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IPU Statement

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Information webinar on
The Sustainable Development Goals
and the Role of Parliaments in
SDGs Implementation in Indonesia

Geneva, 13 November 2020

Mr. Charles Honoris, Vice Chair of Committee for Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation,
Mr. Saber Chowdhury, Honorary President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,
Mr. Agustaviano Sofjan, Director for Development, Economic and Environmental
Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Indonesia,
Ms. Juliaty Ansye Sopacua, SDGs Advisor, United Nations Development Programme
Indonesia,
Honourable Members of Parliament,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to address you at the beginning of this important webinar on the challenges and opportunities for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) during a pandemic. Let me start by commending the House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia, in particular Madam Speaker, Puan Maharani, on her leadership and commitment to the SDGs agenda.

My participation in this online event represents continuity in a trustful and long partnership that started in the very distant year of 1922 when Indonesia became a Member of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). The House of Representatives of Indonesia has always been an active IPU Member, keen to do its utmost to promote global peace, democracy, cooperation and prosperity. The IPU warmly applauds the exemplary commitment shown by the House of Representatives in pursuing our common purposes and in putting SDG implementation at the national, regional and global levels, high on its political agenda.

Throughout the years, Indonesia has not only participated actively in IPU regional seminars on achieving the SDGs – such as in Viet Nam in 2017 and Mongolia in 2019 – and workshops organized within the framework of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, but it has also worked to promote national ownership of the SDG implementation process by translating the IPU-UNDP publication *Parliaments and the Sustainable Development Goals: A self-assessment toolkit* into Indonesian and organizing several editions of the World Parliamentary Forum on Sustainable Development. I was very pleased to hear that Indonesia is interested in hosting, in cooperation with the IPU, a Global Parliamentary Meeting on the SDGs in 2021, and has also offered to host an IPU Assembly in April 2022.

I am very much confident that the partnership between the House of Representatives of Indonesia and the IPU will continue to yield many good results in this challenging time as the world embarks on a journey to find effective ways to address the COVID-19 pandemic while realizing the SDGs.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We are all aware of the importance and magnitude of the task of delivering on the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Global Goals. Now more than ever, there is a need for parliaments to strengthen their actions to ensure that the SDGs are comprehensively institutionalized and mainstreamed into the legislative process and parliamentary mechanisms. Thanks to their integrated and interlinked nature, the SDGs could in fact provide a road map that can help countries improve their preparedness, respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, and implement recovery plans that deliver social and environmental sustainability in a comprehensive manner.

Governments are responsible for SDG implementation, but the realization of the goals can only be achieved if all stakeholders are actively engaged. Parliaments must play a central role in this effort. Through their key responsibilities, they can turn the voluntary commitment to the SDGs into enforceable laws, hold their governments to account on development policy choices and strategies, and the adoption of national budgets. Parliaments have the obligation to oversee, identify problems and seek corrective measures that will ensure SDG attainment.

The ambition to effectively realize the SDGs by 2030 can only be fulfilled if proactive engagement combines with a strong political determination at the institutional level. As countries are now resetting their priorities and reallocating resources to deal with the pandemic, parliaments should be in a position to influence policies and budgets to ensure that the COVID-19 pandemic responses and recovery strategies incorporate the SDG framework in its entirety. This outbreak is currently imposing huge costs on society, especially on vulnerable and marginalized groups. Parliaments should therefore monitor policy implementation and ensure that the needs and concerns of the whole of society are given due consideration, with no one left behind. Parliaments should be at the heart of the national and global response to COVID-19, and they should also be at the heart of transformational change. Going back to business as usual cannot be an option.

It is also critical for parliaments to evaluate the impact of their work on people's lives and the planet especially during these trying times. Are parliaments doing their utmost to undertake a people-centred approach to decision-making? Are they working to find holistic solutions that tackle the root causes of current and structural challenges? Now that the world is entering the final decade of action and delivery for sustainable development, parliaments must be fit for purpose to effectively deliver on the SDGs and accelerate their efforts to reach their common vision by 2030. The SDGs are a unique opportunity for parliaments to demonstrate their commitment to improving people's lives and the health of the planet.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Today's information webinar offers a platform to further discuss the role of parliament in effectively implementing the SDGs at the national level. You will hear about practices adopted by the Parliament of Bangladesh to mainstream the SDGs and review legislation through SDGs lenses. It is also an opportunity to learn more about the SDGs self-assessment exercise promoted by the IPU, and the ways it can help the House of Representatives of Indonesia assess its current level of engagement with the SDGs and identify the most suitable path to strengthen its action in this area. I look forward to open and constructive debates and wish you a very successful webinar.

Thank you