah Moalim	Member of the House of the People
Mr. MOHAMED, Ismail Eid	Member of the House of the People
Mr. OLUIOG, Noradin Abdullahi	Member of the House of the People

Ms. MOHAMUD, Zamzam Dahir

Member of the House of the People

**SOUTH AFRICA - AFRIQUE DU SUD**Ms. MAPISA-NQAKULA, Nosiviwe  
Leader of the delegation

Speaker of the National Assembly (ANC)

Ms. LUCAS, Sylvia

Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly (ANC)

Ms. DLAKUDE, Dorries Eunice

Member of the National Assembly (ANC)

Ms. LOTRIET Annelie

Member of the National Assembly (DA)

Mr. NTOMBELA, Madala

Member of the National Assembly (ANC)

Mr. SHIVAMBU, Floyd

Member of the National Assembly (EFF)

Ms. MONNAKGOTLA, Roseline

Adviser

Ms. MONTSHO, Alice

Adviser

Ms. NOJOZI, Nogoli

Adviser

Mr. MABANE, Zuki

Personal Assistant to the Speaker

Mr. MARJORIE, Brant

Personal Assistant to Deputy Chairperson of  
Provinces

Ms. MVULANE, Sebolelo

Mr. SITHOLE Dumisani

Mr. TEMBE, Sthembiso

Ms. TYAWA, Penelope

Mr. VAN DEN BERG, Wessel Jan

Mr. XASO, Masibulele

Mr. KOLA, Malose

Diplomat

(ANC: African National Congress / Congrès national africain)

(DA : Democratic Alliance / Gauche démocratique)

(EFF : Economic Freedom Fighters / Combattants de la liberté économique)

**SOUTH SUDAN – SOUDAN DU SUD**

Ms. KUMBA, Jemna Nunu

Speaker

Ms. MASOR, Gatluak Nyank

Deputy Speaker

Mr. ACIEN, Gabriel Guot Guot

Member of Parliament (SPLM)

Mr. ALI MALOU, Daniel Abocha

Member of Parliament (SPLM)

Mr. BENEDICT, Queenta

Member of Parliament (SPLM)

Ms. BONAMALAI, Sandra

Member of Parliament (SPLM)

Mr. GARANG, Isaiah Hakim

Member of Parliament (SPLM)

Mr. NOH, John Gai Nyot

Member of Parliament (SPLM)

Mr. LAWIRI, Okello Odongtoo

Member of Parliament (SPLM)

Mr. CHUOL, Moses Maliek

Member of Parliament (SPLM)

Mr. NGONA, Makuc Makuc

Clerk

Ms. RAMBANG, Nacik Jamea

Protocol

Mr. NILSON, Peter Amos

Protocol

Mr. DABI, Hakim Angelo

Executive Director

Ms. GAMU, Anita

Protocol

Ms. HAIDER, Viola

Personal Assistant to the Speaker

(SPLM: Transitional National Legislative Assembly)

**SPAIN - ESPAGNE**

Mr. ECHANIZ, Jose Ignacio  
Leader of the delegation  
President of the Group  
Member of the Executive Committee  
Vice-President of the Committee on Peace  
and International Security  
President of the Health Advisory Group  
Mr. CEPEDA, José

Member of the Congress of Deputies (PP)  
President, Defence Committee  
Member, Foreign Affairs Committee

Mr. GARCÍA, Joaquín

Member of the Senate (PSOE)  
Socialist Spokesperson, Committee on Latin-  
American Affairs, Deputy Socialist  
Spokesperson, Committee on Relations with the  
Ombudsman

Mr. HUELVA, Amaro

Member of the Congress of Deputies (PP)  
Deputy Spokesperson, Member, Foreign Affairs  
Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Food  
Member of the Senate (PSOE)

Mr. RAMÍREZ, Arnau

First Secretary of the Committee Bureau, Committee  
on Youth, Spokesman of Socialist Group, Member,  
Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Food  
Member of the Congress of Deputies (PSOE)  
Deputy Spokesperson of Socialist Group  
Member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs  
First Vice President, Committee on Coordination and  
Follow-up of Spanish Strategy to achieve SDOs  
Member of the Congress of Deputies (Vox)  
Deputy Spokesperson, Foreign Affairs  
Spokesperson, Committee on International  
Cooperation for Development  
Deputy Secretary General of the Senate

Mr. SÁNCHEZ DEL REAL, Víctor

Ms. ÁLVAREZ PABLOS, Ana María

Mr. CASTILLO, Fernando  
Advisor

Ms. GÓMEZ-BERNARDO, Teresa

Secretary of the delegation

(PP : Popular Party / Parti populaire)

(PSOE : Spanish Socialist Workers' Party / Parti socialiste ouvrier espagnol)

**SRI LANKA**

Mr. ABEYWARDANA, Mahinda Yapa,  
Leader of the delegation  
President of Group

Speaker of Parliament (SLPP)  
Chairman, Committee of Selection  
Chairman, Committee on Parliamentary Business,  
Chairman, House Committee

Mr. ALAWATHUWALA, Jayadewa Chandrawansa

Member of Parliament (SJB)  
Member, Select Committee of Parliament to look  
into and report to Parliament its recommendations to  
ensure gender equity and equality with special  
emphasis on looking into gender-based  
discriminations and violations of women's rights in  
Sri Lanka

Mr. ATHUKORALA, Kapila Nuwan

Member, House Committee  
Member of Parliament (SLPP)  
Member, Backbencher Committee

Mr. MARIKKAR, Saidulla Musthajib

Member of Parliament (SJB)  
Member, Ministerial Consultative Committee on  
Mass Media

Ms. NANAYAKKARAGE, Muditha Prishanthi

Member of Parliament (SLPP)  
 Member, House Committee  
 Member, Women Parliamentarian Caucus in Parliament,  
 Member, Select Committee of Parliament to look into and report to Parliament its recommendations to ensure gender equity and equality with special emphasis on looking into gender based discriminations and violations of women's rights in Sri Lanka  
 Secretary General of Parliament

