



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

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Video message by Mr. Martin Chungong, IPU Secretary General

Second Annual National Assembly of Zambia Research Fair

21 November 2023

Honourable Speaker,
Mr. Clerk,
Excellencies,
Honourable Members of Parliament,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to be addressing you today for the opening of the National Assembly Research Fair.

It seems like yesterday that I gave a similar message when you held your first Research Week in 2022. This innovative initiative was motivated by the parliamentary administration's wish to better serve you, dear members of parliament. Continuing with our longstanding relationship of cooperation with the National Assembly, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) is only too happy to be involved in this event once again.

This is just one example of the very strong bond between the IPU and the National Assembly. Among the 180 Member Parliaments of our Organization, your institution is one of our most active members. From hosting the IPU Assembly and Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians in 2016, to co-organizing several national activities – including an upcoming one on child marriage at the end of the month – the ties that bind us are robust and enduring. On this note, I wish to congratulate Speaker Mutti on her recent election to the Executive Committee of the IPU last month. We look forward to continuing to work together towards our shared objectives.

Coming back to the 2022 inaugural Research Week, I understand that it was a resounding success. I am pleased to know that more and more MPs are turning to the National Assembly Research Department for quality information to inform their work. I am also delighted that the Research Week helped create a platform for the building of partnerships between the parliament and other institutions, including civil society organizations, government agencies, academia, and more. Congratulations to you all.

Now, in 2023, the IPU is delighted to continue our partnership for this new edition. This year's theme on "Leveraging Constituency Offices as Research Satellites for Enhanced Data Collection" is a very important one. Parliaments are built to represent the diversity of our countries. To make decisions "by the people, and for the people", it is vital that all segments of society are able to inform decision-making. We often talk about the inclusion of women and youth in politics, and the importance of including these groups cannot be understated. But we also need policy that is responsive to all the geographic corners of our countries, both rural and urban.

In today's world we are inundated with information on an unprecedented scale. This vast access brings both advantages and challenges, particularly in terms of the proliferation of mis- and dis-information.

For members of parliament, it is crucial to have access to credible data and fact-based information to effectively perform your duties. It is essential that the information you rely on is of high quality and tailored to meet your specific needs.

Fortunately, you have a dedicated department equipped to meet these requirements and eager to assist you. The support provided by officials in the Research Department is designed to empower you. I encourage all of you to make the most of these next three days not only by learning how the Department's services can help, but also to make the most of these services in the months and years that follow.

Madam Speaker,
Honourable Members,

In less than two years, the National Assembly has come a very long way. When we first embarked on this journey with the National Assembly's administration to hold a research fair, we helped build bridges with the research departments of other parliaments who had hosted such events to learn from their experiences and knowledge. Now, two years later, and with an innovative focus on constituency offices, I am delighted to see the National Assembly not as a beneficiary of expertise, but positioning itself as a model and inspiration for other parliaments to follow. It is a strong testament to the exemplary work your administration is doing to better serve its members.

I wish you a very successful and productive event over the next three days.

Thank you.