



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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Summary Records of the Proceedings of the 142nd IPU Assembly

(Virtual session)

24-28 May 2021

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Introduction

Delegations from 133 Member Parliaments took part in the work of the Assembly:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guinea, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, San Marino, Sao Tomé and Príncipe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The following five Associate Members also took part in the Assembly: the Arab Parliament, the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), the Latin American and Caribbean Parliament (PARLATINO), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC), the Parliamentary Assembly of la Francophonie (APF).

Observers included representatives of:

(i) the United Nations and related organizations: the World Health Organization (WHO);

(ii) parliamentary assemblies and associations: African Parliamentary Union (APU), Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union (AIPU), Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA), Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), Forum of Parliaments of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (FP-ICGLR), Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic Speaking Countries (TurkPA), Parliamentary Assembly of the Union of Belarus and Russia; and

(iii) international political party federations: Liberal International (LI), Socialist International; and the Committee to Represent the Union Assembly of Myanmar (CRPH).

Of the 1,073 delegates who attended the Assembly, 755 were members of parliament. Those parliamentarians included 52 Presiding Officers, 38 Deputy Presiding Officers, 288 women MPs (38.1%) and 193 (25.6%) young MPs.

The figure of 38.1% of delegates being women was a record high. The previous record was 32.9% women delegates, which was reached twice, in 2016 and 2018. In addition, 44 out of 133 delegations (33.1%) were gender-balanced, i.e. they included no less than 40% of members of either sex. This was up from 30 gender-balanced delegations (20.1%) at the 141st Assembly. Of the 133 delegations in attendance, 129 were composed of at least two delegates. Among those, eight were composed exclusively of men (6.2%) and two were composed exclusively of women (1.6%). Five delegations were sanctioned at the 142nd Assembly for being composed exclusively of representatives of the same sex for two Assemblies in a row.

Organization of the work of the Assembly

Final Agenda

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1. General Debate on the theme *Overcoming the pandemic today and building a better tomorrow: the role of parliaments*
 2. *Parliamentary strategies to strengthen peace and security against threats and conflicts resulting from climate-related disasters and their consequences*
(Standing Committee on Peace and International Security)
 3. *Mainstreaming digitalization and the circular economy to achieve the SDGs, particularly responsible consumption and production*
(Standing Committee on Sustainable Development)
 4. Reports of the Standing Committees
 5. Approval of the subject items for the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security and for the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development for the 144th Assembly and appointment of the Rapporteurs
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142nd Assembly

Sitting of Wednesday, 26 May

The sitting was called to order at 14:00 CEST with Ms. C. Doole serving as the Moderator of the opening interactive session.

Item 1 of the agenda

General Debate on the theme *Overcoming the pandemic today and building a better tomorrow: the role of parliaments* (A/142/1-Inf.1)

Mr. D. Pacheco (Portugal), President of the IPU, said that the moment had come to open the 142nd IPU Assembly, at which parliamentarians from around the world were gathering together to promote parliamentary dialogue and cooperation. The moment had come for global values, ideas and aspirations to converge into a strong impulse for peace and representative democracy. The moment had come to put parliamentarians centre-stage in efforts to empower people to live in dignity. Over 750 Members of Parliament from 135 countries were attending the Assembly.

He was honoured to be marking a historic moment for the Organization: the opening of the first ever virtual IPU Assembly. However, he was equally overwhelmed by the crisis that was currently unfolding. More than three million people had lost their lives to the COVID-19 pandemic. Together with a climate emergency and a recession on a scale not seen in nearly a century, the pandemic had reversed some of the recent progress made in human development. The path forward was no longer a predictable one. The radical uncertainty that had come with the pandemic had created many obstacles. It had also exposed the challenges that governments faced in instigating real, forward-looking change and in upholding democratic values. Equally significant was the impact of the pandemic on societies. The pandemic had worsened existing weaknesses, deepened structural inequalities and made life particularly difficult for women, girls and other vulnerable people. The world had reached a point in the pandemic where innovative approaches and a genuine openness to change were needed. It would only be possible to confront complex challenges if societies were resilient, equitable, inclusive and fair. Parliamentarians, as custodians of human rights and the rule of law, must be at the centre of those efforts, serving the people above all else.

The 142nd IPU Assembly provided a unique global platform for a wide-ranging discussion on how to overcome the pandemic and build a better tomorrow. The discussion would be held using virtual tools while maintaining what was most valuable from in-person Assemblies. Over the past few weeks, the Standing Committees, the Forum of Women Parliamentarians and the Forum of Young Parliamentarians had held their own discussions on the role of parliaments in post-pandemic recovery efforts, particularly in the areas of peace and security, sustainable development, democracy and human rights, gender and youth.

A number of elements must be included in the parliamentary response to COVID-19. First, more needed to be done to bridge the wide gaps in vaccination programmes across different countries and regions. Access to vaccines was fragmented and slow. It was unacceptable that 80 per cent of vaccines had been given in high- and upper middle-income countries and only 0.3 per cent in low-income countries. There was a need to defend vaccine accessibility as a global public good.

Second, it was important to ensure that institutions were fit for purpose and met the needs of society. There was ample evidence that strong institutions contributed significantly to development and growth. Parliaments should foster a spirit of inclusiveness, responsibility, efficiency and fairness while exercising their legislative function and ensuring accountability. A new social contract grounded in human rights was needed between people and government.

Third, inclusiveness was non-negotiable. Women and youth had borne the brunt of the multiple overlapping crises provoked by COVID-19. They must be part of the recovery and take their rightful place in the world of politics. At the current rate, it would take another 50 years before gender parity was achieved in parliaments worldwide. There was also a huge deficit in the political representation of young people given that 50 per cent of the world's population was under 30. Those realities must change.

Fourth, economies should be rebuilt, underpinned by new ways of thinking about sustainable production, consumption, environmental preservation and the care economy. New approaches should be consistent with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs could serve as a foundation for COVID-19 recovery strategies, allowing the international community to address both the current global health crisis and the many other challenges facing the world.

Political commitment, openness, a determination to embrace change, robust investments and genuine care for the people were of paramount importance if parliaments wished to live up to the challenges of the time. Parliaments must seize the momentum of the Assembly to help rethink the foundations of the pre-pandemic world, paving the way for a post-pandemic world that was resilient, equitable, smart, green, inclusive and fair. A reinvigoration of the global multilateral system was one way to do so. It was also important to build strong and democratic national parliaments that could deliver for the people.

He encouraged parliamentarians to make the most of the IPU, particularly in troubled times. The Organization had lived through many turbulent periods but had always stood by its primary purpose: to facilitate political dialogue, parliamentary diplomacy and cooperation for a better tomorrow. It would do the same during the current crisis. Among the initiatives being taken was the in-person segment of the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, which would take place in Vienna in September 2021. The IPU Strategy was also under review with every effort being made to ensure that the views of parliamentarians were taken into account.

Lastly, he wished to strongly condemn the attack on the Speaker of the People's Majlis of the Maldives and called on Portuguese-speaking countries to unite in strength.

The Moderator welcomed delegates to the General Debate on the theme *Overcoming the pandemic today and building a better tomorrow: the role of parliaments*. The sitting would start with an interactive session. She introduced three keynote speakers who had very clear ideas about how to move forward.

Ms. A. Gupta (Deputy CEO of Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance), keynote speaker, said that the COVID-19 pandemic was a timely reminder not only of the power of vaccines but also of the power of partnerships, multilateral cooperation and proactive country leadership. It was crucial to join hands in tackling the pandemic and to ensure a more equal and inclusive world that left no one behind on immunization.

Equity had always been at the heart of the Gavi mission. Over the past two decades, Gavi had been tireless in its efforts to expand equitable access to vaccines. The outcome had been phenomenal with vaccine-preventable child deaths having declined by 70 per cent in Gavi-supported countries. Similarly, coverage of life-saving vaccines was higher in Gavi-supported countries than in the rest of the world. Therefore, it was natural, in the face of the pandemic, for Gavi to build on its long track record and co-lead the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access (COVAX) initiative.

COVAX was an unprecedented, multilateral facility aiming to advance rapid and equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines. Demand for COVID-19 vaccines far outstripped supply. It was therefore important that all countries, regardless of their income or paying capacity, received enough vaccines to protect vulnerable and high-risk populations. COVAX had already been able to deliver vaccines to over 100 low-income countries in the same time frame as high-income countries. However, several challenges had arisen related not only to manufacturing, supply, funding and logistics but also to community demand. Some wealthier countries had managed to vaccinate as much as 70 per cent of their populations with at least one dose while just 0.7 per cent of people in low-income countries had received doses. More than 75 per cent of all vaccines had been administered in just 10 countries. There was also suboptimal demand in some countries, making the situation even more complex. It was imperative to address the above challenges.

Continued transmission in any part of the globe was a threat to the entire world. More transmission meant more mutations and variants, some of which could defy the current vaccines. The international community must quickly scale up manufacturing and increase global supply, for instance by enabling the export of essential raw materials and encouraging technology transfer. High-income countries, besides financing, should share their surplus doses sooner rather than later. Public trust in the safety and efficacy of COVID-19 vaccines must also be enhanced.

It was important not to overlook the collateral damage of the pandemic. An additional 2 million child deaths were anticipated within 12 months because of the indirect impact of COVID-19. Even before the pandemic, about 20 million children born every year had been deprived of basic vaccine doses with two thirds not even receiving a single shot. Zero-dose children accounted for 50 per cent of vaccine-preventable deaths and usually came from vulnerable communities that faced poverty, gender

barriers, stigmatization and low access to education, nutrition, sanitation, water and hygiene. Equity was, therefore, central to the Gavi strategy. Gavi was focused on reaching zero-dose children and missed communities who often suffered a disproportionate burden of disease, deaths and medical impoverishment. Gender was an integral part of the equity agenda, particularly given the disproportionate gendered impacts of pandemic. There was no one way to proceed, with approaches varying from country to country. The solutions, however, would require flexibility, innovation and the expertise of organizations working in a range of fields.

It was heartening to see the IPU focus on health, including through its landmark resolution of 2019, *Achieving universal health coverage by 2030: the role of parliaments in ensuring the right to health*. She looked forward to working further with the IPU to address deep inequities, many of which had been exacerbated by the pandemic.

Mr. J. Sundaram (Former UN Assistant Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Professor at Colombia University and the International Islamic University of Malaysia), keynote speaker, said that a historic opportunity had arisen to address two related but distinct challenges: accelerating containment of COVID-19 and rebuilding better economies.

The world would be much worse off if the pandemic was not contained. Yet, developing countries continued to have limited access not only to vaccines but also to diagnostic tests and personal protective equipment. To rectify the problem, South Africa and India had put before the World Trade Organization (WTO) a proposal for a waiver to the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) but very little progress had been made in that direction. It was clear that the current range of vaccines available would not eradicate COVID-19 but instead mitigate the severity of infections and the likelihood of death. Some of the major companies involved in developing vaccines were organizing their business strategies on the assumption that COVID-19 would be endemic.

It was crucial to mobilize the resources, financial and otherwise, to ensure relief, recovery and reform of all economies in the face of the crisis. The world would be set back much more if those resources were not made available. There was, however, a great divide between rich and poor countries. Rich countries had sufficient resources to proceed with relief, recovery and reform efforts while poor countries did not, given their huge debt overhangs and difficulties accessing finance. The international community must do far more to make resources available in poorer countries. Some recent developments had been quite promising, such as the approval of special drawing rights at the International Monetary Fund (IMF). However, those resources were largely distributed according to the relative wealth of economies worldwide meaning that developing countries would accrue less. Additional resources must be made available through the multilateral financial institutions that already existed, such as the IMF, World Bank and African Development Bank. Rich countries that were not using their special drawing rights should allocate those resources so that financial institutions could lend more. Without timely action, there was a huge risk that temporary recessions would extend into protracted depressions, setting back many years of progress on reducing poverty, hunger and other afflictions.

Parliaments must think seriously about how to address the two abovementioned challenges. They must act together across national boundaries to achieve results.

Ms. H. Clark (Former Prime Minister of New Zealand and UNDP Administrator, Chair of the Board of the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH), Co-Chair of the Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response), keynote speaker, said that the Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response had recently released a report in which it presented a number of findings and recommendations regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. The Panel had found that most countries had not been prepared to respond to a pandemic despite years of warnings. Many reviews, panels and commissions had issued bold recommendations urging States to step up preparedness. Yet, those recommendations had been largely put aside and dismissed as too hard. In addition, the Panel had documented a series of failures, gaps and delays around responses to COVID-19. When the first cases of the virus had been observed, Wuhan had quickly arranged tests and issued a notice. However, a great deal of time had been lost in January 2020 when information had been hoarded and the response bogged down in exchanges of official e-mails and letters. The Panel had found that the investigations made by the World Health Organization (WHO) had been hampered and not helped by the International Health Regulations (2005). Equally, WHO had not been sufficiently empowered to investigate, validate and confirm a dangerous outbreak at the required speed. It had become clear that the public health emergency of international concern could have been declared at least eight days earlier, by 22 January 2020. February 2020 had also been a lost month

during which many countries had adopted a “wait and see” approach rather than enacting aggressive response strategies. That said, some countries had responded successfully, particularly those that had learnt the lessons of the SARS outbreak of 2003 or Ebola. Success had been dependent on governance capacity and strong leadership that did not deny the science or sow distrust. Those who had proactively deployed public health measures in the absence of vaccines had made progress.

The Panel had made two sets of recommendations: urgent recommendations and transformational actions needed to make the current pandemic the last. Among the urgent recommendations was a call for every country to deploy the non-pharmaceutical public health measures that had been proven to stop transmission. She agreed that the vaccines would not solve everything. Indeed, there were already problems of inequitable distribution and supply. On distribution, the Panel had recommended that high-income countries, with a vaccine pipeline and adequate coverage of their own populations, should share their surplus orders. Collectively, high-income countries should commit to putting at least one billion vaccine doses into the COVAX Advanced Market Commitment (COVAX AMC) to support low- and middle-income countries, with the objective of redistributing 2 billion doses by mid-2022. So far, commitments to the COVAX AMC had totalled no more than 150-200 million doses, which was not enough. On supply, pharmaceutical companies were hoarding their intellectual property and refusing to support large-scale voluntary licensing. As a result, the knowledge and technology transfer needed to enable widespread manufacturing could not take place. The Panel had recommended that WHO and WTO urgently convene a meeting with major pharmaceutical manufacturing countries and companies to broker an agreement that enabled the rapid scaling up of voluntary licensing. If no such agreement was possible, the TRIPS waiver must come into force within three months. Urgent action was needed in that regard. The Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator was short of US\$ 18.5 billion. She called on the G7 to fund 60 per cent of that. The G20 had been talking of funding the whole amount but had not yet produced the money. The final urgent recommendation was for WHO to develop a clear strategy on the way forward, including timelines and benchmarks.

Among the transformational actions proposed by the Panel was the creation of a global health threats council to be constituted at the level of Heads of State and government. The council would aim to maintain and mobilize political commitment for preparedness and response on an ongoing basis. The establishment of a dedicated international pandemic financing facility had also been proposed with a funding formula based on ability to pay. It was estimated that annual preparedness funding for low- and middle- countries should be around US\$ 10 billion per year. There should be an ability to leverage up to US\$ 100 billion at short notice. The Panel was also supporting the negotiation of a pandemic framework convention to fill gaps in the existing legal framework. Other transformational recommendations included reforming the existing ACT-Accelerator, strengthening and empowering WHO and improving the surveillance and alert system. Lastly, the Panel had called for a special session of the UN General Assembly to agree a political declaration around the key reforms required. It was vital to seize the moment at a time when the world was focused on the need for change.

The Moderator opened up the floor for questions.

Ms. P. Bayr (Austria) said that it was very disappointing that the European Union (EU) was not supporting a TRIPS waiver. The waiver would allow every country with a pharmaceutical industry to produce COVID-19 vaccines and medicines on their own. She asked what arguments could be used to convince countries that were prioritizing profits over global health to waive intellectual property rights for COVID-19 vaccines and medicines.

Ms. H. Clark agreed that the position of the EU was disappointing. Given that moral arguments were not working, she would try a geopolitical one. Many new vaccines were coming onto the market, including ones from China and the Russian Federation. WHO had already approved some and was expected to approve others. Those behind the new vaccines were being much more helpful in terms of waiving intellectual property rights. Arrangements were already being made for third countries to manufacture the Russian Sputnik V vaccine, for example. In that context, Big Pharma might not have an ongoing life unless it quickly rolled out voluntary licensing.

Mr. M. Nadir (Guyana) said that many countries had been slow to approve vaccines produced in other countries such as China and the Russian Federation due to mistrust. Such inertia was a big challenge. China and the Russian Federation had great capacity to ramp up vaccine production for the rest of the world. He asked what the views of the experts were on this matter.

Ms. A. Gupta said that the vaccine approval process was extremely rigorous with health and safety considered of paramount importance. Trials had to be conducted with extreme caution without any short circuiting of the process. WHO had come up with very innovative ways of speeding up approvals without compromising on high standards.

Ms. M. Grande (Italy) asked whether the international human rights agenda would become more of a priority as a result of the pandemic.

Ms. H. Clark said that human rights had not done well during the pandemic. Authoritarian regimes had used the cover of COVID-19 to oppress people even more. A strong reaction was needed from the whole of society. The Panel had called on national governments to design very inclusive arrangements around preparedness and response, bringing in government mechanisms but also civil society. Overall, human rights had been put on the back foot during the pandemic. A great deal of advocacy was needed to put it back on the front foot.

Mr. J. Sundaram agreed that human rights had been put on the back foot. Intellectual property rights had trumped human rights with disastrous consequences.

A serious commitment was needed to provide developing countries with vaccines. So far, there had been no recourse except to deal with intellectual property rights. No single company had signed up to the COVID-19 Technology Access Pool (C-TAP). Lack of funding was also a big problem. It was important to share knowledge or no progress would be made.

Ms. M. Alsuwaidi (United Arab Emirates) said that economic recovery was dependent on growth, innovation and resilience. Strong economic infrastructure was needed. It was her belief that small and medium enterprises (SMEs), especially young entrepreneurs, had the greatest role to play in the economic recovery. She asked the speakers to clarify the role of parliaments in ensuring that governments delivered assistance to SMEs as part of economic recovery plans.

Mr. J. Sundaram said that the challenge for the developing world was that many of the relief measures in place mimicked relief measures adopted in the West. Those measures had helped large companies but adversely affected SMEs, especially start-ups. There was a special need to address the problem of SMEs. However, it was important to be realistic. Very few resources were currently available. Parliaments should urge their governments to free up more resources and encourage more spending, especially in developing countries.

Mr. D. McGuinty (Canada) said that there was an early emerging consensus that pollution and habitat destruction could lay the groundwork for future pandemics. It was important to address the fundamental question of ecological integrity and find ways to integrate the environment into the economy. He asked what parliamentarians could do to help introduce a system of accounting for natural capital. After all, the economy was a wholly owned subsidiary of the environment.

Mr. J. Sundaram said that it was important to build forward better rather than build back better. The status quo before COVID-19 did not work for many people, with one of the major victims being the environment. He agreed that environmental issues must be handled much better but believed that the natural capital approach, which put contemporary pricing on nature, was a problematic one. It was almost impossible to anticipate how nature might be valued in the future.

Mr. A.Y. Ihou (Togo) said that vaccine availability was a big problem as it was dependent on the prior availability of financial resources. The IPU President should use diplomatic means to ensure that the necessary financial resources were available. Without vaccines, countries could not overcome the pandemic. Financing was also needed for countries to relaunch their economies post-COVID-19.

The Chair invited the keynote speakers to provide some final remarks.

Ms. H. Clark said that parliamentarians should press their governments to become champions of the transformational change required as well as to develop an updated pandemic preparedness and response plan.

Mr. J. Sundaram said that it was important to recognize the related but distinct character of the two challenges he had described previously. First, parliaments should take measures to contain and, if possible, eliminate the disease. Second, they should ensure that countries, especially poorer ones, had sufficient funding to overcome the crisis. Some of the money should come from abroad but much of it could come from domestic resources.

Ms. A. Gupta said that parliamentarians must not politicize health and instead ensure that the principles of equity, fairness and social justice were upheld. Parliamentarians played a key role in law-making, accountability, advocacy, budget allocation and priority setting. They had a great opportunity to create a more equal, inclusive and integrated world that put human rights at the forefront. It was particularly important to focus on vulnerable populations, such as refugees, migrants, asylum seekers, internally displaced people, stateless people, indigenous people, people with disabilities and detainees.

The Secretary General agreed that parliamentarians should not politicize health. There should be more emphasis on “rights” as well as on “people”. Indeed, health was a right of the people, not a favour done by States or institutions. It was important to remember that behind the abstract issues were real human beings. He saw a stronger role for parliaments in tackling the crisis not least because of the values they underpinned, such as defending human rights and representing the people.

Participants had highlighted the need to look forward rather than back. They had identified multilateralism as a key solution. They had promoted a new brand of multilateralism with people at the centre to ensure access, equity and inclusiveness. There had also been talk of creating partnerships. Those were the points he would take away from the discussion.

The President of the IPU took the Chair.

A short video about the participation of women in parliament was played.

The President, introducing the main discussion, said that the pandemic had disproportionately affected women and young people. He would thus first give the floor to the newly elected President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians and the newly elected President of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians for their thoughts on the recovery process.

A short video about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women was played.

Ms. L. Vasylenko (Ukraine), incoming President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, said that the impacts of COVID-19 were not gender-neutral. With that in mind, the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians had recently held a series of virtual inter-parliamentary dialogues on gender-responsive post-COVID-19 recovery. The Forum had later elaborated on those discussions.

She wished to raise four main points. First, gender parity in decision-making was urgently needed. Women made up 70 per cent of frontline workers but held only 25 per cent of parliamentary seats globally. Inclusive leadership in the public and private sectors drove stronger governance and better outcomes. It would also be key to any ambitious, gender-responsive and green recovery agenda. The target should be no less than 50/50.

Second, the pandemic had exacerbated gender inequalities in the economy. Women were more vulnerable to layoffs and were more likely to be affected by the increase in unpaid care work and the lack of worker protection. It was necessary to put in place stronger social protection schemes, set up affordable childcare services and offer robust support within the care economy to ensure women’s economic empowerment. Building back greener and more gender-responsive could open up many opportunities to support women’s economic independence and empowerment.

Third, in 2020, 245 million women and girls had experienced violence from their partner. Parliaments must step up their efforts to address the increasing violence against women, including online.

Fourth, parliaments must be models of gender-sensitivity. They must be spaces where women could fully contribute, with family-friendly and anti-harassment policies in place. They must be free of stereotypes and strive to analyse every budget, law and policy through a gender lens. There was a need to advance gender-responsive legislation, policymaking and budgeting as well as to repeal discriminatory laws. Doing so would require political will and resources, a strong mandate and dedicated parliamentary mechanisms.

No recovery agenda could succeed if it did not go hand-in-hand with the gender equality agenda. Only with a gender perspective would it be possible to build back stronger, more resilient, greener and more equitable.

Ms. S. Albazar (Egypt), incoming President of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians, said that the pandemic had caught the whole world unaware but was also an opportunity to shape new norms and create an inclusive future. The future should be shaped by the

youth. Unfortunately, only 2.6 per cent of the world's parliamentarians were under 30. Youth must be represented adequately in political institutions and processes, such as parliaments, political parties, elections and public administrations.

Members of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians had often said "No decisions about us, without us". It was not just about fairness but also about harnessing the ideas and talents of young men and women to meet collective challenges. Young people were eager to contribute and simply needed a way in.

The Forum had recently met at the 2021 Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians to examine the ingredients of a youth-responsive recovery from the pandemic. The outcome document set out a number of recommendations. First, one in eight children had not been able to continue their schooling during the pandemic. As a result, there was a need for greater investment in education, including online. Second, young people tended to have less severe COVID-19 infections but faced disproportionate mental health costs and reduced access to sexual reproductive rights. It was important to pay greater attention to youth health services. Third, young people were suffering the economic consequences of COVID-19. More investment was needed in youth employment with better access to credit and stronger social safety nets.

She called on parliamentarians to support the new IPU campaign *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament*.

The President said that youth participation was essential. He was highly committed to the *I Say Yes* campaign. It was a campaign not only for young parliamentarians but for all parliamentarians who believed in youth participation.

A short video about the "I Say Yes campaign" was played.

The President opened up the floor to Member Parliaments, starting with interventions by Speakers of Parliament.

Ms. R. Suñé (Andorra) said that it was vital to vaccinate people from all countries or the pandemic would drag on for a long time. Andorra had launched an initiative under which the parliament, government and municipalities could come together to discuss ways forward for the future. Multilateralism was also very important. Countries must be able to share experiences and learn from each other. The only way through was together.

Mr. T. Dorji (Bhutan) said that COVID-19 had taken more than three million lives globally and caused severe socioeconomic hardship. Parliaments around the world must engage in collective and coordinated efforts to overcome the pandemic. So far, the impact of the pandemic in Bhutan remained low with only 277 cases and 1 death. Some parts of the country were under lockdown to prevent the virus from spreading. His Majesty the King of Bhutan had recently returned from the high-risk areas where he had travelled to oversee containment measures. Overall, the Government had proactively implemented best practices and protocols to ensure safety. Frontline workers, including medical staff, armed forces and volunteers had served with full dedication. Religious bodies had also offered their prayers.

Mr. I. Dacic (Serbia) said that the world had changed dramatically since the 141st IPU Assembly in Belgrade. In Belgrade, the IPU had adopted its resolution on universal health coverage, which had gained even more significance in the era of COVID-19. The resolution had called on parliaments to accelerate efforts towards universal health care as well as to strengthen health systems, emphasizing the role that such systems played in ensuring global health security.

Serbia had been prepared to respond to the pandemic not only in terms of its health system but also in terms of the economy, social protection and the smooth functioning of political processes. It had also put in place a good immunization strategy. However, the pandemic could not be overcome within national borders alone. Global solidarity and joint action were needed. It was for that reason that Serbia had donated vaccines to neighbouring countries and offered to vaccinate foreign nationals living within the country in addition to its own citizens. COVID-19 was a common enemy to all people regardless of ethnicity, nationality, political affiliation or religion. He was pleased to note that multilateralism and inter-parliamentary cooperation had not been lacking in such challenging times. It was important to further strengthen parliamentary cooperation within the IPU.

Ms. B. Argimón (Uruguay) said that the Parliament of Uruguay had taken a number of measures to address the pandemic. It had been active on the boards of various health authorities and introduced rules to protect the population. The Parliament had also set up a committee on COVID-19 not only to combat the virus but also to consider the way forward post-pandemic. The crisis had given all countries a common challenge to face. Uruguay considered vaccine inequity to be a big problem and found the economic and social repercussions of the pandemic very concerning. The response to COVID-19 should include a gender perspective since women were the backbone of most national care systems.

The IPU should issue a declaration that demonstrated the unity that had been created among parliaments throughout the pandemic. The declaration should also address the question of access to vaccines.

Mr. A. Al-Odat (Jordan) said that the COVID-19 pandemic had been testing human values. It was important to take a participatory approach, address the social and economic repercussions and ensure transparency and equity in the distribution of vaccines.

Israel was committing crimes against Palestine. Places such as Gaza had been excluded from the vaccine programme. Equity, respect for international law and consideration for humanitarian crises had been completely absent. In Jordan, however, Syrian refugees had been among the first to receive vaccines. At a time when Jordan needed all of its medical staff and equipment, it had sent out as much assistance as possible to Gaza.

A better tomorrow would not be achieved by eradicating COVID-19. It would be achieved by eradicating injustice and aggression and by promoting respect for international law, democracy and human rights. The IPU must use its position internationally to promote a peaceful and prosperous world that worked for the whole of humanity.

Mr. O. Birla (India) said that India was one of the countries worst affected by the latest wave of COVID-19. He thanked the international community for extending a helping hand at a time of severe crisis.

The pandemic had adversely impacted governments, economies and health care systems globally. It was time to formulate a comprehensive global strategy and share resources to combat the disease. The Government of India had launched the world's biggest vaccination drive. It was accelerating the pace of vaccination by taking quick policy decisions and approving vaccines imported from other countries. The Parliament had lived up to its responsibilities during the pandemic. It had deliberated extensively on the various aspects of COVID-19 management. It had passed various financial and legislative proposals. It had also set up a COVID-19 control room as an interface between public representatives and the people. All nations must come together to resolve the problems plaguing the world. Parliaments had a significant role to play in terms of spreading awareness about COVID-19, helping out citizens and monitoring governments. It was only through the collective efforts of parliaments, governments, the private sector and international agencies that the pandemic could be brought under control.

Mr. C. Leekpai (Thailand) said that COVID-19 crossed borders naturally, leaving people all over the world exposed to the virus. The legislative branch must not only legislate and deliberate but also solve problems. Members of the Thai Parliament had been helping to distribute face masks and consumer goods to vulnerable people who were experiencing financial limitations. Such measures were important given the limited availability of vaccines. The COVID-19 pandemic would continue for some time. However, countries must not let the crisis hold them back from fulfilling their duties. Thailand deemed it essential to cooperate with members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and with the international community in general, including through the IPU, for instance, by sharing knowledge, experiences and success stories. The international community must work together in the spirit of multilateralism and partnership to rebuild economies, societies and health safety nets for a more equitable and sustainable world post-COVID-19.

Mr. S. Albarkani (Yemen) said that the COVID-19 situation was bleak. The world was suffering unimaginable losses, both human and economic, as the virus continued to spread. However, he was hopeful that countries could mobilize their capacities to tackle the crisis.

If large economies were struggling, then Yemen had little chance of faring well. In addition to COVID-19, Yemen was having to deal with a war that was wreaking havoc on the nation. Militias were spreading misinformation, practising child recruitment and destroying basic economic, educational and service infrastructure. All peace and humanitarian initiatives were being ignored. People were dying not only because of COVID-19 but also because of war.

Like other countries, Yemen had been overtaken by the pandemic. However, its situation was different because it lacked the most basic health services. There were no medicines, no vaccines, no quarantine facilities and no awareness-raising programmes. The militias were denying the presence of a pandemic or suggesting that the only way to overcome it was to believe more in their leader. He called on the international community to pay more attention to the situation in Yemen.

Mr. R. Recto (Philippines) said that the threat of COVID-19 continued to loom. While the United States of America and Europe were returning to normality, the virus was still ravaging parts of Asia and South America. In such an interconnected world, global cooperation was vital to tackle the virus. Parliamentarians should share their best practices, share information on mutations and variants, share effective drugs and treatments but, above all, share their vaccines. Although he was thankful for COVAX, it was not enough.

The Philippines was willing to pay for more supplies, including vaccines, but had been prevented from doing so by a lack of immediate availability, supply chain problems, stringent indemnification conditions and issues with drug companies. Consequently, the country had been unable to fully open its economy. The consumer base remained weak, transport facilities could not operate at full capacity, trade was down and tourism was close to nil. In addition, the global economic downturn had caused a recession, leading to extensive joblessness and widespread hunger. Despite the above, it was important to find ways to recover and rebuild. The Philippines Congress was working on the third of its emergency response laws. The law would allocate more funds to accelerate economic recovery and resilience while also providing additional support for COVID-19 mitigation and vaccine programmes. The country had increased worker subsidies and social amelioration for poverty-stricken households and offered subsidies to the education sector. Capacity building of critically impacted sectors had also been introduced.

As the virus continued to mutate, so must the approach to containing it. Parliamentarians must play a strategic role in addressing the health and economic crisis. They must craft more innovative measures, be bolder in funding an economic stimulus and exercise oversight over the government.

Mr. T. Xhaferi (North Macedonia) said that COVID-19 had led to loss of life, a collapse of many health systems, economic troubles and psychological trauma. It had also exposed the flaws of the pre-pandemic world, such as inequality, development gaps, human rights violations, poverty, and mistreatment of women and children. It seemed, however, that countries had learned little from the crisis, showing insufficient empathy for each other.

Multilateral cooperation was needed to prevent current and future crises. The IPU, in particular, was a valuable platform where parliaments could come together and share experiences. Parliaments had a key role to play in promoting democracy and human rights. They must retain the trust of their citizens by building an equal, inclusive and caring world, including by making health a priority. Access to medical aid was a universal human right.

Mr. H. Sabbagh (Syrian Arab Republic) said that, throughout history, his country had been an exceptional model of co-existence, respect and openness. It would soon be conducting elections in the spirit of diversity, transparency and freedom.

COVID-19 had caused an unprecedented human tragedy. The global governance system had been exposed as ineffective, vulnerable and incapable of protecting people and societies. The current balance of power had created great divides between countries, leading to unequal distribution of wealth and resources. The system had had a negative impact on COVID-19 response and recovery plans.

Syria had taken all possible measures to confront the pandemic but had been hampered by coercive and unjust sanctions. He called on the international community to lift the sanctions immediately. The sanctions were depriving the Syrian people of basic medicines and vaccines, including for COVID-19. Fairness and equality between countries was essential. It was important to exchange information and best practices so that no one was left behind. No country should have a monopoly on vaccines.

Ms. T.K. Narbaeva (Uzbekistan) said that her country was taking comprehensive measures to tackle the pandemic. For instance, it had strengthened the national health system, guaranteed social protection for the population and offered support to SMEs. It was also providing humanitarian aid to different countries, including neighbouring ones.

There was a need to pass legislation in a timely manner, boost employment and offer financial support to low-income families. Much attention should be placed on women's empowerment. It was also important to ensure full implementation of all international commitments and agreements as well as to further develop mutually beneficial cooperation.

At the UN General Assembly, Uzbekistan had put forward a proposal for an international code on the voluntary commitments of States during pandemics. It would also be holding, in conjunction with WHO, a high-level conference on international cooperation in the fight against pandemics.

Mr. J. Lazo Hernández (Cuba) welcomed efforts to overcome the pandemic and build a better tomorrow. Cuba had faced a major obstacle in its own work to preserve lives, namely the economic crisis resulting from the United States blockade. The blockade had intensified over the past four years with over 240 coercive measures having been directed against Cuba. Despite the blockade, Cuba had managed to maintain its basic services and take care of its infected population. It had established more than 20 molecular biology laboratories, designed a number of prototypes for ventilators and diagnostic equipment, and developed five different vaccine candidates. The above was proof that Cuba was on the right side of history. It was clear that its revolutionary and socialist vision had a huge amount of potential. Not even the biggest empire had been able to tear it down.

Mr. P. Katjavivi (Namibia) said that it was important to treat COVID-19 vaccines as a public good so as to resolve inequalities. The virus did not discriminate between rich and poor. Thus, collective efforts were needed to ensure vaccine accessibility. Namibia had made progress in the area of gender responsive policy and women's leadership and was committed to giving young people a voice. There were currently five young women in the Namibian Parliament, the youngest of whom was 22 years old. The deputy minister for information and communication technology was a 23-year-old woman. Namibia upheld the principle of gender responsible budgeting in all its institutions and encouraged institutions to pay particular attention to the needs of the girl child. Overall, the Parliament hoped to adapt to the situation and emerge stronger and more resilient in case of future pandemics or shocks.

Mr. J. Pizarro (Parlatino) said that Parlatino had made health a priority since the beginning of the pandemic. States had an obligation to guarantee the health of their people. Vaccines must be made available in a timely manner free of charge. Patents and intellectual property rights for vaccines should be lifted. Vaccines could then be mass produced and could reach all citizens. The pandemic had caused a political, economic and social crisis. It was important to tackle the crisis in a coordinated and integrated way. There was a need to focus on employment, especially for women, who had been the most seriously affected. Parliaments should exercise oversight over the work of the executive, guaranteeing the rights and freedoms of the people and the proper functioning of democracy. It was necessary to build more inclusive economies which prioritized education and allowed people to reach their full potential.

Mr. P. Casini (Italy) said that the whole world had gone through some very difficult months grappling with the threat of COVID-19. People had felt entirely powerless knowing that modernity and science had been unable to help. Fortunately, after enormous efforts, many countries were now beginning to see a way out. As the world moved forward, new responsibilities were arising. It was important to remain sensitive to the needs of countries where vaccines were not yet widespread. Countries must harness all possible knowledge and means to fight the virus. There was also a need to revive multilateralism. Multilateral organizations such as WHO had not always worked well but it was not the time to put them on trial. Instead, countries should understand that international cooperation was crucial. A weak and confused form of multilateralism which wasted time and did not solve problems was its own worst enemy. The multilateral system should uphold parliamentary institutional culture, including democracy and pluralism, but avoid exporting predetermined democratic models. The latter would be an unacceptable show of arrogance and could even be considered neo-colonialism. Countries from very different political regimes should be able to find common points of convergence in defence of universally recognized values such as solidarity, liberty and peace.

Ms. D. O'Neill (Australia) said that the world had gained a new understanding of human vulnerability and connection as a consequence of the past year. It was important for parliamentarians to prioritize the needs of First Nations people who had been significantly impacted by COVID-19. There was also a need to redouble efforts and investment in education. Parliaments were a product of education. It was therefore incumbent on all parliamentarians to be champions of education,

particularly a type of education that thrived on innovation and multilateralism. Education could make a profound difference in people's lives. Currently, the world was experiencing one of the biggest global disruptions to education with 250 million children no longer in school due to COVID-19. It was a profound loss of human potential that would manifest as reduced health, knowledge, life years and earning capacity. She called on parliamentarians to prioritize a return to school for the 250 million students who had been unable to attend. They should also increase safety in schools and make sure food was distributed in schools to tackle malnutrition.

Ms. C. Widegren (Sweden) agreed on the importance of education. Parliamentarians had a very clear leadership role to play in overcoming the pandemic and building a better tomorrow. The UN Charter began with the words "we the peoples". Parliamentarians were representatives of the people. The time had come for them to step forward and act. There was a need to show not only local and national leadership but also global leadership. Digital democracy was a good place to start. Multilateralism was needed more than ever. It was important to set goals but also to develop strategies to reach those goals. Goals could only be achieved by working together through dialogue.

Ms. H. Baldwin (United Kingdom) said that the pandemic had wreaked havoc all over the world, including in her own country where over 127,000 citizens had lost their lives. As the United Kingdom prepared to host the G7, she hoped that global leaders would go further to provide vaccines worldwide through COVAX. She agreed that education was vital. The United Kingdom would be co-hosting the replenishment of the Global Partnership for Education in conjunction with Kenya and working on the International Parliamentary Network for Education in conjunction with Australia. Lastly, the United Kingdom would soon be holding the 26th session of Conference of the Parties (COP26) to the United Nations Climate Change Framework Convention (UNFCCC) in Glasgow. It was a chance for the world to come together and be ambitious in their national contributions on climate change.

Ms. I. Dimic (Slovenia) said that Slovenia had adopted legislative measures aiming to provide financial incentives, preserve jobs and ensure social security during the COVID-19 pandemic. The country was beginning to loosen restrictions and return to normal life. However, complete normalization would not be possible without sufficiently high vaccine coverage. All countries worldwide must have equal access to vaccines to curb the spread of the virus. Slovenia welcomed the Digital COVID-19 Certificate introduced by the EU. The certificate would facilitate border crossing within the EU and enable travel and tourism to restart in a non-discriminatory manner. The international community should be guided by solidarity when addressing the pandemic in order to leave no one behind. Post-pandemic investment should be green and sustainable. It was also important to decrease inequalities, including on health care.

Mr. D. McGuinty (Canada) said that COVID-19 had wreaked havoc on communities all over the world. The millions of people affected were not just numbers but faces and livelihoods. It was also a sharp reminder that the planet had been pushed to its carrying capacity limit. The time had come to take collective action.

The pandemic had underscored the world's interdependence and shown that equality was key to ensuring a sustainable future. Parliamentarians must demand respect for the principle of equality in vaccination access. Vaccine equality must inform the global recovery plan but also the ways in which the plan would be implemented. The recovery plan should strive to build more efficient economies defined in terms of sustainability and the restoration and renewal of the earth's natural capital. The political, economic and social recovery from the pandemic must also seek to end the unequal treatment of women. Recovery would be suboptimal unless women took their rightful place as partners and decision-makers.

Parliamentarians had a unique role to play, domestically and internationally, in building a post-pandemic world. He encouraged them to seize the challenge before them.

Mr. F. Naek (Pakistan) said that Pakistan was one of the few developing nations to have taken a strong and effective stand against COVID-19. The federal and provincial parliaments had found innovative solutions allowing them to continue their constitutional duties. They had continued working on an intermittent basis, taking up priority items only, especially those related to COVID-19. Strict procedures and localized lockdowns had been imposed in areas with high infection rates. Businesses violating COVID-19 containment measures were heavily fined. The National Command and Operation Centre continued to monitor the situation and issued periodic directives to all segments of society. There was also a dedicated COVID-19 information website. An extensive nationwide vaccination

programme was in place. So far, the country had partially vaccinated almost 3 million people and fully vaccinated over 1 million. The Parliament was working on building back better through a transition to a clean economy. It would not be possible to improve quality of life for the global population without equal representation. As a result, Pakistan had advised the IPU to incorporate a balanced representation of global parliamentary professionals in the Secretariat on a rotation basis.

Ms. S. Xayachack (Lao People's Democratic Republic) said that the Lao People's Democratic Republic had acted quickly on COVID-19, for instance, by enforcing lockdowns in big cities, introducing travel restrictions and closing down educational institutions and entertainment venues. It had set up an information centre and an official government website. There was also a national preparedness and response plan that had been harmonized with the SDGs. Vaccination was one of the key priorities of the plan. The Government aimed to vaccinate 22 per cent of the population by the end of 2021, 50 per cent by 2022 and 70 per cent by 2023. A national task force had also been set up to ensure effective implementation of COVID-19 measures. Parliamentarians had played a crucial role in implementing health laws, particularly those to ensure efficient and equitable access to health facilities and services. He called on IPU Member Parliaments to work together to fight the pandemic.

Mr. R. Lopatka (Austria) said that the COVID-19 pandemic was a global challenge not only for health systems but also for economies, social security systems and daily life. Parliaments were core institutions at the centre of democracy and the rule of law and had a key role to play in overcoming the crisis. In times of crisis, parliamentary dialogue could bring parties together, build trust and contribute to finding sustainable solutions. Parliamentarism and multilateralism were the two main pillars of wellbeing and were brought together by the IPU. It was therefore important for the IPU to continue its work. Through the extraordinary session of the IPU Governing Council held in November 2020, the IPU had shown that it was able to take important decisions even in times of crisis. However, parliamentarians should endeavour to restart normal life as quickly as possible, including by meeting in person. He drew attention to the second segment of the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament and the First Global Parliamentary Summit on Counter-Terrorism, both of which would be held in person in Vienna in September 2021. Meeting in person would make it easier for parliamentarians to do their job.

Mr. S. Sitorus (Indonesia) said that the whole world had had to adapt to the same threat and had faced many challenges along the way. Countries must find a sense of burden sharing, global solidarity, multilateralism and cooperation if they wished to overcome the pandemic. Parliamentarians should act as a beacon of hope by ensuring humanity came first.