Mr. DASANAYAKE, Waruna Bandara Dhammika  
 (SLLP : Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna)  
 (SJB : Samagi Jana Balawegaya)

**SURINAME**

Mr. GAJADIEN, Asiskumar, President of Group,  
 Leader of the delegation  
 President of the Standing Committee on  
 Democracy and Human Rights

Member of the National Assembly (VHP)  
 Chairman, Standing Committee for Foreign affairs,  
 international business and international cooperation,  
 Chairman, Standing Committee for finance and  
 planning  
 Member, Standing Committee for natural resources  
 Member of the National Assembly (NDP)  
 Member, Justice and Police Committee  
 Member, Foreign affairs, international business and  
 international cooperation Committee  
 Member, Economic affairs entrepreneurship and  
 technological innovation Committee

Mr. TSANG, Stephen

(VHP : Progressive Reform Party / Parti progressiste et réformiste)  
 (NDP : National Democratic Party / Parti national démocratique)

**SWEDEN - SUÈDE**

Ms. LINDH, Eva  
 Leader of the delegation  
 Member of the Bureau of the Standing  
 Committee on United Nations Affairs  
 Mr. HULTBERG, Johan

Member of Parliament (SDP)

Mr. KARLSSON, Mattias  
 Mr. HERMANSSON, Ralph  
 Secretary of the Group

Member of Parliament (CP)  
 Member, Committee on Social Insurance  
 Member of Parliament (CP)  
 Adviser

Mr. SONDÉN, Björn  
 Secretary of the Group  
 (CP : Conservative Party / Parti conservateur)  
 (M : Moderate Party / Parti modéré)  
 (SDP : Social Democratic Party / Parti social-démocrate)  
 (SD : Sweden Democrats / Démocrates de Suède)

Adviser

**SWITZERLAND - SUISSE**

M. JOSITSCH, Daniel  
 Chef de la délégation  
 Président du Groupe

Membre du Conseil des États (SP/PS)  
 Membre, Commission de politique extérieure  
 Membre, Commission des affaires juridiques  
 Membre, Commission de la politique de sécurité  
 Membre, Commission des institutions politiques  
 Membre du Conseil national (SVP/UDC)  
 Membre, Commission de la politique de sécurité,  
 Membre, Commission des transports et des  
 télécommunications  
 Membre du Conseil national (SP/PS)  
 Membre, Commission de politique extérieure  
 Membre, Commission des finances  
 Membre, Délégation auprès de l'Assemblée  
 parlementaire de l'OSCE

M. HURTER, Thomas  
 Vice-président du Groupe  
 Membre du Groupe de travail sur la science  
 et la technologie  
 Mme BADERTSCHER, Christine



M. CARONI, Andrea  
Membre du Comité des droits de l'homme  
des parlementaires

Mme. FEHLMANN RIELLE, Laurence

M. WEHRLI, Laurent  
Vice-Président de la Commission permanente  
des Affaires des Nations Unies  
Comité sur les questions relatives au Moyen-Orient

M. SCHWAB, Philippe  
Membre de l'ASGP  
M. EQUEY, Jérémie  
Secrétaire du Groupe et de la délégation  
Mme GNÄGI, Anna-Lea  
Secrétaire adjointe du Groupe, Secrétariat de la  
délégation  
(G/V : Green Party / Les Verts)  
(SP/PS : Socialist Party / Parti socialiste)  
(FDP/PLR : The Liberals / Les Libéraux-Radicaux)  
(SVP/UDC : Swiss People's Party / L'Union démocratique du centre)

Membre du Conseil des États (FDP/PLR)  
Membre, Commission de politique extérieure  
Membre, Commission des affaires juridiques  
Membre, Commission des institutions politiques  
Membre du Conseil national (SP/PS)  
Membre, Commission des affaires juridiques  
Membre, Commission de l'immunité  
Membre du Conseil national (FDP/PLR)  
Membre, Commission de politique extérieure  
Membre, Commission de gestion,  
Membre, Délégation auprès de l'Assemblée  
parlementaire de la Francophonie  
Secrétaire général de l'Assemblée fédérale

Relations internationales

Relations internationales

### SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC - RÉPUBLIQUE ARABE SYRIENNE

Mr. AL ZAIBAK, Atef  
Mr. BAKR, Alan  
Mr. AL AHMAD, Fayez  
Ms. DURRA, Nour  
Mr. ALALOU, Nedal  
Mr. DIAB, Abdul Azim

Member of Parliament  
Member of Parliament  
Member of Parliament  
Member of Parliament  
Member of Parliament  
Director

### THAILAND - THAÏLANDE

Mr. TONTISIRIN, Kraisd  
Leader of the delegation  
Member of the Bureau of the Standing  
Committee on Sustainable Development

Mr. WONGTRANGAN, Kanok  
Member of the Working Group on Science and  
Technology  
Mr. SUWANMONGKOL, Anusart  
Member of the High-level Advisory Group on  
Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism  
Ms. SAMREJVANICH, Theerarat

Ms. UNNOPORN, Saratsanan

Mr. BAMRUNGPON, Tanukom  
Secretary to the delegation  
Ms. SUNGTO, Neeranan  
Assistant Secretary to the delegation  
Ms. LICKANAJULE, Somsakul  
Assistant Secretary to the delegation  
Ms. TANGULRAT, Sasirit  
Adviser to the delegation

Mr. ONGKAMONGKOL, Naravit  
(PTP : Pheu Thai Party)

