



Inter-Parliamentary Union  
For democracy. For everyone.

# Second Expert Roundtable on the Common Principles for Support to Parliaments

## Proactive parliaments: Bolstering self-development

Geneva, 29 March 2018

### Concept Note

In recent decades, external technical support to parliaments has steadily increased, as have the number of support partners. To draw lessons from this experience and to enhance the effectiveness of support programmes, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the European Parliament, the National Assembly of France, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI) worked together to develop the **Common Principles for Support to Parliaments**.<sup>1</sup> Drawing on inputs from parliaments and other organizations, the document identifies ten principles to guide parliamentary support. The Common Principles were formally adopted by the 131<sup>st</sup> IPU Assembly in October 2014, and have since received the endorsement of 93 national parliaments and 24 partner organizations.<sup>2</sup> The Principles are intended to provide a summary of what is most important and aspirational in parliamentary development and as a common language that all actors involved in parliamentary development can share.

To facilitate the application of the Common Principles, a series of roundtables with parliaments and support partners are being organized. The First Roundtable took place in October 2016 and focused on Common Principle 3: *Parliamentary support aims for sustainable outcomes*. It led to the exchange and compilation of good practices to strengthen the sustainability of support projects.<sup>3</sup>

The First Roundtable emphasized that in order for sustainable change to occur, parliaments benefitting from external support must be highly engaged in defining priorities and driving their own development. This idea is reflected in the first Common Principle: *Parliamentary support partners are guided by the needs of parliament*. Although there is wide support for the paramountcy of this Principle, tools for parliaments and support partners to apply it at operational levels are needed.

### Objective

The Second Expert Roundtable on the Common Principles aims to strengthen the operationalization of parliamentary ownership – and the Common Principles as a whole – through increased engagement by parliaments in the identification and realization of development priorities.

Through interactive discussions, the Roundtable will inform the production of a guide for parliaments and partners to help increase parliament's proactive engagement and, in turn, enable parliaments to better assess offers of support. Bolstering the engagement of parliaments in the early stages of support will result in projects that are more locally driven and offer greater flexibility and sensitivity to local contexts. The guide will also provide parliaments and support partners with a transparent set of criteria on which to build support relationships, resulting in stronger partnerships and more effective and sustainable outcomes.

### Programme Outline

- **The morning session** will bring together parliaments and support partners to examine good practices and lessons learned in the integration of parliament's development-related internal infrastructure and process to support projects.
- **The afternoon session** will be dedicated to breakout group work to elaborate a draft guide that offers practical guidance to strengthen parliament's central direction of project design and implementation.

---

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/principles\\_en.pdf](http://www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/principles_en.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Endorsements as of 13 February 2018: <https://www.ipu.org/file/4146/download?token=54ltVdmd>

<sup>3</sup> The Report of the First Roundtable: <http://www.ipu.org/splz-e/common16/report.pdf>

## Participants

Participants will be representatives of parliaments and partner organizations who have responsibility for parliamentary support projects (secretaries general, parliamentary staff, members of parliament, parliamentary support partners and experts).

## Registration

Delegates should register online at the following link: <http://www.surveygizmo.eu/s3/90069193/Expert-Roundtable-on-the-Common-Principles-for-Support-to-Parliaments>. The deadline for registration is **16 March 2018**. Confirmation of registration will be sent within two working days.

Please note that space is limited. Parliaments are kindly requested to limit their participation to a maximum of two representatives, and organizations are kindly requested to limit their participation to a maximum of one representative. We also encourage early registration to ensure participation.

## Languages

Documents will be provided in English and French, interpretation will be provided in English, French, Spanish and Arabic

## Date and venue

The Second Roundtable will take place on **29 March 2018**, immediately after the 138<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly, from **9.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.**

It will take place at **IPU Headquarters**, Geneva, at the following address:

Chemin du Pommier 5  
1218 Le Grand-Saconnex  
Geneva – Switzerland