Indonesia had launched its vaccination programme early and was one of the co-Chairs for the COVAX AMC engagement group. The country was also of the opinion that the SDGs were crucial to the post-pandemic recovery. It had put the green agenda at the heart of its own recovery plan and was aggressively pursuing low carbon development and resource efficiency. The recovery should be people-centred, aiming to fight discrimination and inequality while promoting wellbeing and inclusiveness. He urged delegates to support the TRIPS waiver for COVID-19 vaccines and medicines.

Ms. R. Kavakci Kan (Turkey) said that the COVID-19 pandemic had demonstrated the extent to which the world was interconnected. It was clear that no one would be well unless everybody was well.

The Turkish Parliament had continued its work during the pandemic. It had passed laws providing economic support and offered free health care and vaccinations. Education had been taken online, thereby boosting efforts to address the digital divide. Measures to combat violence against women had also been introduced. Multilateralism was extremely important at such a difficult time. Turkey had provided support to 155 countries worldwide, including humanitarian assistance.

The people of Palestine were experiencing terror at the hands of the Israeli State. It was unacceptable to discriminate on the basis of ethnicity. The global community must come together to make sure no more lives were lost during the pandemic, particularly in Palestine.

Mr. S. Yang (Cambodia) said that the world had been attacked without warning by an invisible enemy. Wealthy countries with advanced technologies had been able to fight back while other countries were struggling. Some believed that by vaccinating their own citizens they would be safe. Others were politicizing the pandemic for their own political gains. It was important to remember, however, that the world was in fact fighting a common enemy. He called on parliamentarians to submit an emergency proposal to the IPU Governing Council declaring war on the pandemic and vowing to fight it together.

Ms. S. Koutra-Koukouma (Cyprus) said that the unprecedented COVID-19 crisis had exposed the many weaknesses and inequalities inherent to social systems and structures worldwide. The most significant discrepancy that was currently taking place was the uneven access to vaccines. Governments should realize that successful management of the pandemic and a speedy economic recovery was not a one-country job but required collective efforts. Enhanced international cooperation, coordination and solidarity were therefore needed. Providing equal access to vaccines should be made an overwhelming priority.

Parliaments had a major role to play in building a better tomorrow. First and foremost, they should empower the welfare state, paying special attention to the health sector. Second, they should adopt national legislation that empowered women and youth, protected the environment and enhanced quality of life for all, while following the provisions of international agreements and conventions, such as the Paris and Istanbul Conventions. Third, parliaments should promote economic sustainability in development, including through the circular economy.

In dealing with the pandemic, parliaments must not lose sight of the SDGs. Recovery from the current crisis should lay the foundations for a restructured social system. The new social system should place youth and women at the forefront, distribute global resources more equally and reduce unemployment and poverty to a minimum.

The COVID-19 pandemic had created tensions in societies. However, it should not be used as a pretext for the promotion of anti-democratic practices. It was up to parliamentarians to safeguard democratic principles and rights by intervening where necessary.

Mr. Man Tran Thanh (Viet Nam) said that it was important to continue strengthening partnerships between the IPU, regional parliamentary organizations and international organizations, particularly when it came to addressing crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The IPU must call on countries manufacturing large amounts of vaccines to provide more assistance to developing countries, particularly those severely affected by the virus. Indeed, equal, timely and affordable access to vaccines and advanced medical equipment was vital. Member Parliaments must quickly improve their national COVID-19 response policies. They should guarantee timely budget allocation and bolster government oversight and accountability.

WHO should strengthen partnerships and cooperation for the transfer of vaccine manufacturing technologies and enhance COVID-19 capacity building.

Mr. J. Taiana (Argentina) said that the COVID-19 pandemic had impacted the entire world, taking many lives and threatening economic and social prospects. One of the biggest problems was that it was exacerbating inequalities between developed and developing countries. Indeed, 80 per cent of vaccines were being delivered in the richest, most developed countries. He supported India and South Africa in their efforts to have WTO declare vaccines a global public good and introduce a TRIPS waiver. Countries must work together to overcome the pandemic. Without collective efforts, the virus would become endemic. Cooperation was needed not only in the sphere of health but also in the economy. Rebuilding economies required countries to make significant modifications to international financial institutions and engage in sustainable development based on the SDGs. He called for a special session of the UN General Assembly on the economic recovery. It was important to show that multilateralism had not been paralysed during the pandemic but was, instead, active and effective.

Ms. M. Mularoni (San Marino) said that the pandemic had changed the world profoundly. San Marino, like many countries, had had to find solutions in a very short space of time. Thanks to a successful vaccination campaign, the country was close to being free of COVID-19 and was ready to resume its economic activities.

It was vital to ensure democratic and equal distribution of vaccines around the world without discrimination based on race, wealth or geographic location. All countries should come together and speak with one voice on the matter. The voice of smaller countries was particularly important. Ensuring fair access to vaccines was a crucial test for international cooperation. It would establish how quickly countries could begin their post-pandemic recovery. The SDGs should represent the foundation of COVID-19 recovery strategies. The green agenda was a particularly important vision for the recovery.

The President said that he had picked up on a number of messages so far. The pandemic had revealed the extent to which the world was interdependent. There was a need to diversify the vaccination process and make the vaccine a public good. The commitment of all parliaments was needed to win the battle against COVID-19. The IPU should stay committed to multilateralism. It was also important to invest in education.

The Secretary General said that the messages coming out from discussions were very encouraging. Parliaments were looking ahead instead of back to better address the challenges. The discussions would continue the following day.

The sitting rose at 17:30 CEST.

Sitting of Thursday, 27 May

The sitting was called to order at 14:10 CEST with Mr. D. Pacheco (Portugal), President of the IPU, in the Chair.

Item 1 of the agenda (continued)

General Debate on the theme *Overcoming the pandemic today and building a better tomorrow: the role of parliaments*

Resumption of the Debate

Mr. J.F.N. Mudenda (Zimbabwe) said that the role of parliaments in overcoming the COVID-19 pandemic could not be overemphasized. Parliaments should exercise their legislative, oversight and representative functions in their work. There was a need for intensified publicity about the pandemic worldwide as well as proper solutions. It was imperative to test the population in order to have validated data on the spread of the virus. Strong efforts were needed to accelerate vaccine manufacturing programmes and to ensure availability. Accessibility of vaccines, especially to those living in rural areas, was non-negotiable. The international community must guard against vaccine nationalism whereby privileged countries manufactured vaccines primarily for their own nationals instead of sharing them with other, less privileged ones. It was unacceptable that 1.4. billion vaccines had been distributed yet Africa had enjoyed only 1 per cent of that figure. Parliaments must exercise due diligence over vaccines, including in the tendering process. Robust economic policies and strong national budgets were needed to stimulate economic recovery, especially for vulnerable women and youth. Parliaments must enact laws and regulations that promoted democratic access to health care for all and champion the expansion of digital economies. Humanity had no choice but to conquer COVID-19 through international solidarity and multilateralism.

Ms. F. Zainal (Bahrain) said that the pandemic had had an effect not only on health but also on many other sectors. Parliaments and governments must work together to minimize the impact and promote a sustainable recovery. There was a deep need to make sure that human values prevailed over narrow interests. The IPU should work to create real partnerships for scientific research and vaccine development. Vaccines should be distributed to all countries without discrimination on the basis of equity. Democratic principles and human rights must be a core part of recovery and response efforts.

Bahrain had adopted measures to protect citizens and residents. For example, treatment and vaccines for COVID-19 were provided free of charge. The measures in place were based on strong cooperation between the legislative and executive branches and sought to promote human rights and fundamental freedoms. In addition, Bahrain had developed a legislative framework which took into account the living conditions of citizens greatly affected by the pandemic, thus minimizing socioeconomic burdens.

Ms. L. Wall (New Zealand) said that the COVID-19 pandemic had exacerbated existing inequalities and set countries back on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, it had also presented the world with a strategic opportunity for change, innovation and global cooperation. In 2019, the UN Deputy Secretary General had said that human rights were an intrinsic part of sustainable development and sustainable development was a powerful vehicle for the realization of all human rights. Parliamentarians must advocate for all citizens but particularly for those who were vulnerable due to COVID-19, conflict, climate change and economic disadvantage.

The world could not afford to lose momentum on tackling climate change. Action was needed from every country. The New Zealand Parliament had unanimously adopted the Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Act in 2019 and established the independent Climate Change Commission. A major focus of New Zealand development assistance was to help Pacific countries reduce their vulnerability to the impacts of climate change, build climate resilience and meet emissions targets.

The pandemic had disproportionately affected women, particularly women with disabilities, older women, ethnic and migrant women, indigenous women and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) community. The rights of all peoples should be on the IPU agenda. She urged parliamentarians to use their positions of power to support human rights defenders such as Nasrin Sotoudeh. It was extremely concerning to note the imposition of sanctions against parliamentarians who had called attention to human rights abuses in other jurisdictions, such as China. The IPU must not stay silent on the troubling situations in Xinjiang and Hong Kong or it would be complicit.

Mr. J.I. Echániz (Spain) said that the world was facing a very serious health crisis which had caused severe socioeconomic impacts and left millions dead. It was still unclear where the virus had come from or how it had spread so quickly, but people had a right to know to prevent it from happening again. If the details were known, countries could introduce the right protective measures and build up their scientific and logistical capabilities. The lessons of the pandemic must be learnt or the suffering would have been for nothing.

The pandemic had affected all countries and exacerbated problems locally and globally. Much of the response had been inadequate, unsatisfactory and unacceptable. However, there had also been examples of huge solidarity. Those examples had shown that the only way out was together.

The crisis had brought to light weaknesses in the structures and systems in place worldwide, including in the multilateral system. An opportunity had therefore arisen to rethink and rebuild them. He encouraged parliamentarians to innovate as well as to build democratic systems based on human rights.

Ms. M.I. De Oliveira Valente (Angola) thanked international partners such as the World Health Organization (WHO) for providing aid to Angola. The aid had ultimately helped to keep COVID-19 cases down.

In addition to the health impacts, the pandemic had exacerbated poverty and increased unemployment, particularly among women working in informal jobs. There had also been an increase in violence against women and children. In the recovery process, parliamentarians should address health and economy but also many other areas. There was a need for immediate, crosscutting, structural measures to be taken and coordinated multilaterally.

Vaccines must be considered a public good of utmost priority. She supported the withholding of intellectual property rights on COVID-19 vaccines and medicines to ensure equal access. WHO should take the lead on universal vaccine passports to avoid discrimination.

Global challenges deserved an equally global response. It was the role of parliamentarians to implement effective laws that prevented all types of discrimination against women, youth and other vulnerable people. In addition, parliamentarians should approve budgets that strengthened public health systems, tackled poverty, promoted education and supported environmental policies. It was important to create a new world order post-COVID-19. A multilateral response was needed so that countries could face the crisis together.

Mr. U. Lechte (Germany) said that the only way to solve the COVID-19 pandemic was on a global level. More multilateral cooperation was therefore needed. Severe challenges remained despite several vaccines having been made available. One of those challenges was the distribution of vaccines.

People in all parts of the world, regardless of their financial situation, must have access to the vaccines as soon as they became available. With that in mind, the WHO had established the COVAX facility. The goal was to ensure that each participating country received enough doses to vaccinate the most vulnerable 20 per cent of its population by the end of 2021. Currently, the world was far away from reaching that goal.

It was important to strengthen the COVAX facility. First, the international community must enhance the financial base of the initiative. Second, it should ramp up production, licensing and distribution of vaccines. Third, States that had ordered multiple times their required doses per capita should donate part of them quickly and unbureaucratically.

Mr. C. Lohr (Switzerland) said that the COVID-19 pandemic had been a significant challenge not only for policymakers but for society as a whole. The world had not been prepared for it, neither globally nor regionally.

At the 141st IPU Assembly in Belgrade in 2019, the IPU had adopted a resolution entitled *Achieving universal health coverage by 2030: The role of parliaments in ensuring the right to health*. Among other things, the resolution addressed the need to improve international cooperation in response to pandemics. However, IPU resolutions must not remain mere words but instead should be used as guidelines in the daily work of parliamentarians.

The battle against COVID-19 not only required money but also values such as solidarity and respect in addition to medical expertise. The principle of treating everyone equally and leaving no one behind must be at the forefront of IPU work. International solidarity was a pillar of society and a pillar of the IPU.

Mr. J.A. Coloma (Chile) said that parliamentarians could not resolve inequalities in the short term. They could, however, take other actions in the short term such as working in solidarity and ensuring free trade. He drew attention to the protectionist policies introduced by the European Union (EU) under which vaccines could not be sold outside of the region. The policy had meant that many vaccine laboratories had been unable to fulfil their contracts. Such policies generated mistrust and undermined development. Parliamentarians should demand that their governments work in solidarity with other countries and maintain free trade. It was important to create favourable conditions for countries to work together. Contracts must be fulfilled and freedoms must be respected.

Ms. O. Rudenko (Ukraine) said that COVID-19 had changed the world. It had tested the political, economic and cultural infrastructure and pushed the limits of health systems, leaving no country untouched. The best way forward was through science, solutions and solidarity. The only way to overcome the pandemic was together. Ukraine fully supported the efforts of the international community to ensure equitable distribution of vaccines.

Since the beginning, the Ukrainian Parliament had been taking steps to address the pandemic. For example, it had introduced legislative regulations to simplify procedures for the procurement of goods and services related to COVID-19. It had been urgently transforming its health care system to cope with the new challenges. It had introduced quarantine measures. People had been able to work from home and children and young people could engage in distance learning. Measures had also been taken to support businesses.

Ukraine was in fact fighting on two fronts: the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian armed conflict. Hostilities and violence on the ground were jeopardizing the fragile peace process and dramatically affecting safety and security. The Parliament had had to maximize its efforts to protect both the civilian population and the army.

Mr. H. Traoré (Mali) said that Mali had registered its first case of COVID-19 on 25 March 2020. Since then, the country had had about 14,000 cases, of which 500 deaths. About 1,000 people were being tracked and traced on a daily basis. The National Assembly of Mali had registered eight cases, three deaths and five recoveries. The Transitional National Council had registered three cases, zero deaths and three recoveries. A total of 62 people from the Transitional National Council had been vaccinated using the AstraZeneca vaccine, with first doses having been given on 30 April 2021. The Council had also introduced a number of protective measures, including building disinfection, social distancing, obligatory use of masks, systematic temperature taking, hand washing and use of hydroalcoholic gel.

Mr. K. Bayramov (Azerbaijan) said that COVID-19 had overwhelmed health care systems and caused widespread social and economic disruption. It was clear that international and domestic laws as well as health care systems had not been prepared. The pandemic had also exposed many other challenges.

Azerbaijan had made voluntary contributions to WHO and provided direct humanitarian and financial assistance to more than 30 countries. It had organized a summit for the nonaligned movement in May 2020 and initiated the Special Session of the UN General Assembly in response to the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Pandemic held in December 2020.

He wished to express his deep concern regarding the unequal and unfair distribution of vaccines among developing and developed countries. Some countries held several times more vaccines compared to their actual needs. It was clear that in such circumstances other countries would face vaccine shortages. Azerbaijan had put forward a draft resolution entitled *Ensuring equitable,*

affordable, timely and universal access for all countries to vaccines in response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic at the UN Human Rights Council, which had been adopted on 23 March 2021. It was also among the first countries to join and support COVAX. He called on all delegations to express their support for COVAX.

Mr. V. Bologan (Republic of Moldova) said that Moldova had been hit by the pandemic no less than other countries. The Parliament had come up with multiple legislative initiatives to support the medical system. It had doubled salaries, frozen interest on business loans and offered unemployment benefits and compensation to vulnerable parts of the population. Medical equipment and medicines had also been purchased to ensure access to treatment.

Throughout the pandemic, Moldova had been tasked with developing a functioning, democratic system of governance that served the citizens and withstood critical challenges. Unfortunately, over the past few months, a constitutional crisis had arisen between the Parliament and the presidential institutions. The situation had left citizens deprived of a number of facilities and compensations. Nevertheless, with the help of international partners, such as WHO, the World Bank and the EU, Moldova had managed to decrease the number of daily COVID-19 infections to below 100 and could steadily return to normal life.

Ms. A.P. Agudelo (Colombia) endorsed the interventions made so far by other delegates. It was particularly important to strengthen social dialogue in the fight against COVID-19. She believed that religious organizations could play a fundamental role in facilitating dialogue between public authorities and communities, helping to bridge gaps and achieve peace. The Parliament of Colombia had continued deliberating and developing proposals throughout the pandemic. Many democracies had been able to adapt to the crisis through the use of information and communication technologies (ICT). ICT had, in turn, had a positive impact on participative democracy. It was essential to bridge technological disparities. Internet access should be considered a fundamental right in the same way as health, education or work. There was a need to introduce policies that encouraged economic growth, protected household finances and sought to “formalize” the informal sector. People working in the informal sector should have access to social security and opportunities for training and entrepreneurship.

Ms. L. Ramohlanka (Lesotho) said that COVID-19 had caught everyone off-guard with catastrophic effects. Lesotho had already been struggling to reach its development goals and COVID-19 had reversed the little progress that had been attained. In March 2020, the Prime Minister of Lesotho had declared COVID-19 a national emergency and had consequently imposed the first lockdown. As Parliament had been deemed an essential service, parliamentarians had been able to continue their work as normal, in line with COVID-19 regulations and WHO protocols. However, in January 2021, with the COVID-19 situation reaching unprecedented levels, hybrid sittings had been imposed. All Members of Parliament had been provided with iPads. Efforts had also been made to enhance parliamentary Wi-Fi and other technological equipment.

Lesotho had been working to find a balance between responding to COVID-19 while maintaining essential service delivery and creating solid foundations for the future. The Government was currently formulating an economic recovery policy based on protecting health, saving the economy and ensuring social protection. Parliamentary committees were holding the Government accountable for possible omissions in the planning and provision of services, especially in the provision of grants to the vulnerable. The HIV/AIDS committee had recently conducted a study on the safety of COVID-19 vaccines for people living with HIV/AIDS. There were also a good number of motions from Members requesting the establishment of specific committees on COVID-19.

Mr. J.M. Kabund-A-Kabund (Democratic Republic of the Congo) said that the pandemic had affected the entire world although to varying degrees. Thus far, the Democratic Republic of the Congo had registered more than 31,000 cases and 780 deaths, including 32 parliamentarians. The world was beginning to see a flattening of the curve thanks in part to vaccination programmes, thereby bringing some hope. Solidarity between rich and poor countries was needed when developing economic plans. The Congolese Parliament had done a great deal to combat COVID-19. It was holding the Government to account and improving the existing legal framework, particularly in the area of scientific research.

Mr. K. Kosachev (Russian Federation) said that the Russian Federation had been the first country to develop and register a vaccine, namely the Sputnik V vaccine. Since then, it had registered a further two vaccines and would soon put out a fourth. The Russian Federation had been sharing its vaccines as well as the technology to produce them. Sputnik V had now been registered in more than 70 countries. In addition, the Russian Federation had launched a COVID-19 passports scheme allowing people who had been vaccinated to move around freely. It was also supporting the COVAX facility.

The pandemic had highlighted the need to take a comprehensive approach to the SDGs. Countries should come together in unity under the umbrella of the United Nations and other multilateral organizations. All dividing lines and conflicts between countries should be brought to an end. As suggested by the UN Secretary-General, it was important to create a corridor allowing the most needed goods to be supplied to the most vulnerable. He invited delegates to the World Conference on Intercultural and Interfaith Dialogue to be held in May 2022 in Saint Petersburg.

Mr. M. Nazurally (Mauritius) said that Mauritius had been proactive in its efforts to combat the global health crisis. First, a high-level committee had been set up to monitor and manage the crisis. Second, the Parliament had introduced a sanitary protocol as well as video conferencing measures for the smooth running of democracy. Third, COVID-19 legislation and regulations had been enacted. Fourth, citizens and businesses had been offered low-interest loans, wage and self-employment assistance, access to a special relief fund and preferential tariffs for utility bills. Fifth, the Government had launched a mass vaccination campaign. Members of Parliament should work together to find a sustainable solution to the unprecedented crisis. The pandemic called for global solidarity and oneness of humanity.

Ms. M. Espinales (Nicaragua) said that Nicaragua had taken a proactive strategy to combatting the pandemic without introducing a lockdown. It had sought to strike a balance between health measures and the economy. The National Assembly had adopted legislation to strengthen free universal health care and had in fact been increasing the health budget for the past 14 years. It had put in place a community and family health model with a strong preventative element. Efforts had been made to modernize and expand the hospital infrastructure. Over US\$ 200 million had been spent on emergency service programmes, prevention and containment of COVID-19. A vaccination programme had also been introduced, offering the Covishield and Sputnik V vaccines free of charge. The programme prioritized elderly people and people with chronic illness, particularly those with cancer and renal insufficiency. The country was supporting all vulnerable groups. Thanks to the above measures, Nicaragua had the lowest number of COVID-19 cases and deaths in Central America. She called on the IPU to ensure equal access to vaccines.

Nicaragua had restarted its economy, placing an emphasis on small and medium enterprises (SMEs). It supported innovation and family-based economies. Funding had been allocated to the energy sector with a view to transforming the energy matrix. The goal was to generate 77 per cent of energy from renewable sources. The Parliament was committed to gender equality and had passed important laws in that regard, including a reform of the electoral law. The above measures were all part of her country's commitments under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The work had been carried out despite a failed coup, a pandemic and two hurricanes.

Mr. M. Rezakhah (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that innocent men, women and children were being massacred by the Israeli State using the deadliest and most sophisticated weapons. It was a blatant violation of human rights and international law. The only path to peace in Palestine was to hold a referendum.

Iran had an effective health network in place. Despite sanctions, it had successfully increased its domestic capacity to deal with the virus. It had been able to provide medicines and medical equipment as well as to produce and supply vaccines. Unfortunately, some rich countries were preventing fair and equitable access to vaccines. Strengthening multilateralism was key to repairing the damage caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ms. L.B. Malema (Mozambique) said that coordinated efforts and strategies were needed to overcome the pandemic. Parliaments played a key role not only in defending public health but also in resolving the economic consequences. Legislators should strike a balance between those two elements.

Mozambique had adopted several measures to address the pandemic, including the declaration of a state of emergency. Later, however, a law had been passed allowing for public calamities, including pandemics, to be managed without having to declare a state of emergency. Another law had been adopted to support workers who had lost their jobs. Education must continue to be a priority even in difficult times.

Mr. A. Alahmad (Palestine) said that Palestine was currently facing multiple pandemics. The first pandemic was the Israeli occupation. The second pandemic was COVID-19. The third pandemic was the ethnic cleansing of people using weapons of mass destruction. Indeed, Israel was expelling people from their homes and allowing settlers to enter the Al-Aqsa Mosque, one of the most important religious sites for Muslims. It was attempting to loot land and to establish colonial settlements despite numerous UN resolutions and calls to stop. Much of the international community wished to see an end to the aggression and a revival of the peace process. Apartheid had become part and parcel of the Israeli policy.

Mr. B. Llano (Paraguay) said that Paraguay had the highest number of COVID-19 deaths in the region and was therefore very concerned. He wished to severely condemn the COVAX facility. COVAX had been set up by WHO to ensure equal access to COVID-19 vaccines. Indeed, the only global solution to the pandemic was to ensure that everyone in the four corners of the world had access to COVID-19 vaccinations regardless of their financial situation. It was clear, however, that the COVAX facility was a fraud. Paraguay was supposed to receive 4.2 million vaccine doses through COVAX but had so far only received 170,000. It was not possible to stay quiet on the situation given that huge amounts of people were dying. COVAX had a responsibility to supply vaccines where they were due.

Ms. A.N. Reynoso Sánchez (Mexico) said that the COVID-19 pandemic had caused one of the greatest socioeconomic crises in history and demonstrated the fragility of humanity. It was important to address the structural problems in society in the recovery phase. The crisis had challenged all health systems and shown that there was no perfect model. Countries should, nevertheless, seek to transform and evolve their health systems as positively as possible.

The issue of vaccination remained a challenge. Mexico had only achieved a 10 per cent vaccination rate, which could be down to disparities between the health and public sectors. There were also many economic problems, including a slowdown in job creation and financial insecurity. The world was now more than ever calling on its parliamentarians. It was a call to which parliamentarians must respond with responsibility, compromise, loyalty and courage. United, parliamentarians could promote more cooperation and empathy. They should take up their responsibilities within the IPU while also encouraging their governments to take up their own objective responsibilities beyond ideologies and party ideals.

Mr. Z. Galadima (Nigeria) said that the world continued to experience the devastating effects of COVID-19. Economies were struggling, jobs had been lost, families had been torn apart and health facilities had been stretched. Parliaments had an abundant role to play in ensuring a return to normal life. They should balance out the power held by the executive. They should strengthen their representative, legislative and oversight roles to effectively guarantee the rights and freedoms of citizens. They should ensure that the voice of the people was heard. They should spread awareness of the virus and protect citizens, particularly migrants. Overall, they must learn the lessons of the pandemic.

Ms. F. Benbadis (Algeria) said that, despite the many negative impacts of the pandemic, there were also some positive impacts in the form of lessons. The virus continued to spread even if it was doing so at a slower rate. It was important to encourage confidence in the fight against the virus. Indeed, some people had become distrustful of the response, particularly of vaccines, largely due to social media. Parliamentarians must raise awareness about the devastating nature of the virus and then react. Reacting meant continuing to respect health measures. It also meant convincing people to get vaccinated even if it was too early to assess the effectiveness of the vaccines. The idea that it was not possible to fight the pandemic was not true.

Ms. E. Nyirasafari (Rwanda) said that her country had taken a range of measures to contain the virus, which had yielded good results. For example, the Economic Recovery Fund had been set up to support the most affected businesses. Teleworking had enabled the Rwandan Parliament to

continue conducting its business, with physical meetings held on an exceptional basis. Currently, Rwanda was witnessing a gradual easing of measures. Businesses had been allowed to resume operations while adhering to health guidelines. At least 450,000 Rwandans had been vaccinated. The country hoped to reach at least 60 per cent of its population by 2022. The global community must come together to ensure vaccines were available to all. Parliaments should make it their mission to have all countries come together and share all know-how.

Mr. S. Cogolati (Belgium), making his remarks in a pre-recorded video, said that the current generation was the last one that would be able to save the climate, ensure solidarity, protect human rights and achieve peace. Going backwards was not an option. The pandemic had brought the world to its knees and further accentuated inequalities. It was not a time for divisions but a time for nations and generations to come together to build a more just and sustainable world. Parliamentarians could be the architects of change. Belgium was already leading the way on renewable energy, on the protection of civilians against explosive weapons, and on citizen participation in parliament. The world of tomorrow would not be built in a snap of the fingers. However, the common horizon must be one of hope in order to safeguard biodiversity, create jobs for climate and protect fundamental freedoms. Parliamentarians must be a voice for the voiceless.

Mr. Wan E'xiang (China), making his remarks in a pre-recorded video, said that the pandemic had brought the world into a phase of fluidity and transformation. Instability and uncertainty were clearly on the rise. However, the trend which saw the status quo moving towards a multipolar world remained unchanged. Economic globalization was showing renewed resilience and the call for upholding multilateralism had grown stronger.

He called on legislatures worldwide to jointly advance global cooperation in the fight against COVID-19. They could do so in a number of ways. First, parliamentarians must defend multilateralism. It was important to safeguard the UN-centred international system and support WHO in playing a leading role on COVID-19. There was a need to advance international vaccine cooperation and make vaccines more accessible and affordable.

Second, efforts must be made to pursue open, innovation-driven development in the recovery from COVID-19. The international community should uphold the multilateral trading system with WTO at its core, reject attempts to impose trade and technological barriers and ensure the safe, stable and unimpeded operation of global industry and supply chains. It was the duty of parliamentarians to provide timely legal safeguards for the new industries and business forms that had emerged from the pandemic and facilitate creation of new drivers of growth.

Third, parliamentarians must promote cooperation among legislatures. They must make good use of multilateral parliamentary platforms, such as the IPU, to strengthen exchanges and share experience on poverty alleviation, health systems strengthening, environmental protection and other social governance issues. The aim was to improve the governance capacity of all countries and promote dialogue and friendship.

China had contributed greatly to the global pandemic response. It had reported cases of infection and quickly released the genome sequencing of the virus and other information. It had provided assistance to WHO and some 150 countries and was striving to make vaccines a global public good. He was convinced that with solidarity and perseverance, the world would ultimately defeat the virus, build a community with shared values and usher in a brighter future for all.

Mr. H. Gebaly (Egypt), making his remarks in a pre-recorded video, said that the pandemic had overwhelmed the world and inflicted very damaging impacts on all levels. Economically speaking, supply chains had been cut off as a result of lockdowns and travel restrictions, thus negatively affecting global trade. Many markets had crashed and employment had suffered greatly. Socially speaking, containment measures had greatly disrupted daily life. Social problems, such as inequality and poverty, had been exacerbated. Parliamentarians, as representatives of the people, must address the above impacts in a quick, positive and serious way, working, above all, on the preventative and pre-emptive level.

Ms. H. Makiyama (Japan), making her remarks in a pre-recorded video, said that the problems caused by the pandemic were not new problems. The pandemic had simply made existing problems more visible. Parliamentarians must seize the opportunity to create proactive change. It was important to give priority to poorer countries in the economic recovery. A trend could be observed in which countries were prioritizing their own needs in the drive for vaccines. However, in times of crisis, countries and parliaments should work hand in hand in a spirit of international cooperation.

Mr. F. Etgen (Luxembourg), making his remarks in a pre-recorded video, said that the pandemic had put huge amounts of pressure on institutions, economies and values. The Parliament of Luxembourg had worked to ensure that it remained in full operation to manage the crisis. The pandemic had shown how fragile the world was and how quickly democracies could be closed down. It was for that reason that national and international institutions must be strong. There was a need for solidarity, inclusion, transparency, citizen participation, a reduction of inequalities and cooperation. Those were the keys to a shared future.

Mr. Z. Gombojav (Mongolia), making his remarks in a pre-recorded video, said that Mongolia was effectively overcoming the challenges caused by the pandemic owing to the support it had received from its partner countries. So far, it had fully vaccinated more than 50 per cent of its target population. It would also be investing 10 trillion tugriks (MNT) in a risk protection programme to support the economy. A digital parliament was being promoted so that deliberations could be held online. There was also an online lawmaking forum in place which was helping to promote public engagement in parliamentary matters, especially in the legislative process.

Parliaments must evaluate lessons learnt from the pandemic and establish future goals. A great deal remained to be done but one issue was particularly important, namely the need to build healthy societies based on equality. The latter could be achieved by strengthening political, economic and social justice. It was particularly important to reduce the income gap, guarantee jobs and create equal access to social security and health services. Only those countries that had provided equal opportunities and rights to all their citizens would overcome challenges. He called on parliaments everywhere to unite under the IPU mission and create a more equal world.

Mr. H. El Malki (Morocco), making his remarks in a pre-recorded video, said that international cooperation and coordination were needed to confront the pandemic. The events of the past year would set a global precedent, bring strategic changes to the world and reshape international relations and power centres. One of the most important conclusions to draw from the experience was the need to create a new development model that addressed issues such as health, education, the environment, unemployment and food security. It was important to adopt a proactive approach based on global solidarity.

Among the measures taken by Morocco was the introduction of an economic policy which harnessed the talents and skills of people. A universal social protection project had also been launched with a view to combatting poverty and inequality, creating job opportunities, promoting human rights and stimulating economic and social recovery.

Vaccines gave the world hope as a way out of the pandemic. Nevertheless, it was important to remain vigilant in the face of new waves and virus mutations. Morocco had adopted a successful national vaccination strategy.

Mr. G.P. Timilsina (Nepal), making his remarks in a pre-recorded video, said that the efforts made worldwide to protect lives and strengthen democracy were commendable. International cooperation was the most important tool to defeat the pandemic. He thanked the international community for the assistance it had provided to Nepal in terms of personal protective equipment (PPE), medicines and vaccines.

Even during a pandemic, parliamentarians could not forget their responsibilities. The Nepalese Parliament had continued to hold regular sessions while adhering to physical distancing rules and precautionary measures. The sessions were an inherent part of a lively democracy and must be kept alive. In a time of great crisis, protecting human lives was an utmost priority. He called for programmes to be put in place on the international level to help parliaments and other key institutions carry out their work efficiently even in the context of emergency situations such as the pandemic.

Ms. E. García (Panama), making her remarks in a pre-recorded video, said that the National Assembly of Panama had set up an office to monitor and implement the SDGs. To protect the environment, it had adopted laws to reduce the use of plastic waste and promote the use of reusable bags. It was also working on an electric mobility project. The Parliament had an office for citizen participation, a youth assembly, a virtual plenary session and an electronic voting platform called Assembly 507, all of which ensured transparency in the legislative processes and included the whole of society, including young people and women, in the development of public policies. A teleworking law had been passed to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 and ensure greater sustainability of jobs. The Parliament was also working to close the gap between men and women, for instance, by promoting the participation of women parliamentarians on the international scene. The law on political

violence made it easier for women to participate in electoral processes. The Parliament had not stopped working throughout the pandemic. Dialogue and political understanding were fundamental tools for a post-COVID-19 recovery.

Mr. A. Al Mahmoud (Qatar), making his remarks in a pre-recorded video, said that the pandemic continued to take away lives, affect economies and restrict the movement of people. However, scientific developments and medicine, including vaccines, gave the world hope. In Qatar, the majority of citizens, both nationals and non-nationals, had been vaccinated. The country was looking to lift restrictions in four stages, with the first stage beginning in May and the last stage beginning in September. Qatar had provided financial assistance to many countries and humanitarian organizations to help them overcome the pandemic. It believed in working seriously towards sustainable development, which was at the core of peace and security.

He strongly condemned the aggression that Israel was waging on the Palestinian people. He called on the international community to condemn the violence and grant the Palestinians their legitimate right to establish an independent State based on the borders set out on 4 June 1967 with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Ms. Nam In-soon (Republic of Korea), making her remarks in a pre-recorded video, said that the number of COVID-19 cases per 100,000 people stood at 256 in the Republic of Korea. It was one of the lowest numbers among Member States of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The Republic of Korea had earned global recognition for its response to COVID-19. As soon as the first cases had been reported, the National Assembly had made the necessary amendments to its legislation and appointed a second Vice-Minister to the Ministry of Health and Welfare to order to enhance government capabilities.

The National Assembly and Government had taken a range of measures to address the devastating impact of COVID-19 on inequality. Four rounds of stimulus cheques had been issued and legislative efforts were underway to compensate small business owners and the self-employed. The Government had also unveiled a national development strategy called the Korean New Deal which was based on two pillars: the Digital New Deal and the Green New Deal. The strategy aimed to create robust employment and social safety nets. It would address the short-term economic shock from COVID-19 and create 1.9 million jobs by 2025. Preparations would also be made for possible structural changes in the future employment market, for instance, by expanding investments in human resources and introducing a universal employment insurance scheme. In addition, efforts were being made to build a net-zero society through green infrastructure, an energy transition and green industry innovation. It was also important to ensure a gender-sensitive recovery. The Korean Government hoped to build a more equal and inclusive society in the post-pandemic era by reducing gender gaps in the labour market and alleviating care burdens.

International solidarity was needed to overcome the global crisis. Life would not go back to normal unless global vaccine inequality was addressed. It was necessary to significantly scale up vaccine production and ensure more equitable distribution.

Ms. S.-M. Dinică (Romania), making her remarks in a pre-recorded video, said that the COVID-19 outbreak continued to threaten efforts towards a sustainable world. Governments, parliaments, international organizations, civil society, academia and the business and financial sectors must all join forces to overcome the crisis and ensure no one was left behind. The three pillars of a successful response were: multilateralism, international cooperation and solidarity. She quoted British writer Damian Barr who had said, "We are not all in the same boat. We are all in the same storm".

Parliaments must focus on democratic governance, human rights and the SDGs. Laying the basis for a better future meant eliminating the root causes of inequality, achieving gender balance, empowering women and youth, promoting universal access to health care, sanitation and clean energy, and closing the digital divide between and within countries. However, the foundation for a better tomorrow was education. It was crucial to look at education given the unprecedented disruption to learning caused by COVID-19. There was a need for a long-term cross-party parliamentary commitment to position education at the core of recovery. Parliamentarians must put in place adequate legislation, educational infrastructure, digitalization, new curricula, teacher training and targeted support for all vulnerable people. Education should also be part of the new IPU Strategy.

Mr. S. Ghobash (United Arab Emirates), making his remarks in a pre-recorded video, said that overcoming the COVID-19 pandemic required countries to put aside their differences and come together as one global family. A strategic approach was needed at all levels, including at the

environmental, health, social, economic and educational levels. It was important to establish new working links between parliamentary organizations on the one hand and intergovernmental organizations on the other. The partnership between the IPU and the United Nations should be at the forefront of those efforts. Together, the IPU and the United Nations should address all factors that hindered sustainable development and exacerbated issues such as unemployment and poverty, which had been made worse by the pandemic. It was also important to allocate larger budgets to education, health and social protection systems as well as to encourage investment in infrastructure, knowledge and technology. The pandemic had shown that safety and security could be achieved through prior preparation.

Mr. A.R. Alasoomi (Arab Parliament), making his remarks in a pre-recorded video, said that the pandemic had had catastrophic consequences on the economic, social, health and environmental levels. Recovery efforts were not only up to governments but also up to parliaments. Parliaments should implement sustainable development plans and support the most affected sectors.

The Arab Parliament had been working to alleviate the negative impacts of COVID-19 on the Arab people. For example, the parliamentary committees had been preparing a number of laws to support parliamentary and governmental efforts in the recovery. One law sought to support SMEs, many of which were experiencing reduced cash flows as a result of lockdowns. Another law sought to eradicate violence against women which was on the rise during the pandemic. The Arab Parliament had also been working to coordinate international parliamentary efforts on the recovery from the pandemic.

A group photo was taken.

The President thanked delegates for their contributions to the Assembly and more generally to the work of the IPU. It was clear that parliaments were working hard to combat the pandemic.

Ms. R. Kavakci Kan (Turkey), making a point of order, said that the video of the Speaker of the National Assembly of Turkey had not been broadcast. The reason provided by the IPU was that it was not on the theme of the General Debate. The video was in fact related to the fight against COVID-19. That aside, it was unacceptable that the Speaker of Parliament had been unable to express himself. No one had a right to mute a Speaker of Parliament or evaluate their message. One of the values of the IPU was freedom of expression. It was essential that everyone had a voice. She expected the IPU to issue an official apology and upload the video immediately. What had happened was a diplomatic scandal.

The President said that the IPU was an organization of free speech and would never impose censorship. It was normal that colleagues sometimes went off topic. What had happened was not a diplomatic scandal but an effort to adhere to the procedures. Each delegation had the right to make one statement. The Turkish delegation had made a statement in real time the previous day. Therefore, it was not possible to play the video as well. The video would, nevertheless, be uploaded to YouTube for everyone to consult.

Mr. Chen Guomin (China), exercising his right to reply, said that the remarks made by the representative of New Zealand were untrue. Xingjiang was flourishing in stability and security. People of all ethnic groups enjoyed the rights enshrined in the Constitution and were leading happy and fulfilling lives. Any attempt under any pretext to hold back the development of China would fail. He encouraged parliamentarians to work together towards a better tomorrow.

Standing Committee on Peace and International Security

Sitting of Monday, 26 April

The sitting was called to order at 14:10 CEST with Mr. J.I. Echániz (Spain), President of the Standing Committee, in the Chair.

The President, welcoming all participants, explained the modalities of the virtual meeting platform, and said that the Standing Committee would hold two sittings, the first to debate the general theme of the 142nd Assembly, *Overcoming the pandemic today and building a better tomorrow: the role of parliaments*, and the second to discuss the draft resolution, *Parliamentary strategies to strengthen peace and security against threats and conflicts resulting from climate-related disasters and their consequences*. Aside from the Committee's plenary sittings, a drafting committee had been established to consider and take into account the proposed amendments to the draft resolution. As foreseen by the Special Rules of Procedure for the virtual sessions of the Assembly and Standing Committees, the draft would be subject to a written silence procedure, by which unless written objections were received from at least one third of IPU Members within 15 days of dispatch of the revised draft resolution, the text would be considered adopted. Following its adoption, any reservations submitted would be presented in a footnote to the text of the resolution, as per the Standing Committee's usual procedure. A Bureau meeting had also been held to consider the Standing Committee's future programme of work.

Adoption of the agenda (C-I/142/A.1)

The agenda was adopted.

Approval of the summary records of the Committee's session held during the 141st IPU Assembly in Belgrade (October 2019)

The summary records were approved.

Overcoming the pandemic today and building a better tomorrow: the role of parliaments

A video was shown, detailing the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in helping countries to face the challenges of COVID-19 pandemic. The Agency was providing global scientific support to fight the virus, including by providing laboratories with online training for polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing, and by supplying more than 120 countries with PCR testing equipment. With a view to future preparedness, the Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action (ZODIAC) project had been launched, to track pathogens passing between animals and humans. The IAEA would continue to support its Member States throughout the pandemic, and in their preparation for future pandemics, while always maintaining its focus on safeguarding nuclear materials and their use for exclusively peaceful purposes.

Despite the pandemic, IAEA inspectors had continued their vital work in the field, and all time-critical verification activities had been performed. Remote monitoring systems delivered data directly from nuclear facilities around the world to the Agency's headquarters. The reliable availability of nuclear electricity had been crucial during the pandemic, with reactors providing much-needed energy to hospitals and key industries. Nuclear energy was a crucial part of the global energy mix, and the IAEA ensured that the highest safety standards were observed at all times.

Presentation by a keynote speaker

Mr. O. Fernandez-Taranco (United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support) said that building back better post-pandemic required creative and innovative thinking and action. Inclusive and sustainable recovery from COVID-19 was central to the UN common agenda, while heightening resilience and fostering international security were at the heart of United Nations peacebuilding efforts. Building back better meant building capacities to better withstand, adapt to and

recover from stresses and shocks. Such resilience was paramount in preventing a reversal of peacebuilding gains and preparing for future shocks. The COVID-19 pandemic had shown the importance of planning for risk scenarios. Risk prevention and sustaining peace, which were essential for advancing human security, meant addressing the root causes of vulnerabilities, with attention on emerging risks and early action, in line with the United Nations Secretary-General's prevention agenda, on the prevention of any human suffering. Resilience required investment in local communities, institutions and capacities; parliaments had a key role in that regard, and were the main venue for the non-violent management of conflicts.

Resilience and human security were grounded in the notion that peace, security, human rights and development were inextricably linked. That logic had guided the United Nations in its work to build and sustain peace. The COVID-19 pandemic had shown that continuous reprioritization was required. To strengthen resilience, consideration must be given to the roles of the various peace, security and development instruments in place: who was best placed to assist in addressing the grievances that drove conflict and which tools were most effective? It was important to consider how to build local capacities to recover from crisis.

The United Nations Peacebuilding Commission provided a unique forum to mix and match the attributions of partners across the peace, security and development nexus, bringing actors together to achieve policy coherence, aid effectiveness and conflict prevention. The Commission had engaged in more than 20 countries and regional settings during 2020, despite the limitations imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The close partnership between the United Nations and the World Bank, in particular through the Pathways for Peace programme, showed how the comparative advantages of different organizations could be leveraged in cooperation. Joint work was ongoing in nearly 50 crisis-affected situations through 30 initiatives to support nationally-owned prevention efforts.