Member of the Senate  
Advisory Chairperson of the Senate Committee on  
Agriculture and Co-operatives  
Third Vice-Chairperson of the Senate Committee on  
Higher Education, Science, Research and  
Innovation  
Member of the House of Representatives (DP)  
First Vice-Chairperson, the House Committee on  
Science, Technology, Research, and Innovation  
Member of the Senate  
Second Vice-Spokesperson of the Senate  
Committee on Foreign Affairs  
Member of the House of Representatives (PTP)  
Secretary of the House Committee on Foreign  
Affairs  
Member of the House of Representatives (PTP)  
Spokesperson of the House Committee on Foreign  
Affairs  
Director of the IPU Division  
Foreign Affairs Officer (Expert Level)  
Foreign Affairs Officer (Professional Level)  
Ambassador / Permanent Representative  
Diplomat

(BJT : Bhumjaithai Party)  
(DP: Democrat Party / Parti démocrate)

**TIMOR-LESTE**

Ms. MARQUES LEMOS MARTINS, Veneranda Eurico Leader of the delegation President of Group	Member of Parliament (CNRT)
Ms. BELO, Helena Martins	Member of Parliament
Mr. DA COSTA, Aderito Hugo	Member of Parliament (CNRT)
Ms. DE CARVALHO	Member of Parliament
Mr. DA SILVA, Luis Roberto	Member of Parliament
Mr. DA COSTA, Paulo	Chief of Protocol
Ms. DA COSTA, Joaquina	Adviser
(CNRT: National Congress for the Reconstruction of Timor-Leste / Congrès national pour la reconstruction du Timor)	

**TOGO**

Mme NOMAGNON, Akossiwa Leader of the delegation	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale Membre, Commission n1 des Lois Constitutionnelles, de la Législation et de l'Administration Générale
M. KAGBARA, Ulija Yebessi Innocent	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale
M. IHOU, Attigbé Yaovi	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale Membre de la Commission de la Défense et de la Sécurité
M. KINI, Efoe Mawunygan	Secrétaire général
M. KABISSA, Sakrala Kouwani	Adviser
M. ZINSOU, Kossi	Adviser

**TÜRKİYE**

Ms. KAVAKCI KAN, Ravza Leader of the delegation President of the Group Member of the Committee on Middle East Questions	Member of the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye Member, Committee on Digital Channels
Mr. BILGIC, Süreyya Said	Deputy Speaker
Mr. DURMUSOGLU, Mülcahit	Member of Parliament
Mr. KARAKAYA, Mevlut	Member of the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye Member, Committee on Public Enterprises
Mr. OZSOY, Hisyar	Member of the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye Member, Committee on Foreign Affairs
Ms. POLAT DUZGUN, Arife	Member of the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye Spokesperson, Committee on Health, Family, Labor and Social Affairs
Ms. YILDIZ, Zernep	Member of the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye Member, Committee on Digital Channels Spokesperson, Committee on Education, Culture, Youth and Sports
Mr. KUMBUZOGLU, Mehmet Ali Member of the ASGP	Secretary General
Mr. GUNER, Mumtaz Secretary of the delegation	Deputy Director
Ms. DENERI, Hande	Adviser
Mr. DUMAZ, Volkan	Adviser
Ms. TÜRKMEN, Elif	Adviser
Mr. YILDIZ, Ali	Adviser

**UGANDA - OUGANDA**

Mr. RUHUNDA, Alex Leader of the delegation	Member of Parliament (NRM) Member, Public Accounts Committee - Commissions, Statutory Authorities and State Enterprises
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Ms. ACORA ODONGA, Nancy	Member, Committee on Tourism, Trade and Industry Member of Parliament (NRM) Member, Public Accounts Committee - Commissions, Statutory Authorities and State Enterprises Member, Committee on Presidential Affairs Member of Parliament Member of Parliament Member, Committee on Climate Change Member, Committee on Tourism, Trade and Industry Member of Parliament
Mr. AKAMBA, Paul Ms. AMERO, Susan	
Ms. ANYAKUN, Esther Bavinia Member of the Executive Committee of the Inter-Parliamentary Union Mr. ARIKO, Herbert Edmund	Member of Parliament (NRM) Member, Committee on Natural Resources Member, Budget Committee Member of Parliament (NRM) Member, Committee on Tourism, Trade and Industry Member of Parliament (NUP) Member, National Economy, Member, Trade Member of Parliament (NRM) Member, Public Accounts Committee - Local Governments Member of Parliament Member, Committee on Education and Sports Member of Parliament (NRM) Member, Committee on Internal Affairs Member, Committee on Equal Opportunities Clerk to Parliament Principal Clerk Assistant Adviser Adviser Deputy Clerk Parliamentary Affairs Senior Administrative Secretary to the Speaker Personal Assistant
Mr. KATO, Mohammed	
Mr. KIRUMIRA, Hassan	
Mr. MUTUMBA, Abdul	
Mr. PATRICK, Nsanja	
Mr. SEMPA, Bashir Lubega	
Mr. KASAIJA, Adolf Mwesige Ms. MWANDHA KAGANZI, Martha Secretary of the Groupe Mr. MPUGA RUKIDI, Mohammed Mr. WABWIRE, Paul Ms. CHEROTICH, Sitnah Mr. BUSINGYE, Fred Police Mr. KABOGOZA, Phillip	
(NRM : National Resistance Movement / Mouvement de la résistance nationale ) (NUP : National Unity Party / Parti de l'unité nationale)	

**UKRAINE**

Mr. KORNIYENKO, Oleksandr Leader of the delegation Mr. BELENIUK, Zhan	Deputy Speaker of Parliament"
Mr. GERASYMOV, Artur	Member of Parliament First Deputy Chairman of the Committee of the Verkhovna Member of Parliament Member of the Committee of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Member of Parliament Member of the Committee of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on Foreign Policy and Interparliamentary Cooperation Member of Parliament Member of the Committee of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on Finance, Tax and Customs Policy Member of Parliament Member of the Committee of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on Environmental Policy and Nature Management Head of the Subcommittee on Climate Change and atmospheric air protection
Ms. RUDENKO, Olga	
Ms. SHKRUM, Alona Member of the Committee on Peace and International Security Ms. VASYLENKO, Lesia President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians Ex-officio member of the Executive Committee	

Mr. ZHMERENETSKYII, Oleksii

Member of Parliament  
Member of the Committee of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on anti-corruption policy  
Head of the Subcommittee on adaptation of Ukrainian legislation to the provisions of European Union law (EU *acquis*), fulfillment of Ukraine's international legal obligations in the field of European integration  
Adviser  
Adviser  
Adviser

Mr. KANIUKA, Andrii

Mr. KUCHEZENKO, Erik

Mr. RYZHAK, Artem

**UNITED ARAB EMIRATES - ÉMIRATS ARABES UNIS**

Mr. ALNUAIMI, Ali

Leader of the delegation

President of the Group

Member of the Executive Committee

Ms. ALAMERI, Mouza,

Member of the Federal National Council  
Head of Defence, interior, and Foreign Affairs Committee

Mr. ALMHERI, Marwan,

Member of the Federal National Council  
Member of the Social and Human Resources Committee

Ms. ALSUWAIDI, Meera

Member of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians

Member of the Federal National Council  
Vice Head of Defence, interior, and foreign affairs committee

Ms. ALTENEIJI, Shaikah

Member of the Committee on Middle East Questions

Ms. FALAKNAZ, Sara

Member of the Bureau of the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security

Mr. AL NAJJAR, AbdIrahman

Member of the Federal National Council  
Member of the Financial, Economic and Industrial committee  
Member of the Federal National Council  
Member of the Education, Culture, Youth, Sport and Media Committee

Member of the Federal National Council  
Member of the Education, Culture, Youth, Sport and Media Committee  
Head of Media

Mr. ALALI, Belal

Adviser

Researcher

Mr. ALAQILI, Ahmed

Adviser

Ms. ALBASTI, Afra

Adviser

Mr. ALMHEIRI, Juma

Secretary General of the Federal National Council

Head of Protocol

Mr. ALSAYEGH, Abdulla

Adviser

Researcher

Mr. ALSHEHHI, Abdulrahman

Adviser

Ms. ALSHEHHI, Roudha

Adviser

Ms. ALSHEHHI, Salama

Member of Protocol of Federal National Council

Mr. ALYAFEI, Mubarak

Adviser

Member of Protocol of Federal National Council

Adviser

**UNITED KINGDOM - ROYAUME-UNI**

Ms. BALDWIN, Harriett  
Leader of the delegation  
President of the Group

The Rt. Hon. WHITTINGDALE, John, OBE  
The Rt. Hon. Baroness D'SOUZA, CMG

Mr. CARDEN, Daniel,  
Ms. OSAMOR, Kate

Mr. LAW, Chris

Mr. NIMMO, Rick  
Ms. REES, Dominique  
Ms. EDWARDS, Rhiannon  
Mr. LAURENCE SMYTH, Liam  
(C : Conservative / Parti conservateur)  
(L : Labour / Parti travailliste)  
(SNP : Scottish National Party)

Member of the House of Commons (C)  
Treasury Committee, Member  
Finance Committee (Commons), Member  
Members Estimate Audit Committee  
Member of the House of Commons (C)  
Member of the House of Lords  
Member, Statutory Instruments (Joint Committee)  
Member, Consolidation, &c., Bills (Joint Committee)  
Member of the House of Commons  
Member of the House of Commons (L)  
Member, Committees on Arms Export Controls,  
Member, International Development Sub-Committee  
on the Work of the Independent Commission for Aid  
Impact  
Member, International Development Committee  
Member of the House of Commons (SNP)  
Member, Committees on Arms Export Controls,  
Member, International Development Sub-Committee  
on the Work of the Independent Commission for Aid  
Impact  
Member, International Development Committee  
BGIPU Director  
BGIPU Deputy Director  
BGIPU International Project Manager  
ASGP representative from the House of Commons

**UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA - RÉPUBLIQUE UNIE DE TANZANIE**

Ms. (Dr.) ACKSON, Tulia,  
Leader of the delegation  
Mr. KINGU, Elibariki Immanuel

Ms. MATIKO, Esther Nicholas

Mr. MHAGAMA, Dr Joseph Kizito

Mr. RAMADHAN, Ramadhan Suleiman

Ms. ULENGE, Engr. Mwanaisha

Ms. MWIHAMBI ndc, Nenelwa Joyce  
Mr. KILEO, Mathew Nionzima  
Advisor

Mr. MBOGGO, Emmanuel

Ms. KIHANGE, Zainab Issa  
Secretary of the delegation

Ms. LYAFUMILE, Martha

Mr. MSOMBE, Michael

Ms. MAKUNGU, Ruth Stanley  
Advisor

Mr. SAPALI, James Nyengwa

(CCM : Chama Cha Mapinduzi)  
(CHADEMA : Chama Cha Demokrasia Na Maendeleo)

Speaker of the National Assembly (CCM)  
Chairperson, Steering Committee  
Member of the National Assembly (CCM)  
Member, Infrastructure Development Committee  
Member of the National Assembly (CHADEMA)  
Member, Budget Committee  
Member of the National Assembly (CCM)  
Chairperson, Constitution and Legal Affairs  
Committee  
Member of the National Assembly (CCM)  
Member, Constitution and legal affairs committee  
Member of the National Assembly (CCM)  
Member, Infrastructure Development Committee  
Secretary General / Clerk of the National Assembly  
Director, National Assembly  
Advisor  
Assistant to the Speaker  
Advisor  
Assistant to the Speaker  
Information Officer  
Advisor  
Advisor