Inclusive, responsive, effective and accountable governance was essential to strengthen resilience and human security by remedying structural inequalities, which were a major risk factor for violent conflict, and by extending political processes and compromises beyond the elite. Inclusive governance would accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and strengthen social cohesion. Inclusion was therefore to the benefit of all stakeholders, yet progress in that regard remained slow. The percentage of women parliamentarians was increasing, but the pace of that increase must be accelerated. The whole-of-society approach must be strengthened, and investment in fostering trust and community engagement must be bolstered. Stronger engagement with women's groups, which played a pivotal role in promoting peace at community, local and national levels, was particularly crucial. The participation of young people in parliament must also be fostered by aligning the minimum legal age for voting with the minimum age for running for office, especially given that the COVID-19 pandemic had confirmed deepening intergenerational mistrust. Better choices were needed with regard to where support should be given – whether at local, national, regional or global level – to best address the root causes of conflict, using a people-centred approach.

The climate emergency, which was exacerbating the risk of conflict, must be tackled globally, while other peacebuilding initiatives required a local approach to address the changing nature of violent conflict that arose over such matters as land and water. The United Nations Secretary General's Peacebuilding Fund would therefore be focusing its gender and youth promotion work in 2021 on local, community-based peacebuilding, to foster participatory, rather than representative democracy, and strengthen commitment and shared responsibilities. A community-based approach would also allow for greater attention to be paid to marginalized regions, strengthening their local authorities and reducing horizontal and spatial inequalities.

To prioritize investment in human – rather than military – security, the Peacebuilding Fund was directed towards peace investment. Overall, however, funding remained too low. In 2018, only 4 per cent of official development assistance had been spent on prevention, with 13 per cent spent on peacebuilding. Funding streams would come under great pressure as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. At the same time, the business case for sustaining peace and preventing conflict was well known. Scaled up systems for preventive action could save up to US\$ 70 billion per year. Prevention worked, saved lives and was cost-effective. The business case for prevention required adequate, predictable and sustained financing to build back better. With that in mind, United Nations Member States had called for the General Assembly to convene a high-level meeting at its 76th session, to further advance, explore and consider the Secretary-General's recommendations for peacebuilding. The support of parliamentarians was essential.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the nature of conflict had been changing, becoming more complex and protracted. The pandemic had aggravated that situation; polarization was on the rise, fuelled by unchecked disinformation spread by social media. Hate speech and other forms of incitement had become further entrenched. Competition between great powers and international

rivalries had increased, undermining international cooperation. A 21st Century approach to conflict prevention and resilience was needed, accompanied by sustainable financing for peacebuilding, with inclusion as its central tenet, prioritizing meaningful participation of women and young people, and engagement with a variety of actors across the peace, security and development nexus. The partnership, support and engagement of the IPU were essential.

The President thanked the Assistant Secretary-General for his remarks, and opened the floor for discussion, recalling that two points had been put to the Standing Committee to guide the debate: resilience approaches to tackling the root causes of grievances and investing in local capacities, skills and attributes to recover from crises, act for peace and enable communities to build back better; and ways and opportunities to prioritize investment in human, rather than military, security.

Debate

Ms. S. Falaknaz (United Arab Emirates) said that facing the global implications of the COVID-19 pandemic was an unprecedented challenge, in which parliaments had a key role to play by enacting laws and decisions for the management of medical and human resources and pandemic response. The United Arab Emirates had provided medical and practical assistance to other States and strengthened its cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO). Multilateral efforts and international cooperation to address the root causes of threats to peace and security must be supported, with a focus on investing at the local level to recover from the pandemic and facing other global challenges, in particular climate change and food insecurity.

Mr. Dai Lihong (China) said that, since viruses knew no borders, solidarity and cooperation were the most powerful weapons to defeat the COVID-19 pandemic. In opening the 73rd World Health Assembly in May 2020, President Xi Jinping of China had announced measures to boost the global fight against COVID-19, including by providing international aid and making China's COVID-19 vaccines public goods that were truly accessible to all countries. Thus far, China had provided practical support to more than 160 countries and international organizations, and was providing urgently needed vaccines to more than 100 countries. Diagnostic tests developed in China had been shared worldwide, and technical experts had been sent to countries severely affected by COVID-19 to boost testing capacities.

China had made significant strides in the fight against the pandemic: the initial spread of COVID-19 had been controlled within a month, the daily increase of local cases had been brought under control in two months, and within three months the Wuhan anti-epidemic effort had been deemed successful. That success had been due to early detection, early reporting, early isolation and early treatment. Good health was crucial for sustainable development. China stood ready to continue its collaboration at the global level, with the support of the IPU and in cooperation with its Member Parliaments, to overcome the pandemic and build back better.

Mr. R. Mavenyenga (Zimbabwe) said that COVID-19 was having a significant impact on governance, peace and security, and was reversing the development gains made in Africa. Parliaments must enact laws in support of the fight against the pandemic; access to vaccines and treatment should be free of charge and apolitical. It was important during such times of crisis that international organizations and development partners should continue to support governance, peace and security in Africa. Vaccine assistance to Africa was particularly crucial. Parliaments had a role in encouraging governments to strengthen their social contract with the population. Governments could harness the response to the COVID-19 pandemic as an opportunity to build public trust by providing health care and social protection through equitable, transparent and accountable mechanisms.

Food security for the most vulnerable was particularly important during the pandemic; global humanitarian agencies and regional institutions must move quickly to provide relief where needed, which was especially urgent in times of pandemic. The security sector should be restructured to focus on preventing violent extremism through an approach grounded in sustainable development. Action against threats to climate and natural disaster must be strengthened. The Government of Zimbabwe was making efforts to uphold its commitments under the Paris Agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. The global community must support sensitive political transitions in Africa, with a focus on strengthening democratic electoral processes; the COVID-19 pandemic had already delayed political processes and elections. International organizations should support cross-party negotiations and help to foster trust between all stakeholders.

Ms. H. McPherson (Canada) said that parliamentarians were in constant contact with their constituents and colleagues, and as such were gaining a deep understanding of the social, economic and other impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic was significantly undermining peace and security, and fuelling conflict around the world, with a disproportionate effect on the displaced and refugees, felt most acutely by women and girls. The impacts of the pandemic would be long-lasting; long-term commitment to recovery would be essential. The Parliament of Canada had conducted a study on the aftershocks of the COVID-19 pandemic, culminating in 10 recommendations to the Canadian Government, including a recommendation that Canada should play a key role in international pandemic response. Official development assistance should be increased and steps taken to ensure that funds were allocated directly to COVID-19 recovery, and in particular to ensuring that vaccines were made available to all. The Canadian Government would be pushing for an intellectual property waiver, through the World Trade Organization, to ensure access to vaccines for all the vulnerable around the world.

Mr. A. Suwanmongkol (Thailand) said that the COVID-19 crisis had reframed the concept of modern security challenges. For 20 years, humanity had been facing non-military threats that knew no borders and did not have military solutions, including epidemics, climate change and cybersecurity threats. The pandemic was more than a health crisis; it was a catastrophic, multi-pronged, socioeconomic global shock, threatening every aspect of people's lives and livelihoods, and exacerbating crises of inequality and exclusion. It was widening existing socioeconomic gaps and exposing fundamental weaknesses in countries' health-care and social protection systems, leaving the poorest and most marginalized most severely impacted.

Security threats must be addressed from a human, rather than military, perspective, through a holistic approach bringing together the international community in measures to empower the vulnerable. Budget priorities must therefore be shifted, acknowledging that, in the pandemic context, security required well-resourced health for all with robust disease prevention systems, equitable access to health care and vaccines, and broader improvements to living conditions. A combination of protection and empowerment measures was needed to improve early warning capabilities and preparedness, build the capacity of the health-care infrastructure, educate the public and protect the most vulnerable. In the face of complex global threats, extensive and inclusive international cooperation, with an increased sense of solidarity and partnership across stakeholders and sectors, would be crucial.

Ms. C. Roth (Germany) said that parliaments had a decisive role to play in organizing inclusive public debates against the conspiracy theories, hatred and aggression seen all over the world. They had a responsibility to ensure transparency in decision-making, which must always be to the benefit of all. Legislation must be set in parliaments, not outsourced. The COVID-19 pandemic was highlighting an increasing wave of nationalism: the pandemic would not end until it had ended worldwide. Vaccine nationalism was particularly worrying; a vaccine could not be effective unless it was available to all. The COVID-19 pandemic was exacerbating hunger, poverty, inequality and violence against women. It was broadening gaps in access to education for girls, and was weakening already fragile health systems. Addressing all of those issues and investing in solutions was essential to recovery. The COVID-19 pandemic must not be used as an excuse for neglecting efforts to mitigate the climate crisis; climate change remained a significant threat to peace and security, and addressing it must always remain a priority.

Mr. J. Taiana (Argentina) said that parliamentarians had a key role in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic; they must strengthen health systems through national legislation, regulate social distancing and other prevention and management measures, and must encourage the adoption of technical solutions to support those efforts. The pandemic was a global challenge facing the whole international community. It could not be overcome by acting in isolation, or by large pharmaceutical companies and a handful of rich countries holding the key to access to vaccines. International cooperation, bridging gaps, and ensuring the equal distribution of and access to vaccines were crucial. Only through a spirit of mutual support and solidarity could the pandemic and its impacts be overcome.

Ms. C. Widegren (Sweden) said that, in such unpredictable times, parliamentarians had an essential role to play in bolstering multilateralism and cooperation, which were the basic foundations of peace and security. The world's parliamentarians must work arm-in-arm, side-by-side, through dialogue, not military force, to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts, as well as other global crises. Parliamentarians represented the people; that responsibility must be upheld by building

dialogue into efforts to promote peace and security and to secure a better future for all. Such an approach was crucial for ensuring peace and security, especially at a time when the whole world was in crisis. Although parliaments acted at the national level, they should never lose sight of the international impact; a better future could only be built if the world's parliamentarians worked together, building dialogue into strategies to promote peace and security. Parliamentarians were uniquely positioned to bridge gaps, and realize people's hopes for a better future. Cooperation through dialogue was the key.

Mr. M.A. Basorah (Yemen) said that Yemen was suffering from armed conflict, the COVID-19 pandemic and the negative impacts of climate change. The attacks organized by the Houthi movement must be taken into account when considering Yemen's response to the pandemic. With assistance from Saudi Arabia, a vaccination campaign had been launched in Yemen, despite the ongoing war, which was worsening extreme poverty and deprivation. Every effort was still being made to achieve immunization coverage of the population. The attacks by the Houthi movement had, however, led to mass internal displacement, which was exacerbating the effects of the pandemic. The State had few resources and needed to not only face the pandemic but also to manage the internal war and bring a halt to the incursions by the Houthi movement, which had deliberately attacked the displaced and homeless. The Government of Yemen was committed to continuing its efforts to work with local authorities to offer as much assistance as possible to the people of Yemen.

Mr. I. Almofleh (Saudi Arabia) said that parliamentarians must rise to the challenge of serving their constituents throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Saudi Arabia, as president of the G20 in 2020, had convened an extraordinary meeting on the COVID-19 pandemic, which had resulted in some positive outcomes, in particular pledges of financial support and vaccine provision. The Saudi Arabian parliament was playing a significant role in the national pandemic response; legislation had been enacted to support the vaccination programme and awareness-raising and information campaigns had been run by the Ministry of Health. As a result of those measures, vaccination uptake was high, and the population of Saudi Arabia had shown great respect for the social distancing and other prevention and mitigation measures in place. The Government of Saudi Arabia had offered significant assistance to neighbouring countries, in particular Yemen, and had received support from others, including oxygen supplies from India.

Mr. M. Yousefi (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that he wished to express his parliament's support to all those who had been affected by COVID-19 and to all health-care workers who were putting their lives on the line each day in the fight against the pandemic. Regarding the enforcement of measures to prevent and mitigate the effects of the pandemic and, in particular, to procure vaccinations, the Islamic Republic of Iran was cooperating with other countries, including India.

The Islamic Republic of Iran prioritized respect for civil rights, and was making efforts to increase the participation of women and young people in parliament. Steps were being taken to strengthen parliamentary diplomacy and increase its influence on global decision-making. In the current context of the pandemic, the economic sanctions levelled against certain countries by others ran counter to the principles of parliamentary diplomacy and the spirit of solidarity required between nations in times of crisis. The imposition of such sanctions constituted negligence against the well-being of ordinary people. Parliaments must work together to overcome the challenges posed by the pandemic and to ensure availability of vaccines to bring an end to the crisis. The Islamic Republic of Iran was ready to cooperate with other countries to pool know-how with regard to vaccine development. Given the critical importance of cooperation on an equal footing, the current structure of the international system had become obsolete; the special privileges of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council were particularly objectionable, and could be detrimental to the efforts to overcome the pandemic. The potential of the world's parliaments must be leveraged to build synergies and foster cooperation.

Ms. P. Maadam (India) said that COVID-19 had impacted the world in an unprecedented manner. India, as the world's largest democracy, had responded with self-belief in a period of immense uncertainty. Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, the Indian parliament had successfully held two sessions, adhering to all COVID-19 safety standards. Legislation on epidemic diseases had been updated, and further legislation had been enacted on strengthening the health-care infrastructure. The Disaster Management Act had been invoked, to optimize coordination of efforts to manage the pandemic. Budgetary allocations to health care had been increased, and a new scheme had been launched by the Prime Minister for institution-building to respond to emerging issues

and health threats. India had been at the forefront of humanitarian assistance and solidarity, in particular through the provision of vaccines, essential medicines and equipment to other countries. The second wave of the pandemic was particularly challenging. Measures were being taken to ensure vaccination for all, free of charge, in India. The Government had launched a variety of economic stimulus and relief packages. Technological developments had been used to boost the production of personal protective equipment, drugs and ventilators. Medical oxygen production had also been increased. The pandemic had proven that no country could remain isolated; global health recovery required collaboration, partnership and cooperation between nations. The IPU was an important forum for fostering such cooperation. Consideration should be given to the establishment of global crisis management teams to coordinate exchanges of information, resources and experience of legislative action.

Ms. D. Ndadaye (Burundi) said that Burundi was committed to working with the rest of the world to foster peace and international security. Burundi had not been spared from the pandemic. The Parliament had been called on to help raise public awareness with regard to the importance of COVID-19 screening, prevention and protection measures. While significant steps had been taken to bolster health care, and many people had recovered from COVID-19, the continuation of the pandemic was preventing the people of Burundi from going about their daily lives, and as such, constituted a significant threat to economic development. Without economic stability, peace would become fragile. The pandemic must therefore be overcome, to ensure the health and well-being of all as the foundation of peace and international security.

Mr. M. Almheri (United Arab Emirates) said that, in the context of the pandemic, parliaments must consider flexible legislation, which could be adapted to the daily developments and changes in the COVID-19 situation, in order to foster peace and security for all countries in the world. The United Arab Emirates had focused on improving its vaccination campaign, broadening its reach and ensuring that everyone, of all nationalities, in the United Arab Emirates had equitable access to the vaccination and to health care. Efforts were being made to provide assistance to other countries, to effectively alleviate and mitigate the negative impacts of the pandemic, including through the provision of equipment, medicines and vaccines. Such cooperation across the international community in times of global crisis was essential for maintaining and strengthening peace and international security.

Mr. D. Chapman (United Kingdom) said that the COVID-19 pandemic had shone a spotlight on human security at all levels, rocking the foundations of global stability and security. The pandemic was having a disproportionate impact on vulnerable groups and those living in poverty around the world, who were also particularly affected by the threats of climate change. Human security and climate injustice went hand-in-hand, and the voices of those most affected must be heard and taken into account in decision-making and strategies for a resilient recovery. Parliamentarians had a key role to play in ensuring democratic involvement in inclusive policy decisions. Scotland, as host to the 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26), in November 2021, would ensure that COP26 would be “the people’s COP”, in which the voices of the vulnerable and marginalized would be heard. Post-pandemic recovery was a unique opportunity to move beyond rhetoric to purpose-driven and targeted action building on international cooperation and collaboration to strengthen resilience and human security.

Ms. I. Alwazir (Palestine) said that the people of Palestine were not only suffering from the COVID-19 pandemic but also from Israeli repression and violence. The destruction of property and tightening of the embargo on the Gaza Strip was preventing fishermen from working, threatening the safety of civilians, and hindering electoral processes in East Jerusalem. She called on the IPU to urge Israel to allow the people of East Jerusalem to vote and hold legitimate elections. Intervention was needed to protect the democratic rights of the people of Palestine and to secure peace for all.

Mr. A.A. Alaradi (Bahrain) said that the COVID-19 pandemic was having social and economic repercussions that were exacerbating inequalities and destabilizing peace and security. Strategies for recovery must be comprehensive, addressing the disparities that prevented sustainability and equality and thereby destabilized global peace and security. Parliaments had an essential role to play in enacting legislation, overseeing the work of the executive and approving budgets in the post-pandemic world. The deep and pervasive inequalities with regard to access to COVID-19 vaccines could only be addressed by eliminating all forms of discrimination. The principles of international humanitarian law must be upheld at all times, in particular in the context of enabling access of humanitarian aid, medical

personnel and medical supplies to populations in situations of conflict. Recovery from the pandemic must seek to reverse its negative effects on countries devastated by conflict, by ensuring the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 2565 on the need to develop international partnerships; international cooperation based on a spirit of solidarity equity and efficacy was essential. Cooperation in the areas of science, innovation and technology must be enhanced to ensure collaborative and coordinated post-pandemic recovery and to boost resilience and preparedness for future crises.

The President, closing the discussion, thanked all participants for their contributions, which had underscored the ongoing importance of the role of parliamentarians in public debate, fighting conspiracy theories, improving transparency and fostering public trust in measures to fight the pandemic. The pandemic had provided a “wake-up call” for the world, on the need to work more effectively together, through cooperation to bridge development gaps and the divisions in multilateral systems. Nationalism was blocking progress, and the pandemic had brought climate issues to a head and slowed sustainable development. The time had come to rethink how to address the issues of the pre-pandemic world: how to build resilience, increase creativity and innovation, strengthen democracy, foster a circular economy and bring the global population, in particular the most vulnerable, together as one. The distribution of vaccines was a test for humanity; sharing and solidarity were essential.

A video was shown, marking the 20th anniversary of the adoption of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. With the vast increase in the proportion of civilian deaths in conflict over recent years, women and girls were most greatly affected. Violent extremism was on the rise, with violence against women and rape used as weapons of war. The climate crisis was increasing vulnerability to conflict, with women and children disproportionately affected. Research had shown that with the inclusion of women in prevention, protection, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, outcomes improved significantly. Early warning prevented conflict; when women’s rights were curtailed, conflict was more likely to erupt, whereas meaningful inclusion of women resulted in a significant increase in the success of peacekeeping efforts, distribution of humanitarian assistance and conclusion of lasting peace agreements. Member States of the United Nations had been requested to adopt plans for women’s inclusion in peace and security. Parliaments should encourage the adoption of such plans, allocate budgetary resources for their implementation, and monitor activities undertaken.

The sitting rose at 16:10 CEST.

Sitting of Monday, 17 May

The sitting was called to order at 14:20 CEST with Mr. J.I. Echániz (Spain), President of the Standing Committee, in the Chair.

Parliamentary strategies to strengthen peace and security against threats and conflicts resulting from climate-related disasters and their consequences

The Chair said that the COVID-19 pandemic had prevented the Committee from finalizing its most recent resolution, *Parliamentary strategies to strengthen peace and security against threats and conflicts resulting from climate-related disasters and their consequences*, which had been before the Committee since March 2019. The Committee was now proceeding in virtual format in line with new rules set out by the Executive Committee. The new rules stipulated that, instead of being negotiated in plenary, the draft resolution would be reviewed by a drafting committee. The drafting committee had met on 22 April 2021, under the leadership of Mr. R. del Picchia (France), to agree the final draft. The draft had then been sent out to Members for adoption through a written silence procedure. As written objections had not been received from one third or more of IPU Members within 15 days of dispatching the draft resolution, the text was considered adopted.

However, several countries had expressed reservations. Turkey had expressed a reservation to the entire text of the resolution. India had expressed reservations to the title of the resolution, to preamble paragraphs 3, 4, 5, 8, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19, and to operative paragraphs 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25 and 26. Nicaragua had expressed reservations to operative paragraphs 3, 8, 11, 12, 13, 18, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 and 33. Hungary had expressed reservations to preamble paragraphs 9, 14 and 20, and to operative paragraphs 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21. China had

expressed reservations to preamble paragraph 5 and operative paragraphs 9, 23 and 25. The Czech Republic and Poland had expressed reservations to operative paragraphs 19 and 21. Lastly, Thailand had expressed reservations to operative paragraphs 20 and 22. The reservations and objections would be duly reproduced in footnotes appended to the text of the resolution.

Ms. C. Roth (Germany), co-Rapporteur, said that the drafting committee had finalized the draft resolution in April 2021 after reviewing 130 amendments received from all geopolitical groups. The focus of the resolution was climate-related disasters and the humanitarian impacts of climate change as a multiplier of existing conflicts and challenges. The climate crisis was a matter of life and death. It was exacerbating hunger, poverty and displacement around the globe with millions of people already affected, particularly women, girls and indigenous groups. For many, the COVID-19 pandemic came on top of the climate crisis.

Countries must step up preparations for the impacts of climate change on international peace and security. Some good practices already existed, such as regional climate parliaments aiming to educate and empower parliamentarians. The resolution would help to bolster such initiatives.

The resolution called for immediate and multilateral action to address climate change and mitigate its effects on international stability and security. It called on parliaments to expedite and facilitate the ratification and implementation of the Paris Agreement as well as to invest in climate-resilient development programmes.

According to the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, if the current trend continued, more than one billion people would be displaced by ecological disasters and conflict by the middle of the century, over a third of countries would experience catastrophic water stress, and one country in five would be experiencing catastrophic food insecurity. The humanitarian costs of the crisis could rise to USD 20 billion by 2030. It did not have to be that way, however. Things could be done to build resilience to climate change as well as to address tensions and stop conflicts.

Political accountability was necessary to keep people and their livelihoods safe as well as to foster peace and security for all. Thus, the adoption of the resolution sent a strong signal from all the parliaments of the world that urgent action was needed.

Preventive and stabilizing climate-specific policies were crucial. There was also a need for farsighted actions that put people and their needs first and helped to establish sustainable, peaceful and gender-equitable structures within societies. It was not only a matter of respect for universal human rights or climate justice but a prerequisite for a global peace dividend.

Ms. C. Widegren (Sweden), rapporteur of the drafting committee, presented the process and outcome of the drafting committee's deliberations. It had not been possible to discuss the draft resolution in plenary because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Instead, a drafting committee had been set up for that purpose. The drafting committee had met virtually on 22 April 2021 and comprised the following members: Mr. R. del Picchia, (France), Dr. S. Jaiswal (India), Mr. A. Naderi (Islamic Republic of Iran), Ms. R. Raheriarijaona (Madagascar), Ms. R. El-Tabsh (Lebanon), Ms. C. Widegren, (Sweden), Ms. S. Kihika (Kenya, Forum of Women Parliamentarians) and Ms. C. Roth (Germany, co-Rapporteur). All geopolitical groups had been invited to nominate up to two representatives. However, the Eurasia Group had not submitted a nomination and the representative of the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC) had not been able to attend. The representative from the Forum of Young Parliamentarians and the remaining two co-Rapporteurs had also been unable to join. The first decision taken had been to elect a Chair and Mr. R. del Picchia (France) had agreed to assume the role.

The first draft of the resolution had initially been tabled in early 2020 and had been due for adoption in April of the same year. However, it had not been adopted at the envisaged time since no IPU Assembly had taken place in spring 2020. The co-Rapporteurs had been asked to update their initial draft ahead of the 142nd Assembly and to include in it the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic. A total of 130 amendments from 16 Member Parliaments had been received by the set deadline. Four sets of amendments had been rejected because they had arrived too late.

The co-Rapporteurs had been invited to consider the list of amendments and indicate which of them they supported. The amendments had been inserted and clearly identified in an initial compromise text that served as the basis for the drafting committee's discussions. The text had been provided in advance. The discussion had proceeded paragraph by paragraph with the co-Rapporteurs explaining the rationale behind their choices as a starting point. All members had had the possibility to second the proposals, challenge them or recommend others. The objective was to reach a consensus.

The discussion had been a lively and high-quality one conducted in a spirit of transparency and accountability. Members had been able to vocally defend their various points of view while maintaining dialogue and consensus. The utmost had been done to accommodate as many amendments as possible. That said, amendments that had undermined the concrete impact of climate change on peace and security had been discarded as they would have completely changed the meaning of the resolution. The link between climate change and peace and security was real.

The final draft that had arisen from the above process had been sent to Members for adoption through a written silence procedure. During the meeting, the text had grown by 25 per cent from 43 paragraphs to 54 paragraphs. It had been an exercise in inclusiveness, negotiation and consensus, leading to a document that captured gender perspectives as well as the perspectives of vulnerable groups, especially those most affected by climate change and conflict. The resolution had the potential to become a landmark resolution. She urged delegates to follow up on the recommendations contained therein.

The Chair invited delegates to discuss how the resolution could inspire and guide parliamentary work on climate-related threats to peace and security.

Mr. B. Mahtab (India) said that the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities must underpin all discussions on climate change. The IPU must not build a parallel climate track where those principles were brushed aside. According to the best science available, climate change only exacerbated conflict. It was not a reason for conflict and did not threaten peace and security. In addition, there was no common widely accepted methodology for assessing the links between climate change, conflict and fragility. Indeed, fragility and climate impact were highly context-specific. Similarly, peace and conflict assessments as well as vulnerability assessments faced significant challenges when it came to data availability and impact measurement. In view of the above, the Parliament of India believed that peace and security was a distinct topic that should not be linked to climate and had, therefore, proposed some amendments to the draft resolution.

The resolution called on governments to take concrete measures to mitigate climate risks and promote resilience to climate change while adhering to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. Doing so would ensure that the legislative response of parliaments would be nationally appropriate and consistent with the aims of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It also called on parliaments to strengthen oversight over national and international commitments. Those commitments should include: implementing national legislation, enhancing transparency and accountability in climate action and reporting, and bolstering the budgetary allocation for adaptation and mitigation measures.

His Government had set up a committee for the implementation of the Paris Agreement which oversaw progress on the nationally determined contribution of India. It had also launched several global initiatives such as the International Solar Alliance and the Global Coalition for Disaster-Resilient Infrastructure. Parliamentarians must generate awareness among the people about the ill-effects of climate change and collectively work towards capacity building.

Mr. S. Suzuki (Japan) said that the climate crisis and decarbonization were pressing issues that could not wait. It was important for the international community to act together, combining the wisdom of all humanity. Japan intended to become carbon neutral by 2050 and hoped to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 46 per cent compared to 2013 levels by 2030. In 2020, the Parliament had passed a resolution declaring a state of emergency on climate.

It was predicted that meteorological disasters would become even more devastating in the future as a result of climate change. Those disasters could lead to problems such as food shortages and refugees, thereby having a negative impact on peace and security. The international community, in addition to stemming the climate crisis, should implement adaptation measures and respond to security risks as set out in the resolution. Japan had abundant expertise on decarbonization, disaster risk reduction and resilience building and wished to use that expertise to tackle the climate crisis. Legislators should support their governments in their efforts to engage in effective international cooperation.

Mr. He Hong (China) said that multilateralism and unity would be very important in tackling both climate change and COVID-19. The President of China had recently attended the Leaders' Summit on Climate where he had delivered a speech entitled *For Man and Nature: Building a Community of Life*

Together. The concept could be summarized into six commitments: harmonious coexistence of humans and nature, green development, systematic governance, a people-centred approach, multilateralism, and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

China was aiming to achieve its carbon peak before 2030 and to reach carbon neutralization before 2060. Climate change was a problem of development. Sustainable development was key to resolving it. Parliaments should urge their governments to build the capacities of countries in need, including countries in conflict, least developed countries and small island developing States. They should support the integration of climate change responses into national economic and social development plans. They must also bear in mind the link between economic development, ecological environmental protection and climate change.

Ms. M. Gregorcic (Slovenia) said that climate change multiplied the negative political, economic and social consequences of existing injustices, thus affecting world peace and stability. Environmental degradation and climate change were driving migration in particular, even more so than political instability and armed conflicts. There were also other drivers of migration, such as poverty and lack of water. Although the drivers of migration were numerous and diverse, they were usually interconnected. Therefore, a complex and global approach was needed. It was also important to tackle the root causes. The only way to solve the problem sustainably was to engage the entire international community in a spirit of shared solidarity and responsibility. Every country and every individual had a responsibility to act.

Slovenia was advocating for an ambitious approach on climate and taking immediate action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Consistent and effective implementation of the Paris Agreement was key to achieving the green and digital transition. The economic recovery from COVID-19 was an opportunity for the world to invest in new technologies that helped countries to become carbon neutral and sustain their biodiversity. Slovenia would soon take up the presidency of the European Council and had listed the green and digital transition as one of its priorities. Parliaments had an important role to play in the process. She supported the adoption of the resolution.

Ms. A.P. Alonso Gómez (Nicaragua) agreed that climate change was directly related to peace and security. Some countries stood out in terms of their climate change efforts and Nicaragua was one of them. Nicaragua had introduced laws, decrees and policies that aimed to increase the country's capacity to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change. It had an environmental policy, unique in the region, which set out ways to incorporate climate change in the legislation process. The Parliament was also setting up an information system with clear indicators to assess the extent to which environmental issues had been embedded in laws and whether the laws were consistent with national and international commitments. There was also a national disaster prevention system. Many of the laws and decrees in place in Nicaragua were in line with the resolution. The IPU should set up follow-up mechanisms to evaluate whether parliaments were implementing the commitments made in the resolution and whether results were being achieved. Climate justice was also an important issue for Nicaragua, which was a country highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Financial mechanisms were needed to compensate for losses and damages suffered.

Ms. R. Kavakci Kan (Turkey) said that climate change was a global challenge that affected every country. It was an existential threat especially for the most vulnerable countries, such as least developed countries and small island developing States. It also led to different security risks. There was an urgent need to provide adaptation and resilience building support to the countries most affected. Sharing technology, best practices and know-how with one another was extremely important in building climate resilience.

That said, her understanding was that climate change should be regarded as a risk multiplier and not a direct cause of conflict. The latter would prevent the international community from addressing the root causes of the conflict. She strongly agreed that all issues related to climate change should be addressed under the UNFCCC. The IPU must avoid creating new platforms for addressing climate change or generating new approaches to climate-related issues. The world was interconnected and interdependent. All countries must act on climate or the whole world would suffer. She urged delegates to address the situation in Palestine and in other conflict areas.

Ms. Le Thu Ha (Viet Nam) agreed that climate change had a serious impact on people's lives and livelihoods, thus threatening peace, security and stability. She wished to make several proposals to tackle the problem.

First, it was important to remain fully aware of the climate situation globally and take steps to prevent the crisis from getting worse. Second, parliaments should uphold their political and legal commitments and take specific actions towards the climate agenda with a view to maintaining peace and security. Third, parliaments must make the climate response a priority, for instance by allocating proper financial resources for mitigation and adaptation and offering financial support to developing countries. It was also important to establish national mechanisms to monitor, revise and enhance implementation of adaptation measures. Fourth, climate actions must be tailored to the situation of each country, integrated into national development plans and based on the principles of equal opportunities, inclusiveness and benefit for the people. There was a particular need to support people hardest hit by climate change, such as women and children. Fifth, parliaments should develop more practical policies and laws in line with IPU guidance. Examples of policies included: initiatives for a low-carbon economy, experience sharing opportunities, capacity building projects and policies to encourage private sector investment in low-carbon businesses. Sixth, there was a need to adopt a low-carbon development model for sustainable recovery. For example, governments should create climate friendly jobs, including through the digital transformation. They should promote renewable energy, smart agriculture, smart cities, smart transportation and the circular economy. It was also essential to develop new technology, green energy and effective infrastructure as well as to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Ms. R. Saint-Germain (Canada) said that no one could deny that conflict and climate change were having a tremendous impact on the most vulnerable and marginalized people in society, such as women, children, indigenous peoples and people living with disabilities, as well as refugees and displaced people. She thanked the drafting committee for accepting the amendments from the Canadian Parliament which sought to focus attention on indigenous peoples as well as on the adverse impact of climate change on the fragile ecosystems of polar regions. Traditional knowledge sources held by indigenous and local communities would be invaluable in building a common understanding of climate-related risks and threats. Parliamentarians had important work to do to implement the collective commitments made in the resolution. She concurred with Ms. Roth that political accountability was needed to follow up on the resolution.

Mr. H. Naderi (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that Members of Parliament could effectively overcome environmental challenges, especially climate change, by passing effective laws and resolutions. Climate change and international peace and security should not be deemed as two separate phenomena as their nature was interconnected. As part of the sustainable development and peace and security agendas, IPU Members must work together multilaterally to curb corruption, promote good governance and protect the environment. Topics such as the following should be made a priority at future meetings of the Standing Committee: preventing money laundering, cutting off terrorist financing, combatting drug and human trafficking, expanding the use of green, renewable and sustainable energy and restricting the use of fossil fuels. The situation would improve if all countries acted in good faith when fulfilling their commitments.

Mr. F. Ahmad (Syrian Arab Republic) said that the climate crisis was a matter of life and death, leading to desertification, soil salinization, water scarcity, floods and thus illness, poverty and hunger. Parliaments must build capacities and work multilaterally to tackle the problem. It was also important to share technology, scientific expertise and experiences.

The Turkish occupation was cutting off the water supply in some Syrian villages. Water was desperately needed in those areas since temperatures were high and the health situation was dire due to COVID-19. He called on international organizations to stop such violations. The lack of water was having a negative effect on civilians, particularly children, women and the elderly.

He reiterated his commitment to implementing the Paris Agreement, respecting human rights and living free from crises and wars. Parliaments should invest in programmes for least developed countries, focusing on food security, health, education, gender parity, clean drinking water, decent work and the right to self-determination. The international community must work together for the good of humanity.

The Chair drew attention to operative paragraph 34 of the resolution which invited Member Parliaments to communicate to the Secretariat by the 146th IPU Assembly the measures taken to achieve implementation of the resolution.

Ms. R. Kavakci Kan (Turkey), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that Turkey was not an occupier. Syria was killing its own people and using weapons of mass destruction. Turkey was simply protecting its own borders. It was also hosting four million Syrian refugees.

Preparations for future Assemblies

The Chair said that the Bureau of the Committee had met on 13 April 2021 where it had discussed the Committee's agenda for the next two Assemblies as well as activities that the Bureau would undertake between Assemblies. The Bureau had agreed to hold the following two panel discussions at the 143rd IPU Assembly: *Parliament's role in addressing the risks of diversion in arms transfers* and *Applying traditional and human security concepts in assessing security threats to devise ways to foster peace globally*.

The Bureau had also discussed the topic for the next resolution and had unanimously decided on the following: *Rethinking and reframing the approach to peace processes with a view to fostering lasting peace*. The proposal had been shared with all IPU Members for adoption through a silence procedure. Since the Secretariat had received no objections, he declared the proposal adopted. The Committee would organize an expert hearing on the topic also at the 143rd IPU Assembly. The event would include a debate so that the co-Rapporteurs could gather inputs from IPU Members before starting the preparation of the draft resolution. The Committee would devote most of its time at the 144th IPU Assembly to discussing and approving the resolution. For all three events organized during the 143rd Assembly, the Bureau had unanimously agreed to include a strong gender perspective.

Between Assemblies, the Bureau had decided to hold some short online briefings on the situations in Myanmar and between Ukraine and the Russian Federation. It would then report on its conclusions at the next meeting of the Committee.

Lastly, it was necessary to appoint co-Rapporteurs to prepare the next draft resolution. Ms. Widegren had offered to serve as one co-Rapporteur. As per the rules, the President of the IPU would be entrusted with appointing the remaining co-Rapporteurs.

Ms. C. Widegren (Sweden) thanked Members for the opportunity to draft the next resolution. The topic for the resolution was very important, especially in the post-pandemic world. Parliamentarians should have a voice in peace building. She invited delegates to send their proposals to her.

Elections to the Bureau of the Standing Committee

The Chair said that COVID-19 had delayed the renewal of Bureau members. The Committee now had to fill seven vacancies and deal with some changes taking place in the composition of the Bureau. Several members who had already spent two years on the Bureau were also up for re-election.

He had received a number of nominations to fill the vacancies. The African Group had nominated Mr. A. Kharchi (Algeria). The Arab Group had nominated Mr. D. El Idrissi (Morocco). The Asia-Pacific Group had nominated Mr. B. Mahtab (India) and Mr. A. Naderi (Islamic Republic of Iran) and would keep one vacancy free. The Group of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC) had nominated Mr. J. Taiana (Argentina) and would also keep one vacancy free.

Ms. S. Falaknaz and Mr. S. Rachkov would take over as representatives from the United Arab Emirates and Belarus respectively, both for an additional two-year term. Chile would take over from Uruguay, having designated Mr. R. García García as candidate. Lastly, Ms. S. Grigoryan (Armenia), Ms. P. Ikourou Yoka (Congo), Mr. P. Tolstoy (Russian Federation), Mr J.I. Echániz (Spain) and Ms. A. Shkrum (Ukraine) were up for re-election for an additional two-year term.

He took it that the Committee wished to approve the above proposals.

It was so decided.

Any other business

The Chair wished to draw attention to two further points. First, the IPU Forum of Young Parliamentarians had recently launched the "I Say Yes" campaign. It was a five-year, intergenerational campaign urging parliamentarians of all ages to meet youth representation targets and to generally "say yes" to youth participation in parliament. More information could be found on the IPU website,

where parliamentarians could sign up to one or more of six pledges. The pledges were as follows: promoting youth quotas, legislating to align the eligibility age for parliamentary office with voting age, supporting channels for youth perspectives in parliament, empowering young parliamentarians, mentoring young aspirants to political office, and advocating for “I Say Yes” in parliament. Once signed up, parliamentarians would continue receiving information and tools from the IPU to further support the campaign.

Second, the IPU Strategy set out the vision, mission and objectives of the Organization over a five-year period. The current Strategy (2017-2021) would soon be coming to an end and was therefore under review. A team of independent consultants had been hired to conduct the review. They would first review the impact of the current Strategy over the past five years and then identify priorities for the next five years with the intention of producing a new Strategy. The review process was as an inclusive one, giving Members of Parliament the opportunity to contribute. Consultations would be held with Members and other stakeholders. He invited the lead consultant to present an update.

Ms. F. Martonffy (consultant), accompanying her remarks with a digital slide presentation, said that she was one of a team of four independent consultants working on the strategic review process. The process was centred on Members and their experiences with conversations and consultations placed at the centre. Members’ experiences over the past five years would be gathered together with a view to codesigning a new Strategy for the next five years.

So far, her team had reviewed a series of impact documents and were currently holding conversations with Members, the results of which would be calibrated into a final report. She had developed a mixed methods methodology to evaluate the results. The methodology was based on the UK Commission for Aid Impact’s traffic light system in combination with criteria from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) on relevance, coherence and sustainability.

Members had been asked, amongst other things, where the IPU had had the most impact over the past five years. Preliminary results showed that the biggest impact had been made in the area of facilitating dialogue, diplomacy and networking among parliamentarians. The smallest impact had been made in the area of peacebuilding despite some achievements such as those on disarmament. There were, however, a number of caveats to that assessment. First, the assessment was based on a limited number of documents reviewed. Second, the usual tools used by the IPU, such as policy tools and technical assistance, might not be relevant to peacebuilding, which was often reactive work for which it was difficult to plan.

The next IPU Strategy would cover the years 2022 to 2026. When designing the Strategy, it was important to start with a discussion on the context, looking at how the world was likely to evolve over the next five years. The idea was to anticipate trends, identify priorities and plan for the future. It would then be necessary to examine impact. Members should set out where they felt the IPU had had the greatest impact and where it had had the least impact. In addition, they should identify whether impact was missing in any areas that they considered critical to the core mission of the IPU. Lastly, there was a need to think about relevance and sustainability. Members should consider how to increase the impact of IPU work and how to ensure progress was sustainable and fit-for-purpose. The Standing Committee on Peace and International Security should pay particular attention to peace and security issues in their contributions. She would be holding two focus group discussions where the above questions would be put to Members. There was also a survey that Members should fill in.

Ms. R. Kavakci Kan (Turkey) asked Ms. Martonffy to clarify how the Strategy would deal with issues that could not be anticipated, such as the COVID-19 crisis.

Ms. F. Martonffy (consultant) said that it was not possible to plan for everything. However, the IPU should focus on what was key so that it was in a place of increased strength and resilience no matter what happened. It was important to be able to absorb, adapt and transform in the face of systemic shocks.

The Chair said that the IPU often addressed urgent issues at Assemblies. However, it was also vital to address long-term, foundational questions that were not so urgent but were still very important. There was an enormous opportunity at the start of each strategic period to suggest pathways forward, particularly on long-term, foundational questions, with a view to creating a more harmonious, peaceful and secure world. He encouraged delegates to participate actively in the review process. The chance would not come around for another five years. Delegates could participate in two ways: by filling out the survey and by attending the focus groups.

Ms. R. Kavakci Kan (Turkey) wished to thank the IPU for its “I Say Yes” campaign on youth participation. Turkey had recently amended its Constitution, reducing the age to get elected from 25 to 18. Eight people under 30 had been elected as a result of the amendment. She urged delegates to support the campaign because young people would energize parliaments.

A video on the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency during the COVID-19 pandemic was played.

The sitting rose at 16:35 CEST.

Standing Committee on Sustainable Development and Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs

Joint Sitting of Tuesday, 27 April

The sitting was called to order at 14:05 CEST with Mr. J.C. Romero (Argentina), President of the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs, and Ms. V. Muzenda Tsitsi (Zimbabwe), President of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, in the Chair.

The President of the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs welcomed all participants to the joint sitting of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development and the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs, which would follow the general theme of the 142nd IPU Assembly, *Overcoming the pandemic today and building a better tomorrow: the role of parliaments.*

Adoption of the agenda of the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs (C-IV/142/A.1)

The agenda was adopted.

Approval of the summary records of the Committee's session held during the 141st IPU Assembly in Belgrade (October 2019)

The summary records were approved.

Adoption of the agenda of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development (C-II/142/A.1)

The agenda was adopted.

The President of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development said that the joint meeting would be held in two parts: the first to address two matters, recovery from the pandemic and the green economy, and multilateral cooperation to prevent new crises; and the second on vaccine accessibility as a public good.

Recovery from the pandemic and the green economy; Multilateral cooperation to prevent new crises

The President of the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs introduced the three guest speakers who had been invited to make keynote presentations to inform the Committees' discussions. Senator Sherry Rehman (Pakistan) was a member of the Bureau of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development and had led a distinguished political career. Professor Tim Jackson was an ecological economist, Professor of Sustainable Development and Director of the Centre for the Understanding of Sustainable Prosperity at the University of Surrey in the United Kingdom. Ms. Agnes Kalibata, former Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources of Rwanda, was President of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa and the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy to the 2021 Food Systems Summit.