**URUGUAY**

Mr. LOZANO, Raúl Leader of the delegation Member of the Bureau of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development Mr. CERVINI, Walter	Member of the Senate (CA) Member, Climate Change Vice-President, International Affairs President, Labour and Social Security Affairs Member of the House of Representatives Member, Housing and Land Committee Member, Gender equality Committee Member, Environment Committee Member of the Senate (PN) Member, Labour and Social Security Affairs Committee Member, Sport and Youth Committee Secretary General
Mr. NIFFOURI, Amin	
Mr. MONTERO, José Pedro Vice-President of the ASGP Ms. GALVALISI, Carina Secretary of the Group Secretary of the delegation Mr. PIQUINELA, Oscar Secretary of GRULAC (CA: Cabildo Abierto) (PN: Partido Nacional) (PC: Partido Colorado)	Head, International Relations Secretariat of GRULAC  Adviser

**UZBEKISTAN**

Mr. SAIDOV, Akmal Leader of the delegation Mr. TILAVOLDIEV, Nordir	The first Speaker of the Legislative Chamber  Member of the Legislative Chamber
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**VIET NAM**

Mr. VU HAI, Ha Leader of the delegation President of the Group Mr. DON TUAN, Phong	Member of the National Assembly Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee Foreign Affairs Committee Member of the National Assembly Vice Chair, Foreign Affairs Committee Deputy Secretary General
Mr. NGUYEN, Giang Ms. PHAM THI HONG, Yen	Member of the National Assembly Standing Member, Economics Committee Member of the National Assembly Standing Member, Law Committee Parliamentary Officer
Mr. DO, Duc Hien	
Ms. THI QUYNH, Nguyen Secretary of the delegation Mr. TRAN, Thu Hang Secretary of the delegation	Parliamentary Officer

**YEMEN - YÉMEN**

Mr. BASORAH, Mohsen Ali Leader of the delegation Mr. AL-AHMAR, Hamid Abdullah Mr. AL-AMERI, Saleh Salem, N/A Mr. AL-MUZLEM, Ibrahim Ahmed, N/A Mr. AL-NEHARI, Abbas Ahmed, N/A Mr. AL-SHARAFI, Mohamed Yahya, N/A Mr. BA SURRA, Mohammed Gamal Secretary of the delegation	Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives  Member of the House of Representatives Member of the House of Representatives Member of the House of Representatives Member of the House of Representatives Member of the House of Representatives Adviser
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**ZAMBIA - ZAMBIE**

Ms. MUTTI, Nelly B K Leader of the delegation President of the Group	Speaker of the National Assembly
--	----------------------------------

Mr. AMUTIKE, Oliver	Member of the National Assembly (UPND) Member, Media Information and Communication Technologies
Ms. KATUTA MWELWA, Given Member of the Health Advisory Group	Member of the National Assembly (IND) Vice - Chairperson, Local Government Accounts, Member, Cabinet Affairs
Mr. KAMBONE, Harry K.	Member of the National Assembly (UPND) Chairperson, Local Government Accounts
Ms. LUNGU, Tasila	Member of the National Assembly (PF) Vice - Chairperson, Legal Affairs, Human Rights, National Guidance, Gender Matters and Governance, Vice - Chairperson, Transport, Works and Supply
Ms. SABAO, Jacqueline	Member of the National Assembly (UPND) Vice Chairperson, Public Accounts
Mr. SIACHISUMO, Kenny	Member of the National Assembly (UPND) Member, Delegated Legislation, Member, Legal Affairs, Human Rights, National Guidance, Gender Matters and Governance
Mr. ROY, Ngulube	Secretary General / Clerk
Mr. BWALYA, Banabas	Director of the National Assembly
Secretary of the Delegation	Adviser
Mr. KAWIMBE, Stephen C.	Director of the National Assembly
Secretary of the Group	Adviser
Ms. MONGA, Pauline	Adviser
Mr. SAGE, Samuwika	Executive Assistant
(PF: Patriotic Front / Front patriotique)	
(UPND: United Party for National Development / Parti uni pour le développement national)	
(IND) Independant	

**ZIMBABWE**

Mr. MUDENDA, Jacob Francis Nzwidamilimo Leader of the delegation President of the Group Member of the Executive Committee	Speaker of the National Assembly Chairperson, Committee on Standing Rules and Orders
Ms. CHINOMONA, Mabel Memory	President of the Senate (ZANU PF)
Mr. MAVENYENGWA, Robson	Member of the National Assembly (ZANU PF) Member, Portfolio Committee on Environment, Climate and Tourism Member, Standing Committee on Industry and Commerce
Mr. TSVANGIRAI, Vincent	Member of the National Assembly (MDC) Member, Standing Committee on Defence, Home Affairs and Security Services Member, Portfolio Committee on Environment, Climate and Tourism
Mr. MNANGAGWA, Tongai Mafidi	Member of the National Assembly (ZANU PF) Member, Portfolio Committee on Local Government, Public Works and Housing Member, Portfolio Committee on Energy and Power Development
Ms. MUKUNYAIIDZE, Spiwe	Member of the National Assembly (ZANU PF) Member, Portfolio Committee on Industry and Commerce
Ms. MUZENDA, Tsitsi Veronica	Member, Committee on Standing Rules and Orders Member of the National Assembly (ZANU PF) Member, Thematic Committee on SDGs Member, Thematic Committee on Human Rights
Mr. MAKUBAZA, Farai Nicholas	Director, National Assembly Adviser
Mr. GUVI, Califinos Kudakwashe	Director, Office of the President of the Senate
Ms. CHISANGO, Rumbidzai Pamela	Adviser, National Assembly
Mr. NYAMAHOWA, Frank Mike	Director, National Assembly Adviser
Ms. MUSHANDINGA, Martha Secretary of the delegation	Principal Executive Assistant to the Hon. Speaker of the National Assembly