Presentations by keynote speakers

Ms. S. Rehman (Pakistan) said that the COVID-19 pandemic was at its height in South Asia, with a particularly significant crisis of mortality and morbidity in India, which was hitting both the health system and the economy. Pakistan was bracing for a similar multidimensional trauma. Despite its catastrophic impacts, the pandemic was a moment of opportunity, giving a clear signal to the international community to rethink policies beyond borders. Pandemics and climate stress were borderless, yet the world was retreating to an attitude of economic nationalism, which constituted a "policy straightjacket" at the multilateral and regional levels. Developing countries had been hit hardest

by the political microclimate of uncoordinated decision-making, in which multilateralism was no longer treated as the first agent of global governance. The term “global governance” in itself was a misnomer; it implied that there was a system in place that was funded, valued and respected. That system had fallen by the wayside. South Asia was in a particularly difficult situation, with countries such as Pakistan having no access to COVID-19 vaccines, and India with a dire shortage of oxygen amid 16.9 million COVID-19 cases and more than 192,000 deaths to date. The failure of cooperation across borders and the rise of economic nationalism were exacerbating the crisis.

The COVID-19 pandemic was also causing a crisis of parliamentary oversight, by driving parliamentarians out of buildings and restricting discussions on major policy issues. The pandemic had shone a light on the moral crisis of capitalism, including in the multilateral financial system; International Monetary Fund stimulus packages came with an onerous burden of hidden taxation. Parliamentary oversight of medical, economic and other support measures must be guaranteed. Vulnerable groups, such as those without State-registered identity documents, were at particular risk as they would not be granted access to vaccines. Such administrative hurdles to equality must be overcome, not only to face the current COVID-19 crisis but also to build resilience for the future. Many governments in Asia and Africa were not in a position to be able to protect their populations. Multilateral support and leadership were crucial, not just in the pandemic context, but also in the context of the climate crisis and other impending threats.

Mr. T. Jackson (Professor of Sustainable Development, University of Surrey, United Kingdom) said that as the COVID-19 pandemic had struck, certain aspects of economies had been closed down to protect health at all costs. That approach gave a clear lesson: prosperity was in fact a balance, and at times should focus on health, rather than wealth. There were, of course, some countries in a fragile economic situation, where people lacked access to proper nutrition, safe drinking water and sanitation, had precarious livelihoods and faced the threat of conflict. In such cases, prosperity should be considered from the perspective of growth. In other countries, however, prosperity should be viewed from the perspective of having less: less materialism, less consumerism, lower carbon emissions, less damage to the environment. Capitalism focused on constant growth, which had, in fact, undermined financial stability and was rendering the livelihoods of ordinary people very uncertain.

An economy of care would be based on frontline care workers, those who looked after the vulnerable, being the most valued in society. Despite society’s dependence on those workers in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, they remained underpaid with insecure jobs, unrealistic professional targets and harrowing working conditions. Systematically, over many decades the care sector had become the most fragile part of the capitalist economy. Post-pandemic recovery must be centred on economic strategies that protected those workers in delivering the most vital aspect of prosperity. The time had come to think beyond capitalism and truly ask why care workers had become marginalized in society, and why investment in health and social care had been insufficient to protect against a global pandemic.

While labour productivity growth had delivered wealth and material improvement, it was a model that worked best in the manufacturing of material goods to be sold by profit-making businesses into growing markets. It was not an effective model for an economy of care. In care-based services, time was of the essence; the amount of time spent with individuals in need gave value to care services. Asking care workers to care for more people, teachers to teach more children, and medics to treat more patients, undermined the value of their work. Typically, in such circumstances, care workers were underpaid, and care systems were underfunded, leaving them ill-equipped to deal with the dangers of a pandemic.

Parliamentarians had a key role in promoting health as the fundamental basis for prosperity, and care as the mechanism for protecting it. Measures should be taken to support the workers who would build the care sector of the economy and allow it to flourish in the future. The economy of care was a green economy; prioritizing health was the best way to ensure an economy that stayed within monetary boundaries, and build a better world for future generations. It would be so much better than an economy built on profit maximization and its accompanying inequalities. The care economy would be one in which everyone could flourish.

Mr. M. Frick (Deputy to the United Nations Secretary-General’s Special Envoy to the 2021 Food Systems Summit), speaking on behalf of Ms. Kalibata, who had been unable to connect to the virtual meeting, said that the world’s food systems were broken; figures on hunger and malnutrition were constantly on the rise. More than a third of global carbon emissions were related to food

systems. Biodiversity, water and land resources were under enormous pressure from food production, yet more than a third of the food produced globally went to waste while land and ocean resources were being depleted. The situation was critical.

The 2021 United Nations Food Systems Summit aimed to change the global narrative around food systems. The Summit had an innovative structure, with work ongoing at the national level in 105 countries to hold Food System Summit dialogues, through a whole-of-society approach. Parliamentarians should be engaged in those dialogues and in the developing national food systems action plans and setting up national multi-stakeholder platforms to deal with food system-related issues. Independent dialogues were also part of the Food Systems Summit preparation, and had been undertaken by several organizations worldwide.

Women's empowerment would be central to making the necessary changes to food systems. National action was needed and parliaments were in a key position in that regard. As well as national-level dialogue, international dialogue was being held in preparation for the Summit, to discuss key issues for building a global community for food systems transformation, including innovation, water, and women's participation. He urged all parliamentarians to participate in those dialogues, through the many available channels for engagement.

Ms. P. Torsney (IPU Representative to the United Nations) added that a parliamentary food systems meeting was due to be held on 23 June 2021, with the United Nations 2021 Food Systems Summit team. She encouraged all parliamentarians to take part.

Debate

Ms. R.A. Abunayan (Saudi Arabia) said that the COVID-19 pandemic was a global health crisis that was spreading human suffering and threatening economies. Environmental protection was a key factor in avoiding future pandemics. Solidarity and collaboration through transfers of knowledge and experience-sharing were essential. Saudi Arabia had made efforts to strike a balance between economic growth, sustainable development and innovation. A major tree-planting operation was under way, aiming to cut carbon emissions by 60 per cent, and various measures were being taken to promote a circular economy, through reduction, reuse, recycling and renewal. The use of renewable energy was being increased, with the goal of renewables accounting for 50 per cent of Saudi Arabia's energy consumption by 2030. New technologies were also being explored, including the use of hydrogen as a source of energy. Carbon capture, utilization and storage were also being investigated, and funding was being given to start-ups to develop innovative technologies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Those efforts could not stand alone; all countries must work together through solidarity and cooperation to address the climate crisis and overcome the pandemic.

Ms. V. Riotton (France) said that the French Government had launched an ambitious post-pandemic economic recovery plan, involving a transition to a new, carbon-free and resource-saving economy, which would be more virtuous and sustainable than previous economic models. In the current situation of major economic and social crisis, the opportunity to build back greener was a source of hope for all. The plan had a budget of €100 billion, including €30 billion for exclusively green investment to support decarbonization in all high greenhouse gas emitting sectors, and would target every level of the economy, from large businesses to households. The aim was to reduce carbon emissions by 40 per cent by 2030, and to support the transition to the use of green technologies and practices, such as recycling and use of hydrogen and biofuels for energy production. Activities would be promoted if they had high added value- that created jobs, promoted local and national know-how, and made the French economy more competitive. The French Parliament, which had voted in favour of such measures, would review budgetary support after two years. The Prime Minister remained committed to reporting back to Parliament every two months on implementation of the recovery plan.

Mr. K. Shindo (Japan) said that the COVID-19 pandemic had significantly affected agriculture, forestry and the food industry in Japan. Import restrictions and sluggishness in trade and logistics were having a severe impact. Every country must act calmly, and must implement initiatives to ensure stable food supplies. Malnutrition could exacerbate the spread of disease; food insecurity was one of the root causes of major health problems. The sustainability of agriculture, food production and food supply chains must therefore be strengthened.

Mr. M. Rezakhah (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the importance of attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was particularly evident in the context of tackling the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic impacts. Parliaments should urge their governments to take more effective action against COVID-19 by reforming health-care systems and to push for equitable distribution of medical and pharmaceutical supplies for all. While the outbreak of COVID-19 had put obstacles in the way of the attainment of the SDGs, it had also created some opportunities. Lockdowns imposed around the world had resulted in a significant reduction in carbon emissions. It must, however, be acknowledged that the long-term impact of COVID-19 on environmental goals and biodiversity still remained unclear. Developed countries must strengthen their investment and assistance for development, through international funds and multilateral cooperation, to minimize the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the world economy.

Ms. A. Mulder (Netherlands) asked Mr. Jackson to offer three policy examples for taking the first steps towards a more balanced and restored society.

Ms. M. McPhedran (Canada) said that young people around the world had raised their voices to underscore the links between climate threats and the COVID-19 pandemic. She asked the guest speakers to share their views on the impacts of COVID-19 on women and young people, and on the climate crisis.

Mr. T. Jackson (Professor of Sustainable Development, University of Surrey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) said that the care sector was predominantly staffed by women; protecting care workers and addressing their livelihoods would result in a redressing of gender inequalities. The impact of the pandemic on young people would be profound. In the aftermath of the global economic and financial crisis, youth unemployment rates in southern Europe, for example, had been up to 50 per cent, which constituted a significant loss of talent. Such large-scale unemployment created an entire cohort of young people without a livelihood, income or sense of purpose. It was therefore particularly important, when considering recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, that mechanisms should be put in place to protect young people and women, in particular those with the lowest incomes. Government investment in job creation and employment guarantees, such as furlough schemes and the protection of livelihoods, in particular for the most vulnerable, were particularly important. Protecting employment for young people would give them an essential sense of purpose, and protect against the loss of a generation, which would be crucial for the stability of the whole of society.

Ms. S. Rehman (Pakistan) said that in South Asia, the vast majority of health-care frontline workers, care workers and immunizers were women, many of whom were undocumented. In Pakistan, social protection cash transfers in times of crisis were given to women householders. That system had changed the lives of many women, as it had encouraged them to register with the State for identity documentation, which had in turn made them eligible for other types of protection, such as health care. In South Asia, many vulnerable women were householders, breadwinners and caregivers. Aid programmes should target those women as key recipients; women automatically cascaded their benefits down to children.

Mr. I Serreewhathanatut (Thailand) said that the COVID-19 pandemic had highlighted and exacerbated systemic inequalities, and was widening gaps with regard to the attainment of the SDGs. The crisis had, however, afforded opportunities to rethink global interdependence. No country could solve the COVID-19 crisis alone. Sustainable recovery policies required investment in building a more resilient society. Support for local economies, the development of digital technologies, and support for the agriculture sector to promote food security, as well as efforts to strengthen community businesses and boost the sustainability of grassroots economies, were all essential elements of the recovery process. Thailand was using circular economic models to promote sustainable, environmentally friendly and inclusive growth.

The COVID-19 pandemic had shown that the global health architecture and social protection systems were suffering from severe underinvestment. National health care must be extended to protect the whole population, especially the most vulnerable. Thailand's ability to cope with the crisis relied largely on its own health system, without external support. Thailand stood ready to share experiences with the rest of the international community.

Ms. F. Abbas (Bahrain) said that the COVID-19 pandemic and its catastrophic socioeconomic and humanitarian impacts had made meeting the SDGs more difficult, but also more urgent, than ever. The international community must work together, mobilizing efforts for sustainable development. Parliaments were well positioned to lead the recovery process, ensuring that it was supported by appropriate policies and legislation. All countries had seen an unprecedented decline in development, with food insecurity and inequalities very much on the rise. Work on recovery must begin by countering the social and economic losses endured, paying particular attention to protecting the most vulnerable and those most in need.

Ms. S. Rehman (Pakistan) said that the ability to manage resources was critical for post-COVID-19 recovery, with a focus on harnessing infrastructure for the benefit of the most vulnerable in society. The United Nations had a crucial role in showing how to work together to move forward through the pandemic, leaving economic nationalism and vaccine nationalism behind. Multilateral organizations needed to adapt to global change; reform was needed.

Mr. T. Jackson (Professor of Sustainable Development, University of Surrey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) said that when looking at the climate crisis and the need to reduce carbon emissions, significant attention had been paid to financial architecture, with consideration of a financial system that would support the transition towards a carbon neutral economy. The time had come to build a similar initiative for health and the economy of care; financial institutions currently prevented that economy from becoming a reality. A revised set of institutions, policies and regulations was needed to guarantee proper financing for care. Such an initiative at the international level would be particularly beneficial.

Vaccine accessibility as a public good

Ms. S. Dinică (Romania), member of the Bureau of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, took the Chair.

The Chair said that the matter of ensuring vaccine accessibility as a public good was especially urgent. Measures were needed to ensure that COVID-19 vaccines were made available to everyone, fast enough to stop the pandemic from spreading any further. Although some developed countries had faced issues of vaccine availability, they were still far ahead of developing countries in respect of immunization coverage. At current rates of coverage, the populations of some countries would be waiting until the end of 2023 to be vaccinated. Such delays should be deemed unacceptable. She introduced Ms. M. Aubry, a young member of the European Parliament and advocate for vaccine availability.

Presentation by a keynote speaker

Ms. M. Aubry (France, Member of the European Parliament) said that the European Parliament had been raising the matter of vaccine accessibility with the European Commission since early in the pandemic, with particular concerns over price-setting and market regulation, which would significantly limit access to vaccines. Since the beginning of discussions on vaccine production and distribution, the European Parliament had been advocating for the lifting of patents, for a variety of reasons. Firstly, the Member States of the European Union, and many countries around the world, had injected public funds into vaccine research and development, and pre-orders of supplies. Public investment should mean public ownership and patents should be in the public domain. Second, to end the pandemic, the whole global population needed to be vaccinated; no-one would be safe until everyone was safe. Delays in vaccinating allowed the virus to mutate, and new, potentially vaccine-resistant, variants to circulate.

Pharmaceutical laboratories were currently not being used to full capacity, which could be rectified by lifting patents. Laboratories that had not developed their own vaccines should be put to the task of producing others. Thus far, more than 80 per cent of COVID-19 vaccine doses had been distributed to developed countries, illustrating that the most dangerous threat to global society was, in fact, inequality. A person's right to protection in a situation of global pandemic should not be contingent on his or her place of residence or socioeconomic status. If full production capacity was reached, vaccine supplies would be sufficient to vaccinate the whole global population. Lifting patents was thus a political necessity; it was shameful that certain countries and groups of countries, in particular the European Union, were standing in the way of negotiations in that regard in the World

Trade Organization, thereby allowing a small number of pharmaceutical companies to make massive profits. Market logic was being pushed to extremes, allowing for companies such as Pfizer to raise dose prices. Vaccines should be public goods, for the protection of the public and to bring an end to the pandemic.

Debate

Ms. D. Urunbolor (Mongolia) said that vaccine accessibility was a crucial matter in the context of the current COVID-19 pandemic. Questions were being raised as to whether vaccines would be effective in controlling the pandemic, how economic recovery could be secured, and whether there was sufficient commitment to address climate change. Without certainty on those matters, sustainable development could not be achieved. The answers could only be found through joint efforts, cooperation and a spirit of solidarity. Around 30 per cent of the target population in Mongolia had been vaccinated, largely thanks to the COVAX facility, led by WHO. Mongolia would be hosting the next Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum on Global Health.

Ms. Cai Ling (China) said that vaccines were the only way to defeat COVID-19 and should be for the benefit of all humankind. The Government of China supported the principle of vaccines as a global public good, and was striving to ensure vaccine accessibility and affordability in developing countries. China had provided material assistance to more than 160 countries and was seeking to offer access to vaccines to 100 countries, in an effort to ensure fair and equitable distribution of vaccines around the world. The international community must work together to end vaccine politicization and vaccine nationalism. Vaccines should be used to save lives in an equitable manner, not generate large profits for a handful of companies or widen the immunization gap to gain advantage over one another. Every effort should be made to optimize access to vaccines, provide humanitarian assistance to those in need, and support recovery for developing countries. Only through cooperation could the pandemic be truly defeated.

Ms. M. Alsuwaidi (United Arab Emirates) said that unjust access to and distribution of vaccines was a threat to humanity. Thus far, 78 per cent of the world's vaccine supply had been distributed among only 10 countries, and at current rates of production and distribution, 25 per cent of the world's population would still not be vaccinated before the end of 2022. In the United Arab Emirates, vaccines were being provided free of charge for all residents, irrespective of nationality. The Government was hoping to send 6 billion doses to other countries, to be increased to 18 billion by the end of 2021. Some 80 per cent of aid from WHO had been shipped through the Dubai International Humanitarian City, in cooperation with the World Food Programme, providing material and medical assistance to countries all over the world. Parliamentarians bore a heavy responsibility for fostering cooperation at the international level to promote equitable distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, through a human-centred approach.

Mr. T. Mansmann (Germany) said that privately owned industry, not State innovation, had developed vaccines in less than a year. Market mechanisms had been very effective in driving the development and production of vaccines; lifting patents would reduce that effectiveness. Effective market logic should be used to overcome the pandemic, rather than compulsory acquisition, which would not be effective.

Ms. M. Aubry (France, Member of the European Parliament) said that the comments raised underscored the shared concerns over access to vaccines; if no strict rules were in place for pharmaceutical laboratories, production capacity would remain underutilized. Vaccine development had not been funded exclusively by privately owned industry; significant portions of funding had come from public investment, without which, pharmaceutical laboratories would not have been able to work so quickly. Lifting of patents would not deprive pharmaceutical companies of their income altogether, but it seemed unacceptable that for the purposes of pure profit-making, some laboratories were prevented from producing the vaccines that constituted the only way out of the current global health crisis. How could it be explained to future generations that during a global health crisis, when the antidote to the disease was available, millions of people were allowed to die to enable a few to make a huge profit? Health should come before anything else. Exceptional measures were needed; some had likened the pandemic to a war, in which case, the vaccine must be the weapon of choice. Without

sufficient supplies of and access to vaccines, the virus would mutate around the world, and the situation would spiral even further out of control. The only means of halting the crisis was by vaccinating the whole planet, irrespective of socioeconomic status and geographic location.

Mr. S. Patra (India) said that India's national budget for 2021–2022 had included a significant increase in the allocation to health expenditure, with a large sum earmarked for vaccination. India had supplied more than 66 million doses of vaccines made in India to over 90 countries around the world, and more than 25 million doses to 40 countries through the WHO-led COVAX facility. Decisions had been fast-tracked to address the second wave of the pandemic in India, including offering vaccines to all adults aged 18 years and over, and using the national railway infrastructure for the rapid transportation of liquid medical oxygen. Efforts had also been made to ensure protection against COVID-19 for migrant workers. The IPU had a key role in fostering cooperation to tackle the pandemic; India stood ready to work with the rest of the world in ensuring the provision of vaccines for all.

Mr. C. Nshimirimana (Burundi) said that Burundi's COVID-19 cases were on the rise; measures were being taken to build resilience, expedite detection, and control the spread of the disease. Public awareness-raising measures were being taken to encourage testing. Testing and care for COVID-19 patients were provided free of charge. Thus far, just over 3,000 cases of COVID-19 had been confirmed in Burundi, and the death rate remained low. While the situation was currently under control, resilience must be strengthened and particular vigilance was required with regard to incoming trade and tourism. In that regard, measures were being taken to ensure that Burundi was self-sufficient from the perspective of food production and security. Efforts were being made to transition to a green economy, with a focus on organic agriculture, using products with high yield and low impact in terms of soil degradation. Post-pandemic recovery must take account of the need to make up for lost time in respect of development. A COVID-19 vaccination programme had not yet begun in Burundi. A vaccine approved by WHO should be made accessible for all, irrespective of age and socioeconomic status.

Ms. Jang Hye-Young (Republic of Korea) said that patience was needed in trying different approaches to tackle the COVID-19 crisis. Lack of vaccine supply in such an affluent world pointed to a lack of global governance and a failure of multilateral cooperation, amounting to a catastrophic failure of world politics. Prior to the commercialization of vaccines, discussions had centred on the role of international organizations in making vaccines available as a public good. Developed countries and major pharmaceutical companies had not taken heed of those discussions. Despite the fact that the Republic of Korea had a vaccine production centre it was struggling with vaccine supplies. The supply problems came not from lack of production facilities or qualified human resources, but rather from restrictive intellectual property rights. The Republic of Korea had presented a draft resolution to the World Health Assembly regarding the lifting of certain intellectual property restrictions under the Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights with regard to vaccine distribution. Governments and parliaments should speak up actively for substantial change to address vaccine inequalities, since no-one could be safe until everyone was safe.

The President of the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs thanked all participants for their contributions and said that the main ideas expressed during the discussions would inform the outcome document of the 142nd IPU Assembly.

The sitting rose at 16:10 CEST.

Standing Committee on Sustainable Development

Sitting of Tuesday, 18 May

The sitting was called to order at 14:05 CEST with Ms. T.V. Muzenda (Zimbabwe), President of the Standing Committee, in the Chair.

Approval of the summary records of the Committee's session held at the 141st IPU Assembly in Belgrade (October 2019)

The summary records were approved.

Adoption of the resolution

Mainstreaming digitalization and the circular economy to achieve the SDGs, particularly responsible consumption and production

The President said that, due to the Assembly's virtual format, the Executive Committee had decided that the resolution should be finalized in the drafting committee and adopted through a silence procedure. The drafting committee had met on 22 April to discuss amendments to the draft text.

Mr. A. Gryffroy (Belgium), co-Rapporteur, said that digitalization could strengthen the circular economy, while the circular economy should be at the heart of digitalization. In addition, they both benefited from bridging technologies, such as the internet of things, and could contribute to equitable and sustainable economic growth.

The draft resolution highlighted the role of the circular economy in achieving SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production). By restoring, regenerating and reusing materials, the circular economy promoted the efficient management of limited natural resources. It was critical for stimulating collaboration, enabling innovation, and rethinking how products were made and used, which would reduce material use, industrial waste and greenhouse emissions.

The resolution's recommendations encouraged parliaments to prioritize the circular economy in their legislative, oversight and budgetary activities, and had been updated to address the challenges and opportunities of the pandemic. Recommendations included adopting measures such as establishing financial and economic incentives, limiting food waste, and encouraging resource recycling and sustainable public procurement.

As the pandemic had reversed hard-won gains towards gender equality, the resolution stressed that the circular economy and digitalization were key enablers for women's economic empowerment. Every recommendation could be implemented from a gender perspective that empowered women and reduced gender inequalities. In particular, parliaments were invited to address the digital gender divide by encouraging women's education in STEM subjects, and to adopt gender-inclusive legislation and policies that would increase opportunities for women and girls to develop their digital skills.

Mainstreaming digitalization and the circular economy required ambition, political will and a change of vision at all levels that went beyond standard digital and environmental political agendas. That ambition must be based on a systemic national approach involving all sectors of society and enhanced international cooperation. All change involved risk, but in the present case, the opportunities outweighed the risks.

The drafting committee had included representatives, nominated by the geopolitical groups, from Canada, Ecuador, Guyana, India, Iran, Rwanda and Switzerland. A representative of the Forum of Women MPs and two co-Rapporteurs had also participated. The committee had considered 88 amendments submitted by 12 countries, and a draft compromise resolution. As part of the drafting process, Ms. S. Dinică (co-Rapporteur) and Ms. H. Al-Helaissi had also made a presentation to the Forum of Women Parliamentarians.

The process of integrating as many amendments as practicable had increased the length of the resolution. However, that had also enriched it, both proportionately and in terms of its balance and inclusiveness, especially regarding gender issues and vulnerable groups. The particular attention given to privacy issues had resulted in forms of words that had accommodated all geopolitical groups without unduly diluting the resolution's main messages.

The drafting committee had worked cooperatively and flexibly, resolving all differences constructively and by consensus, in large part thanks to its Chair, Ms. Dinică.

The President thanked the co-Rapporteurs. She reminded the Committee that, after the drafting committee's work, the revised draft resolution had been submitted to all IPU Member Parliaments for adoption through the silence procedure. That meant that, if written objections from one third or more of IPU Members had not been received by 14 May 2021, the resolution was to be considered as having been validly adopted.

Two parliaments had expressed reservations by 14 May 2021: India on preambular paragraphs 7 and 29; and Nicaragua on operative paragraphs 3, 8, 20 and 28. Reservations would be noted in footnotes appended to the text of the resolution.

She announced that the resolution had been duly adopted and would be presented to the plenary session of the Assembly later in May 2021. It was a timely instrument that provided valuable guidance to all parliaments. She proposed presenting the Committee's work on the resolution as part of her report to the plenary.

It was so decided.

Ms. M. McPhedran (Canada) said that the resolution reinforced the role parliamentarians could play in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals and tackling many challenges faced by MPs' constituents. Excellent joint leadership had led to the adoption of amendments that had improved the resolution. The Canadian amendments had strengthened the resolution's inclusivity by highlighting the unequal access that vulnerable and marginalized groups had to the benefits of digitalization and the circular economy. That inequality had been amplified by the pandemic, especially in terms of online access in general and remote learning and working in particular. Decades of progress for women and those in poverty had been reversed. As parliamentarians implemented the resolution's provisions and developed public policy, they should also consider issues such as privacy, human rights and cybersecurity. In addition, infrastructure improvements were needed to bridge the digital divide and provide better online access for remote and rural communities.

Mr. V.D. Ram (India) welcomed the fact that most of the Indian IPU Group's amendments had been incorporated. A one-size-fits-all approach to the circular economy would not necessarily result in the resolution's aspirations being realized. Consensus on a set of principles should therefore be sought to allow the circular economy to be defined flexibly within a framework of core ideas. The principles would need to be adopted across the world to ensure a level playing field for and enhanced cooperation between all countries, especially in terms of technology transfer and financial resourcing. If there was no consensus, competitive disadvantages could ensue. Circularity standards should develop gradually and mature as countries adopted circularity principles. Advocacy and sectoral debate would also enable a common understanding of the long-term gains that the circular economy could bring.

Alternative and circular business models must be encouraged in the short term, as they could be more cost effective than traditional technology-based strategies. The capacity of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises should be strengthened by founding local networks and support groups to promote the benefits of the circular economy.

Ms. H. Martins (Portugal) said that the resolution was a tool with which governments could achieve their objectives; it clearly set out the path that should be taken to avoid catastrophe. In the past, it had been said that consumption must be reduced and the linear economy transformed if the world's resources were not to be exhausted. The time had now come for governments to be held to account and to deliver on such intentions. The only way that parliamentarians could protect their constituents was to adopt legislation that would guarantee a healthy world and a healthy life for future generations. Public awareness of new technologies must also be raised. The pandemic had provided an opportunity to experiment, work together and share good practices.

Mr. J. Fakhro (Bahrain) said that it was crucial for developing countries to have access to the benefits of digitalization. Parliamentarians had to find the best way to enable that access. The pandemic had underlined the importance of the digital world from education to business and service delivery. A particular advantage of the greater prevalence of home working was that women had been able to participate more extensively in the world of work. It would also be important to ensure that service delivery costs trended downwards over time. In addition, MPs should support their governments by ensuring adequate funding for cybersecurity as it related to national security and more widely.

Mr. Cao Renxian (China) said that, as a parliamentarian and a businessman, he was honoured to be participating in the debate. The resolution had the potential to improve global cooperation on sustainable development, which was being affected by the pandemic, the climate crisis and other environmental problems. A consensus appeared to be developing around the need to expand global cooperation and promote a green economic system. China supported that consensus, including the aim of reaching carbon neutrality across the world. His business aimed to widen access to green power and had committed to becoming carbon neutral itself before 2028. It had also been responding directly to the global environmental movement for many years by providing large numbers of countries with renewable energy-related products and services. It was an honour to be able to contribute in that way to the move towards green energy and to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. All countries had a shared responsibility to work together, and the National People's Congress would continue working with all parties to promote global green development.

Ms. H. Antoni (Sweden) said that a crisis had arisen because humanity had consistently taken from nature without giving back. In the past, not enough had been known about the consequences of that approach, but that was no longer the case. Parliamentarians had a responsibility to call for action in view of momentous market shifts. A new generation of consumers supported that action, and was demanding responsibly sourced products, for which they were willing to pay more. Even though the shift towards those sustainable arrangements was too slow, companies who did not move in that direction were risking their survival.

Strengthening consumer knowledge would contribute to a more sustainable economic system. For example, recycling had created new markets and opportunities; the use of recycled material must be stepped up to conserve the world's assets and stimulate economic growth. Responsibilities in that regard lay across party lines and national borders if thinking on supply, demand and growth was to be adequately reshaped.

Ms. A. Mulder (Netherlands) said that, to achieve the European Union's aspiration to an entirely circular economy by 2050, action was needed immediately. As not all elements of the value chains needed to make such a change were in the EU, she hoped that the whole world would work together to achieve greater economic circularity. Sharing more data, open-source information and knowledge could result in communities being served more effectively in a healthier environment that would shape humanity for the better. However, it was important that algorithms used in that regard did not disadvantage women. The world had a significant opportunity before it as business models began to change.

Preparations for future Assemblies

The President said that the Bureau of the Committee had met on 13 April 2021 to consider proposals for the theme of the next resolution. After discussions, the Bureau had adopted a proposal from India: *Leveraging information and communication technology as an enabler for the education sector, including in times of pandemic*. The proposal had been shared with all IPU Members for adoption through the silence procedure, and then duly adopted.

The nominations for co-Rapporteurs had been: Ms. H. Järvinen (Finland) and Mr. S. Patra (India).

The nominations were approved.

After deliberations about the Committee's work plan for the 143rd IPU Assembly, the Bureau had proposed that one sitting be allocated to the debate on the theme of the next resolution and one sitting to the subject: *The impact of climate change on natural resources: how can parliaments ensure inclusive water access and availability?*

The work plan was approved.

Elections to the Bureau of the Standing Committee

The President said that the Bureau must be composed of three representatives of each geopolitical group, with each Bureau member expected to serve a four-year term. According to the relevant Standing Committee Rules, Committee officers were to be elected or re-elected by an absolute majority of the votes cast. The following nominations had been received from the Geopolitical Groups:

African Group

Ms. J.N. Lesuuda (Kenya)
Mr. P.G. Assirvaden (Mauritius)
Mr. W. William (Seychelles)

Arab Group

Ms. I. Ezzeddine (Lebanon)

Asia-Pacific Group

Mr. V.D. Ram (India)

Eurasia Group

Ms. M. Baratova (Uzbekistan)

Group of Latin America and the Caribbean

Mr. C.P. Muñoz López (Ecuador)
Ms. S. Parag (Guyana)

Twelve Plus Group

Ms. M. McPhedran (Canada)
Ms. F. Notari (Monaco)

The nominations were approved.

Some Bureau members were completing their first term and were eligible for a second. Bureau members from Armenia, The Netherlands, Pakistan and Thailand had expressed interest in serving a second term.

A second mandate for the Bureau members from Armenia, The Netherlands, Pakistan and Thailand was approved.

The President said that it was her last IPU Assembly as President of the Committee. She was grateful to all members for their cooperation and had found it a great pleasure to work together through the IPU to promote global parliamentary engagement on sustainable development issues.

Any other business

The President said that, every five years, the IPU reviewed its strategy to ensure it remained relevant and was reflecting Members' needs. As the current IPU Strategy was to end in 2021, a review overseen by the IPU Executive Committee was under way. The review was a consultative process that would first assess the impact of the IPU over the past five years and then identify priorities for the next five.

Ms. F. Martonffy (Consultant on the IPU's Strategy) said that a key strength of the IPU was the relationship among its Members and between Members and the Secretariat. As a result, the review team had carried out some impact analysis, but had mainly focused on MPs' experiences over the last five years.

There were three steps in the first phase of the review. First, 20 impact documents had been analysed through quantitative and qualitative approaches that drew on relevant parts of assessment frameworks used by the OECD and UK Aid Commission. That step was not a full impact assessment and had resulted in preliminary findings only. Second, the results of the first step would be discussed and consulted on in groups and through a survey. Third, the results of the consultations would be calibrated, reported on and shared with Members for further feedback.

The preliminary findings on IPU Strategic Objective 7 (sustainable development) had placed the past five years' work in the *amber-red* category. Initial conclusions noted that the review period had seen the deployment of tools such as self-assessment kits, that sustainable development had high impact potential, and that the IPU had a unique capacity to mobilize action within national parliaments. Overall, there was also a strong need for a more strategic approach. So far, the survey indicated the IPU's work on the Sustainable Development Goals was perceived by Members as a strong mid-level performance. Ms. Martonffy invited all Committee members to participate in the survey and forthcoming focus group.

The President said that she hoped many members would take part in the consultations and contribute to the IPU's next five-year strategy. The world was entering a crucial period, as it started to recover from the impact of the pandemic and create a better and more sustainable world.

The sitting rose at 15:00 CEST.

Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights

Sitting of Wednesday, 28 April

The sitting was called to order at 14:00 CEST, on the Interprefy videoconferencing platform, with Ms. A. Gerkens (Netherlands), Vice-President of the Standing Committee, in the Chair.

Adoption of the agenda (C-III/142/A.1)

The agenda was adopted.

Approval of the summary record of the Committee's session held at the 141st IPU Assembly in Belgrade (October 2019)

The summary record was approved.

Debate on the overall theme of the 142nd Assembly: *Overcoming the pandemic and building a better tomorrow: the role of parliaments*

The Chair, introducing the debate on the overall theme of the 142nd Assembly, *Overcoming the pandemic and building a better tomorrow: the role of parliaments*, said that the serious challenges to democracy had multiplied significantly since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and that the debate offered an opportunity for Members to exchange experiences on how parliaments were approaching those challenges and learn lessons that would inform the outcome document to be considered for adoption during the present Assembly.

The debate would be divided into two segments, the first dealing with the impact of the pandemic on democracy and human rights, with remarks made by two special guests: Ms. L. Thornton, Director for Global Programmes at the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) and Mr. N. Bako-Arifari, member of the National Assembly of Benin, and the second dealing with the impact of the pandemic on parliaments, with introductory remarks made by two special guests: Mr. A. Williamson, senior researcher at the IPU's Centre for Innovation in Parliament; and Ms. C. López Castro, member of the Chamber of Deputies of Mexico.

Ms. L. Thornton (IDEA, special guest), accompanying her introductory remarks to the first segment of the debate with a digital slide presentation, shared data collected from 162 countries by the IDEA Global Monitor of COVID-19's Impact on Democracy and Human Rights, which sought to identify whether COVID-19 measures taken in those countries were concerning, or potentially concerning, from the democracy and human rights perspective. Updated twice monthly, those data indicated that governments – in many cases with justification – had restricted liberties in the face of the pandemic. States of emergency had been declared, for instance, in almost 60 per cent of the countries monitored, although over one half of them had reversed that measure by December 2020. Such declarations had been more commonly made in democracies, which, in contrast to authoritarian regimes, were primarily bound by constitutional provisions and liberal frameworks protecting civil liberties.

The criteria applied by the Global Monitor were based on whether COVID-19 measures were taken democratically and were proportional, needed, temporal and legal. Perturbing developments had unfortunately been identified in 62 per cent of the countries monitored. Although that figure was mainly associated with authoritarian or hybrid regimes, democratic standards had also been transgressed in two out of every five democracies. In all cases, the areas of freedom of expression, media integrity and personal integrity gave most cause for concern.

Over 70 countries had taken action to restrict freedom of expression, mostly under the guise of combating misinformation about COVID-19, including, in around one half of cases, by way of legislation and measures such as Internet blackouts. Some governments had also concealed or tampered with COVID-19-related data. In over one half of the countries monitored, the media had

been restricted, with journalists, media outlets and their owners often targeted with fines, arrests and prosecutions. The greatest number of violations of freedom of expression and media integrity had occurred in the Asia-Pacific region.

As to personal integrity and security, violations were again most common in authoritarian regimes, where, for example, military personnel acted as law enforcers, police used excessive force, criminalization was disproportionate, and contact-tracing applications had been used for political purposes. Similar measures had, however, been noted in some 20 per cent of the democratic countries being monitored. Over one half of countries, furthermore, had used arbitrary arrests to enforce COVID-19 restrictions and 32 countries had called in the military to manage the pandemic.

Elections were naturally very much affected by the pandemic. Almost one half of all electoral processes scheduled to take place in 2020 had been postponed to a later date, although over 50 per cent had since been conducted on schedule. Most postponements had occurred in democracies, which was unsurprising in view of the higher number of electoral exercises occurring in such countries. The greatest number of indefinite postponements had been in Africa. Last but not least, women had been disproportionately affected by the pandemic. An increase in gender-based violence, for instance, had been recorded in 57 of the countries monitored.

In short, the pandemic had intensified the pre-existing stress on democracy and accelerated democratic deterioration processes. Positive developments, on the other hand, had included the introduction of innovative election arrangements, the use of digitalization to bring political actors closer to constituents, and an increase in demands for democracy.

Further information about the Global Monitor and the data produced from its continuing work was available at: <https://www.idea.int/gsod-indices/covid19globalmonitor>. Questions and requests could also be addressed to the Global Monitor helpdesk at: globalmonitor@idea.int.

Ms. J. Salman (Bahrain) said that her country's proactive response to the global outbreak of COVID-19 had undoubtedly helped to minimize the worst effects of COVID-19 for its population. The measures taken in Bahrain to curb the spread of the virus were, moreover, human rights-compliant and consistent with the recommendations of the World Health Organization. They were also widely supported by the public, who recognized that concern for their health and safety was driving such measures, none of which had been forcibly imposed. Throughout the pandemic, the Government had worked in close cooperation with the legislature, which had enacted laws to address the socioeconomic impact of COVID-19, including by providing for stimulus packages and emergency medical expenditure.

Ms. M. Alameri (United Arab Emirates) said that access to health care was a universal human right and more urgently needed than ever in the fight against the pandemic. Parliamentarians must therefore do their utmost to secure access to affordable health care, including COVID-19 vaccines, supplies of which were readily available in developed countries but virtually non-existent by comparison in developing countries. Parliamentarians must also be committed to ensuring affordable testing for coronavirus and to preventing the dire consequences, vividly highlighted by the pandemic, of lack of access to health care. The United Arab Emirates was helping to alleviate such consequences in numerous countries through a humanitarian approach.

Mr. M.R. Dashti Ardakani (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the pandemic had already taught lessons in democracy and human rights. Some countries were, for example, hoarding vaccines, restricting access for others hard hit by the virus to medicines and medical equipment, and failing to observe such basic principles as the right to life and to fair distribution of products in times of crisis. The health of Iranians had suffered badly as a result of medical shortages caused by the continued illegal sanctions imposed on their country by the United States, which put pressure on the global community to do the same in pursuit of its self-centred policies. The situation was compounded by economic woes, also caused by sanctions, that made it difficult to wage an effective fight against COVID-19.

Ms. S. Ntakirutimana (Burundi) said that, in May 2020, COVID-secure elections had been successfully organized in her country, which had testing, quarantining and other measures in place to prevent the spread of the virus, all of them protective of human rights. Free care was provided to COVID-19 patients and a new COVID-19 response plan had been developed following a review of the first such plan. In addition to ensuring that it was kept abreast of government plans for fighting the

virus, her Parliament had worked to sensitize the public to the importance of following the recommended preventive measures and of being promptly tested should COVID-19 symptoms appear. National solidarity was key to overcoming the pandemic and enabling the country to pursue its development.

Mr. Zhuo Xinping (China) said that, in fighting the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, his Government had consistently adhered to the people-centred concept of human rights, prioritizing individual health and safety and implementing the concept of health for all by offering emergency humanitarian assistance worldwide. Despite increasing global inequality, development challenges and social ills fuelled by disinformation, some were exploiting the pandemic to politicize irrelevant issues and stigmatize others while the legitimate vaccine needs of most developing countries remained overlooked and unfulfilled. China called for strengthening of inclusive, innovative, multifaceted and multilateral cooperation and information-sharing, in particular on vaccines; the promotion of sustainable development, poverty reduction and human rights; and collaboration to combat the pandemic and build a shared future for humankind.

Ms. L. Fehlmann Rielle (Switzerland) said that the pandemic had highlighted not only social inequalities within and among countries but also the important role of the State in regulation, redistribution and the provision of assistance to individuals and businesses forced into economic inactivity. It had equally highlighted the vital role of key and frontline workers, such as health professionals, carers and retail staff, whose jobs were indispensable but frequently low paid. As some dictatorial regimes had reportedly used the pandemic as a pretext for repression, the Committee should reinforce the message that democracy was a precious asset to be safeguarded, including in the interest of defending the human rights of parliamentarians and of the wider public alike.

Mr. M.A. Basorah (Yemen) said that the pandemic had had an adverse impact on democracy and that errors had been made in advanced and emerging democracies alike. Some governments had exploited the pandemic to restrict rights and freedoms and engage in political manoeuvring in pursuit of their aims. The IPU and parliaments around the world must protect democracy by speaking out against such unacceptable practices, which included imposing embargoes, banning political party activity, and manipulating COVID-19 figures for use as a pretext for limiting social, political and other rights and freedoms.

Ms. R. Kavakci Kan (Turkey), stressing the vital importance of democracy and human rights, said that first priority in fighting the pandemic was to preserve lives. As the pandemic had underlined, humankind was interconnected and interdependent, which meant that no one was well unless all were well. Multilateralism and cooperation, furthermore, were essential to addressing not only the pandemic itself but also related to other challenges, which ranged from economic and vaccination issues to rising violence, racism and oppression. To survive the pandemic, the global community – in particular its wealthier countries – must work to share resources, provide economic support where needed, halt embargoes and secure all medical needs.

Mr. J. Taiana (Argentina) said that the pandemic had not revealed the world at its best, throwing the spotlight instead on the growing inequality among countries. Clearly, on the basis of agreements with the pharmaceutical industry, some countries were focused only on the medical needs and vaccination of their own populations while leaving others almost entirely deprived of those benefits. With cooperation in that regard crucial, his country was grateful to the Chinese and Russian Governments for having supplied it with vaccines. Parliamentarians must call on the international community to respond to the need for free or affordable vaccines, failing which there could be no guarantee of democracy or human rights going forward.

Ms. H. McPherson (Canada) said that COVID-19 had intensified existing inequalities, laying bare social fault lines and placing the most vulnerable at risk. In Canada, essential and key workers had been deeply affected by the pandemic and parliamentary committee studies had found that indigenous populations were more susceptible to its effects than other Canadians, partly owing to long-standing health and socioeconomic inequalities. Indigenous women and children and gender-diverse people had also reported an increase in human rights violations since the start of the pandemic. Parliament had therefore urged measures to protect the rights of women and girls, whose health and well-being were threatened by the pandemic, together with their economic security, physical safety and security.

Mr. N. Bako-Arifari (Benin, special guest) said that restrictions imposed during the pandemic had increased economic fragility and led to repercussions for, among others, household incomes, employment and access to basic services, in developing countries especially. The exceptional measures taken in some countries had affected the enjoyment of fundamental human rights and the longer the pandemic continued the more elusive the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), above all Goal 1 (on the elimination of poverty), were likely to become. The pandemic had also accentuated democratic decline, with freedoms curtailed, elections sometimes postponed indefinitely and voter turnout reduced in even the largest democracies, which potentially delegitimized the results. In working to strengthen cooperation to combat the pandemic, parliaments must use their legislative and oversight functions to preserve human rights and democratic gains while keeping all exceptional measures under constant review to ensure their constitutionality and consistency with international norms and the rule of law.

Ms. F. Benbadis (Algeria) said that the pandemic had spared no country and that saving human lives and restricting individual freedoms were contradictions to be reconciled in the fight against it. No strategy for eradicating the pandemic could ever be infallible and decisions had invariably had to be made to limit such freedoms, as it was unrealistic to count on the strict compliance of citizens with guidelines. States of emergency imposed in accordance with national constitutions were therefore permissible, as were restrictions on freedom in the public interest, which, in the present case, related to public health and an eventual return to normalcy.

Ms. S. Koutra-Koukouma (Cyprus) said that, coupled with states of emergency, the pandemic had offered a golden opportunity to those who had long sought to deregulate labour relations, reduce labour costs and introduce new flexible forms of work. It had furthermore increased the stress on and demand for democracy while also generating a socioeconomic and political crisis. Recognizing that such crises were never gender neutral, the IPU had organized a series of virtual meetings on gender-responsive recovery post-COVID-19, which had focused on, inter alia, women's economic empowerment, violence against women and girls, and gender-sensitive parliaments. In the ongoing fight against COVID-19, social dialogue remained highly relevant to safeguarding social labour and political rights. Recovery must be human-centred and aimed at protecting the rights of all citizens.

The Chair, summing up the views expressed in the first segment of the debate, noted the emphasis laid on the universal right to health care and on guaranteed access to COVID-19 vaccines for all. Several speakers had drawn attention to the growing inequalities, human rights abuses and pressures on democracy. Against that backdrop, it was heartening that some countries had successfully held elections in a COVID-secure environment. She invited the special guests for the second segment of the debate to address participants.

Mr. A. Williamson (IPU, special guest), accompanying his introductory remarks with a digital slide presentation, provided an overview of findings from research conducted by the IPU's Centre for Innovation in Parliament on the impact of COVID-19 on parliaments. Over the preceding year, a staggering number of the 116 Member Parliaments surveyed had introduced virtual processes, with some 33 per cent holding virtual or hybrid plenary sessions and 65 per cent holding virtual committee meetings, which offered not only a solution to the crisis caused by the pandemic but also benefited civil society and public participation. It had therefore been a year of rapid enforced innovation for parliaments, three quarters of which had signalled their intention to retain at least some of their new digital infrastructures and practices, whether involving public-facing tools or tools in support of legislative and management processes.

Parliaments had thus been changed by the pandemic, most noticeably through the acceleration of modernization towards digitally focused processes and procedures, which had significant business and democratic advantages in addition to enhancing transparency and accountability. Thanks to the efforts of technology teams to understand and support the needs of parliamentarians and staff in remote work settings, parliaments had been able to overcome issues of trust surrounding remote working and technology. They had also grown more flexible and agile as a result of their experience of the pandemic, driving the pace of change through the system instead of working on the basis of major planning and procurement projects. Other benefits of remote working included reduced printing and travel costs, greater efficiency, and increased resilience to future crises. Full details of the research findings and data would be included in the World e-Parliament Report to be presented at the World e-Parliament Conference in June 2021.

Ms. C. López Castro (Mexico, special guest), giving an account of her experience of the pandemic as a member of the Mexican Chamber of Deputies, said that, following the outbreak of COVID-19 in March 2020, the Chamber had suspended its plenary sessions until further notice and was at present continuing to work in hybrid mode. Under its rules of procedure, parliamentarians were at that time required to vote in person, meaning that parliamentary committees working via videoconferencing had been unable to vote on the matters under discussion. On occasion, and with social distancing measures in place, the Chamber had convened extraordinary sessions in order to debate and approve crucial secondary legislation, such as that relating to the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement.

New rules of procedure had since been adopted to limit the number of parliamentarians present in the Chamber at any one time and authorize the remainder to follow sessions online and vote remotely using special handheld devices. The Chamber had consequently grown more agile and could perhaps contemplate continuing its committee work remotely even after the pandemic, whereas other aspects of parliamentary work involving, for instance, lobbying and negotiation, including on the sidelines, were best conducted in person. The same applied to plenary sessions and to opportunities for engagement with constituents, especially those in neighbourhoods worst affected by the coronavirus, many of whom had fallen through the social net after losing jobs in the informal sector. The pandemic had exacted a high human toll, including among Mexican parliamentarians and their staff, almost 30 of whom had been its victims.

On a more positive note, working from home had improved the life-work balance for parliamentarians, especially women. Unfortunately, however, the more newly elected among them had already spent the first third of their three-year term of office without experiencing and learning from the in-person dynamics of the job. Parliamentary committee work could continue remotely after the pandemic, but it would be important to set a clear agenda for the performance of other parliamentary activities.

Mr. R. Mavenyengwa (Zimbabwe) said that the pandemic had precipitated an unprecedented crisis that had negatively affected all sectors of the community, exacerbated existing inequalities and undermined the enjoyment of human rights. Many were unable to access health-care facilities, informal workers had been left stranded, and government resources were inadequate to cope with the situation. Although identified from the outset as an essential service, his Parliament had been prevented by lockdown measures from discharging its normal legislative and oversight functions. It was keen to scale up those functions as swiftly as possible to ensure, inter alia, that funds were being properly channelled towards dealing with COVID-19 and that the thousands of schoolgirls who had become pregnant during the pandemic were not denied their right to education.

Mr. M.A. Basorah (Yemen) said that the pandemic had brought many parliamentary activities around the world to a standstill. His Parliament was not alone in having had to amend its rules of procedure to allow for virtual meetings and other forms of remote working, all of them a novelty for most. As a result, it had been able to work on budgetary and planning matters at the committee level but was constrained by the continuing absence of an online voting system. It was nonetheless doing its best to adapt in response to the pandemic by enacting and overseeing the implementation of required legislation. The crisis was as yet open-ended, however, and likely to affect the parliamentary budget going forward.

Mr. M.R. Dashti Ardakani (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that his Parliament's new session had coincided with the devastating peak of the pandemic crisis and that several parliamentarians had sadly lost their lives to COVID-19. Some parliamentary meetings had been held with the assistance of information technology and parliamentarians had endeavoured to lend moral and practical support to their constituents while always taking care in the process to observe social distancing measures. The suffering from the effects of the pandemic in his country was intensified, however, by the cruel sanctions imposed on it by the United States. He therefore called for action to secure equal access to COVID-19 vaccines for his country, which was grateful for those it had already received.

Mr. A.K. Althawadi (Bahrain) said that the pandemic had paralysed all aspects of life but that his Parliament had nonetheless managed to hold all of its usual sessions through online platforms. It had also worked to support and ensure enforcement of the precautionary measures introduced to combat COVID-19 and safeguard public health. Individually, parliamentarians had used social media to maintain contact with constituents and take on board their views and suggestions in an approach that had shifted since the start of the pandemic from reactive to proactive. COVID-19 treatment and

vaccines were offered free of charge to all citizens and residents of Bahrain, who had every confidence in the ability of the Government and Parliament to tackle the pandemic without any diminution of their rights.

Mr. S. Spengemann (Canada) said that, in addition to playing their part in vaccine equity, which was a domestic and international issue, parliamentarians must centre political dialogue around the most credible, reliable and globally shared science when it came to addressing such key issues as the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change. They must also push back against sources of deliberate misinformation and arguments known to run counter to scientific operations with the explicit aim of causing harm in the public health context. The way forward in the pandemic, as well as towards the attainment of the SDGs by 2030 and net zero emissions by 2050, was to share science globally and empower countries that did not generate their own scientific research to tap into sources recognized as reliable.

Ms. S. Sapag (Argentina) said that communication technology had enabled parliaments to continue functioning throughout the pandemic. They had, however, remained isolated as a result and must think hard about ways of overcoming the present situation. Her concern was ensuring that parliaments continued to work for the public and serve as its voice.

Mr. A. Suwanmongkol (Thailand) said that, in the fragile context of the current COVID-19 crisis, parliaments stood as a beacon of hope by helping to improve transparency and holding governments to account for any introduction of public emergency measures with far-reaching health and socioeconomic consequences that would outlast the pandemic. Parliaments should work towards guaranteeing the meaningful participation of all sectors of society in decision-making concerning the COVID-19 response; protect the key values of democracy and human rights, including freedom to disseminate information without interference; and counteract misinformation with clear evidence-based facts. Lastly, parliaments must ensure that emergency powers were not used to quash dissent, silence human rights defenders and journalists, or take unnecessary steps to address the pandemic situation.

The Chair, summing up the views expressed in the second segment of the debate, said that interesting remarks had been made concerning the collaborative work of parliamentarians, their efforts to reach out to the electorate, including through social media, and challenges associated with online voting procedures and budgetary restraints. The parliamentary colleagues sadly lost to COVID-19 would be remembered by the Committee.

She hoped that participants had learned from the debate and would feel energized to move forward with fresh ideas and bold solutions for combating the pandemic. As stated earlier, the views expressed would inform the outcome document to be considered for adoption by the Assembly. She looked forward to the inclusion of gender-equality issues in that document, especially in the light of the shocking information that pregnant teenagers in Zimbabwe might be barred from attending school, which was a stark example of the impact of the pandemic on human rights. She expressed thanks to those who had contributed to the debate and her best wishes to all for their continued health and safety.

The sitting rose at 15:50 CEST.

Sitting of Tuesday, 18 May

The sitting was called to order at 14:05 CEST with Mr. A. Desai (India), President of the Standing Committee, in the Chair.

The next resolution of the Standing Committee: *Legislation worldwide to combat online sexual child exploitation*

The Chair said that the Standing Committee had selected the following theme for its next resolution: *Legislation worldwide to combat online sexual child exploitation*. The theme had been selected at the 141st IPU Assembly in Belgrade in October 2019, but work had been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The issue had become even more urgent during the pandemic. In 2019, the

Committee had appointed Ms. A. Gerkens (Netherlands) and Ms. J. Oduol (Kenya) as co-rapporteurs and decided that it would appoint a male parliamentarian as the third co-rapporteur. Mr. P. Limjaroenrat (Thailand) had been nominated. The Chair took it that the Committee wished to approve the nomination.

The nomination was approved.

The Chair said that, at the present meeting, the Standing Committee would hold a preparatory debate on the theme of the next resolution with opening remarks from the UN Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children. Parliamentarians would then be able to take the floor, starting with the three co-rapporteurs. Lastly, there would be an expert hearing with the opportunity to put questions to a panel.

Ms. M. Singhateh (UN Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children), expert, said that the continued development and growth of information and communication technologies (ICT) had created new opportunities to communicate, interact, work and learn. However, they had also exposed children to different manifestations of sexual exploitation and abuse. Online sexual child abuse was not a new phenomenon but had increased over the past few decades. Examples of offences included: the use of images and videos depicting children in a sexualized manner, child prostitution and grooming. Perpetrators were using technologies such as live streaming services, encrypted communication systems, peer to peer platforms and anonymous payment applications to share sexual child abuse material as well as to communicate with each other and with children anonymously. The rapid evolution of those technologies posed a challenge to law enforcement officers, researchers and advocates who often found themselves outpaced.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing lockdown had caused a surge in online child abuse cases reported since children were spending more time online. She had recently finalized a report entitled *Impact of the coronavirus disease on different manifestations of sale and sexual exploitation of children*. The report showed that the pandemic had changed the pattern of sexual abuse and exploitation with perpetrators operating less outside and more indoors and online. There had also been an increase in those seeking sexual child abuse materials and an increase in sexual abuse and exploitation facilitated by ICT.

Addressing the problems of online sexual child abuse and exploitation would require a holistic approach and commitment from all stakeholders, including parents, law makers, governments, regulators, the private sector, civil society, the UN system and children themselves. However, not much could be achieved without the enactment of national laws that protected children in the digital space and criminalized online sexual child abuse. Legislation should not only protect children and punish perpetrators. It should set out adequate budgetary allocations for application of the law, provide for the training and equipment of law enforcement agencies and offer counselling, rehabilitative care and reparations to survivors. In addition, there must be room to formulate policies that protected children against harmful content online and to develop measures requiring ICT and social media platforms to monitor, review and remove inappropriate content and share digital forensic evidence with law enforcement authorities.

A worldwide model law which included all the foregoing and factored in the contributions of all stakeholders would be most impactful if adopted by States and incorporated into domestic laws. Any law formulated should be based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, and in accordance with the following four principles: non-discrimination, the best interests of the child, the child's right to life, survival and development, and respect for the views of the child. The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child's general comment No. 25 (2021) on children's rights in relation to the digital environment and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights would be very instructive in the formulation of any legislation relating to online sexual child abuse and exploitation. It was her hope that progress would be made not only in the formulation of an IPU resolution but also towards the drafting of a model law to be adopted by all IPU Members. She would support the process in every possible way.

Ms. A. Gerkens (Netherlands), co-rapporteur, said that online sexual child abuse was a growing problem. Young people were going online increasingly more often, which made them vulnerable to predators. A growing number of images were self-made with people sharing images easily without thinking of the terrible consequences. There was also a great deal of shame around the subject due to victim-blaming. As a result, victims did not always seek help and could be pressured

into creating more images. It was a good idea to work together to overcome the problem. The debate, however, was a difficult one because not every country had the same sexual values or the same digital expertise or networks. Those differences must be taken into account when formulating any legislation. She asked parliamentarians to describe the hurdles that existed in their own countries as well as the best practices used to overcome them.

Mr. P. Limjaroenrat (Thailand), co-rapporteur, accompanying his remarks with a digital slide presentation, said that, after engaging with a wide range of stakeholders in Thailand, he had observed three trends related to online sexual child exploitation. First, cash incentives were turning into crypto incentives. Such incentives were integrated into applications and platforms, thus making it increasingly difficult for law enforcement agencies to trace them. Second, forced exploitation was becoming volunteered exploitation, which also made enforcement much more difficult. In such cases, prevention was key. Rehabilitation for volunteered exploitation was different to that for forced exploitation. Third, public domain investigation was becoming private domain investigation. Evidence was difficult to access because it was stored in the domains of private technology companies and destroyed after a certain time.

Online sexual child exploitation was an internationalized problem that required coordinated efforts focusing on three areas: prevention (before it happened), enforcement (while it happened) and rehabilitation (after it happened). Each of those three areas could also be examined on the national, regional and global levels. The said framework would make it possible to assess gaps under each area, including capability gaps, legal gaps or budget gaps. In his own research, he had found many gaps that prevented law enforcement, international organizations and governments from addressing the problem effectively and efficiently.

Online sexual child exploitation was an evolving phenomenon and the infrastructure was not up to date to accommodate the pace of the change. There were some immediate actions that parliamentarians could take to tackle the problem. First, parliamentarians should engage in advocacy efforts, for instance, by raising awareness and providing checks and balances on government policy. It was important to develop an approach that was child-centric and did not lead to further victimization of the children. Second, parliamentarians should pay attention to the law, making sure to review and update legislation regularly and ensure harmonization of legal frameworks between countries. Third, immediate action was needed on the national budgeting process. All stakeholders must have enough resources, people, technologies and capabilities to tackle the problem in a holistic and time-effective way.

Ms. J. Oduol (Kenya), co-rapporteur, said that online sexual child exploitation was a big problem in Kenya due to the rapid development and expansion of digital technology. Children, and especially young girls, had become even more vulnerable during the COVID-19 pandemic since many were spending more time at home. Kenya already had some domestic legislation in place. There was also some regional legislation, including Article 27 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, which required children to be protected from all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse. In addition, Kenya had put in place an ICT regulator called the Communications Authority of Kenya whose mandate was to protect consumers online, particularly children. The authority had developed a guide to online child protection and continued to raise awareness of ways to keep children safe online. However, law enforcement was having many difficulties because internet service providers were not able to report offences. It was important to create laws and policies that enabled internet service providers to work with law enforcement, for example, by identifying offenders. The problem was a global one requiring concerted effort from all countries.

Mr. J. Galla (India) said that India had always upheld international covenants, treaties and instruments pertaining to the rights of children and was consistently looking to strengthen its national policies and laws to fulfil those international commitments. Some of the laws enacted by the Parliament of India included the Information Technology Act (2000), which contained provisions to deal with online sexual child abuse, including child pornography, and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (2012), which further protected children. There were, however, many challenges, including difficulties locating content service providers, a lack of cooperation by some platforms and law enforcement agencies, and increased use of the dark web. The Government of India was trying to address those challenges.

The way forward was to develop technology based on a proactive monitoring facility that could identify platforms hosting child sex abuse material. Those platforms could then be blocked and removed. It was also important to encourage cyber volunteers to report obscene content as well as to

strengthen cyber forensic capabilities. In addition, the cyber safety public awareness drive should be strengthened with support from industry, academia and non-governmental organizations. Parliamentarians at the national, regional and global levels must unite in their efforts to create a peaceful and productive environment for children.

Ms. Le Thu Ha (Viet Nam) said that Viet Nam had passed laws to protect children from abuse of all forms, such as the Law on Child Protection, Care and Education (2004), the Law on Children (2016) and the Law on Cybersecurity (2018). Legislation must be kept up to date with the rapidly changing online environment. In Viet Nam, the Committee for Culture, Education, Youth, Adolescents and Children was in charge of the matter but also cooperated with other committees. Debates and meetings took place at committee level where parliamentarians could raise concerns and then take them to the National Assembly.

A number of measures should be taken to combat online sexual child exploitation: (1) pass legislation to protect all children, in both remote or urban areas, and, in so doing, ensure comprehensive coordination between government ministries; (2) promote international cooperation to mobilize resources and technical expertise; (3) call upon major agencies to prevent harmful programmes from appearing online; (4) provide children with access to support systems where they could express their concerns; (5) enhance enforcement capacity and educate people on how to protect children from online sexual exploitation nationally and locally.

Mr. S. Al Salloum (Syrian Arab Republic) said that it was very important for all countries to enact laws that protected children as well as to monitor internet activity. It was especially important to do so during the pandemic since children were being forced to stay at home for long periods of time. Parents should be educated on how to monitor the activity of their children online. Technology could help in that regard. Syria had passed a law that criminalized the use of the internet to exploit children and was working on enforcing it in the proper way. It had also enacted a law with the sole aim of protecting children.

Ms. L. Wall (New Zealand) said that New Zealand had a set of Voluntary Principles to Counter Online Child Sex Exploitation and Abuse. The principles had been developed in July 2019 at a ministerial meeting in London and operationalized by Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

The Parliament of New Zealand was in the process of amending its Harmful Digital Communications Act (2015) with respect to the issue of unauthorized postings of intimate visual recordings. Currently, the law contained a requirement to prove “intent” and “harm”, but, as part of the amendment, the focus would instead be on “consent”. Indeed, the victim would have previously had to prove that they had endured serious emotional harm as a result of the recordings. With the amendment, a sex crime would have taken place if consent had not been given, resulting in three years in jail or a fine of NZD 50,000.

Her Parliament was also examining a submission from Facebook. Facebook had a policy on non-consensual sharing of intimate imagery and a commitment to removing sexual images which led to sexual exploitation. They removed the image if not consented and had the power to disable violating accounts. By working with platform providers and moving to the issue of consent, it was possible to address the issues.

Ms. R. Kavakci Kan (Turkey) said that it was very important to protect children from all kinds of crimes and ensure their spiritual and physical wellbeing. Turkey had harmonized its national law with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and signed the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (2007). Children were protected under the Turkish Constitution. The country had a law on protecting minors from harmful publications, a child protection law, a law regulating broadcasts made on the internet and a law on broadcasting harmful materials on television and radio. However, a great deal more needed to be done. In addition, the Parliament had recently established the Digital Platforms Commission, thanks to which a law had been passed requiring all social media and communications platforms to have a representative in Turkey, where previously they had not had one. The representative dealt with all harmful material and could be questioned and held accountable by Parliament.

Ms. S. Koutra Koukouma (Cyprus) said that online sexual child exploitation was a growing phenomenon. The phenomenon could only be effectively tackled through cooperation between different providers and platforms. It was essential to put together a comprehensive piece of legislation that held States, companies and social media platforms responsible. The legislation must include an

accurate and appropriate definition of the term “online sexual child exploitation” and establish monitoring mechanisms that prevented perpetrators from approaching children. However, it was even more important to equip children with the ability to resist and make sure they felt safe to ask for help. The only way to do so was to empower, inform and sexually educate children. It was for that reason that sex education must be integrated into the school curriculum in a scientifically grounded way to meet the needs of all ages. Dogmatic, prohibitive and conservative approaches would not help. Children must understand that their body belonged to them and that they had the right to say no.

Ms. M. Alameri (United Arab Emirates) said that cyber criminals tended to operate in countries with no cyber laws or with weak cyber laws. It was for that reason that the United Arab Emirates had enacted its own laws, including a law on cybercrimes and many child protection laws. In 2016, her Parliament had also passed Wadeema’s Law which contained many provisions on cyber protection for children. National hotlines were in place where children, educators or parents could call and report abuse. There were also other important initiatives to encourage reporting of online sexual child abuse. More needed to be done, but progress in the United Arab Emirates was good compared to other countries.

Ms. Fang Yan (China) said that China fully recognized the seriousness of crimes committed against children on social media and had taken several measures to combat the problem. In 2015 and 2020, the Parliament had amended the Chinese Criminal Code to reclassify the act of having sex with a child under the age of 14 as rape. There was also a chapter on cyber privacy and security in the law on the protection of minors.

China had made progress domestically, but difficulties remained because online sexual child abuse was a cross-border crime. Criminals and internet providers often operated in different countries which were governed by different laws. There was also insufficient international cooperation and a lack of information sharing. Nevertheless, investigating and prosecuting criminals should be of the highest priority. She urged delegates to improve information sharing across countries, for instance by setting up an online bulletin board, network platform or server. Developing cross-border relationships to facilitate prosecution of offenders and extradition of criminals would also be valuable. Lastly, there was a need to establish a mechanism of international judicial cooperation. Justice would be served with collective determination, effort and collaboration.

Ms. M. Espinales (Nicaragua) said that Nicaragua was committed to children and adolescents and would support an IPU resolution on the given topic. Her Parliament had ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocol and was currently updating its domestic legal framework. The Special Law on Cybercrimes (2020) was being amended to include a specific chapter on sexual exploitation of children. A national coalition had been set up to implement the Law on Trafficking of Persons (2015) with the support of two parliamentary committees. The Penal Code had also been updated to include sanctions for crimes committed on the internet and through ICT. It was important for countries to exchange ideas with a view to strengthening their legal frameworks.

Other measures taken by her Parliament included working with the International Labour Organization and Save the Children to build capacities among teachers. There was also a public policy giving protection to children.

Mr. M.R. Dashti Arakani (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that online sexual child abuse and exploitation was on the rise with perpetrators launching their own websites or posing on social networks, such as Facebook and Twitter. Research suggested that many children had learnt to use ICT tools before the age of five. Consequently, eight out of ten teenagers were at risk of online sexual abuse. The majority of children who fell victim had no information about sexual abuse or how to deal with the situation. It was estimated that 60-80 per cent of victims did not reach out to anyone or access specialized services. It was necessary to adopt broad policies to prevent sexual child abuse, educate adults working in childcare and educate children themselves so that they had the skills they needed to take care of themselves.

Iran had taken legal measures to combat child abuse. Its law on children and adolescents categorized child abuse as a public crime. A social emergency system had also been set up to provide support to people in big cities. Efforts should be made particularly on prevention.

Child abuse could not be eradicated, but it could be reduced and its consequences diminished. An IPU resolution on the topic would facilitate the work of parliamentarians and raise awareness of the phenomenon globally.

Mr. J. Carr (ECPAT International), expert, said that ECPAT International was dedicated to fighting against sexual exploitation of children in all its many forms. It was encouraging to hear of the legal measures being adopted in different countries. Laws were an essential foundation but were never enough. There was an urgent need to improve the international machinery enabling all stakeholders to cooperate in protecting children.

Many of the global platforms on which the offences were taking place were American-owned and therefore governed by United States federal law. Under that law, every case of sexual child exploitation that came to the attention of an online platform must be reported to the National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC). According to data published by NCMEC, 21.7 million reports of online sexual child exploitation had come to the attention of American-based companies such as Facebook or Google in 2020. Those reports represented a 25 per cent increase from the previous year. However, the reports often related to more than one item. It was estimated that there were in fact 65 million individual files, including 31,650,000 videos and 33,690,000 pictures. A total of 93 per cent of the material came from Facebook Messenger or Instagram Direct. In 99 per cent of cases, the platforms themselves had taken action to find the images, delete them and report them to the police. They did so using smart tools such as Photo DNA, which had been developed in 2009 by Microsoft. Photo DNA was a big, scalable system that looked at every image that appeared on a particular platform and compared it with a database of already known illegal images. NCMEC also produced data showing the countries from which the images were being uploaded and downloaded. There was no country in the world that did not feature in the data.

In December 2020, a new law had come into effect in the European Union which made it illegal for Facebook and other platforms to continue using tools such as Photo DNA. It had been an unintended consequence of the law. Thankfully, the European Union had now removed the hurdle although Facebook was yet to follow up. During the period that the new law had been in effect, there had been a 58 per cent decrease in the number of reports of sexual child exploitation being received by NCMEC in relation to the 27 countries of the European Union. It was a very dramatic example of how important the tools were in protecting children on the internet. The extent to which the tools were being used on platforms that were not based in the United States was unclear. What was clear, however, was that the scale of offending against children was too large to be left solely to human intervention. Better technical solutions must be deployed on a much wider scale across the world.

Ms. M.F. Singhateh (UN Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children), expert, said that it was clear from the interventions that many relevant laws were already in place worldwide. However, she encouraged the adoption of a universal, uniform law. It would be useful for every country to have a model law that was specifically devoted to the subject and captured all the problems involved.

Collaboration and cooperation were also important. Online sexual child exploitation was a transnational crime with perpetrators, children and users often based in different countries. There must be collaboration among all law enforcement agencies so that countries could share information. Countries should introduce child protection helplines to support children and other stakeholders. Children should be involved in the development of mechanisms, laws and policies since their perspectives were key in ensuring the right solutions were in place. There was also a need to educate all stakeholders on how to stay safe online, including parents, parliamentarians, the private sector and children themselves. She had found that most materials were generated by children themselves. Children must be aware of how not to share images.

Ms. S. Sapag (Argentina) said that Argentina had made grooming a crime in 2013 and set up a specialized unit dealing with online sexual child abuse. More, however, needed to be done. Argentina was currently training the relevant actors in society to fight more effectively against the problem.

Mr. J. Carr (ECPAT International) endorsed the sentiments of Ms. Sapag. Specialist units and resources were essential to make progress. Many countries had good laws in place. The problem was not the law, but the ability to enforce the law. Enforcing the law required the police to have enough money as well as the cyber tools, equipment, knowledge and training to investigate the crimes and arrest perpetrators. It also depended on Interpol and other international law enforcement bodies having the right tools and resourcing to ensure global cooperation.

Mr. S. Spengemann (Canada) said it was incredibly important to show that the parliaments of the world were united on the issue and were visibly working together. Law enforcement and domestic legislative mechanisms would then have the confidence and support to make the investment and policy decisions that were so urgently needed. Countries must consider how to achieve global unity as quickly as possible and show that the IPU was engaged.

Ms. J. Salman (Bahrain) said that online sexual child abuse was one of the most dangerous issues arising from the pandemic. Children were frequently at home using virtual tools and were therefore more vulnerable to being exploited. Bahrain had a national institution in charge of children's rights and a law protecting children and condemning perpetrators. It was also part of an international coalition to combat internet crimes. She agreed with Mr. Carr that laws were not enough. Equally, she agreed with Ms. Singhateh on the need to educate children and to invite them to participate along with other stakeholders. Parents had a part to play in terms of raising awareness and providing security. Schools also played an important role and so did the media. The media could raise awareness among parents and academic institutions about the seriousness of such crimes and how to respond. International coordination was needed so that countries could develop structures to fight the phenomenon. The phenomenon was evolving, with children currently exploited not only through pornography but also through games. It was for that reason that all structures should be kept up to date.

Mr. G. Binzagr (Saudi Arabia) agreed with the remarks made by Ms. Singhateh on the need to address the matter holistically. It was important to take three elements into account. First, mechanisms should be put in place to make the matter a national priority rather than one on the periphery. Saudi Arabia had introduced an initiative for the protection of children in cyber space, but other countries might have different approaches. Second, a mechanism was needed to analyse the issue in a multidimensional fashion and provide solutions that addressed all the complexities involved. Third, structures were necessary to coordinate action between the various entities responsible for tackling the problem within a country. Saudi Arabia had a Family Affairs Council with different specialized committees of which one was a children's affairs committee. It was through the council that coordination on prevention, enforcement and rehabilitation could occur.

Ms. M. Singhateh (UN Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children) said that the IPU resolution would be a good place to start when it came to creating global unity. It would show that parliamentarians around the world recognized the problem and were seeking a strategic solution. It was also important to look at the issue from a holistic perspective. The problem was a transnational one with every country having a role to play. It was for that reason that a uniform law, which States could incorporate into domestic structures, was also a good idea. It would mean that all parties were on the same page. She agreed that countries already had relevant laws in place, but those laws were all different. A model would show that there was political will to address the problem. It would also make provision for budgetary allocations as well as for the training and equipment of law enforcement agencies.

It was bad enough that children were enduring the abuse. They were, however, revictimized repeatedly every time the material was viewed online. The sharing of technology to scan the internet, detect the problem and remove the material was therefore key. International cooperation was needed in that regard. All law enforcement agencies across the globe should be speaking in a unified voice. Most countries had some structures in place but were not always training and equipping the bodies responsible. Again, she emphasized the need for political commitment, but also for a legal framework, budgetary allocations and cooperation between all stakeholders. Most importantly, children needed to be involved and educated.

Mr. J. Carr (ECPAT International) agreed that gaming environments were a major source of risk. Most parliaments had not focused on the gaming environment in sufficient ways. The problem was not to do with the nature of the laws in place but with the way evidence was processed and presented in a courtroom. It would be asking a great deal for procedural law in every country to be unified. However, it would be helpful to agree the basis on which evidence could be exchanged between countries. He knew of cases that had been rejected by English courts because of the way the evidence had been collected or processed. He commended Bahrain on the excellent work it was doing, particularly in respect of young women and girls, and agreed with the remarks made by Mr. Binzagr. The problem was already at the top of the agenda of most countries. The way it panned

out, however, was completely different and depended on the politics and history of the country. There was no simple prescription for how to progress on the topic. Much of it had to do with launching campaigns on the ground and encouraging parliamentarians to help those campaigns gain traction.

Ms. S. Rezaie (Afghanistan) said that she strongly supported the suggestion for a universal law. There should be global unity to protect children worldwide, with harassment of children recognized as an international crime. Afghanistan already had laws in place but was having problems implementing them. Often, it had been unable to track the groups responsible. She asked the experts to suggest potential mechanisms for a country such as Afghanistan.

Ms. S. Koutra Koukouma (Cyprus) said that Cyprus had a children's ombudsperson and a Children's House which offered all the necessary services to victims. The idea was for children to describe what had happened once instead of having to repeat it to different officials, such as teachers, police, civil servants and social workers. Professional workers who were around children had a responsibility to speak out, not to ignore what a child had said. In 2014, Cyprus had harmonized its law with the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse and had since made strong forward steps. Globally, one in four children were victims whereas in Cyprus it was one in five. Numbers were better in Cyprus because it had created an environment where children could speak.

Ms. A. Gerkens (Netherlands), co-rapporteur, said that it was an interesting idea to have a model law that could be incorporated into national law. She asked what elements should be contained in the law. It was difficult to prescribe laws for national parliaments, but a model law would take away hurdles. Many parliaments had problems implementing their laws. She asked Ms. Singhateh to clarify her role as UN Special Rapporteur in helping parliaments worldwide to accelerate efforts on the subject.

Ms. J. Oduol (Kenya), co-rapporteur, asked the experts to clarify the role of parents, guardians and other duty-bearers. In Kenya, a great deal of emphasis was placed on duty-bearers. However, many did not have the capacities to engage or to hold law enforcement accountable.

Mr. P. Limjaroenrat (Thailand), co-rapporteur, said that self-generated materials, sexting, sextortion, grooming and luring were emerging issues that law enforcement officers were having trouble preventing in Thailand. There was a fine line between volunteering and forcible exploitation as well as between talking and grooming. Several steps should be taken to determine if an act was lawful or unlawful. He asked if there was a system of law or any best practices that were as advanced as the exploiters themselves.

Mr. S. Al Salloum (Syrian Arab Republic) asked the international community to lift the sanctions imposed on Syria.

Ms. M. Singhateh (UN Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children) said that the model law should criminalize online sexual child exploitation and abuse. It should seek to incorporate all the provisions of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, including provisions on punishment for perpetrators, mutual legal assistance and seizure of relevant properties. She did not expect every State to incorporate the exact provisions of a model law. However, a model law would serve as a guide that different countries could adapt to their own legal system. It was important to have a unified law so that every country had similar provisions.

Her role as UN Special Rapporteur involved embarking on country visits, preparing thematic reports and issuing communications to countries and businesses. She could help to implement and promote a model law by communicating with governments. She could also take part in advocacy efforts, lobbying for the adoption of the law and its adaptation in the respective jurisdictions.

Everyone had a role to play in protecting children online, including duty-bearers. As representatives of the people, parliamentarians had a responsibility to ensure that States were raising awareness of the problem, educating people on how to protect children and putting in place avenues where children could seek assistance, such as helplines.

Mr. J. Carr (ECPAT International) said that self-generated images, sextortion and grooming were very important and recent dimensions of the problem. He was however quite suspicious about the term "self-generated". There was no doubt that some children were making the images entirely voluntarily without any encouragement or coercion. However, a very large proportion of the images

described as self-generated were in fact a result of grooming and coercion, for instance, by an older sibling or someone from the internet. Care must therefore be taken when discussing self-generated images in order not to blame the victim.

In the United Kingdom, the police had adopted a policy in which children would not be prosecuted for creating and exchanging illegal images on a consensual basis, except in the case of aggravating factors. In other countries, particularly in the United States, children who produced or exchanged images were in fact prosecuted. The latter approach was a terrible one as it ruined the child's life.

Duty bearers, including parents, required a great deal of help. They needed more education and support to help their own children stay safe online. The Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse and the Convention on Cybercrime of the Council of Europe contained good legal frameworks. Indeed, there were plenty of examples of good laws. There was, however, a lack of good cooperation. The Parliament of Afghanistan could look for help from Interpol, which had a great deal of expertise in prosecuting crimes, including a detailed database. Many structures were in place, but people did not always know about them.

The Chair said that the co-rapporteurs would prepare the draft resolution on the basis of the present debate and the best international expertise. The draft would be shared with all IPU members in August 2021 who would be able to submit proposals for amendments. The resolution would be finalized at the 143rd IPU Assembly in November 2021.

Elections to the Bureau of the Standing Committee

The Chair said that eight vacancies must be filled on the Bureau. The African Group had nominated Mr. E. Uwizeyimana (Rwanda). The Asia-Pacific Group had nominated Mr. F. Zon (Indonesia) and Ms. J. Mahmood (Maldives). The Eurasia Group had nominated Mr. N. Tilavoldiev (Uzbekistan). The Group of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC) had nominated Ms. S. Nane (Uruguay). The Twelve Plus Group had nominated Mr. D. Larsson (Sweden). The members would be elected for a first two-year term ending in March 2023.

There had also been some changes made to the existing membership of the Bureau. For the Arab Group, Mr. D. Al Hamad (Qatar) would replace Mr. Y. Al-Khater (Qatar) to complete the term ending in March 2022. For GRULAC, Mr. G. Boric (Chile) would replace Mr. M. Texeira (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) to complete the term ending in March 2022, and Ms S. Sapag (Argentina) would replace Ms. L. Crexell (Argentina) to complete the term ending in April 2023.

The nominations were approved.

Any other business

The Chair said that it was his last Assembly as President of the Standing Committee. The election of the next President and Vice-President would take place at the 143rd IPU Assembly.

Every five years, the IPU reviewed its strategy to make sure it stayed relevant and fit for purpose. The current IPU Strategy 2017-2021 would expire at the end of the year. An inclusive process for reviewing the current strategy had been put in place. He invited delegates to take part.

The sitting rose at 16:25 CEST.

Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs

Sitting of Thursday, 29 April

The sitting was called to order at 14:00 CEST with Mr. J.C. Romero (Argentina), President of the Standing Committee, in the Chair.

Discussion on the UN75 Declaration and follow-up process

The President said that even before the COVID-19 pandemic had broken out, trust in multilateralism had been eroding. The world was struggling to address the challenges of growing inequality and poverty, uncontrolled climate change, loss of biodiversity and overuse of resources, as well as increasing threats of nuclear proliferation and armed conflicts. On 21 September 2020, on the 75th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, a global summit had been held to review the role of the United Nations as the world's major entity for global governance. The summit had culminated in the adoption of the UN75 Declaration, which included 12 commitments by Member States to tackle the challenges to global governance through a strong multilateral framework, or common agenda. The common agenda consisted of resetting global efforts towards a more sustainable, just and peaceful world, with the United Nations at the helm. The present sitting of the Standing Committee would engage parliamentarians in the global discussion on the common agenda, through the launch of a consultation by interactive poll to identify parliamentary priorities. The results of the interactive consultation would be shared with the United Nations to inform the Secretary-General's forthcoming report on the common agenda, to be submitted to the General Assembly. Three guest speakers would address the Standing Committee: Ms. M. Joyini, South Africa's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Mr. B. Rae, Canada's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, and Ms. E. Cousens, President of the UN Foundation.

Presentations by keynote speakers

Ms. M. Joyini (Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations) said that South Africa was a strong proponent of multilateralism. The complex issues facing society were not national problems; they cut across borders and required strong global cooperation and collective action. The COVID-19 pandemic had taught hard lessons and had demonstrated that humanity was stronger together when reacting together, reflecting together and generating solutions together. Now more than ever, collective action must be strengthened. Lack of vaccine equity and the rise of vaccine nationalism were posing serious problems. Most of Africa currently did not have any access to COVID-19 vaccines. There could be no recovery from the pandemic if some countries were left behind. It was more important than ever before to ensure that collective recovery and preparation for future pandemics were a joint effort.

All Member States of the United Nations must commit to the common agenda. South Africa was committed to global dialogue and collective action in the United Nations context, and had partnered with like-minded countries to consider the financial architecture required to ensure preparedness for future pandemics. South Africa was also involved in the network of leaders working with the United Nations Secretary-General on ensuring the implementation of the UN75 Declaration. At the national level, South Africa was making every effort to implement the common agenda, meet the SDGs and, during its 2020–2021 chairship of the African Union, to ensure that no country in Africa was left behind. South Africa remained committed to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. R. Rae (Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations) said that the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic had been far greater than the world had anticipated. The pandemic not only constituted a tragic health event but also an economic and social event that had increased the extent to which countries focused on themselves. At the United Nations, there was deep concern about increasing parochialism and the lack of global vision in the response to the crisis. While the pandemic was causing severe setbacks in development progress, the SDGs were still not well known in many countries and people did not relate to them as a set of common objectives. Yet the pandemic was a global event; no one would be safe until everyone was safe. Extraordinary leadership was therefore required from national governments. Parliamentarians had a critical role in that regard,

reinforcing the message that the crises facing the world, whether COVID-19 or the climate crisis, were global, and while the actions of national governments were crucial, joint action and cooperation were absolutely critical.

Ms. E. Cousens (President and CEO of the UN Foundation) said that the biggest threats to society, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the climate crisis, development issues and technological threats, were global and required deep multilateral solutions. Systems and politics, however, were not able to respond to those threats. The United Nations and other core multilateral institutions faced a range of pressures that severely limited their capacity to perform, including declining budgets, popular scepticism about their value, and larger political dynamics that reduced their space for innovation, engagement and action.

The world was deep in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus far, only a handful of countries had benefitted from the lion's share of vaccines. The Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator was under-resourced. The world was not only facing the continued threat of disease and devastating loss but also the potential for new variants of the virus to emerge that would threaten parts of the world that currently felt safe. Decades of development progress had already been lost, the broadest collapse in income since 1870 had been seen, and inequalities had grown exponentially. The pandemic was a test. If it could not be overcome for everyone everywhere through joint action, it would jeopardize the belief that countries could rise above their differences to confront shared challenges.

A more concerted effort was needed to assert the value of international cooperation. Cooperation was not sentimental; it was a matter not just of solidarity but also of self-interest. There was potential to harness the expertise of other stakeholders, including faith leaders, businesses, municipalities, and young people's organizations. The SDGs had the potential to create real opportunities for collaboration. Governments must give international institutions more space to perform as needed, through the provision of fiscal space, better and more predictable resources, and political space. Those institutions must be required and enabled to innovate and embrace change. Parliaments had a crucial role, through their budgetary and legislative functions, as well as through policy-making and regulation. Parliamentarians were the link to the "We, the peoples" of the United Nations. That resource must be tapped further.

Debate

Ms. M. Tserenjamts (Mongolia) said that the COVID-19 pandemic was not only a health crisis, but also a social and economic crisis. The pandemic was increasing inequalities, especially with regard to jobs and employment. Workers in the informal economy were unsupported, and the digital divide was deepening other social inequities, with 40 per cent of the world's population still offline and therefore unable to work from home. The gender gap was also widening, as women were more likely to have jobs in retail and hospitality, which were the sectors hardest hit by the pandemic-related restrictions. Inequities in access to COVID-19 vaccines were illustrating the deep divide between low- and high-income countries. Universal health coverage required political will. Lessons must be learnt from the pandemic.

Mr. P. Katjavivi (Namibia), unable to connect to the meeting, submitted a written statement in which he said that Namibia welcomed the UN75 Declaration. The global community was facing unprecedented challenges, in particular inequalities in access to the COVID-19 vaccine. Developed countries had a heavy responsibility to take measures to bridge those gaps and ensure that the less privileged could be immunized. Namibia's Government and Parliament were committed to cooperating at the regional and international levels to advocate for the well-being of the African continent and the wider world.

Ms. R. Kavakci Kan (Turkey) said that the COVID-19 pandemic was an essential moment for multilateralism and for international organizations to work together. The response to the pandemic could not be postponed; if the global community did not act together, the whole world would suffer. Vaccines should be shared, and countries that happened to be more fortunate should share their wealth and resources with the rest of the world. The IPU represented almost the whole global population across the whole political spectrum, and was thus uniquely positioned to encourage coordinated action and decision-making to bring an end to the pandemic. No-one would be safe until everyone was safe; the longer the situation continued, the greater the prospects of virus mutation and prolonged suffering.

Mr. S. Patra (India) said that, since the establishment of the United Nations in 1945, the political landscape had undergone vast changes. Over time, the United Nations had lost its capacity to manage global governance, in particular with regard to preventing and settling intra-State conflicts and undertaking a unified response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite new and unprecedented challenges, such as terrorism, pandemics, climate change and mass migration, the composition of the United Nations Security Council remained a 1940s construct. In a changing world order, that structure should be amended to safeguard the interests of all countries. India supported all efforts to address inequalities, and to achieve the SDGs, and stood ready to learn from the rest of the world and share its own experiences. Stability in the United Nations was crucial for the welfare of the world.