Ms. MAPOKOTERA, Chiguta Jessie  
Secretary of the delegation

(MDC T : Movement for Democratic Change / Mouvement pour le changement démocratique)  
(ZANU PF: Zimbabwe National Union Patriotic Front / Zimbabwe National Union Patriotic Front)

Principal Executive Assistant to the President of the  
Senate

\* \* \* \* \*

#### **AFGHANISTAN**

Mr. RAHMANI, Mir Rahman  
Leader of the delegation  
President of the Group

Mr. ARYUBI, Abdul Qader  
Mr. DEHQAN, Ferdous  
Mr. HUSSAINI, Abdul Sattar

Speaker of the House of the People

Secretary General  
Secretary General

#### **TUNISIA – TUNISIE**

MAHER, Madhioub (Mr.),

Member of Parliament



**II. ASSOCIATE MEMBERS – MEMBRES ASSOCIES****ARAB PARLIAMENT  
PARLEMENT ARABE**

Mr. AL-ASOOMI, Adel	President of Parliament
Leader of the delegation	
Mr. AL-NASIRI, Oman	Member of Parliament
Ms. MOHSIN, Hanan	Member of Parliament
Mr. ELMOGHAZY Yousri	Member of Parliament
Mr. SHARWY, Kamel	Secretary-General
Mr. ALSHUROOQI, Nabeel	Assistant Secretary-General
Mr. AL-SEIDY, Ashraf	Adviser
Mr. EL-SAYED, Mais	Adviser
Mr. HASSABALLA Ahmed	Protocol Officer

**EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY (EALA)  
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'AFRIQUE DE L'EST**

Mr. NGOGA KAROLI, Martin	Speaker of Parliament
Leader of the delegation	
Ms. NZEYIMANA, Leontine	Member of Parliament
Mr. ODONGO, George Stephen	Member of Parliament
Mr. MUTEKA, John Njoroge	Secretary General
Ms. TUHOYE, Emiliana Changwa	Adviser
Mr. KADONYA, Charles Ngeleja	Adviser
Ms. AMODING, Priscilla	Adviser
Secretary of the group	

**EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT - PARLEMENT EUROPÉEN (EP)**

Mr. ZORRINHO, Carlos	Member of Parliament
Mr. KRAFT, Jonas	Member of Parliament

**INTER-PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE OF THE WEST AFRICAN ECONOMIC AND MONETARY UNION  
(WAEMU) / COMITÉ INTERPARLEMENTAIRE DE L'UNION ÉCONOMIQUE ET MONÉTAIRE OUEST-  
AFRICAIN (UEMOA)**

Mr. HOUNGNIBO, Lucien Kokou,	President
Leader of the delegation	
Mr. EFANGAL, Adam	Member of Parliament

**LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN PARLIAMENT (PARLATINO)  
PARLEMENT LATINO-AMÉRICAIN ET CARIBÉEN**

Ms. GIACOPPO, Silvia	President
Leader of the delegation	
Mr. GAMITEA, Santiago	Director

**PAN-AFRICAN PARLIAMENT  
PARLEMENT PANAFRICAIN**

Mr. CHARUMBIRA, Fortune	President
Leader of the delegation	
Mr. NDAMUKA, Marino	Member of Parliament
Mr. ANGO NDOUTOUME, François	Adviser
Mr. MASSA, Harou Gali	Deputy Secretary General
Mr. ONGANGA SENDE, Jeffrey Vladimir	Media Officer
Mr. ESSISSIMA, Ndi	Protocol

**PARLIAMENT OF THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES (ECOWAS)  
PARLEMENT DE LA COMMUNAUTÉ ÉCONOMIQUE DES ÉTATS DE L'AFRIQUE DE L'OUEST  
(CEDEAO)**

Mr. TUNIS, Sidie Mohamed Leader of the delegation	Speaker or President
Ms. AYAMBA, Laadi Ayii	Member of Parliament
Mr. SALAM, Bamidele	Member of Parliament
Mr. SNOWE Jr, Edwin Melvin	Member of Parliament
Ms. SOARES DA COSTA, Isa Filomena Pereira	Member of Parliament
Mr. CARAMO, Carmara	Member of Parliament
Mr. AZUMAH, John	Secretary General
Mr. K. Bertin, Some Secretary of the delegation	Director
Mr. FWANDGER, Ezekief Friday	Chief Protocol Officer
Mr. KOMLAN, Gninevi	Protocol Officer
Mr. PABAI, Mohammed	Administrative Assistant

**III. OBSERVERS - OBSERVATEURS****UNITED NATIONS  
NATIONS UNIES**

OJIELO, Ozonnia Matthew (Mr.) UN Resident Coordinator's Office, Rwanda

**FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS*****ORGANISATION DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'ALIMENTATION ET L'AGRICULTURE (FAO)***

SOW, Coumba (Mr.), Country Director

LAZARUS, Brenda (Ms.), FAO-East Africa

Mr. Nakouzi, Serge (Mr.) (FAO), Deputy Regional Representative for the Near East and North Africa

**OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (UNHCR)*****BUREAU DU HAUT-COMMISSAIRE DES NATIONS UNIES POUR LES RÉFUGIÉS (HCR)***

MIRGHANI, Zahra (Ms.), Delegate UNHCR Rwanda

KALINDA, Jean Damascene Ndabirora (Mr.), UNHCR Rwanda

PAVEY, Safak (Mr.)

**PARTNERSHIP FOR MATERNAL, NEW BORN AND CHILD HEALTH*****PARTENARIAT POUR LA SANTE DE LA MERE, DU NOUVEAU-NE ET DE L'ENFANT***

KARLSSON, Ulrika, (Ms.), Special Adviser on Health to the IPU

MBAYA, Susan (Ms.), Lead, Campaigns and Partner Engagement (Countries and Regions)

PRAMANIK, Mohit (Mr.), Technical Officer

**JOINT UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME ON HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)**

N'DAW, Béchir (Mr.), Senior Adviser, Political Partnerships Director, External and Donor Relations Department

**UN WOMEN**

FREIZER GUNES, Sabine (Ms.), Regional Advisor for Governance, Peace and Security for Europe and Central Asia

ENGWONWEI, Jennet Kem (Ms.), Country Representative UN Women Rwanda

**WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION**

CHANDRA-MOULI, Venkatraman (Mr.), Scientist

KESSLER, Sarah (Ms.), Technical Officer

**WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME**

HEINES, Edith (Ms.), Representative and Country Director, Rwanda

**ACP-EU JOINT PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY*****ASSEMBLEE PARLEMENTAIRE PARITAIRE (ACP-UE)***

ZORRINHO, Carlos (Mr.), Member

KRAFT, Jonas (Mr.), Desk Officer, Caribbean

**AFRICAN PARLIAMENTARY UNION (APU)*****UNION PARLEMENTAIRE AFRICAINE***

IDI GADO, Boubacar (Mr.), Secretary General

CHEROUATI, Samir (Mr.), Director

**ARAB INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION (AIPU)*****UNION INTERPARLEMENTAIRE ARABE***

AL-SHAWABKEH, Fayez (Mr.), Secretary General

NIHAWI, Samir (Mr.), Director

**ASIAN PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY (APA)*****ASSEMBLEE PARLEMENTAIRE ASIATIQUE***

MAJIDI, Mohammad Reza (Mr.), Secretary General

GHASHGHAVI, Mehdi (Mr.), Executive Secretary

HASHEMI, Seyed Javid (Mr.), Director

**COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY**  
**ASSOCIATION PARLEMENTAIRE DU COMMONWEALTH**  
MATIYA, Jarvis (Mr.), Deputy Secretary General

**FORUM OF PARLIAMENTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE  
GREAT LAKES REGION (FP- ICGLR)**  
**FORUM DES PARLEMENTS DE LA CONFÉRENCE INTERNATIONALE SUR LA  
RÉGION DES GRANDS LACS (FP-CIRGL)**  
KAKOBA, Onyango (Mr.), Secretary General  
KATYA, Violette (Ms.); Protocol

**GLOBAL ORGANIZATION OF PARLIAMENTARIANS AGAINST CORRUPTION (GOPAC)**  
**ORGANISATION MONDIALE DES PARLEMENTAIRES CONTRE LA CORRUPTION (GOPAC)**  
ZON, Fadil (Mr.), Vice-Chair

**MAGHREB CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL**  
**CONSEIL CONSULTATIF MAGHRÉBIN**  
MOKADEM, Said (Mr), Secrétaire général

**PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE MEDITERRANEAN (PAM)**  
**ASSEMBLEE PARLEMENTAIRE DE LA MEDITERRANEE**  
MIGLIORE, Gennaro (Mr.), President

**PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF TURKIC SPEAKING COUNTRIES (TURKPA)**  
**ASSEMBLEE PARLEMENTAIRE DES PAYS DE LANGUE TURCIQUE**  
ER, Mehmet Süreyya (Mr.), Secretary General

**PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE UNION OF BELARUS AND RUSSIA**  
**ASSEMBLEE PARLEMENTAIRE DE L'UNION DU BELARUS ET DE LA RUSSIE**  
LEYKAUSKAS, Audryus (Mr.), Head of International Relations

**PARLIAMENTARY UNION OF THE OIC MEMBER STATES (PUIC)**  
**UNION PARLEMENTAIRE DES ETATS MEMBRES DE L'OCI (UPCI)**  
NIASS, Mouhamed Khouraiichi (Mr.), Secretary General  
MOHAMMADI SIJANI, Ali Asghar (Mr.), Deputy Secretary General

**SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY PARLIAMENTARY FORUM (SADC PF)**  
**FORUM PARLEMENTAIRE DE LA COMMUNAUTE (SADC)**  
SEKGOMA, Boemo Mmandu (Ms.) Secretary General  
MUNGANDI, Yapoka (Mr.), Director Finance

**GLOBAL FUND TO FIGHT AIDS, TUBERCULOSIS & MALARIA**  
**FONDS MONDIAL DE LUTTE CONTRE LE SIDA, LA TUBERCULOSE ET LE PALUDISME**  
BOULE, Scott (Mr.), Senior Specialist, Parliamentary Affairs

**INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS (ICRC)**  
**COMITÉ INTERNATIONAL DE LA CROIX ROUGE**  
ARMAN, Jemma (Ms.), Regional Legal Adviser, Nairobi Regional Delegation, Kenya

**INTERNATIONAL IDEA**  
RODRIGUEZ PEREZ, Andréa (Ms.), Network Facilitator for iKNOW Politics  
TRABELSI EP ZAYANI, Meriem (Ms.), Coordinator of iKNOW Politics

**SOVEREIGN ORDER OF MALTA**  
**ORDRE SOUVERAIN DE MALTE**  
VON TROTT zu SOLZ, Dr. Wilhelm, Ambassador to Kenya and South Sudan

**IV. ADVISERS AND OTHER PERSONS TAKING PART IN THE WORK OF THE 145th ASSEMBLY-  
CONSEILLERS ET AUTRES PERSONNES PARTICIPANT AUX TRAVAUX DE LA 145<sup>e</sup> ASSEMBLEE**

**SENEGAL**

Mr THIMBO, Amadou

Secrétaire général adjoint de l'Assemblée nationale

**ASSEMBLEE PARLEMENTAIRE DE LA FRANCOPHONIE (APF)**

Mme EZA, Mireille

Directrice

**V. SPECIAL GUESTS TAKING PART IN ACTIVITIES FORESEEN ON THE OCCASION OF THE  
145th ASSEMBLY OF THE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION**