Mr. Dong Chuanjie (China) said that on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, the international community had reiterated its support for multilateralism, the international order, and the global governance system with the United Nations at its core. The world had entered a period of turbulence and change, and the sentiment of unilateralism was prevailing. Gaps in governance, trust, development and peace were getting wider, and there was a long way to go to achieve global security. Economic globalization had, however, gained strength, and it was increasingly clear that in an era full of challenges, multilateral communication was a source of hope. China had high expectations for the report on the common agenda to be issued by the United Nations Secretary-General, and hoped that it would respond to the call of the times, focus on international cooperation and sustainable development in the wake of the pandemic, and bolster belief in an international system with the United Nations at its core. China would always extend friendship and cooperation to other countries, on the basis of the five principles of peaceful coexistence.

Mr. K. Tontisirin (Thailand) said that Thailand had fully supported the work of the United Nations over the past 75 years. COVID-19 had taught many important lessons: the global community must work together to bring an end to the pandemic and to meet the SDGs. While the United Nations system must work together, the international parliamentary community, through the IPU, must also join forces to raise awareness and foster the political will and commitment to address complex problems. The world was facing recurring challenges; future preparedness was crucial. Multiple strategies were needed to address the COVID-19 pandemic, with efforts at every level, from international cooperation down to community action. Education, communication and information were the key to public involvement. A multi-stakeholder approach was also essential, to foster a coordinated approach to solving complex problems.

Mr. A. Al-Hamad (Kuwait) said that international cooperation was essential for facing global challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic was an extraordinary time in world history, which could only be addressed comprehensively through consolidated efforts by all international actors, under the leadership of the United Nations. Parliamentarians had a fundamental role in supervising and monitoring government activities to meet the SDGs. Kuwait was committed to continuing to promote international peace and security, having always endeavoured to commit to dialogue and act as a mediator for peaceful coexistence.

Mr. M. Rezakhah (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that multilateralism was the only way to end global challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic. To respond to threats that knew no borders, integrated approaches were needed, involving all countries under the leadership of the United Nations. The inability of countries to manage the global COVID-19 crisis demonstrated the fragility of the current world order and was shining a light on the need for reform. Newly emerging challenges could only be overcome through a collective approach. It was therefore regrettable that some countries, pursuing egocentric policies, were weakening multilateralism and victimizing others. The United Nations must therefore pursue the creation of a post-pandemic world with the spirit of equality and cooperation at its heart, for the well-being and prosperity of all and the protection of the planet. Multilateralism was a necessity for global peace and stability.

Ms. E. Cousens (President and CEO of the UN Foundation) said that, indeed, there was no alternative to multilateralism in a globally interconnected world, with a population of seven and a half billion people whose future health and well-being depended on each other. In building back after the pandemic, there was a rich opportunity to reimagine the forms and purposes of multilateralism, and to engage other sectors and actors with critical capabilities for problem solving and which had a stake in how multilateral institutions performed. Parliaments had a pivotal role to play, as an essential part of government, as leaders who were close to constituents, as decision-makers over resources, and as

influencers with the ability to shape the substance and tone of public debate about international cooperation. Efforts to sow division between countries and communities and withdraw from systems of cooperation could never benefit anyone. Global society, working together, had tremendous power to bring about change.

Mr. R. Rae (Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations) said that the work of national parliaments should be integrated with the work of the United Nations, through dialogue to engage on steps that could be taken together to overcome the challenges facing the world. COVID-19 had magnified the differences and inequalities in global society. He hoped that technologies could be harnessed to give greater opportunities for discussion and to share ideas, experiences and approaches to close those gaps. The IPU was the parliament of the world, bringing the whole of society together.

Ms. M. Joyini (Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations) said that the discussion had shown that there were many issues of convergence; it was clear that there was still a significant interest in the work of the United Nations, as well as aspirations to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and meet the SDGs. Parliamentarians had a key role in communicating with citizens, educating and informing at the public and community levels. There was also clear consensus on the importance of multilateralism and the need to solve common problems together for the benefit of all and for sustainable development.

The United Nations Common Agenda

Ms. M. Griffin (Senior Adviser, Office of the United Nations Secretary-General) said that while the intention had been to use the United Nations 75th anniversary year as an opportunity to discuss the future of multilateralism, the world was now facing the biggest crisis since the founding of the Organization. The COVID-19 pandemic had afforded an opportunity to consider how to reset multilateralism and global governance, as well as national governance.

A global exercise had been launched in January 2020, prior to the onset of the COVID-19 crisis, in which people in all Member States had been asked to outline their priorities for the future and their ideas for action to be taken. That exercise had shown that people looked to the United Nations and international institutions to support national governments in solving problems. The COVID-19 pandemic had subsequently reinforced that desire for problem solving at the global level, and had underscored the sense that global institutions, in their current form, were not stepping up to that challenge.

In September 2020, United Nations Member States had adopted the UN75 Declaration, which had identified 12 areas of action, through which Member States recommitted to collective problem solving and international cooperation. Those areas included climate change, digital cooperation, trust and equality, rule of law, human rights, women and girls, youth and future generations, and peace and security. Through the Declaration, Member States requested that the Secretary-General report back to the General Assembly of the United Nations in September 2021 on how to work together for a common future. The Secretary-General took that mandate as an opportunity to think seriously about the future of multilateralism, and it was hoped that the presentation of the report on future action would coincide with the emergence from the global pandemic. There was a broad consensus on the need to reset the core foundations and values that underpinned collective action to ensure a fair, equitable and sustainable global recovery from COVID-19, to accelerate efforts to attain the SDGs, and to get back on track with climate action and meet the targets of the Paris Climate Agreement. A renewed global system was needed, which could deliver global public goods, support international problem solving, and uphold promises to current and future generations.

The Secretary-General's report was under preparation. Consideration was being given to its core components, which coalesced around the idea of solidarity within societies, between people, and reimagining the social contracts that existed between people and the institutions that governed their lives, as well as solidarity at the global level between countries, to work more collectively to solve global problems. The fact that the rollout of vaccines in response to COVID-19 had not been imbued with such solidarity had highlighted the urgent need for change in that regard. Lastly, particular consideration was being given to ensuring solidarity with young people and future generations. The Charter of the United Nations opened with the determination to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". That determination must go beyond the scourge of war to include the scourges of climate change and unsustainable economic, political and social practices that robbed future generations of their rights to a healthy and viable future.

Interactive discussion

The President said that, in order to feed into the UN's ongoing worldwide consultation, a poll comprising multiple choice questions had been devised for parliamentarians. All parliaments were invited to join that consultation before the deadline in two weeks' time via a link that would be disseminated to all IPU Member Parliaments. To spark a preliminary discussion, the IPU had created its own multiple-choice questionnaire.

A series of nine multiple choice questions were presented via the virtual meeting platform and the Standing Committee members were invited to select two preferred answers for each. Following each question, the results were presented on screen and a short discussion ensued.

Question 1: How can decision-making take more account of the future?

1. *Strengthen data collection capacity to analyse trends and future projections (7 votes)*
2. *Include youth in consultations for national development plans and budgets (5 votes)*
3. *Create youth parliaments in every country (1 vote)*
4. *Make the global ecological footprint an official sustainability measure (4 votes)*
5. *Other (1 vote)*

Mr. I.R. Ratsiraka (Madagascar) said that he had selected answer 4 on the global ecological footprint. Madagascar, as a large, biodiverse island, was particularly interested in environmental matters and he felt strongly that environmental policy must be taken into account for future development. Respect for the environment and for humankind's natural habitat was essential. Young people were calling on the world's leaders to take environmental action. The decisions made now would have a significant impact on future generations.

Question 2: What institutional changes can help deliver peace and security?

1. *Cut national military budgets by half in the next four years (7 votes)*
2. *Establish, by international law, a maximum that countries can spend on the military (2 votes)*
3. *Include more women in peacebuilding and in military leadership (2 votes)*
4. *Expand UN Security Council membership to suit current geopolitics (5 votes)*
5. *Introduce culture of peace teaching in school curriculums (11 votes)*
6. *Other (4 votes)*

Question 3: What immediate actions are needed to accelerate collective action on climate change?

1. *Phase out all subsidies for fossil fuels within the next four years (4 votes)*
2. *Enable communities to produce locally what they consume (1 vote)*
3. *Invest massively in renewable energy and green industries (11 votes)*
4. *Implement massive re-forestation projects globally (4 votes)*
5. *Expand public transit and make cities more pedestrian and bike friendly (3 votes)*
6. *Invest in the care economy to improve human well-being (3 votes)*
7. *Change standards to ensure high input products (e.g. electronics) last a lifetime (4 votes)*
8. *Tighten rules for marketing practices with the aim of curbing consumerism (4 votes)*
9. *Institute environmental education in school curricula (4 votes)*
10. *Other (2 votes)*

Mr. I.R. Ratsiraka (Madagascar) said that Madagascar was living through the difficulties of climate change and deforestation, with 500,000 hectares of forest destroyed each year. Successive governments had failed to solve the problem. It was crucial to include environment and climate change in education, from early childhood. When people made their living from felling trees, they were not inclined to stop. Governments must therefore provide alternative sources of income. The use of renewable energies should be a government priority, as should the provision of electricity to rural communities as a tool for development. He had therefore voted for answers 3 and 9.

Question 4: How should we define and manage global public goods?

1. *Public goods are all assets and services that are must be accessible to all (17 votes)*
2. *Public goods should be financed through the state (or sub-state) budget (5 votes)*
3. *Public goods should not be subject to sale or concession to private companies (3 votes)*
4. *Public goods include scientific knowledge that serves the public interest (7 votes)*
5. *Other (3 votes)*

The President said that it would be difficult to ensure that public goods were not subject to sale or concession to private companies at all. Rather, the sale of public goods and involvement of private companies should be subject to regulatory control.

Question 5: How can we build trust between people and institutions?

1. *Open all institutions to more public scrutiny and participation (8 votes)*
2. *Ensure parliamentarians host local round table discussions on key issues (0 votes)*
3. *Limit media monopolies to promote diversity of views (6 votes)*
4. *Ensure every parliament has independent resources (4 votes)*
5. *Devolve national responsibilities to local authorities, closer to the people (7 votes)*
6. *Ensure all governments documents are publicly accessible (9 votes)*
7. *Other (3 votes)*

Mr. I.R. Ratsiraka (Madagascar) said that one of the biggest problems in many African countries in particular was that the people who came to power did not respect democratic freedoms and values. In that regard, respect for media freedom was essential. He had therefore selected answer 3.

Question 6: How can we ensure more inclusive decision-making processes?

1. *Ensure processes are better known publicly in a timely manner (12 votes)*
2. *Pro-actively engaging constituencies most directly affected by decisions (3 votes)*
3. *Make it mandatory for all citizens to vote in elections (1 vote)*
4. *Institutionalize redress for constituencies unfairly excluded in decision-making (1 votes)*
5. *Enable national referendums initiated by the people (8 votes)*
6. *Ensure all laws and budgets are easy to read and understand (6 votes)*
7. *Other (1 vote)*

Question 7: How can we make societies more equal?

1. *Establish national minimum wage above the official poverty line in each country (3 votes)*
2. *Tax earnings from financial investments at least as much as work income (1 vote)*
3. *Institute a wealth tax to support social spending (4 votes)*
4. *Mandate equal leadership of women and men in all public and private organizations (3 votes)*
5. *Strengthen unions and workers' collective bargaining power (3 votes)*
6. *Ensure access to education for all (8 votes)*
7. *Ensure access to health care for all (8 votes)*
8. *Other (2 votes)*

The President said that promoting education and health were particular priorities for developing countries. As well as equal access to health care and education, access to employment was crucial for economic development.

Mr. R. Peña Flores (Costa Rica), participating through the chat function on the virtual meeting platform, said that more private investment was also crucial to reducing unemployment.

Mr. I.R. Ratsiraka (Madagascar) said that poverty was gauged using the human development index, which set a minimum level of education, income and health. Education was of course crucial; without it, there could be no economic development, irrespective of the natural resources available. Health, however, was the most crucial. The COVID-19 pandemic was a clear illustration that nothing else in society could function without the health of the people. In a health crisis, people could not go to work, children could not attend school. Health must not be left behind, and must be the first priority for public investment.

Ms. H. Alhelaissi (Saudi Arabia) said that Saudi Arabia already provided health care and education for all, and she had therefore voted for answer 1, establish a national minimum wage above the poverty line.

Question 8: How can global governance arrangements be more networked?

1. *Enable people to provide direct input to UN negotiations (2 votes)*
2. *Engage parliament more closely with the UN country representative (10 votes)*
3. *Enable more parliamentary dialogue around global issues through the IPU (16 votes)*
4. *Other (1 votes)*

Question 9: How can global institutions, including the UN, be more inclusive and representative?

1. Mandate that national delegations to major UN meetings include parliamentarians (10 votes)
2. Require UN Ambassadors report regularly to parliament on major negotiations (9 votes)
3. Change the UN Charter to recognize parliaments as key to global governance (11 votes)
4. Level the playing field at World Bank and IMF so each country has only one vote (4 votes)
5. Open all WTO proceedings to parliamentarians and civil society representatives (5 votes)
6. Make the G20 and G7 more accountable directly to the parliaments of member states (2 votes)
7. Other (2 votes)

Mr. I.R. Ratsiraka (Madagascar) and **Mr. C. Nshimirimana** (Burundi), both participating through the chat function on the virtual meeting platform, said that least developed countries should have permanent representation on the United Nations Security Council.

Ms. P. Torsney (IPU Representative to the United Nations) thanked all participants and said that the poll would be available online for the coming two weeks. She encouraged as many parliamentarians as possible to contribute their views. The results would be compiled and submitted to the United Nations global consultation.

The President thanked the members of the Standing Committee for their participation and declared the sitting closed.

Elections to the Bureau of the Standing Committee

The Geopolitical Groups had nominated the following members for a two-year term (renewable) ending in April 2023:

African Group

- Ms. S. Abdi Noor (Kenya)

Arab Group

- Ms. E. Al Maksossi (Iraq)
- Mr. M.T. Bani Yassin (Jordan)
- Mr. A. Al-Hamad (Kuwait)

Asia-Pacific Group

- Ms. D. Kumari (India)

Eurasia Group

- Mr. A. Savinykh (Belarus)

Group of Latin America and the Caribbean

- Mr. A. Lins (Brazil)
- Ms. K.M. González Villanueva (Paraguay)

The nominations were approved.

The sitting rose at 16:15 CEST.

Forum of Women Parliamentarians

Sitting of Monday, 10 May

The sitting was called to order at 14:10 CEST with Ms. S. Kihika (Kenya), President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, in the Chair.

Welcoming remarks

Mr. D. Pacheco (Portugal), President of the IPU, said that gender equality was at the top of the IPU agenda. The Forum of Women Parliamentarians was an important IPU body that would shine a light on the perspectives of women.

The COVID-19 crisis was not gender neutral. The effects of lockdown and the resulting economic downturn had had a greater impact on women and girls. Decades of gains in gender equality were at risk of being destroyed. Recovery efforts must therefore include a gender perspective. It was unacceptable that women made up the majority of frontline workers but were underrepresented in COVID-19 decision-making bodies.

Two draft resolutions would be discussed at the 142nd IPU Assembly. Incorporating a gender perspective into those resolutions would help deliver more impactful outcomes. The first resolution was entitled *Parliamentary strategies to strengthen peace and security against threats and conflicts resulting from climate-related disasters and their consequences*. Climate change had unique security impacts on women. For instance, women displaced for environmental reasons were at risk of gender-based violence. It was important to include women in climate-related efforts so that their needs could be addressed. The second resolution was entitled *Mainstreaming digitalization and the circular economy to achieve the SDGs, particularly responsible consumption and production*. Developing countries were having a hard time adapting to the digital shift. However, with the right measures, digitalization and the circular economy could be key to women's empowerment.

In the coming days, parliamentarians would be called upon to make concrete commitments to the Generation Equality Forum. The Generation Equality Forum was a multistakeholder platform aiming to put forward actions on gender equality in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Achieving gender equality required parliaments to make strong coalitions with civil society and the private sector. The COVID-19 pandemic had highlighted the importance of working together to achieve goals.

In 2020, the international community had celebrated five years since the adoption of the SDGs, 20 years since the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, and 25 years since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. As a result of the pandemic however, 2020 had not been a milestone year for gender equality. It was necessary to build back a society that was better, stronger and more resilient.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Recent activities to advance gender equality

The Chair said that the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians had met virtually in March 2021 to ensure continuity of work during the pandemic.

As part of celebrations to mark the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, UN Women had convened the Generation Equality Forum, co-hosted by the Governments of Mexico and France and in partnership with civil society. The IPU had become one of the leaders of an Action Coalition, formed as part of the Generation Equality Forum, which aimed to promote women's political participation and leadership as well as young women's political empowerment.

In March and April 2021, the Bureau had conducted a set of strategic, interparliamentary dialogues on a gender-responsive recovery post COVID-19. The dialogues had been intended to inform the contributions of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians at the 142nd IPU Assembly,

particularly to the general debate entitled *Overcoming the pandemic today and building a better tomorrow: the role of parliaments*. It was clear that the impacts of crises were never gender neutral. A COVID-19 response strategy would not be sustainable without considering gender equality.

Lastly, the Bureau had contributed to the draft resolutions under consideration at the current Assembly with members having participated in the relevant meetings to ensure that a gender perspective was included.

Ms. Z. Hilal (IPU), Secretary of the Forum, accompanying her remarks with a digital slide presentation, said that the IPU had launched several publications recently, including the report entitled *Women in Parliament in 2020* and the map on *Women in Politics: 2021*. A guidance note for parliaments had also been produced on gender and COVID-19.

Some gains had been made for women in politics over the past year. More women than ever before were at the highest levels of political power. For instance, women currently accounted for 25.5 per cent of parliamentarians, 20.9 per cent of Speakers of Parliament and 5.9 per cent of Heads of State globally. However, progress was moving much too slowly and losses had also been made. Only three parliaments worldwide had reached a level whereby women accounted for 50 per cent or more of parliamentarians (Rwanda, Cuba and the United Arab Emirates). Three countries worldwide had no women at all in parliament (Micronesia, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu). The number of countries where women held at least 50 per cent of ministerial positions had dropped from 14 to 13 between 2020 and 2021. The number of countries with no women ministers had increased from 9 to 12 in the same period.

There had been progress in all regions towards women's representation but some inequality in advancements. The top ten most gender-balanced unicameral parliaments and lower chambers had remained similar to 2020 with one new addition, New Zealand. Women's representation had reached 40 per cent or higher in the lower or single chambers of 23 parliaments – one less parliament than the previous year. A total of 11 countries had made a significant increase towards achieving 25-30 per cent women in parliaments.

COVID-19 had had a great impact on women in politics. Many of the obstacles already faced by women had been exacerbated in 2020 with some new obstacles arising. They included: setbacks in campaigning, a rise in violence against women, particularly online, and reduced access to funding. More broadly, 20 countries had postponed parliamentary elections in 2020 mainly due to COVID-19. There was also unequal access to online platforms.

Quotas had proved key in preventing backsliding. A total of 25 parliaments, out of the 57 that had held elections in 2020, had applied gender quotas. Parliaments with gender quotas had elected 11.8 per cent more women to single or lower chambers and 7.4 per cent more women to upper chambers.

The IPU had made a stronger call for gender parity in politics. Gender parity in political office and leadership was key to removing barriers to gender equality. Gender parity would help open politics up to women from diverse backgrounds, transform the political space into a more enabling environment for women, address the equality demands of society and ultimately create more efficient, effective and legitimate political institutions.

Gender parity in politics could be achieved in several ways by 2030. Parliaments should craft, adopt and implement national plans of action on gender parity, legislate gender quotas with a 50-50 target, reform discriminatory legislation and cap spending on electoral campaigns. It was also important to adopt laws preventing gender-based violence in politics and elsewhere, to target parity in all aspects of public life, not only in parliament but also in government and in the judiciary, as well as to mandate and resource gender mainstreaming mechanisms. The IPU and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee) had recently launched a joint call for parity in political participation and leadership.

The Forum of Women Parliamentarians was currently preparing some new publications, including a study on sexism, harassment and violence against women in Africa. A similar study had been carried out on the global situation as well as on the situation in Europe with plans to cover all regions in the future. It was important to understand the specificities of each region and take the necessary action.

Ms. F. Martonffy (consultant), said that she was part of a team of four consultants who were facilitating a review of the IPU Strategy. Her team had designed an approach to the review that put the IPU membership at the centre. The first stage had involved carrying out an initial preliminary desk review of all relevant documents to understand the impacts. She was currently at the second stage,

which consisted of focused group discussions, including with parliamentarians, with a view to collecting lived experiences. The final stage would be to calibrate findings and present them to the membership.

Preliminary findings showed that good progress had been made on gender equality in the last strategic period, specifically towards engaging national parliaments on global policy advocacy. She drew particular attention to the work that had been done to advance the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), engage the media on women in parliament, reach the 50-50 target and create gender-sensitive parliaments, among other things. However, room for growth existed when it came to building relevance and sustainability. It was especially important to ensure wider uptake, carry out more targeted capacity building efforts and better align all the strategic objectives.

Contributing to the work of the 142nd Assembly from a gender perspective

a) Gender-related impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and prioritizing parliamentary actions for gender response recovery

The Chair said that, from March to April 2021, the IPU had organized a series of virtual interparliamentary dialogues on gender-responsive recovery post COVID-19. The dialogues had focused on women's political participation, women's economic empowerment, violence against women and girls, gender-sensitive parliaments and gender-responsive legal reforms. The dialogues had been organized in partnership with UN Women. The first event had focused on gender parity in political participation and was held on the occasion of the 65th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women under the main theme of the session, namely *Women's full and effective participation and decision-making in public life, as well as the elimination of violence, for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls*. The event had brought together 164 Members of Parliament from around the world and provided a platform for parliamentarians to contribute to the Commission's work from a parliamentary perspective.

At the meeting, Members of Parliament had discussed the road towards gender parity. It was clear that, although some progress had been made, it had been slow. It was also clear that no post COVID-19 recovery agenda could succeed without gender equality. One key element of a gender-responsive recovery agenda was to ensure gender parity in political participation and leadership. Members of Parliament had presented their own national experiences in legislating towards gender parity, including during the pandemic. Some good practices included adopting legislative quotas, establishing mechanisms to ensure parity in leadership positions and introducing gender-responsive legal frameworks, including legislation against gender-based violence. The path towards gender parity also required holistic interventions that went beyond legislation, such as forming strong alliances with civil society. Doing so would help mobilize potential female candidates and incentivize political parties to play their part. Participants had also discussed the gendered impacts of COVID-19, such as the negative impact on women's ability to campaign or run for office. Online platforms were effective tools for inclusivity but only if countries addressed the digital gender divide and curbed online violence against women politicians. Lastly, participants had highlighted the important role that women must play in leading COVID-19 responses.

She invited her colleagues from the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians to share their findings from the interparliamentary dialogues.

Ms. H. Al-Helaissi (Saudi Arabia) said that the interparliamentary dialogue on women's economic empowerment had been held on 7 April 2021. It had gathered 65 Members of Parliament and had been informed by experts from Oxfam, the International Monetary Fund and the International Labour Organization.

Women had been hardest hit by the economic effects of COVID-19. In 2020, employment losses for women stood at 5 per cent compared to 3.9 per cent for men. More women worked in sectors most affected by lockdown measures, such as accommodation, food services, wholesale and retail. Many women had also lost their jobs to meet growing household responsibilities. There was even evidence that the pandemic had widened the gender wage gap. Informal women workers, domestic workers, migrant workers and women without internet access or literacy skills were bearing the brunt of the economic collapse. Not only were they unprotected by labour laws, excluded from

social protection schemes and without access to credit, but they had also been overlooked by pandemic relief and recovery packages. As a result, 47 million women and girls would be pushed into poverty.

It had been agreed during discussions that the economy would not recover from the pandemic without reintegrating women into the labour force and eliminating the gender gap in employment. It was important to adopt measures that supported women most affected by COVID-19 restrictions. Some measures identified by participants had included: giving financial support to women who had lost their source of income, supporting families and women in unpaid work, and providing access to affordable and quality childcare services. Although such measures were essential in the short term, they were not sufficient. Long term investments in gender-responsive social protection systems for women were urgently needed. Post COVID-19 recovery plans must also address long-standing inequalities, including unequal division of work at home and the pervasive undervaluation of unpaid care work done mostly by women.

Participants had shared some of the measures taken in their own countries. Some had already developed transparent wage policies and introduced care leave. Others had invested in the care economy as well as in the education, health and social sectors. It was particularly important to justly compensate for care work and provide an adequate safety net, including employment benefits.

Ms. S. Koutra-Koukouma (Cyprus) said that the interparliamentary dialogue on violence against women and girls had taken place on 14 April 2021. It had gathered 56 Members of Parliament and had been informed by experts from the United Nations and Promundo.

Gender-based violence had increased during the pandemic with 245 million women experiencing sexual or physical violence from their partner in 2020. The risks were higher for women from vulnerable and marginalized communities, including adolescent girls and women with disabilities. COVID-19 had also exacerbated shortcomings related to the protection and provision of essential services.

Participants had identified a need to improve the services available for survivors of gender-based violence as a key part of the national response to COVID-19. Some countries had taken steps in that regard, for instance, by ensuring access to sexual and reproductive health care, setting up helplines and counselling services, including online, and enhancing the efficient and timely delivery of protection orders. Such efforts prioritized survivors' needs and ensured that their rights and dignity were respected. It was also important to ensure that women's rights organizations and first responders had adequate means and training.

With the increased use of the internet, more women and girls had been subjected to online violence, such as threats and harassment. While much remained to be done, some parliaments had adopted strong laws to counter the phenomenon. Participants had agreed that online platforms had a duty of care to women and girls. They should improve their regulatory frameworks, ensure online accountability and transparency, create safeguards, and set up reporting pathways.

The economic downturn and the closing down of schools had caused many girls to drop out of education. The situation had led to an increase in child marriages, sexual violence against girls and early pregnancy. It was vital to make sure that girls continued their education, for instance, by investing in distance learning programmes. Long term investments in the prevention of violence against women and girls were also needed. Some solutions shared during the meeting included: promoting women's economic empowerment, working with boys and men to break the intergenerational transmission of violence and partnering with civil society to change harmful gender norms.

Ms. S. Sirivejchapun (Thailand) said that the final interparliamentary dialogue had been held on 21 April 2021 and had focused on gender-sensitive parliaments and gender-responsive legal reforms. It had gathered 61 Members of Parliament and representatives of the IPU, UN Women and the CEDAW Committee.

A gender-sensitive parliament was one that advanced gender equality in all aspects of its work and created an environment in which men and women participated equally. Promoting gender-sensitive parliaments was key to ensuring a proper COVID-19 response and recovery. It was necessary to lift all legal provisions that held women back as well as to promote laws and budgets that empowered women and girls. Parliaments had a paramount role to play in that regard and must be fit for purpose. It was unacceptable that 2.5 million women and girls still faced discrimination in law.

Participants had concluded that the process for building a gender-responsive parliament should include a number of steps. First, women's participation and leadership must be equal in all law making and oversight processes, including in those related to COVID-19. Second, there was a need to create

cross-party parliamentary caucuses for women as well as synergies with women's groups from civil society. Third, all standing and ad hoc committees should be given a mandate to advance gender equality. Fourth, gender budgeting was also necessary. Government should provide all necessary data so that parliaments could adequately monitor the impact of laws, budgets and policy.

Reforming parliamentary processes required strong political will and support from different stakeholders. Several parliamentary leaders had already promoted internal reviews in line with the IPU Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments and its related self-assessment toolkit. She encouraged other parliaments to do the same.

The Chair opened up the discussion to the rest of the Forum.

Ms. A. Kamei (Japan) said that Japan was lagging behind on women's participation in politics with women accounting for only 10 per cent of seats in the House of Representatives. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic was having a serious impact on women in socially and economically vulnerable situations. Job losses were widespread, particularly among women in part-time and temporary work with less job security. Women were also performing the majority of work in the health and social care sectors and were therefore experiencing excessive burdens. The Government of Japan was taking measures to address the above issues but had a long way to go. Progress was particularly slow in terms of women's participation in policy making processes, making gender-responsive action difficult to achieve. It was vital to include women's perspectives in assistance and recovery strategies in the context of COVID-19.

The representative of Mongolia said that vaccination was going very well in Mongolia. The country had already vaccinated 94 per cent of the population of Ulaanbaatar and 63 per cent of the rural population. All vaccinations were free of charge. There were 13 women in parliament, who were taking care of women's issues. During the pandemic, the Government had reduced the cost of public health services by 30-70 per cent and provided 100,000 tugrik (MNT) per month for each child aged 0-18. It was also working to resolve job losses.

Ms. R. Kavakci Kan (Turkey) drew attention to the rise in violence and discrimination during the pandemic, including hate speech, xenophobia and racism, with women suffering the most. The international community must not overlook the situation in Palestine where many women and girls were affected by violence. It was concerning that Germany and France had passed laws preventing women who wore a headscarf from being civil servants. Indeed, women should have equal opportunities without discrimination. Migrant and displaced women were particularly vulnerable to violence whether it was perpetrated by the State or by individuals.

Ms. M. Al Ameri (United Arab Emirates) said that the United Arab Emirates had taken many positive measures to help women. For example, it had made sure that jobs were secure and helped low-income families with the support of charities. A law had also been passed ensuring equal pay between men and women in the private sector. Women were taking part in all decision-making processes in the context of the pandemic.

Ms. J. Ndirahisha (Burundi) said that her Government had initially closed the borders, which had affected women involved in cross-border trade. The financial consequences were significant with many children having to drop out of school. Parliamentarians, in collaboration with other associations, eventually persuaded the Government to reopen the borders so that women could continue trading.

Ms. E. Azad (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that women and girls from low-income countries had borne the brunt of the COVID-19 crisis. More women than men had lost their jobs. There had been an increase in domestic violence. Women were experiencing higher rates of depression and anxiety. Access to sexual and reproductive health services had also decreased. It was vital to consider the gender implications of the pandemic when developing recovery packages as well as to design socioeconomic programmes focusing on women and girls. Women must be considered productive and responsible actors in society, including in the workforce. No country could unlock its full potential without balanced participation of men and women. The international community must work together to promote initiatives that supported women and girls, including through positive discrimination, with the engagement of governments, civil society and international organizations. Legal and regulatory reforms would act as a catalyst to improve the lives of women. Gender equality was a fundamental right but also an effective way to promote security, economic growth and sustainable development.

Ms. L. Vasylenko (Ukraine) said that COVID-19 had forced many women out of their jobs with many having to stay at home to look after children and elderly parents. Parliamentarians must find ways to reintegrate women back into the economy. One way to do so was to ensure women could balance work with family life. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe would soon be considering a resolution aiming to provide better services for mothers working in parliament, government or the civil service. Women often had second thoughts about entering politics due to family commitments. They would be more likely to pursue a political career if conditions were created allowing them to do both. The solution could be as simple as having rooms in parliament where mothers could breastfeed, or nurseries where children could stay while women did their work. It was not expensive to have such areas fitted. Yet, it would send a strong message that women could indeed combine motherhood with work in politics. Often, the issue was not understood by male colleagues. However, they too could benefit from such an initiative, giving them the opportunity to take their children to work. She encouraged the Forum of Women Parliamentarians and the IPU as a whole to support such initiatives.

Ms. M. Espinales (Nicaragua) said that her Government had taken many measures to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, including measures to protect women. For example, the vaccination programme was prioritizing patients with chronic illness as well as cancer patients, many of whom were women. Efforts had also been made to update reproductive health programmes for women.

Electoral reforms had recently been introduced to promote gender equality. The electoral law now required political parties to ensure that women represented 50 per cent of candidates (both main candidates and reserves). Women must also represent 50 per cent of those organizing elections, such as attorneys and management boards.

The Government was promoting family and organic farming, including through credit policies, which promoted women's empowerment. Schools were continuing lessons face to face and online to the benefit of girls who made up 58 per cent of pupils. Women made up 50 per cent of those working in ministerial structures and 50 per cent of mayors and vice-mayors. Overall, Nicaragua was an example for the world when it came to the participation and empowerment of women. The Government had a great deal of political will to advance the influence of women in political, social and economic decision-making processes.

Ms. S. Koutra-Koukouma (Cyprus) said that crises were never gender neutral. Yet, the gender dimension of the COVID-19 crisis was not being considered by governments or international organizations, such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Women were facing severe consequences because of the pandemic, including income losses and stresses surrounding family responsibilities. Parliaments should strive to adopt effective legislation that tackled the economic and social impact of the pandemic. It was vital to make sure that the gains made thus far in the struggle towards gender equality were not lost. The current health crisis, if managed correctly, could provide an opportunity to reset goals and remap society towards a fairer model without discrimination or exploitation. It was for all the above reasons that parliaments around the world should legislate, knowing that laws could influence behaviours, change mentalities and spark discussions.

Ms. W. Andrade Muñoz (Ecuador) said that the world was living in dramatic times. Now, more than ever, it was vital to have the right infrastructure in place, including education and health services, drinking water and access to the internet. Women had been particularly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Many women had experienced domestic violence, earned less than men and were having to invest a great deal in care work. As a result, gender-responsive policies and social protections were needed.

Ms. L. Wall (New Zealand) said that, during the pandemic, women had borne the brunt of unemployment in New Zealand with 70 per cent of those most affected being women. It had to do with the industries in which women worked, such as services, manufacturing and tourism. However, the experience was not generic. A disproportionate burden had been placed on women with disabilities, indigenous women, ethnic and migrant women and women from the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) communities.

The Parliament of New Zealand would soon approve its next budget. She was hopeful that economic recovery and jobs for women would be addressed in that budget. In addition, the Associate Minister for Health had just announced more support to catch up on screenings, including cervical and breast screenings. There had also been a focus on pay parity for women.

Her Parliament had achieved 48.3 per cent women in its most recent election thanks to quotas within political parties. The electoral legislation did not set out quotas as such, but the political parties had taken responsibility. Her country also had a commitment to having 50 per cent women on public boards. That target had recently been met. She was willing to work with the parliaments in the Pacific that did not have any women parliamentarians.

Women parliamentarians should support women's rights defenders around the world. She drew particular attention to Nasrin Sotoudeh, a women's rights activist from Iran.

Ms. S. Karokhail (Afghanistan) said that Afghan women had had a unique experience during the pandemic. It was during the pandemic that the peace negotiation with the Taliban had begun. However, the Afghan authorities had been so absorbed in the pandemic that the peace process had received insufficient attention, especially on the issue of women's rights. Currently, the international community was starting to withdraw from Afghanistan but without putting in place the proper guarantees. As a result, there had been a resurgence of terror attacks with women greatly affected. Violence against women had increased. Schools attended by girls had been bombed. It was a barbaric time for women in Afghanistan.

Women had not participated in any meaningful way in the peace negotiation, with only four women having taken part. The international community had not been generous to women, for example, refusing visas for them to take part in talks abroad. The world must give more attention to the issue of women's rights in Afghanistan. She urged delegates to share her concerns in their own parliaments and support a process that did not compromise on women's rights or political participation in Afghanistan.

The Taliban wished to establish an Islamic emirate in Afghanistan, which was unacceptable to the Afghan people. It was only through proper elections that women's participation could be guaranteed.

Ms. C. Mix (Chile) said that women had been particularly affected by the pandemic. Chile had recorded a 43.8 per cent increase in emergency calls from women experiencing domestic violence. Women were also the ones bearing the brunt of job losses and salary reductions. However, she wished to draw particular attention to one group of women considerably affected by the pandemic, namely those employed as domestic workers. By October 2020, more than 150 thousand domestic workers had lost their jobs. Others had been forced to work during quarantine while cases of COVID-19 were spreading. Many were also unable to access State benefits because they did not have contracts or unemployment insurance or because they were migrants. It was for those reasons that her Parliament had put forward legislative measures to protect such women, including by offering them emergency family income. She called on parliamentarians to comply with the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189) of the International Labour Organization to end discrimination against women domestic workers.

b) Mainstreaming gender equality in the draft resolutions under consideration at the 142nd and 143rd Assemblies

The Chair said that two resolutions were under consideration at the 142nd IPU Assembly. The Standing Committees had been meeting to discuss the resolutions and would endorse them through a written silence procedure. Members of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians had taken part in those meetings to provide a gender perspective. She invited the co-Rapporteurs to present the resolutions.

Ms. S. Dinică (Romania), co-Rapporteur, said that the co-Rapporteurs had begun drafting the resolution entitled *Mainstreaming digitalization and the circular economy to achieve the SDGs, particularly responsible consumption and production* in 2019. In 2021, the initial text had been updated to reflect the impact of COVID-19. A total of 88 amendments from 12 countries had been examined, many of which had been integrated into the text. The drafting committee had then further enriched the resolution to produce the current draft.

The text highlighted that the circular economy and digitalization could be drivers of a sound post-pandemic recovery as well as of sustainable development. It stressed that the pandemic had reversed hard-won development gains, particularly on gender, and deepened social and economic inequalities. It also acknowledged the potential of the circular economy and digitalization to empower women, calling for increased access to digital platforms for women. Government and parliaments were invited to allocate appropriate financial resources for the development of business models based on

digitalization and the circular economy while specifically empowering women entrepreneurs. There was also a call for gender-inclusive frameworks and policies to increase education opportunities for women, including in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), and to develop the digital skills of women and girls.

Overall, the resolution provided a general orientation on the main objectives that governments and parliaments should pursue to advance digitalization and the circular economy. She invited the Forum of Women Parliamentarians to look at the text through a gender lens.

Ms. H. Alhelaiissi (Saudi Arabia) said that she had participated in the meetings of the drafting committee for the above resolution. Digitalization and the circular economy had immense potential to reduce inequalities, including gender inequalities. Some gender aspects had already been included in the initial draft with further amendments added later.

First, the resolution stressed the urgent need to reverse losses made due to COVID-19, particularly as regards gender equality. Indeed, women had been disproportionately affected by the economic downturn since they tended to occupy the least protected, lowest paid jobs and did the largest share of unpaid care work. There had also been increased levels of violence against women and girls, child marriage, teenage pregnancies and school dropouts among girls due to COVID-19. As a result, pre-existing gender gaps were widening in employment, education, health and other areas.

Second, the resolution recognized that the circular economy and digitalization had the potential to empower women. Parliaments and governments were called upon to allocate appropriate financial resources to develop digital and circular economy business models while specifically empowering young women entrepreneurs.

Third, the resolution highlighted the need to bridge the digital gender divide through the promotion of gender-inclusive education frameworks and policies, including for STEM subjects. Women and girls should also be provided with digital skills. She urged the Forum to endorse the resolution and ensure an adequate response nationally.

Ms. C. Roth (Germany), co-Rapporteur, said that she had helped prepared the draft resolution entitled *Parliamentary strategies to strengthen peace and security against threats and conflicts resulting from climate-related disasters and their consequences*. The drafting committee for the resolution had finalized its work in April 2021. The resolution focused on the humanitarian impact of climate change as a multiplier of already existing conflicts and challenges. Millions of people were already affected by the impacts of climate change, which had been further exacerbated by COVID-19. It was vital to step up preparations for a potential escalation in peace and security issues arising because of the climate crisis. Women and girls were particularly affected. They constituted 80 per cent of those displaced by climate change. However, women were also very important actors in combatting the climate crisis. By adopting the draft resolution, the IPU would send a strong signal around the world that urgent action was needed. It was necessary to establish a preventive and stabilizing climate-specific foreign policy with a feminist perspective. There was also a need for far-sighted actions that put people and their needs first to help establish sustainable, peaceful and gender equitable structures in society. It was not just a question of climate justice but also a question of universal human rights.

The Chair said that she had participated in the meetings of the drafting committee for the above resolution. The resolution focused on the consequences of climate change on peace and security, and the parliamentary strategies needed to prevent and respond to them. The initial resolution already contained a significant gender perspective with further amendments having been added later.

Gender had been mainstreamed into the resolution in several ways. First, the resolution recognized UN Security Council resolution 1325 and other related resolutions, highlighting the specific impact of war, conflict and displacement on women and girls as well as the crucial role of women in resolving peace and security issues. Second, it highlighted the effects of climate change on vulnerable groups, such as women and children, indigenous people, people with disabilities, refugees and displaced people. It expressed concern that climate-related tensions and disasters could increase marginalization, discrimination and abuse, including sexual violence. It also pointed out that access to resources to cope with the climate crisis was structurally obstructed by existing forms of discrimination, including gender-based discrimination. Third, the resolution emphasized that inclusive and meaningful public participation, including that of women, at all levels of decision making was key to equitable and peaceful natural resource management. Fourth, it set out that solutions to address the climate-security link should be developed with the involvement of both men and women as well as marginalized and vulnerable groups. Solutions should be based on human rights indicators such as the incidence of

sexual and gender-based violence. The text also called on parliaments to adopt enabling climate-responsive and gender- and conflict-sensitive legislation, including key budget laws aimed at advancing the SDGs and the sustainable peace agenda. It highlighted the need to develop comprehensive gender-responsive national resilience mechanisms to enhance disaster preparedness by fully including women in the design and implementation of such mechanisms.

Ms. J. Oduol (Kenya), co-Rapporteur, said that a new resolution entitled *Legislation worldwide to combat online sexual child exploitation* would be up for consideration at the 143rd IPU Assembly. The increasingly digital world was changing the ways in which democracies, societies and economies functioned, bringing a wealth of opportunities but also many challenges. COVID-19 had put children and teenagers at a greater risk of online sexual abuse and exploitation in light of the growing use of virtual tools for communication, learning and leisure. The internet knew no boundaries, making international cooperation in the area indispensable. Parliamentarians had a key role to play nationally and internationally. The resolution would focus on legislation to protect children from online sexual abuse. It would also put forward best practices on how to improve law enforcement and use technology and big data to identify perpetrators. It was important to draw from international standards and existing best practices. She invited delegates to attend the preparatory debate for the resolution and provide their inputs.

Ms. S. Koutra-Koukouma (Cyprus) said that sexual exploitation of children on the internet was a growing phenomenon that could not be tackled effectively without the cooperation of online providers and platforms. Perpetrators would always find new ways of approaching children no matter the obstacles in front of them. It was for that reason that minors themselves should be empowered to resist and ask for help. There was a need to teach sex education in schools in a scientifically paced way that met the needs of all ages. Countries must leave stereotypes and conservative views behind and give children the resources they needed to understand their rights and defend themselves. Comprehensive legislation should be adopted to put responsibilities on governments and online platforms.

Ms. H. Alhelaissi (Saudi Arabia) said that efforts on tackling online sexual child exploitation would only succeed if combined on a global level. Legislation alone would not be sufficient. The support of every possible entity was needed, including communities, families and companies.

Ms. R. Kavakci Kan (Turkey) said that people who were not affected by the digital divide were online constantly. While digitalization had brought many advantages, there were also many disadvantages, such as online bullying and sexual exploitation of children. Parliamentarians, including women parliamentarians, had a responsibility to protect children physically and psychologically.

Ms. H. Fayez (Bahrain) agreed with the remarks made by Ms. Al-Helaissi. Children spent hours and hours online. It was vital to raise awareness of the risks among adults and children themselves.

Ms. F. Robes (Philippines) said that the pandemic had caused severe anxiety in women and children. It was important to have mental health education but also to open mental health clinics. Doing so would help to prevent suicide. Education ministries should provide guidance to children about online activities and employ counsellors in schools.

Ms. S. Sirivejchapun (Thailand) said that Thailand was a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and had recently amended its Penal Code to administer more serious punishment for the possession and distribution of child pornography. Parliaments should pass legislation requiring the public to be informed when sexual offenders were released from jail. Some could argue that doing so would be a violation of the right to privacy. However, it was more important to protect society.

Elections to the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians

The Chair said that the Forum was required to renew half of the membership of its Bureau. Two regional representatives should be elected from each geopolitical group for a four-year term to replace those regional representatives whose terms had expired. The Forum should also fill the vacant seats of those regional representatives who were no longer Members of Parliament.

Ms. Z. Hilal (IPU), Secretary of the Forum, said that the nominations for the African Group were: Ms. M. Baba Moussa Soumanou (Benin), Ms. N. Bujela (Eswatini) and Ms. O. Sanogo (Mali). The nominations for the Arab Group were: Ms. H. Ramzy Fayeze (Bahrain), Ms. A. Ayyoub (Egypt) and Ms. M. Al Suwaidi (United Arab Emirates). The nominations for the Asia-Pacific Group were: Ms. P. Komarudin (Indonesia) and Ms. E. Azad (Islamic Republic of Iran). One vacancy would remain open until the 143rd IPU Assembly. The nominations for the Eurasia Group were: Ms. M. Vasilevich (Belarus) and Ms. E. Afanasieva (Russian Federation). The nominations for the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC) were: Ms. A. Sagasti (Argentina), Ms. C. Mix (Chile), Ms. W. Andrade Muñoz (Ecuador) and Ms. V. Persaud (Guyana). Lastly, the nominations for the Twelve Plus Group were: Ms. V. Riotton (France), Ms. M. Grande (Italy) and Ms. L. Wall (New Zealand).

The nominations were approved.

Ms. Z. Hilal (IPU), Secretary of the Forum, said that the Forum would elect the new President and Vice-Presidents of the Bureau at the following meeting.

The sitting rose at 17:00 CEST.

Sitting of Wednesday, 12 May

The sitting was called to order at 14:10 CEST with Ms. S. Kihika (Kenya), President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, in the Chair.

Panel discussion – Generation Equality in and through parliaments

The Chair said that UN Women had recently launched the Generation Equality Forum in partnership with the Governments of France and Mexico as well as with civil society groups. The Forum was a unique platform centred on intergenerational dialogue and multistakeholder collaboration to achieve gender equality. Its work would focus on gender-based violence, economic justice and rights, bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights, feminist action for climate justice, technology and innovation for gender equality, and feminist movements and leadership. An Action Coalition had been set up for each of those themes to drive change collectively and individually. The IPU was one of the co-leaders of the Action Coalition on feminist movements and leadership. It was time for parliamentarians to show their commitment to that agenda. In March 2021, draft priority areas under each Action Coalition had been unveiled. At the present panel discussion, the Forum of Women Parliamentarians should present individual pledges and actions. Actions should place a special focus on the empowerment and leadership of youth and adolescent girls. She introduced the panellists.

Ms. L. Banerjee (UN Women), panellist, said that progress on gender equality had been slow since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, particularly on women's leadership. For example, violence against women in leadership, especially against women running for office, had been increasing. Women's representation in parliament was as low as 25 percent globally and only 1 per cent of global cooperation funding went on gender equality. It was for those reasons that the Generation Equality Forum had been set up.

The Action Coalition on feminist movements and leadership, of which the IPU was a co-leader, would focus on four critical actions. First, it sought to double, by 2026, the annual growth rate of funding for women-led and feminist-led movements in all their diversity, including those led by transexual, intersex and non-binary people. Second, it aimed to promote, expand and protect civic space across all domains, including online, as well as to support the efforts of feminist human rights defenders and peace builders. Third, it hoped to increase, by 2026, the meaningful participation, leadership and decision making power of feminist leaders, both girls and women, to advance gender parity in all aspects of decision making, including in the private sector, civil society, international organizations and government institutions. In doing so, it would promote and expand feminist and gender-transformative laws and policy. Fourth, it would dedicate specific but flexible resources, including financial and technical resources, to adolescent girls and young feminist leaders and create safe and inclusive spaces for their meaningful participation. The above actions would place a particular emphasis on three points: financing, laws and policy, and data and accountability. Funding provided to women's organizations should be accessible and transparent. The baseline for the above work was a norm change. It was vital to deepen solidarity within feminist movements and between all social justice movements to build a culture that was enabling for women's leadership.

Catalytic commitments had been made at the first gathering of the Generation Equality Forum in Mexico in March 2021. For example, Women Moving Millions, together with the Ford Foundation and the Government of Canada, had pledged a total of US\$ 15 million to initiate a multistakeholder global alliance for sustainable feminist movements. In addition, Women Moving Millions had committed to raising a further US\$ 100 million by the second gathering of the Forum in Paris in June 2021 to support all Action Coalitions. The commitments had been both financial and related to laws and policy. The work of parliamentarians and the IPU, particularly the IPU Forum of Women Parliamentarians, would be crucial in driving the commitments of the Generation Equality Forum.

Mr. H. Vasconcelos (Mexico), panellist, said that it was extremely important to reflect on the progress made towards eliminating discrimination against women and girls in all areas of life. The first World Conference on Women had taken place in Mexico City in 1975. Since then, many efforts had been made to reach full equality for women and girls. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action had been a critical roadmap in that regard. While it was clear that a great deal had been achieved, it was necessary to reaffirm commitments and tackle new challenges, such as those caused by the pandemic. The Generation Equality Forum offered an opportunity to do just that. The Forum had kicked off in Mexico in March 2021 and would hold a final meeting in Paris in June and July 2021.

The fight for gender equality was central to the Government of Mexico. For the first time in history, there was equal representation of men and women in the Mexican Senate and in the presidential cabinet. Mexico was also taking concrete actions to ensure gender equality in all government bodies, combat all forms of violence against women and girls, prioritize reproductive health, achieve equal pay, offer access to justice, promote paternity and maternity rights, consolidate property and land rights for women, and end discrimination against indigenous and afro-descendant women. Mexico was well on the way to meeting its objectives and would continue supporting the feminist agenda. It was not possible to transform society if girls and women could not enjoy their full rights.

Ms. C. Lopez Castro (Mexico), panellist, accompanying her remarks with a digital slide presentation, said that she had participated on behalf of the IPU at the Gender Equality Forum in Mexico in March 2021. During the meeting, draft blueprints of action had been set out for each of the six Action Coalitions with inputs from governments, international organizations, civil society, youth-led organizations and the private sector. The draft blueprints were currently being finalized. She herself had had the pleasure to present the vision for the Action Coalition on feminist movements and leadership: to build strong woman-led and girl-led feminist movements and ensure the leadership of women and girls in all their diversity. Women and girls had much to contribute to decision making processes. However, a seat at the table did not come easily, especially for young women, who made up less than 1 per cent of parliamentarians. Therefore, the IPU had made a call to action to nurture the political aspirations of young women, support young women candidates for political office and invest in the leadership of young women currently in office. The Action Coalition also sought to create favourable conditions for women's full participation in decision making without fear of violence and to make sure institutions were equipped to advance feminist policies, including gender-responsive laws and budgets.

The commitment-making phase of the Forum was currently underway with all stakeholders being encouraged to pledge what they could towards the gender equality transition. The phase would culminate at the Paris Forum in June 2021 where the final blueprints and commitments would be announced. Parliaments were in prime position to accelerate progress on gender equality, for instance, by repealing discriminatory laws or adopting new gender-sensitive legislation.

The Parliament of Mexico had passed many laws promoting gender equality at all levels of government. It had set gender parity targets and made sure that diverse groups of women were present at all levels of decision making. It had been given the mechanisms to apply a gender lens to its work and had taken measures to combat sexism and violence against women. It was also keen to involve civil society groups and adolescent girls in decision making processes.

Khesavi (adolescent girl advocate from Mauritius), panellist, said that there could not be any real progress on advancing gender equality if the voices of adolescent girls and young people continued to be missing from key discussions. It was clear that further action was needed to empower girls and young women to engage as advocates, leaders and participants in public policy making. When given the space, opportunity and support, young advocates could transform their communities and take steps to achieve gender equality.

Earlier that year, adolescent leaders and representatives had met at the Action Coalition on feminist movements and leadership for an intergenerational dialogue on the specific actions needed to support the movements and leadership of adolescent girls. Three main recommendations had come out of the dialogue. First, it was important to create spaces for girls and young women to be heard. Those spaces must be accessible and adolescent friendly. Young women and girls must have access to decision making spaces and direct regular contact with power holders so they could raise their concerns and offer girl-centred solutions. Spaces were also needed to allow young advocates to connect with each other, form networks and strengthen their movements. Providing access to funding and resources was another vital way of strengthening girl-led movements around the world. Second, there was an important need to promote a safe and supportive environment for girls and young women to speak out freely both online and in public. Measures that could be taken included implementing campaigns and making civic engagement accessible to girls from all backgrounds. Third, it was vital to invest in girls as leaders from the very beginning. Schools should introduce civic and human rights education earlier on and provide girls with the leadership skills, confidence, experience and education needed to engage in public life as leaders. She encouraged parliamentarians to commit to the above three recommendations.

In general, parliamentarians must hold their governments accountable on women's leadership by ensuring that the right funding and policies were in place. Women parliamentarians in particular should offer support and mentorship to girls and champion policies that supported girl-led movements. Youth advocates all around the world were doing an incredible job fighting for a more gender equal world. The time had come to help them.

Ms. C. Lopez Castro (Mexico) took the Chair.

Ms. V. Riotton (France) said that her Parliament had invested a great deal in gender equality. It had doubled the length of paternity leave, increased childcare benefits for single parent families, offered a pay rise of EUR 200 per month to carers and nurses, and made sanitary products available to women free of charge. There were two bills in parliament that were particularly relevant for gender equality, the first of which was a bill to combat domestic violence. The bill had enabled her Parliament to better combat street harassment, introduce protective bracelets for women, speed up the issuing of restraining orders, and allow doctors to break patient confidentiality in the event of immediate danger. The second bill aimed to improve gender equality in the workplace. Companies would be required to measure numbers of men and women and create a compulsory roadmap on achieving gender parity.

Ms. H. Makiyama (Japan) said that Japan had been experiencing difficulties during the pandemic with employment levels taking a serious hit. Part-time workers had been particularly affected, many of whom were women. Many single parents and unmarried women also found themselves without income. The number of domestic violence cases had grown by 1.5 per cent in the past year. Suicide rates among women were also increasing while they decreased among men. It was therefore clear that Japan had not done enough to help women. Currently, the representation of women in the lower chamber of the Japanese Diet was the lowest out of the G7 countries (9.9 per cent). The first step to improving the situation was to better reflect the diversity of society in the political institutions. Diversity was a source of resilience.

Ms. L. Gumerova (Russian Federation) said that the Council of the Federation of the Russian Parliament had set up a youth parliament. The aim was to engage young people in political decision making and provide them with training. There were also other youth parliaments in Russia at both the regional and federal levels. Countries should open up pathways for young people to enter politics, providing them with opportunities to build their professional capacities. Over the years, young parliamentarians had proved they could deal with very serious issues. She invited delegates to Third Eurasian Women's Forum in October 2021.

Ms. M. McPhedran (Canada) said that Canada had recently appointed its first woman finance minister and its most recent budget focused on a feminist economic recovery plan with an emphasis on childcare and youth engagement. There were two other feminist actions plans in place in addition to the economic plan. One focused on the prevention of violence against women and girls, and the other on missing and murdered indigenous women and girls. The new budget had committed almost CA\$ 6 billion to youth, helping with education costs and employment among other things. She asked the panellists to clarify how the Paris meeting of the Generation Equality Forum would help parliamentarians build bridges with young leaders.

Ms. S. Sirivejchapun (Thailand) said that Thailand had recently amended its abortion law, allowing women to terminate a pregnancy in the first 12 weeks. Previously, women had faced criminal charges for undergoing an abortion. In certain circumstances, the new law allowed women to terminate a pregnancy after 12 weeks, such as after a sexual assault.

Under the Thai Constitution, the Government was required to ensure that budgets were gender-responsive. Parliament was responsible for overseeing implementation of that budget. However, gender-responsive budgeting was a new concept in Thailand. The country had a long way to go before it could fully understand and implement it.

The Parliament of Thailand had recently published a code of ethics for members of the House of Representatives, Senate and committees which contained provisions forbidding sexual harassment. An ethics committee had also been established to consider complaints in a confidential manner. The committee was not just a formality but a real body that had already begun examining cases.

Ms. R. Kavakci Kan (Turkey) said that Turkey had changed its Constitution in 2017 lowering the age of eligibility to run for office from 25 to 18. As a result, it currently had eight Members of Parliament under the age of 30. Having youth representation in parliament was very valuable. Not only did it provide an opportunity to bridge the generation gap but also brought fresh energy and perspectives into parliament.

She was concerned that some parliaments were discriminating against women who wore headscarves. Germany and France had passed laws prohibiting women who wore headscarves from taking public office. Women should not be told what to wear and what not to wear.

Turkey had developed a women's support application that could be downloaded onto a smartphone. With one press of a button, any woman in danger could immediately call for help. The aim of the application was to address violence against women. However, it would not serve women who were outside the digital divide.

The IPU must address the situation in Palestine where innocent civilians were being attacked by the Israeli State. The situation was affecting women, men and children.

Ms. S. Koutra-Koukouma (Cyprus) said that Cyprus had managed to prioritize women's issues despite difficulties caused by the pandemic. The Parliament had examined problems such as violence against women and understaffing of competent bodies. It had modernized the rape-related provisions of the Penal Code in line with the provisions of the Istanbul Convention and legislated on an array of gender-related issues, such as the criminalization of sexist speech and behaviour. In line with the campaign #NotInMyParliament launched by the Council of Europe, two discussion points on sexism had been submitted to parliament. A number of social partners and nongovernmental organizations as well as people from the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex (LGBTQI) and immigrant communities had been invited to take part in those discussions. Although the national machinery for women's rights existed, a process for scrutinizing the budget from a gender perspective was lacking. She would continue to press her Parliament to establish such a process. Key elements for dealing with gender inequality included: introducing prevention policies and establishing an effective mechanism to implement and enforce legislation.

Ms. L.B. Malema (Mozambique) said that gender equality was a human right and a prerequisite for poverty reduction. Gender equality and generation equality must go hand in hand to deliver social inclusion. Parliaments had a key role to play in both gender equality and generation equality.

In 2019, the Parliament approved two laws that were important for the lives of women and girls. The first of those was a law criminalizing child and early marriage. Mozambique had one of the highest rates of child marriage in the world with one in every two girls affected. The second was the law on succession, which gave women equal rights to inherit after a spouse had died.

Ms. L. Ramohlanka (Lesotho) said that, under the National Assembly Electoral Act (2011), men and women in Lesotho could participate equally in National Assembly elections. The Act provided for a "zebra model" whereby a man must always be followed by a woman on political party lists. In 2006, her Parliament had enacted the Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act, which removed the minority status of women. Married women were thus given fully-fledged status to represent their families in financial matters and in the courts of law. In 2011, the Parliament had enacted the Companies Act, which authorized married women to become directors of companies without the consent of their husbands. In March 2021, a bill on combatting domestic violence had been submitted for its first reading. The bill sought to abolish abusive practices which degraded children and women, such as forced child marriages, and afforded protection to victims. Lesotho had also developed the Gender and Development Policy 2018-2030 in alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals, which

promoted equitable access to services and resources for women and vulnerable groups. The Public Procurement Policy 2018-2030 aimed to ensure equitable distribution of government resources and advocated for affirmative action in favour of women and youth in the allocation of public tenders.

Ms. L. Ramazanova (Kazakhstan) said that Kazakhstan had made many legislative efforts to empower women and promote gender equality. In 2020, her Parliament had amended its law on elections and its law on political parties. Political parties were obliged to follow a 30 per cent gender quota when putting candidates up for election. As a result, women now represented 27 per cent of parliamentarians in the lower chamber and 30 to 35 per cent of parliamentarians in the regional parliaments. Alarming, violence against women had increased 2.5-fold during the pandemic. However, Kazakhstan was one of the first post-Soviet States to enact laws establishing zero tolerance for domestic violence.

Gender-sensitive budgeting was a very effective tool for improving women's empowerment. Kazakhstan was working in conjunction with UN Women and other institutions to improve gender-sensitive budgeting. The Parliament was holding the government accountable on such matters. There were also 13 resource centres across the country that were working on women empowerment as well as a number of family support centres that offered protection to families facing hardships.

Ms. L. Fehlmann Rielle (Switzerland) said that Switzerland had a big problem with violence against women. It had ratified the Istanbul Convention and would need to align its legislation to fulfil those obligations. Domestic violence had existed for decades but had not always been so visible. It affected not only women but also other members of the family, including children. With more women in parliament, Switzerland had been able to tackle the issue together with civil society. The Parliament had also been reviewing the definition of rape set out under the Criminal Code. The definition was currently too restrictive and would be changed to reflect the issue of consent. It was very important to have more women in parliament. She encouraged parliamentarians to take voluntary measures to increase women's representation. For example, political parties in Switzerland had put more women onto their lists voluntarily, which had, in turn, resulted in more women being elected. Quotas had sometimes been criticized but were a good temporary measure to achieve gender parity in parliament. It was also important to fight for equal pay. Despite the above efforts, a great deal of work remained to be done in Switzerland.

Ms. H. Alhelaissi (Saudi Arabia) said that it was extremely important to implement mechanisms, policy and legislation to advance women's causes and rights. Inclusion of youth and women should be a priority for all governments. Saudi Arabia had prioritized those issues in its vision for 2030 and injected serious financial aid into the budget for such causes. It would not be possible to succeed on women's rights without the inclusion of men. Men should therefore be invited to take part in conversations on gender equality.

Ms. C. Mix (Chile) said that the people of Chile would soon be electing members to the Constitutional Convention, a body tasked with writing a new Constitution for the country. Measures had been put in place to ensure gender parity within the Convention. It would be the first body of its kind anywhere in the world to have equal representation between men and women. The Constitution would therefore be written by equal numbers of men and women.

Mr. G. Binzagr (Saudi Arabia) highlighted the importance of partnership between men and women to achieve the full inclusion of women in society. Saudi Arabia had a vision in that regard. It was important to address four dimensions in particular: pathfinding, alignment, empowerment and modelling. Path finding required the setting of clear goals for the inclusion and participation of women. In Saudi Arabia, women had been involved in education for a long time, but the challenge was to involve them in society as a whole, particularly in positions of leadership. Alignment was a situation where men and women worked together to tweak laws wherever necessary. Empowerment in Saudi Arabia included encouraging women to go on scholarships abroad and to experience positions of leadership as students. Those young women were now beginning to take their place in society. Modelling was also extremely important. Women in leadership should model to the next generation the paths they could pursue. Men and women should model to each other that they could be partners in leadership.

Ms. H. Fayez (Bahrain) said that Bahrain had several bodies working on gender equality and women's empowerment, including the Supreme Council for Women, the Ministry of Labour and Social Development and the Civil Service Bureau. It had also put in place a set of solid legislative rules and regulations that supported women. A package of projects had recently been adopted aiming to better integrate women into the labour market. The package provided employers in the public and private sectors with attractive incentives to employ more women. The Supreme Council of Women was composed of 16 female public figures and aimed to further efforts on women's empowerment. One initiative by the Supreme Council of Women had been to encourage government bodies and private companies to form equal opportunities committees. The committees intended to ensure equal treatment of men and women in the workplace. There were currently 45 equal opportunities committees in the government institutions. Bahrain also had a national plan for the advancement of women which sought to ensure family stability and enable women to contribute competitively to development based on the principle of equal opportunities. Bahrain was currently moving from women's empowerment to women's development. Women should be present in every sector of the economy.

Ms. E. Azad (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the economic empowerment of women was improving in Iran. There were currently 3,200 microcredit funds available for rural women nationwide. A total of 4,000 women were active as entrepreneurs and 20 per cent of knowledge-based companies were directed by women. Politically speaking, women were expected to fill 30 per cent of management positions in the field of policy making. Similarly, recruitment of female judges was growing and women candidates in parliament had increased by 21 per cent over the past four decades. As regards education, school dropout rates for girls had been decreasing. Women who had completed higher education made up 30 per cent of employees. Women and girls also made up half of students in Iran. Women's participation in sports was growing, with many taking part in the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Iran had also made a number of legislative efforts, including a law that reduced the working hours of women. Women were being supported throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, including with loans and subsidies.

Ms. S. Kihika (Kenya) resumed the Chair.

Elections of the presiding officers of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians

Ms. S. Koutra-Koukouma (Cyprus) said that the mandate of Ms. Kihika, President of the Bureau, was coming to an end. She wished to thank her for all her work.

The Chair said that it had been a great honour to serve as President of the Bureau and thanked members for their support throughout her term. The Forum had elected a number of new members to the Bureau on 10 May 2021. The newly constituted Bureau had met for the first time virtually on 11 May 2021 and discussed the mandates of the current regional representatives. Some were foreseen to end their terms in 2022 based on the elections held in 2018. Others would end their terms in 2025 based on the latest elections. The upcoming cycles for renewing those positions therefore stood at one and three years, instead of two years as foreseen in the rules, due to the one-year delay in holding elections following the outbreak of the pandemic. If the Forum so agreed, she suggested extending by one year the terms of the regional representatives whose terms were due to end in 2022 to keep the rotation for renewal of half of the seats at two-year intervals.

It was so agreed.

The Chair said that, at its meeting on 11 May 2021, the newly constituted Bureau had considered nominations for the new President, first Vice-President and second Vice-President. They had designated Ms. L. Vasylenko (Ukraine) as President and Ms. H. Fayez (Bahrain) as first Vice-President. The vacancy for the second Vice-President would remain open until the next IPU Assembly. She took it that the Forum wished to approve the nominations.

The nominations were approved.

Ms. L. Vasylenko (Ukraine) said that it was an honour to be elected President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians. She hoped to raise the gender equality agenda to a new level. It was important to work together to make the world a more gender-balanced and gender-equal place with equal opportunities for men and women. It was her intention to speak to members individually as well as in their regional groups to get to know their goals. It would then be possible to integrate things into a coherent agenda and promote it at the general IPU level.

Ms. H. Fayez (Bahrain) said that the Bureau was an important body for tackling women's issues. She was excited to work with the new President as well as with each and every member of the Forum. She had worked on women's issues in Bahrain for a long time, including on different legislation, and could therefore bring a great deal of value to the IPU. It was her hope that some, if not all, of the goals of the Forum would be achieved over the coming years.

Venue and date of the 32nd session of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians

The Chair said that next session of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians would take place during the upcoming 143rd IPU Assembly in November 2021.

The sitting rose at 16:15 CEST.

Forum of Young Parliamentarians

Sitting of Thursday, 13 May 2021

Welcoming remarks

The sitting was called to order at 14:00 CEST, with Mr. M. Bouva (Suriname), President of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians, in the Chair.

The Chair, in his welcoming remarks, outlined the topics to be covered by the Forum during its session, among them the impact of the pandemic on youth, strategic approaches for building back better, and key outcomes of the recent Seventh Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians. In pursuing those outcomes, Forum members could identify youth-responsive recovery measures to promote at the current Assembly and in national parliaments. He was pleased to welcome to the session the Secretary General, who was the strongest supporter of youth participation and empowerment.

The Secretary General, thanking the President for his kind words, said that he would never tire of interacting with the young people represented by the Forum and was proud that the IPU resolution on youth participation in the democratic process, adopted in 2010, had been instrumental in promoting the growth witnessed ever since in the youth movement within the IPU. He was delighted to join in the official start of the meeting, noting that the participation of so many young parliamentarians was a testimony to their unwavering commitment to widening the engagement of young people in parliamentary work.

The question at issue was how to reflect the voices, needs and interests of young people in political decision-making, as was their right, in a world where only 2.6 per cent of parliamentarians were aged under 30 and where young people in 69 per cent of countries could be old enough to vote but not old enough to be elected. Young people were vital components of any democracy and their perspectives, ideas and talents were key to addressing all matters of concern to people of all ages.

The young generation nonetheless remained at the edges of politics, with their capacity to drive change hampered by impervious governance dispensations. Against that backdrop, the resilience shown by young people was especially heartening. Their critical role in mitigating the impact of COVID-19 through a range of community-based and other activities was particularly noteworthy, as was their leadership in fighting for democracy, human rights and climate action. It was therefore important to support young people to play similar roles in the pandemic recovery efforts.

He had been pleased to note the depth of the reflections on such issues at the Seventh Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians, highlights of which had included the launch of the *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament* campaign, aimed at ending youth under-representation, and the IPU's newly published report on youth participation in national parliaments. Given the good practices and recommendations being formulated in addition for a youth-responsive COVID-19 recovery, the ingredients were in place for guaranteeing a strong youth perspective in Member Parliaments and in the upcoming Assembly.

Young parliamentarians had a great responsibility to ensure that young people were not left behind in policymaking, law-making and resource allocation. The IPU stood ready to continue providing a global platform for enabling young politicians to work for fair, resilient and sustainable progress. Democracies must also be strengthened and rejuvenated by being made more representative and inclusive of all generations and more responsive to the specific needs and interests of each. The opportunities provided by the IPU's forthcoming activities in 2021 must therefore be seized to that end and would at the same time help the IPU to remain relevant and fit for purpose, especially in a post-COVID-19 pandemic world.

In addition to acting on the resolution mentioned earlier to establish the Forum as a platform of influence for the world's young parliamentarians, the IPU had, in 2018, become the first international organization to introduce youth quotas for attendance at its meetings.

The IPU youth movement would help to open the door to politics for the young generation and redefine the development model to serve a better future through the transformative change expected by those who had placed their trust in parliamentarians. The active participation and input of Forum members was a vital part of the IPU movement to empower youth and advocate for their rightful place in building a better today and an even better future. He therefore looked forward to the outcome of the Forum's deliberations.

The Chair, paying tribute to the Secretary General as the driving force behind the IPU's youth participation and empowerment activities, said that the Forum was the reward of efforts exerted since 2010 to boost youth leadership and engagement in politics.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Contribution to the work of the 142nd Assembly from a youth perspective: Parliaments, youth and COVID-19

The Chair said that the health and socio-economic shocks brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic had had a significant impact on young men and women worldwide. The Forum would therefore discuss its contribution to the work of the 142nd Assembly from a youth perspective with the aim of ensuring that parliaments responded to the needs of young people and guaranteed their rightful place during and after the pandemic. In order to inform the discussion, he would brief participants on key recommendations produced from the recent Seventh Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians in connection with a youth-responsive approach to post-COVID-19 recovery.

Accompanying his briefing with a digital slide presentation, he said that recommendations with respect to youth participation and empowerment stressed the need for safe spaces where youth could drive change and expand the boundaries of what it meant to be a politician. To that end, parliaments must be open to bringing more grass-roots voices to the table by harnessing the transformative power of gadgets and social media and increasing awareness of the parliamentary role.

With regard to education, the first recommendation was to invest in education and call on governments to meet the target of allocating 6 per cent of gross domestic product to education in national budgets. Legislation should also include a gender, age and diversity dimension, taking into account the specific needs of girls and boys, and hybrid models should be developed in education systems to bridge the digital divide.

In health matters, robust legislation and oversight were recommended as means of addressing the current disruptions in access to essential health services and of eliminating gender-based violence against young women and girls. Universal health care should deliver as promised to young people, using as a framework the IPU's resolution on achieving universal health care coverage by 2030. More resources should also be directed to youth mental health, with governments investing more in mental health services.

To promote economic empowerment, structural reforms should be supported, including to address youth unemployment. Young parliamentarians had a crucial role to play in improving legislative frameworks specific to young entrepreneurs. In particular, stronger legislation would encourage the private sector through tax stimulus to employ youth. Basic income should also be considered as a means of economically empowering young people. In short, investment was needed in people, institutions and decent jobs.

As to the role of parliaments in implementing those recommendations, their political will should be brought to bear, with the support of stakeholders, to revive education systems; open up employment and entrepreneurship to young people; allow the power of youth-generated ideas and action to change the essence of political engagement; and protect the future generation by safeguarding their health and well-being.

With young parliamentarians set to play a crucial role in bringing forward that agenda, he encouraged participants in the interactive discussion to share information on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on youth; describe good practices for preserving and enhancing youth empowerment during the pandemic; and propose means of ensuring that appropriate policies, legislation and resource allocations were in place to support youth empowerment in the post-COVID-19 recovery efforts.

Mr. U. Lechte (Germany) said that young people were effectively the losers in the pandemic. They were not being vaccinated, were spending long hours on digital devices in order to study and were missing out on their youth, unable to enjoy what life would normally have to offer them. Places of higher education remained shut, jobs were disappearing and the global economy was suffering. Time

moved very slowly for young people, who had already endured many months of lockdown. In Germany, mental health clinics were overrun and youth counselling and therapy services were in short supply because of the demand. Overall, therefore, young people were the hardest hit by the pandemic.

Ms. R.N. Khadse (India), citing a global survey on youth and COVID-19 published in 2020, said that a majority of young people affected by closures of education and training facilities had been unable to transition into online and distance learning and that many young workers had reported job losses or income reduction. With freedoms curtailed in addition by lockdown measures, there was a mental health crisis among young people. Despite such challenges, young people remained determined to partner with other stakeholders to build back better through, for example, volunteerism and donations towards the COVID-19 response.

India was investing in its youth population in line with a holistic national youth policy focused on priority areas for youth development. Youth-targeted initiatives under way included programmes for skilling, digital empowerment, start-ups and micro-enterprise loans, as well as a scheme providing livelihood opportunities for returnee migrant workers. The country's national youth development institutions and organizations had engaged young people in the efforts to combat the pandemic on all fronts, including through raising awareness of disinformation and of sanitation issues. Such concerted actions were the means towards recovery from the impact of COVID-19.

Mr. G. Giam Yean Song (Singapore) said that socio-economic measures introduced in his country to cushion the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on many young Singaporeans in their pivotal years included digital tools for home-based learning, traineeships for young graduates, and financial support for young couples with children. In addition to their interest in acquiring useful skills and good jobs, Singaporean youth had a keen sense of social responsibility and concern for the environment. His parliament had called for greater efforts to combat the global emergency posed by climate change and to embrace sustainable development.

As a country dependent on trade as its life blood, Singapore supported an open, rules-based multilateral trading system as the foundation for sustainable global recovery from the pandemic. With no one safe until all were safe, Singapore strongly supported the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access, or COVAX initiative, as the means of ensuring fair and equitable access to the vaccine for all countries. He called on all parliamentarians to rally together to defeat the common enemy of COVID-19 so as to usher in a safer and brighter future for young people and all humanity.

Mr. I. Dodangoda (Sri Lanka) said that, during the pandemic, young people had been greatly affected by job losses, job shortages and salary cuts. Countries must therefore focus on youth employment by identifying and creating job opportunities and guiding young people towards them. In common with others, his Government had provided relief packages, loans and financial support to enable young entrepreneurs, start-up businesses and others to survive the challenges brought by the COVID-19 crisis. Further efforts were needed, however, to bring youth into the workforce in such hard times, which included helping them to make the right career choices for enhancing their lives and contributing to the national economy. Parliamentarians must work together to achieve the common goal of ensuring that young people received the support needed for them to make a good start in life.

Mr. A. Bakr (Syrian Arab Republic) said that there were substantial numbers of young parliamentarians in the Syrian People's Assembly, which had a standing youth committee in recognition of the fundamental role played by young people in all aspects of life. His country and its youthful society faced exceptional challenges associated with terrorism, sanctions and unilateral measures at the same time as having to cope with the COVID-19 virus. The Government was working to mitigate the effects of the virus on the population, which supported its actions in that regard through cooperation. Care must be taken, however, to safeguard livelihoods and, for their part, young parliamentarians should join in the global vaccination efforts. He and his fellow citizens were always ready to engage with any proposal that would have a positive impact on young lives.

The Chair thanked all those who had spoken for their contributions to the discussion.

Election to the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians

The Chair recalled that the term of office of the current members of the Board would expire at the end of the current Assembly and that new members, consisting of one woman and one man from each geopolitical group, were therefore to be elected to serve for a two-year term, ending in the spring of 2023.

Ms. Z. Hilal (Secretary of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians) said that the candidates nominated by their respective geopolitical groups for election as members of the Board were, for the African Group, Mr. R. Miarintsoa Andriantsitonta (Madagascar) and Ms. T. Jutton (Mauritius); for the Arab Group, Ms. S. Albazar (Egypt) and Mr. A. Al-Kattan (Kuwait); for the Asia-Pacific Group, Ms. R.N. Khadse (India) and Mr. I. Sereewatthanawut (Thailand); for the Eurasia Group, Ms. M. Vasilevich (Belarus) and Mr. A.U. Aslonov (Uzbekistan); for the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean, Ms. S. Browne (Guyana) and Mr. P. Kemper (Paraguay); and for the Twelve Plus Group, Mr. U. Lechte (Germany) and Ms. O. Rudenko (Ukraine).

The Chair said he took it that the Forum wished to elect those candidates to serve as members of the Board for the period 2021-2023.

It was so decided.

The sitting rose at 15:15 CEST.

Sitting of Monday, 17 May

The sitting was called to order at 14:15 CEST with Mr. M. Bouva (Suriname), President of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians, in the Chair.

The Chair recalled that, at its first sitting, the Forum had provided a youth perspective on the COVID-19 recovery effort (the theme of the 142nd Assembly) and elected the new Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians. At the present sitting the Forum would be invited to reflect on recent progress, and on which new solutions could further increase youth participation in politics over the next decade. The sitting would also include discussion of the *I Say Yes* campaign, and of how to prioritize youth issues in the IPU's next five-year strategy.

Panel discussion

A new decade of action for the IPU and parliaments on youth participation

The Chair said that last year, the Forum had marked the 10th anniversary of the IPU's resolution on youth participation by asking parliaments how they were implementing the resolution. Some legislatures had lowered the age of eligibility to run for office, while others had adopted youth quotas and founded youth caucuses. That said, there was still much work to be done: only 2.6 per cent of the world's MPs were under 30, and in 69 per cent of countries, the age at which one could run for elected office was higher than the age of enfranchisement.

He thanked the outgoing Board for all its hard work.

A video was broadcast to mark the tenure of the outgoing Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians.

Mr. D. Pacheco (IPU President) said that the beginning of an important new decade of work on youth issues had been marked in April 2021 by the Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians and the launch of a report on youth participation in national parliaments. Youth empowerment work would be taken to higher levels through the report's new data and recommendations, and the commitments made at the Global Conference, at which young MPs had shared their experiences of the pandemic and set out their vision for young people's role in building back better. Those rich reflections would be properly incorporated into the outcomes of the 142nd Assembly.

Joint work since the launch of the *I Say Yes* campaign had continued. The campaign was a bridge from talking about youth empowerment to taking action. It relied on everyone taking responsibility to work together. One hundred changemakers had already signed up to the campaign. As successful youth empowerment relied on the involvement of people of all ages, the intergenerational nature of the campaign was crucial to its success. The IPU President therefore committed to persuading leaders of all ages to support the campaign.

Youth participation in politics mattered because parliaments should reflect the populations they represented. At present however, there were no MPs under the age of 30 in over 40 per cent of the world's parliaments, even though over 50 per cent of the global population was under 30 years old. Parliaments needed the talents and enthusiasm of the under 30s to solve the planet's critical problems, from climate change to the pandemic. Change was badly needed, and the *I Say Yes* campaign was a chance for everyone to contribute.

The IPU was currently discussing its five-year strategy for 2022–2026. The President urged members of the Forum to participate actively in that process, as young people's perspectives on the IPU's future strategic direction were crucial. He reassured the Forum of his personal commitment to and the IPU's wider support for young parliamentarians. Their work, including the building of a stronger IPU, was a joint endeavour for people of all ages.

The President thanked the IPU President for his commitment to making the IPU and its Members stronger. Young MPs were counting on the IPU President to advocate for the importance of the youth agenda in the next IPU Strategy, including an increase in the quantity and quality of young people's contributions to parliamentary life.

Ms. Z. Hilal (Secretary of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians) said that she would brief the Forum on the state of youth participation in parliament based on the IPU's biennial report (last published in April 2021), which monitored progress and setbacks on the numbers of young MPs in national legislatures. The report included youth participation data from 148 parliaments and other data from 248 chambers of parliament. It was also the first report to draw on interviews with young MPs and youth participation experts.

The IPU set gender-equal targets for parliamentary youth participation based on the proportion of young people across the world in different age categories and the age at which citizens were eligible to be elected to office in their own countries. Progress towards achieving those targets was slow. The 15 per cent target for the under 30s currently stood at 2.6 per cent, the 35 per cent aim for the under 40s was at 17.5 per cent, and the 45 per cent ambition for the under 45s was at just above 30 per cent. A third of the world's parliaments and three quarters of upper chambers had no MPs under 30. Targets were similarly far from being achieved at a regional level.

The report also found that, in 69 per cent of countries, the age at which citizens could be elected to office was higher than the age of eligibility to vote. Equalizing those ages was a high priority, which had most recently been resolved in Nigeria and Turkey.

Only 39 per cent of chambers had committees that dealt with youth issues, despite the view that all chambers should have such committees. The parliaments of Spain, Indonesia and Latvia had recently instituted youth caucuses. The IPU was ready to facilitate peer-to-peer exchanges for legislatures wishing to do the same in order to raise the proportion of youth caucuses to above the current worldwide level of 16 per cent.

Norway topped the global ranking of parliaments in terms of MPs under 30 years old, while Armenia had the most MPs under 40 and 45 in the world. The Gambia was in fourth place for MPs under 30 and sixth place for the under 40s and under 45s, while the President's home country, Suriname, was also in the top ten for all three age categories. All parliaments in the top rankings were to be warmly congratulated, although further progress was certainly needed, especially in the under 30s age range.

There were fewer women MPs in all age categories compared to their male counterparts, although that trend was less pronounced in the 21–30 age bracket for female parliamentarians.

The April 2021 report was the first to compare parliamentary representation by age with the size of each age category across a given country. The number of MPs under 40 was proportionally closest to the number of adults under 40 in Europe and the Americas. Larger differences had been found in regions where young people made up greater proportions of the population, such as the Middle East and North Africa.

A further new element of the April 2021 report was its data on young Speakers of Parliament and Heads of State. One Speaker was under 30 years old and 20 Speakers were under 40; only one of them was a woman.

The report found that lowering the age of eligibility to run for office had a significant impact on the number of young people elected to parliament. For example, when Nigeria lowered its age of eligibility to run for office, the number of young MPs rose by nine per cent.

Non-legal barriers to young people being elected to office included financial constraints, and a greater mistrust of political processes and institutions among younger age groups. Younger people's need to focus on life-cycle challenges, such as starting a family or becoming financially independent, often acted as an additional barrier to election. Men and women's need for childcare support was identified as crucial to encourage and facilitate young people's access to elected office.

The report contained over 50 recommendations that would enable more young people to be elected to parliament, including: lowering the age of eligibility to run for office; instituting youth quotas for election to parliament, and youth committees and caucuses within parliament; levelling the playing field in terms of campaign finances and positions on party lists across age groups; addressing the double discrimination faced by young women so as to help them both to be elected and to remain in the political arena (including by implementing the Call to Action of the IPU and the UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, and working towards the elimination of all forms of sexism, harassment and gender-based violence in politics); providing young MPs with opportunities to take up leadership positions and to engage in mentoring and training; creating or strengthening the youth wings of political parties to encourage young people to think about running for office; and enabling young people's opinions to be heard in parliamentary work, not only at elections but also between them.

The report also made seven recommendations on life-cycle challenges, including: providing childcare on parliamentary premises; permitting pairing of MPs; and developing maternity and paternity leave policies, remote working and remote voting solutions.

The IPU could help parliaments to implement any of the report's recommendations, including by running training and mentorship programmes for newly elected MPs, and providing technical support to establish youth caucuses and networks, enact legislation to reform electoral law, and develop and draft youth-friendly policies to inform working practices within parliament.

The Chair encouraged Forum members to read the report, as its recommendations could and would take parliaments from the current situation towards fulfilling the youth representation targets that the Forum had set. No-one should hesitate to call on the support of the IPU Secretariat in their quest to implement the report's recommendations, or for any other youth-related work in their parliament.

Mr. I. Sereewatthanawut (Thailand) extended his sympathy and solidarity to all those who had suffered and were suffering as a result of the pandemic. At the same time, there was also an opportunity to recover with stability and speed by enhancing joint work as the world brought COVID-19 more under control.

In the decade to come, the Forum should be encouraged to redouble its efforts to increase youth participation in the democratic process. A fifth of the global population was now aged between 15 and 25. That age group had consistently demonstrated its potential to energetically generate creative ideas, and had proved its intelligence, discipline and responsibility. The achievements of Olympic medallists bore witness to that group's abilities and drive.

The IPU had adopted the resolution *Youth participation in the democratic process* ten years ago; but what could strengthen youth engagement for the next ten years? MPs should start to reshape their role from current perceptions of what parliamentary work involved towards activities in which MPs felt they should truly be engaging. That reshaping should be informed by input and feedback from a wide range of sources, taking account of the similarity between various countries and generations, as well as their diversity and differences.

All age groups should make efforts to communicate with and properly understand young people so as to give them the right opportunity to play their role in society. Such efforts could help people to think and act according to a *new normal* that embraced innovation and trust in young people. At the same time, young people should be instilled with good will and good faith towards their communities, countries and the world, especially in view of the pandemic.

Thailand had made good progress with youth participation through initiatives such as a legally endorsed council for children and young people, and a programme of junior parliaments run in schools. In addition, a cross-party caucus of young Thai MPs had recently been established. The caucus aimed to advocate for more youth participation and strengthen young people's dedication to public affairs.

Although technology and communications were crucial, cooperation between young MPs was even more important for achieving the unprecedented engagement from all generations that was now needed.

Ms. S. Falaknaz (United Arab Emirates) said that the pandemic had adversely affected young people across the world. However, the authorities of the United Arab Emirates had not been deterred from continuing programmes and policies that involved young people in decision-making and prepared

them to be suitably qualified to assume leadership positions in the future. In terms of parliamentary representation, 25 per cent of the members of the Federal National Council were currently under 40 years old.

The following actions had been taken to empower young people in different areas of the life of the United Arab Emirates:

- Between 2017 and 2021, the government had appointed four young people as state ministers with various portfolios, including food security and artificial intelligence. The minister for youth had been appointed at the age of 22.
- A decree required that the boards of directors of government agencies and companies must include at least one member under 30 years old. Thirty-three such appointments had been made as of early 2020.
- A policy had been adopted in February 2020 stipulating that delegations of federal officials travelling abroad on official business must include one member under 35 years old, and that gender balance must be taken into account.
- A young man and woman were appointed every year to represent the United Arab Emirates at the UN General Assembly.
- In 2018, a Federal Youth Foundation had been established under the Minister of State for Youth Affairs. It aimed to empower and engage young people across society and to guide their energy, abilities, creativity and ideas.
- Over 100 youth councils had been established in a variety of institutions and companies. The Federal Youth Foundation and the councils had run over 1,000 programmes that had benefited over 60,000 young women and men.
- The UAE Youth Vocational School had been founded. It aimed to prepare young people for the world of work by bridging the gap between skills gained in educational institutions and the needs of the labour market.
- An online platform had been launched that gathered in one place a wide range of opportunities for young people, such as prizes, scholarships and entrepreneurial incubators.