**INVITES SPECIAUX PRENANT PART A DES ACTIVITES PREVUES A L'OCCASION DE LA  
145<sup>e</sup> ASSEMBLEE DE L'UNION INTERPARLEMENTAIRE**

**Assembly**

VAN DEN BERG, Wessel Jan (Mr.), Equimundo

**Standing Committee on Peace and International Security**

DIALLO, Fatoumata Sira (Ms.), Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance

KIENER NELLEN, Margareta (Ms.), PeaceWomen Across the Globe (PWAG)

MUKARUKBUGA, Cécile (Ms.), Peace Women Across the Globe (PWAG)

**Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs**

KAZI, Jamshed M. (Mr.), Representative and Liaison to ASEAN, UN Women Indonesia

BOONTO, Tina (Ms.), Country Director of UNAIDS

ANGGRENI, Hosianna (Ms.), UN Country Team, Indonesia

**Advisor Group of Health**

MBONYINTWALI, Jean Marie (Mr.), RPRPD-Parliament, Rwanda

**Other Events**

KILADZE, Sophie (Ms.), IPU focal point at the Committee on the Rights of the Child

**Side event organized by Climate Vulnerable Forum in collaboration the IPU and Global Center on  
Adaptation**

MUNIRA, Sirazoom (Mr.), Climate Vulnerable Forum

MARFO, Emmanuel (Mr.), Climate Vulnerable Forum

**GLOSSARY / GLOSSAIRE****English****Titles/Functions:**

Speaker of Parliament  
President of the Group

Adviser  
Chair/Chairman/Chairperson  
Clerk  
Deputy Speaker  
Head  
Leader of the Delegation  
Officer  
Researcher  
Secretary of the Group/delegation  
Spokesman

**Parliaments:**

House of Commons  
House of Representatives  
National Assembly  
People's Representatives

**Parliamentary Committees:**

Abroad  
Agreements  
Broadcasting  
Building  
Citizenship  
Complaint Reception  
Computer Science  
Cross-cutting Issues  
Directive Board  
Elderly  
Fishery  
Food  
Foreign Affairs  
Freedoms  
Funding  
Gender Equality  
Growth  
Health/Healthcare  
Heritage  
Home Affairs  
Housing  
Human Rights  
Intelligence  
Investigation/Inquiry  
Joint Committee  
Labour/Work  
Law  
Legal  
Local Self-government  
Missing, Adversely Affected Persons  
Oversight  
People with Disabilities  
Physical Planning, Land Use Planning, Country Planning  
Public Expenditure  
Public Works  
Rehabilitation  
Social Welfare  
Standing Committee  
Standing Orders/Rules  
State Device

**Français****Titres/Fonctions :**

*Président du Parlement*  
*Président(e) du Groupe*  
  
*Conseiller*  
*Président(e)*  
*Secrétaire général/Greffier*  
*Vice-Président(e)*  
*Chef*  
*Chef de la délégation*  
*Fonctionnaire*  
*Chercheur*  
*Secrétaire du Groupe/ de la délégation*  
*Porte-parole*

**Parlements :**

*Chambre des Communes*  
*Chambre des représentants*  
*Assemblée nationale*  
*Représentants du peuple*

**Commissions parlementaires :**

*A l'étranger*  
*Approbations*  
*Radiodiffusion*  
*Bâtiment*  
*Citoyenneté*  
*Instruction des plaintes*  
*Informatique*  
*Matières transversales*  
*Comité directeur*  
*Aînés*  
*Pêche*  
*Alimentation*  
*Affaires étrangères*  
*Libertés*  
*Financement*  
*Egalité entre les sexes*  
*Croissance*  
*Santé*  
*Patrimoine*  
*Affaires internes*  
*Logement*  
*Droits de l'homme*  
*Renseignement*  
*Enquête*  
*Comité mixte*  
*Travail*  
*Lois*  
*Juridique*  
*Autonomie locale*  
*Personnes disparues ou lésées*  
*Surveillance*  
*Personnes handicapées*  
*Aménagement du territoire*  
  
*Dépenses publiques*  
*Travaux publics*  
*Réinsertion*  
*Protection sociale*  
*Comité permanent*  
*Règlement*  
*Dispositif étatique*

Sustainable Development  
Trade  
Training  
Truth  
Underprivileged  
Ways and Means  
Wildlife  
Women, Children and Youth

*Développement durable*  
*Commerce*  
*Formation*  
*Vérité*  
*Défavorisés*  
*Voies et moyens*  
*Faune*  
*Les femmes, les enfants et les jeunes*

**IPU Committees:**

Advisory Group on Health  
Bureau of Women Parliamentarians  
Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians  
Committee on Middle East Questions  
Committee to Promote Respect for International  
Humanitarian Law (IHL)  
Executive Committee  
Forum of Young Parliamentarians  
Gender Partnership Group  
Group of Facilitators for Cyprus  
Standing Committee on Peace and International  
Security  
Standing Committee on Sustainable Development,  
Finance and Trade  
Standing Committee on Democracy and Human  
Rights  
Standing Committee on UN Affairs

**Commissions et Comités de l'UIP :**

*Groupe consultatif sur la santé*  
*Bureau des femmes parlementaires*  
*Comité des droits de l'homme des parlementaires*  
*Comité sur les questions relatives au Moyen-Orient*  
*Comité chargé de promouvoir le respect du droit*  
*international humanitaire (DIH)*  
*Comité exécutif*  
*Forum des jeunes parlementaires*  
*Groupe du partenariat entre hommes et femmes*  
*Groupe de facilitateurs concernant Chypre*  
*Commission permanente de la paix et de la sécurité*  
*internationale*  
*Commission permanente du développement durable,*  
*du financement et du commerce*  
*Commission permanente de la démocratie et des*  
*droits de l'homme*  
*Commission permanente des affaires des Nations*  
*Unies*