The UAE provided its young people with the opportunities needed to succeed. That had been exemplified by the fact that three quarters of the UAE team that had successfully sent a spacecraft to Mars had been under 30 (of whom 23 had been men and 15 women).

The Chair thanked the panellists for sharing the experiences of their countries and for giving the Forum interesting food for thought. He invited participants to report on the situation in their countries and to propose specific solutions to any challenges encountered. That would allow the Forum to assess progress towards strengthening youth participation, and to identify common problems and solutions.

Ms. H.V. Gavit (India) said that young people were the most dynamic part of the population and represented the future of any country. Meaningful youth participation and leadership required an enabling environment with policies and programmes that facilitated successful outcomes. Parliamentarians were responsible for empowering young politicians so that democracies could be strengthened, empowered and more generationally representative.

All Indian citizens were enfranchised from 18 years old, irrespective of background, and were eligible to run for a variety of elected offices from the age of 25.

To give students a detailed knowledge of parliamentary work, the ministry of parliamentary affairs ran youth parliament competitions in schools, colleges and universities across the country. A statutory national youth institute acted as an agency for young people's training opportunities and facilitated other youth development activities in rural and tribal areas. The institute also worked closely with voluntary youth organizations.

With a view to encouraging volunteering and self-help, the department of youth affairs organized a number of programmes, including one to encourage knowledge of the Indian constitution. Volunteers had helped to raise public awareness among many tens of millions of people about important issues, including COVID-safe behaviour during the pandemic, water conservation, a new education policy in 2020, and other popular movements related to sanitation work, among others. Significant numbers of elected officials had also participated in a range of those activities.

The Indian Government's vision of digitally empowering its citizens had been widely welcomed, including among young members of society, almost all of whom had been able to benefit from the *Digital India* programme. The initiative had enabled formerly marginalized groups to be included in mainstream society. A national skills programme had complemented *Digital India* to create opportunities that would develop young people's talents in India and diversify their skills across a range of economic sectors.

Ms. Wang Mengmeng (China) said that national development was underpinned by young people. If they were to participate in politics, their voices must be heard in parliaments as well as through community and grassroots initiatives. She said she had worked for more than 18 years in rural areas of China, helping people to embrace new ideas. Whereas previously, rural communities had striven to be lifted out of poverty, their priorities were currently more centred on issues such as social parity, industrial development and improvements made to villages. She said that, after being elected to the National People's Congress in 2018, she had been able to suggest her own improvements based on past experience.

Ms. Z. Yildiz (Turkey) said that the age at which Turkish citizens could run for elected office had been reduced to 18 in 2017. Seven deputies under the age of 30 had been elected in 2018. She said she was a member of the 1.5-million-strong youth movement of her party.

Young parliamentarians had serious responsibilities with regard to human rights, especially those of other young people and children. News of attacks against Muslims at the Al-Aqsa Mosque during Ramadan had been very concerning, including images of Palestinians being forcibly evicted from their homes, and reports of civilians and members of the press being targeted in Gaza. Young parliamentarians had a duty to speak out, call for an end to violence in that region, advocate for the freedom of Palestine, and stand in solidarity with the Palestinians.

Ms. S. Albazar (Egypt) said that three initiatives had been carried out in Egypt before the last elections. Firstly, to encourage voter turnout, polling stations had been digitized five years ago. That had allowed voters to find the polling station nearest to them and to vote more easily. Subsequently, a social media and television campaign had been run to raise awareness among young people about how to vote. Secondly, a cross-party group and local NGOs had run outreach workshops in schools, universities and slums. The workshops had set out to explain aspects of the political process, including the importance of the right to vote, how voting could impact one's community and how to choose who to vote for. Thirdly, the Egyptian youth ministry had sponsored a model election and parliament event across several universities so that young people could experience political processes at first hand.

Mr. M. Fathi (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that, throughout history, young people had always been a driving and dynamic force that had caused profound changes in human society. One of the most important steps parliaments could take was to provide young people with a range of experiences and training opportunities to prepare future generations for what lay ahead, including by enabling young people to interact with their counterparts in other countries. Parliaments should organize debates not only on youth-related matters but also on other significant contemporary subjects. Parliamentary action should encourage young people to express their views and opinions to institutions and organizations so that they could be involved in decision-making. The work of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians was a crucial way in which the demands of future generations could be heard.

Although parliaments could make an important contribution to supporting the next generation by holding specialized meetings, it was important that those meetings should lead to tangible outcomes and significant action.

Parliaments had tended to focus their job-creation and resource-allocation efforts on young people, as that generation was usually most affected by such issues. However, if parliaments did not also acknowledge the cultural interests and beliefs of youth, efforts to reallocate resources would be futile.

Parliaments should trust the younger generation when creating opportunities for them, but should also expect them to fulfil their responsibilities effectively. Working on behalf of future generations would only be helpful if parliaments committed to interaction, empathy and coordination. Expectations for future generations should be defined. Moving from present conditions to future aspirations would require a range of tools and facilities so that goals could be realized. The Islamic Parliament of Iran was ready to cooperate with the IPU on such matters.

Mr. Dinh Cong Sy (Viet Nam) said that Viet Nam attached great importance to youth development as the country had a large young population. Viet Nam had adopted a law (last amended in 2020) on young people, which set out their rights and responsibilities and included certain aspects of the State's policy on youth.

More young deputies were being elected to the National Assembly at every new parliamentary term. The Assembly had always encouraged young deputies to participate in its work and the establishment of the Assembly's group of young parliamentarians in 2015 had been an outstanding achievement. There were currently 131 young MPs in the legislature, which was 26 per cent of the total seats available. The group aimed to connect young deputies with one another, and increase their participation and contributions to the Assembly's agenda. The group also discussed legislative issues, provided a youth perspective on laws going through parliament, and analysed the impact that laws might have on young people, including through a delegation that conducted oversight of policy implementation and its effects on the young.

Young Vietnamese deputies were active participants in international and regional forums for young MPs. In 2020, for example, the National Assembly of Viet Nam had initiated the first meeting of young parliamentarians within the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly. Discussions and exchanges within the IPU Forum of Young Parliamentarians were also highly appreciated.

The Constitution of Viet Nam provided that all citizens had the right to vote from the age of 18 years old, and could stand for elected office at the age of 21. In Viet Nam, elections to the 15th National Assembly and People's Council for the 2021–2026 parliamentary term were approaching. Among the 867 candidates standing, 224 (just over 25 per cent) were under 45 years old. The average age of all the candidates was about 46. Hustings for those elections were being held across the country at which candidates were exercising their right to campaign.

The President said that very positive developments appeared to have taken place, and encouraged Forum members to continue their hard work in their parliaments and constituencies to promote youth participation.

Presentation of youth campaign

The Chair said that, over the last ten years, the foundations for greater youth participation had been laid. They had cemented the recommendations that would be most effective in bringing about change and it was now time to take the next step.

Mr. J. Lang (IPU Secretariat) said that the next decade would be crucial, as decisions made today would affect the course of human history and the planet for generations. Although young people would be most affected, they had almost no say in those decisions due to their severe underrepresentation.

Since the adoption of the resolution *Youth participation in the democratic process* in 2010, much had been achieved, including: the formation of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians, which had inspired similar forums around the world; the availability of data from hundreds of parliaments on the age of MPs and how legislatures engage with young people; training, leadership and networking opportunities to empower young parliamentarians; policy guidance from a youth perspective on many issues; and the setting of targets for parliamentary youth participation that had united legislatures and other youth-focused stakeholders. Although young MPs had led that work, it was encouraging that people of all ages, including senior leaders in many parliaments, strongly supported the Forum's work as well.

With data, networks, training, technical expertise and clear goals in place, the Forum had felt that one final element was needed: the *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament* campaign. It called on MPs to Say Yes to youth participation and commit to a number of campaign pledges. The campaign was led by young people, but was also an intergenerational effort that called on influential leaders, such as Speakers of Parliaments and party leaders, to lend their support and become changemakers.

All the information about the campaign and its pledges was available online at: www.ipu.org/i-say-yes (English) and www.ipu.org/fr/je-dis-oui (French). The bilingual website told the story of the campaign and outlined how to sign up to the pledges. Later, it would also contain the success stories of MPs and others who had fulfilled their pledges, as well as regular updates on progress towards achieving the campaign goals.

The pledges were based on the Forum's experience of the most effective ways of enhancing youth representation and called on changemakers to: promote youth quotas; align the age of eligibility to hold office with that of voting; support youth channels in parliament such as caucuses and committees; empower young parliamentarians; mentor and support young aspirants; and promote the campaign so that more MPs would join it.

To sign up, MPs would need to click on the form at the top right of the campaign's home page, choose the appropriate pledges and fill in their contact details. The IPU would subsequently get in touch.

Campaign participants would be part of a changemakers' movement. They would receive tools to help fulfil their chosen pledges, and the IPU would champion their efforts online and through social media. The campaign would last several years, and additional stages would be rolled out in 2021 and beyond.

The Secretary General cut a virtual ribbon to declare the campaign open.

The Secretary General said that there was no turning back now that such a joint endeavour had been launched. He recalled that, when the resolution *Youth participation in the democratic process* had been adopted in 2010, he had been the Secretary of the IPU Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights, whose members had prepared the resolution for adoption by the Assembly. The resolution was a foundational document for the IPU youth movement.

The Forum should be proud that, since 2010, it had become a trailblazer on promoting youth empowerment in political life. The *I Say Yes* campaign would empower young leaders and implement the provisions of the 2010 resolution. It would also help Forum members to support young people around the world, enabling the progress needed to transform words into action.

He urged Forum members to visit the website, take the pledge and *Say Yes*. Members should also share the campaign with networks in their parliaments, including Speakers, Committee Chairs, party leaders and other changemakers. It was a campaign for all ages. Since the Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians in April 2021, over 100 changemakers had already committed to the pledges. As it had never been so easy to sign up and make a difference, no-one should put off taking the pledge; they should act immediately.

A short video was broadcast.

Youth in the IPU Strategy

The Chair invited Ms. M. Rutz to brief the Forum on the development of the next IPU five-year strategy and said that there was an opportunity to keep youth participation and empowerment high on the agenda for the next five years.

Ms. M. Rutz (Consultant on the IPU's Strategy) said that she was part of a team leading a consultation exercise with IPU stakeholders that would contribute to the development of the IPU's forthcoming five-year strategy. In that regard, the views of young parliamentarians would be appreciated on intergenerational topics as well as on wider issues. The Forum would be given an overview of the strategic review process, including contextual information and interim results. Members of the Forum would then be invited to contribute ideas for the next strategic period; those ideas would be an important element in shaping the next IPU Strategy.

The approach to the strategic review had been driven by the experience and needs of IPU Members and leveraged one of the Organization's greatest strengths – the relationships among Member Parliaments and between parliaments and the IPU. It drew on specific evidence of the impact of the IPU's past work, but placed a higher priority on the lived experiences of Member Parliaments.

There were three steps in the first phase of the strategic review. First, 20 impact documents selected by the Secretariat had been analysed through quantitative and qualitative approaches that drew on relevant parts of assessment frameworks used by the OECD and the UK Aid Commission. That step had not been comprehensive and had not assessed performance against indicators. Second, the results of the first step would be discussed and consulted on in groups and through a survey. That process would assess how far the initial findings resonated with the experiences of Member Parliaments and stakeholders over the last five years. Third, the results of the discussions and consultations would be reported on and shared with Members.

According to an ongoing survey of Members, youth empowerment was considered to have had the second highest impact of all areas of the IPU's work over the past five years. Based on the documentary analysis and the survey results received to date, the preliminary findings on IPU Strategic Objective 6 (youth empowerment) were that the past five years' work had demonstrated quite good achievement that was likely to be on track in most areas (*green-amber* category). Impact had been achieved through interventions that had strengthened parliaments, both nationally or internationally and directly or indirectly, including the creation of new global standards of youth

representation in parliament. Those findings were preliminary and not a comprehensive impact assessment. Analysis was still ongoing and it would be important to contextualize initial findings with additional sources of information, such as feedback from Forum members about their experiences.

The assessment to date had found that more clarity was needed over the specific role of the IPU in relation to other actors. There was a potential need to focus the IPU's activities more clearly on what the Organization itself was best placed to achieve. There were also concerns about the sustainability of progress made, which might be addressed by deepening existing work with local partners or increasing awareness about the linkages between empowerment and diversity.

Ms. Rutz posed three questions to Forum Members and asked them to contribute their thoughts and ideas using an interactive whiteboard.

Question 1: what assumptions should we be making about the needs and context in which the IPU will find itself between 2022 and 2026? In addition to the impact of COVID-19, Forum members suggested that crucial contextual issues for the next five years would include: climate change, food security, fair water consumption, an economic recovery that benefits young people, unemployment as certain jobs begin to disappear, and the quality of education.

Question 2: Where has the IPU had a direct impact or benefit to your work as an MP? Forum members shared the following examples: helping to understand differences between different political systems and cultures; increasing understanding of many international issues and possible solutions to a range of challenges; providing data on youth participation in one's own parliament; facilitating networking and political and parliamentary advocacy; and enhancing leadership skills, especially through serving on the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians.

Question 3: What should the IPU's future strategic priorities be? What should the IPU stop doing? **Ms. Rutz** said that earlier consultation responses had included suggestions to prioritize specific peer-to-peer experience exchange among MPs and hold Members more accountable for their engagement in IPU activities. Forum members suggested that the IPU should prioritize: connecting MPs to work on joint projects and share best practices; integrating youth work with mainstream IPU business; taking stronger action against IPU members who did not comply with IPU principles; continuing to prioritize momentum on youth participation; making parliaments more prepared for events such as COVID-19; organizing networking activities for young MPs to meet in person in the post-COVID period; building capacity, and facilitating mentoring and leadership opportunities for young MPs and women MPs.

Forum members suggested that the IPU focus less on discussion and more on action, and that the Organization should stop attempting to do everything for everyone.

Ms. Rutz said that consultations would continue with other stakeholders. Conclusions from all consultative discussions would be shared in June or July 2021, when further feedback would be sought to inform the final results of the whole exercise.

The Chair thanked Forum members for their rich and insightful feedback. He also thanked Ms. Rutz, and hoped that she and her colleagues would take account of the Forum's views so that they could be given high priority in the forthcoming strategy.

Election of the President of the Board

The Chair recalled that, at the previous sitting of the Forum, the new Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians had been elected with a full roster of 12 delegates representing all the IPU geopolitical groups. Following that election, the Board-elect had held its first meeting and elected a new President, Ms. Sahar Albazar. The Forum was counting on her to continue furthering the cause of youth empowerment.

Ms. S. Albazar (Egypt) expressed her thanks for the work of the current President and said that she was humbled by the trust the Forum members had put in her.

Not many months ago, the world had been unaware that a life-changing pandemic was on the horizon. That said, great change was often accompanied by great opportunity. There was now a chance to shape new and inclusive norms in a future that would be led by young people. Throughout

history, the creative and innovative forces of the young had often contributed to changes in political and economic systems. To continue that legacy, young people needed to be properly represented in all areas of public and political life.

That said, young people also faced challenges such as poverty, inadequate education, many forms of discrimination, limited employment opportunities and poor health systems. As a result, young parliamentarians had duties to their peers, their countries, the world and their fellow MPs. Young MPs should seize those duties gladly, certain that there was nothing more enriching than working to ensure that young people could engage in the political process, and working to be the voice of young people in political life.

The Forum of Young Parliamentarians gathered MPs from around the world to share experiences and best practices, and to learn from one another. That work aimed to ensure young MPs had the wherewithal to make changes in their own country. The Forum would continue to design programmes and campaigns that would build young people's skills, knowledge and confidence, so that they could express themselves effectively and build strong relationships with political leaders. Such work would certainly be difficult in light of the pandemic, climate change and various political disputes. However, the Forum would choose hope over fear, and unity of purpose over conflict.

Any other business

The Chair said that, at the next Assembly, a draft resolution entitled *Legislation worldwide to combat online sexual child exploitation* would be debated. Written inputs were to be submitted by 14 June 2021. Pursuant to its Rules, the Forum would appoint a Rapporteur to prepare a youth overview report so as to support the integration of youth perspectives into the draft resolution. At its meeting on 6 May 2021, the Board had proposed that Mr. Ulrich Lechte be designated as the Forum's Rapporteur to prepare the youth report.

It was so decided.

He invited Forum members to share any youth-related views on the draft resolution with the Rapporteur or Secretariat. He said that he had been honoured to preside over such a unique and vibrant group as the Forum of Young MPs. Much had been learned by working together, especially in such challenging times. The Forum had achieved good results, especially in strengthening the capacity of young MPs. He urged all members to sign up to the *I Say Yes* campaign and to advocate it to the leadership of their respective parliaments.

The sitting rose at 16:50 CEST.

Adoption of resolutions, final documents and reports

Sitting of Thursday, 27 May

Item 2 of the agenda

**Parliamentary strategies to strengthen peace and security against threats and conflicts
resulting from climate-related disasters and their consequences**
(Standing Committee on Peace and International Security)
(A/142/2-DR)

Mr. J.I. Echániz (Spain), President of the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security, said that his Committee had been preparing a resolution entitled *Parliamentary strategies to strengthen peace and security against threats and conflicts resulting from climate-related disasters and their consequences*. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the resolution had been negotiated virtually in line with new rules set out by the Executive Committee. On 22 April 2021, the drafting committee had met to review the 130 amendments received and to discuss the resolution paragraph by paragraph in an atmosphere of dialogue and consensus. The revised resolution had been sent out for approval through a written silence procedure. The written silence procedure had resulted in the adoption of the resolution but with some reservations. India and Turkey had expressed reservations to the entire resolution. The reservations of India had referred in particular to the title of the resolution, preamble paragraphs 3-5, 8, 13, 15, 19 and operative paragraphs 1, 3-8, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20 and 22-26. Nicaragua had expressed reservations to operative paragraphs 3, 8, 11-13, 18, and 28-33. Hungary had expressed reservations to preambular paragraphs 9, 14, 20 and operative paragraphs 17-21. China had expressed reservations to preambular paragraph 5 and operative paragraphs 9, 23 and 25. The Czech Republic and Poland had expressed reservations to operative paragraphs 19 and 21, and Thailand had expressed reservations to operative paragraphs 20 and 22. The reservations had been included in footnotes appended to the text of the resolution.

The results of the written silence procedure had been announced during a sitting on 17 May 2021. A discussion had then been held during which delegates had had the opportunity to explain their positions and reflect on how the resolution could be used in parliamentary work. He wished to give a special mention to the co-Rapporteurs, especially Ms. C. Roth (Germany), and the various members of the drafting committee, including Mr. R. del Picchia (France) and Ms. C. Widegren (Sweden). All participants had helped to enrich the text. The resolution had the potential to be a historic resolution.

A number of other activities had also taken place. During a sitting on 26 April 2021, the Committee had discussed the topic of the General Debate. On 17 May 2021, in addition to discussing the resolution, the Committee had listened to an update about the review of the IPU Strategy, held elections to the Bureau and approved an action plan for the next two Assemblies and for the activities to be held between Assemblies. In addition, the Committee had decided on a topic for the next resolution, namely *Rethinking and reframing the approach to peace processes with a view to fostering lasting peace*. An expert hearing would be organized on the topic at the 143rd IPU Assembly. The Committee had also approved the following two panel discussions: *Parliament's role in addressing the risks of diversion in arms transfers* and *Applying traditional and human security concepts in assessing security threats to devise ways to foster peace globally*.

The resolution was adopted by consensus.

Item 3 of the agenda

**Mainstreaming digitalization and the circular economy to achieve the SDGs,
particularly responsible consumption and production**
(Standing Committee on Sustainable Development)
(A/142/3-DR)

Ms. V. Tsitsi Muzenda (Zimbabwe), President of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, said that her Committee had started its work on 27 April 2021 with a joint sitting organized in conjunction with the Standing Committee on UN Affairs. A fruitful debate had been held

on the theme of the General Debate, in which delegates had discussed COVID-19 vaccines and the green recovery. The Bureau had followed up with a meeting to consider ways in which parliaments could advance sustainable development. The COVID-19 pandemic had set the world back on the SDGs. Parliamentarians had a duty to ensure the SDGs remained high on the agenda while paying particular attention to the climate crisis.

A second sitting of the Committee had been held on 18 May 2021. During the sitting, the Committee had announced the results of the written silence procedure for its resolution, *Mainstreaming digitalization and the circular economy to achieve the SDGs, particularly responsible consumption and production*. The resolution had been adopted during the written silence procedure with some reservations. India had expressed reservations to preambular paragraphs 7 and 29 while Nicaragua had expressed reservations to operative paragraphs 3, 8, 20 and 28. She thanked the co-Rapporteurs, Mr. A. Gryffroy (Belgium), Ms. S. Dinică (Romania) and Mr. P. Mariru (Kenya) for their commitment as well as the members of the drafting committee and the parliaments that had submitted amendments. A debate had then been held in which Members had highlighted the potential of the resolution to promote international cooperation and dialogue.

The Committee had approved 10 nominations to the Bureau and re-elected members from the Netherlands, Pakistan, Armenia and Thailand for a second term. It had also taken note that members from Morocco and Iraq did not wish to continue serving on the Bureau. Lastly, the Committee had approved the theme of its next resolution: *Leveraging Information and Communication Technology as an enabler for the education sector including in times of pandemic*. It had also approved its workplan for the next Assembly, which would include a debate on the theme of the next resolution and a panel discussion on the theme, *Impact of climate change on natural resources: How can parliaments ensure inclusive water access and availability?*

The Secretary General took the Chair.

The resolution was adopted by consensus.

Item 4 of the agenda

Reports of the Standing Committees

Mr. A. Desai (India), President of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights, said that his Committee had held two sittings in the run up to 142nd IPU Assembly. On 28 April 2021, the Committee had met to discuss the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on democracy, human rights and the functioning of parliaments. The Committee had heard opening remarks from Ms. L. Thornton (International IDEA), Mr. N. Bako-Arifari (Benin), Mr. A. Williamson (Centre for Innovation in Parliament, IPU) and Ms. C. López Castro (Mexico). Delegates had observed that the pandemic had had a wide range of negative impacts on democracy and human rights. The full enjoyment of rights and the practice of democracy must resume as soon as possible. Parliaments had been severely challenged by the pandemic. However, many had also demonstrated an impressive capacity to find innovative solutions and had continued to meet in virtual, hybrid or socially distanced settings. The delegates had expressed hope that the pandemic would soon be brought under control by rapid and equitable distribution of vaccines.

On 18 May 2021, the Committee had held a preparatory debate on the theme of the next resolution, *Legislation worldwide to combat online sexual child exploitation*, to be adopted at the 143rd IPU Assembly. The Committee had appointed a third co-Rapporteur, Mr. P. Limjaroenrat (Thailand) to join Ms. A. Gerken (Netherlands) and Ms. J. Oduol (Kenya) who had been appointed as co-Rapporteurs at the previous Assembly. Ms. M. Singhateh (UN Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children) had highlighted that many laws targeting the issue already existed but were often difficult to implement. She had also laid out the case for developing model legislation to combat online sexual child exploitation that could be adopted by all countries. Mr. J. Carr (ECPAT International) had cited data on the scale of online sexual child exploitation and had drawn attention to the role of technology companies in removing abusive images. He had reinforced the point that legislation was only one step towards effectively addressing the problem. Parliamentarians could greatly contribute to raising awareness of the issue, which would, in turn, increase pressure on technology companies to step up their efforts.

The Bureau of the Committee had met on 11 May 2021 to exchange perspectives on the major challenges facing democracy and human rights in the context of the review of the IPU Strategy. Bureau members had identified a range of pressing issues, such as online misinformation, hate

speech and the fight against discrimination in all its forms, including on the basis of sexual orientation. They expressed the opinion that the Committee should be able to discuss any issue. At its final sitting, the Committee had also elected a number of new members to the Bureau.

The President resumed the Chair.

Mr. J.C. Romero (Argentina), President of the Standing Committee on UN Affairs, said that his Committee had held two virtual sittings on 27 and 29 April 2021. The first sitting had been held jointly with the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development and had focused on the theme of the General Debate. A total of 75 parliamentarians had taken part while 150 other people had attended as observers. He wished to highlight three key messages that had arisen from the discussions. First, the post-COVID-19 recovery should involve a systemic change to the development model. Citizens, countries and the international community must commit to making the change. Second, the green economy, the circular economy and the care economy were fundamental to ensuring that the current development model could be sustained. True prosperity meant guaranteeing the health of the people and the planet. It was important to invest more in low-impact production and in consumption that generated less emissions, caused less pollution and used up fewer finite resources. Third, the pandemic had exposed weaknesses in the area of governance as well as in the global economy, including deep inequalities within and between countries. The pandemic would not end until the vast majority of people in the world had been vaccinated. As a result, those developing the vaccines must ramp up production and distribution in a way that was accessible to all countries, especially to the Global South, where vaccination rates were much lower than in the Global North. The lack of vaccines in many countries was down to a lack of resources or a failure by laboratories to comply with their obligations.

In its second sitting, the Committee had analysed the impacts of the Declaration on the Commemoration of the Seventy-Fifth Anniversary of the United Nations. Forty-five parliamentarians had participated in the session. Three UN ambassadors and a representative of the UN Secretary General had also been present as keynote speakers. The sitting had included a live poll on key elements of the Declaration. The debate had highlighted the importance of multilateralism in responding to the pandemic and tackling key issues, such as climate change. People's trust in governments and in the multilateral system could be restored by effectively addressing problems on the ground.

The Assembly took note of the reports.

Item 5 of the agenda

Approval of the subject items for the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security and for the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development for the 144th Assembly and appointment of the Rapporteurs (A/142/5-R.1)

The President said that the Assembly must next approve the subject items for the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security and the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development for the 144th IPU Assembly.

The initial request for proposals for subject items had been sent to Member Parliaments on 12 March 2021, with a deadline of 2 April 2021. The Bureaus of both Standing Committees had then decided on the subject items that they wished to pursue from among the proposals submitted. The chosen proposals had then been sent to Member Parliaments for adoption through a written silence procedure on 23 April 2021. Member Parliaments had had 15 days to review and consider them. Upon the expiry of the 15-day period, both Committees had met on 17 and 18 May, respectively, to formally announce the results of the procedure.

The subject items had been adopted through the written silence procedure in line with the Special Rules of Procedure for the Assembly and for the Standing Committees. The subject item of the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security was *Rethinking and reframing the approach to peace processes with a view to fostering lasting peace*. The designated co-Rapporteur was Ms. C. Widegren (Sweden). He would continue consultations with the IPU membership with a view to identifying a second co-Rapporteur. The subject item of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development was *Leveraging Information and Communication Technology as an enabler*

for the education sector, including in times of pandemic. The designated co-Rapporteurs were Ms. H. Järvinen (Finland) and Mr. S. Patra (India). He took it that the Assembly wished to endorse the two subject items and the designated co-Rapporteurs.

It was so decided.

Endorsement of the President's Summary

The Secretary General presented the highlights of the outcome document of the Assembly, entitled *President's summary of the debate on the main theme of the 142nd IPU Assembly - Overcoming the pandemic today and building a better tomorrow: the role of parliaments*.

The document captured the deliberations not only of the Assembly but also of the various statutory bodies, including the Standing Committees, the Forum of Women Parliamentarians and the Forum of Young Parliamentarians. The document set out the commitments made by parliamentarians in fighting the pandemic.

The President said that the President's summary would serve as a strong basis informing the actions and efforts of parliamentarians. It was an inclusive document that sought to respond to the needs and expectations of the people. He took it that the Assembly wished to endorse the President's summary.

It was so decided.

Mr. M. Rezakhah (Islamic Republic of Iran), making a point of order, said that the IPU had deemed the Parliament based in Seiyun as the legitimate Parliament of Yemen. That Parliament, however, was not legitimate since it had been formed without legal quorum, contrary to democratic and parliamentary principles. The Parliament based in Sana'a was in fact the legitimate Parliament of Yemen because it had been formed on the basis of the popular vote. The IPU should invite members of the legitimate Parliament to take part in meetings.

The President took note of the reservation but pointed out that the decision had already been taken.

The Secretary General said that it was clear from discussions that democracy was on the move, parliaments were on the move and the IPU was on the move. Parliaments had shown their resilience. The IPU had adapted and transformed, having just held its first virtual Assembly. He hoped that the Organization had risen to the challenge and provided the platform required to promote dialogue and parliamentary diplomacy. The discussions that had taken place would inform the new IPU Strategy, which must be consonant with the expectations of the Members. The Secretariat would continue to come up with solutions that delivered what was needed. He thanked all those who had contributed to the Assembly, including those working behind the scenes. Thanks to everyone involved, the global parliamentary community had been able to identify ways to build forward better for the good of humanity.

The President said that the last in-person IPU Assembly had taken place in Belgrade in 2019. It had not been possible to meet physically since then because of the pandemic. However, the IPU was still working. He thanked delegates for accepting the Special Rules of Procedure allowing the IPU to continue its work. It was important to show that parliaments were ready to serve the people by fighting the pandemic, recovering economies and pushing governments to build a better future for all. The IPU would continue meeting in a virtual format until it could meet in person again. Hybrid meetings could be a possibility for the near future. The Assembly had been a success thanks to the commitment of parliamentarians, parliamentary staff and the IPU Secretariat, who were all working as a team. He strongly believed that together the IPU was stronger. He reminded delegates of the programme of activities approved at the Governing Council, particularly the in-person segment of the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament.

A video message from Mr. W. Sobotka, President of the Austrian National Council, inviting delegates to the in-person segment of the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments, was played.

The sitting rose at 17:40 CEST.

President's summary of the debate on the overall theme of the 142nd IPU Assembly

Overcoming the pandemic today and building a better tomorrow: the role of parliaments

*Endorsed by the 142nd Assembly
(Virtual session, 27 May 2021)*

In addition to the discussions that took place during the debate on the overall theme at the 142nd Assembly, the present summary draws on the deliberations at sessions that the four Standing Committees of the IPU (Peace and International Security, Sustainable Development, Democracy and Human Rights, and United Nations Affairs) held from 26 to 28 April. The deliberations of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians held on 10 May 2021 and of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians held on 13 May 2021 have also informed this summary. The summary captures the key messages conveyed by panel presentations and interventions from the floor. It is provided as a contribution to the IPU's overall response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to build a better tomorrow.

The IPU Members were unanimous in their determination to contribute robustly to efforts designed to control and stop the devastating COVID-19 pandemic. They recognized the need for a stronger response in order to save lives and end the pandemic as soon as possible. In this context, MPs recommended bold new steps to advance peace, sustainable development, gender equality, youth empowerment, democracy and human rights.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created social, economic and political crises. It has exacerbated inequalities within and between countries, and stalled progress on sustainable development, youth empowerment and gender equality. Women and youth have been disproportionately affected, with more women than men losing jobs and taking on an even greater share of household work, and many young people being left without access to work or education.

The pandemic has also contributed to an increase in violence against women and girls, including through the internet, giving rise to a need for greater investment in services for survivors as well as more extensive regulatory frameworks for online platforms and tech companies. As reflected in this summary, the particular concerns of women and youth should inform parliamentary action in all policy areas, from peace to democracy and sustainable development. Parliaments must continue efforts to enhance women's leadership and gender parity in all sectors, as well as to increase the representation of women and youth in politics.

Guided by these considerations, participants committed to ensuring that relief efforts reached the most vulnerable groups, and that vaccines, tests and treatments were affordable and accessible to all. They agreed that a crisis of this magnitude demanded a global solution, which multilateralism was best placed to deliver.

Key messages on peace and security

Parliaments are the main venue for managing conflict in a non-violent manner and a central forum for inclusive debates on policies for building resilience, strengthening institutions and improving people's security. In order to build resilience and strengthen capacity so that countries can recover from future pandemics and other shocks, parliaments must focus on emerging risks and preventive action.

The COVID-19 pandemic has illustrated the need to reduce military spending and shift budget priorities in order to respond to the health crisis and its ripple effects. Official development assistance must be increased and funding must be allocated directly to the COVID-19 recovery.

Parliaments need to support more systematic funding for peacebuilding and conflict prevention, which not only works, but is cost-effective. Including women in peacekeeping efforts is critical to the success of these efforts and to the sustainability of peace agreements. It is also imperative for every government to have a well-funded women, peace and security plan. To prevent instability, parliaments must also focus on youth and ensure they have access to work and education opportunities.

To improve peace and security and build up resilience and human security, parliaments must prioritize emerging risks, act early and strengthen capacities for local response, including that of local law enforcement and the security sector. More attention needs to be paid to tools to respond to such risks that can be scaled up and adapted to different contexts at local, regional and global levels.

Conflict resolution and the maintenance of peace depend on parliaments working together with all stakeholders, including the executive, the private sector, academia and civil society. In keeping with the IPU's support of multilateralism, dialogue among parliamentarians needs to reach further and go deeper at all levels – local, national, regional and global.

There can be no lasting peace, security and development without addressing climate change and securing the environment. Parliamentarians need to deepen their efforts to ensure the implementation of all relevant international commitments in this regard.

Key messages on sustainable development

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown that, over and above wealth, real prosperity should be about health. Prosperity should be thought of more in terms of a healthy environment, better quality of life and more time for self-improvement, as well as for the community. The care economy – which includes front-line workers and those who care for children and the elderly – epitomizes this vision and must therefore be better valued and financed. Care workers deserve stronger social protection. Institutions, rules and policies that allow for proper financing of jobs in the health sector, environmental preservation, education and other components of the care economy need to be strengthened.

Parliaments need to better recognize the role of women in the care economy. Women need financial support for their unpaid work, help in finding jobs outside of hard-hit sectors and greatly expanded access to affordable childcare. Cash transfers and other such programmes need to be better targeted at women as a way of distributing benefits to their communities.

Greater investment in decent jobs for youth and incentives for entrepreneurship are also needed to curb the high level of youth unemployment. Access to quality education and vocational training has been disrupted by the pandemic and parliaments should prioritize the building of resilient education systems that allow equality of access to all children and youth.

Caring for people and caring for the planet go hand in hand. Parliaments must support the shift towards the green economy through a more progressive tax system, universal basic income and other innovative policies. The current food system – which leaves millions of people hungry or malnourished, creates enormous waste and relies on vulnerable supply chains – needs to be reimagined. In particular, parliaments need to monitor the food security situation and ensure that countries achieve food self-sufficiency. Food systems need to be more grounded in local communities and access to key agricultural inputs must be more equitable.

Key messages on vaccine access

The COVID-19 pandemic will not end until the vast majority of people in each country are vaccinated. As a public good, vaccines need to be readily accessible to all people on the planet, including the most vulnerable populations, namely refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced people, stateless people, indigenous people, migrants irrespective of legal status, persons with disabilities, detained persons, and people living in areas under the control of non-state armed groups.

Parliaments must stand against vaccine nationalism and advocate for vaccines to be free and accessible to everyone, not just those in wealthy countries. High-income countries need to step up support to COVAX and other multilateral efforts to tackle the pandemic. It is also essential to strengthen public health infrastructure and communications with the public, including through digital technologies, and take appropriate public health measures to protect people.

With few exceptions, the parliamentarians who spoke on the issue of a temporary waiver of vaccine patents, currently before the WHO, were generally supportive of such a waiver. Enabling generic production of the vaccines could boost vaccine access to developing countries where only a fraction of the population has been vaccinated so far. In settling this issue, claims that patents provide a key financial incentive to research and development of new vaccines should be weighed against public health concerns, as well as the considerable support provided to patent holders through government subsidies, public investment and purchase guarantees.

Key messages on democracy and human rights

By all accounts, the pandemic has put a strain on democracy. Many countries have declared states of emergency, which in some cases have unduly limited personal freedoms. Freedom of expression has been sacrificed under the guise of combating disinformation. There have been restrictions on media integrity, including the incarceration of journalists; as well as restrictions on personal integrity and security, including excessive use of force and arbitrary arrests. In a number of countries, electoral processes have been postponed, some without a new date.

Parliaments need to conduct strong and swift oversight of any emergency measure or restriction on fundamental freedoms and human rights. Measures must be taken democratically, be proportionate, time-limited, necessary and legal. Parliaments must fight against conspiracy theories and misinformation, and confront hate, racism, xenophobia and nationalism, which have been on the rise. Decision-making and political dialogue in general need to be informed by facts and scientific evidence. Taken together, these steps can help build trust between governments and citizens.

The pandemic provides a critical opportunity for parliaments to become stronger. With many parliaments resorting to remote or hybrid ways of working, modernization has accelerated, allowing parliaments to become more flexible and efficient. Still, nothing can fully replace the in-person interactions between parliamentarians and constituents, which are so essential to dialogue, negotiation and compromise.

In reflecting on the many impacts of the pandemic on peace and security, sustainable development and democracy, parliaments and decision-makers everywhere should retain one overarching lesson: there is only one humanity coexisting on one planet.

Parliamentary strategies to strengthen peace and security against threats and conflicts resulting from climate-related disasters and their consequences

Resolution adopted by consensus by the 142nd Assembly (Virtual session, 27 May 2021)*

The 142nd Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Recalling the 2015 Paris Agreement, including its goals to strengthen the global response to climate change and to enhance adaptive capacity, increase resilience and reduce vulnerability to climate change; the outcomes of the Climate Change Conferences in Marrakesh (COP 22), Bonn (COP 23), Katowice (COP 24) and Madrid (COP 25), emphasizing the appeal in the *Chile Madrid Time for Action* to elaborate and implement measures to avert, minimize and address the adverse impacts of climate change, as well as the IPU resolutions of the corresponding Parliamentary Meetings in Marrakesh, Bonn, Krakow, and Madrid,

Recalling also the IPU resolutions *The role of parliaments in ensuring sustainable development through the management of natural resources, agricultural production and demographic change* (adopted at the 124th IPU Assembly, Panama, April 2011), *Towards risk-resilient development: Taking into consideration demographic trends and natural constraints* (adopted at the 130th IPU Assembly, Geneva, March 2014), *Sustaining peace as a vehicle for achieving sustainable development* (adopted at the 138th IPU Assembly, Geneva, March 2018), *Addressing climate change* (adopted at the 141st IPU Assembly, Belgrade, October 2019), and the Hanoi Declaration *The Sustainable Development Goals: Turning Words into Action* (adopted at the 132nd IPU Assembly, Hanoi, April 2015),

Guided by the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which emphasize that climate policy, sustainable development, poverty reduction and universal peace are all inextricably linked,

Mindful of UN Security Council resolutions and UNSC Presidential Statements addressing the adverse effects of climate change on international stability, peace and security, such as UNSC resolutions 2349 (2017), 2408 (2018), 2423 (2018), 2429 (2018), 2431 (2018), 2457 (2019) and 2558 (2020), and appreciating the fact that the Security Council has repeatedly discussed the impact of climate change, including of climate-related disasters, on international peace and security,

Mindful also of UNSC resolutions 1325 (2000), 2467 (2019) and 2493 (2019) highlighting the impact on women of war, conflicts and displacement as well as strengthening the role of women in conflict management and women's involvement in peace and security issues; and of UNSC resolutions 2250 (2015), 2419 (2018) and 2535 (2020) highlighting the importance of increasing the representation of youth in decision-making on peace and security issues,

Recalling the 1996 UN Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes and the 2015 *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030*, which provide an important foundation for sustainable, low-carbon, resilient development,

Welcoming the international community's continuing engagement in numerous global initiatives to address climate change, such as the UN Climate Action Summit in September 2019, the Climate Ambition Summit in December 2020, and the Climate Adaptation Summit in January 2021, which have led to States' affirmation and extension of emission reduction targets, and have showcased the many opportunities for prevention, mitigation, resilience-building and adaptation through the contributions of national governments, provinces, cities and villages, business corporations, financial institutions and civil society,

Recalling the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as well as the International Covenants on Human Rights and other human rights agreements, and welcoming the discussion on climate change as a rapidly growing, global threat to human rights and to peace at the 42nd session of the Human Rights Council in September 2019,

Emphasizing the recommendations of the 2015 Agenda for the Protection of Cross-Border Displaced Persons in the Context of Disaster and Climate Change being implemented by the Platform on Disaster Displacement, which works towards strengthening the management of disaster displacement risks as well as addressing displacement and migration in the context of disasters and climate change,

Appreciating the contribution of the International Mechanism of Warsaw regarding climate-related losses and damages, their financing, technological transfer and capacity-building in developing countries particularly vulnerable to these adverse impacts, and, in particular, the recommendations of the Task Force on comprehensive approaches to avoid, minimize and manage climate-related displacement,

Aware that the world would face unprecedented challenges and irreversible processes, including the crossing of so-called tipping points, with a temperature rise beyond 1.5 degrees Celsius, as referred to in the 2018 special report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change,

Recalling that natural resources, such as water and land, shape billions of people's livelihoods, food security, well-being and identity, notably those of Indigenous peoples, and that, therefore, transparency, access to information, inclusive and meaningful public participation, in particular women's full, equal, and meaningful participation in all levels of decision-making, as well as dialogue and cooperation, especially with vulnerable and marginalized groups, are key to equitable and peaceful natural-resource management,

Concerned about the concrete and existential threat to humanity and human security caused by climate change, which adversely affects global peace and stability, and particularly about the severe consequences of sea level rise, drought, desertification, land degradation, changes to the fragile ecosystems of the polar regions, loss of infrastructure and biodiversity, food insecurity, an increasing scarcity of natural resources, including water, and non-economic loss and damages,

Reaffirming its concern about new and/or intensified displacement and migrant movements as climate phenomena increase and parts of the world become uninhabitable, as well as about their effects in particular on young people and their future, while aware that concerted action to mitigate and adapt to climate change and plan countries' development can significantly reduce the number of persons forced to migrate as concluded in the World Bank's 2018 Groundswell report,

Worried about the particular effects of climate change on individuals and groups in already vulnerable situations, mainly women and children, Indigenous peoples and communities, and people living with disabilities, as well as refugees and displaced people including internally displaced people; noting that people displaced for environmental reasons, by disasters or adverse effects of climate change, do not benefit per se from any official refugee status nor from international protection granted by the 1951 Refugee Convention; taking note, however, of the Human Rights Committee's view of 20 January 2020 that countries may not deport individuals who face climate change-induced conditions that violate the right of life,

Concerned that climate-related tensions and disasters may lead to heightened marginalization, discrimination and abuse, including an increase in sexual and gender-based violence perpetrated mainly against women and girls,

Aware of the adverse effect of climate change on existing economic, social and political inequalities as well as distributional conflicts throughout the world; highlighting that, through these negative impacts on human security, climate change increases already existing risks and discriminatory practices – especially when governance structures are already weak; recalling that the negative long-term implications of climate change may lead to an increase in political tensions, both within and beyond national borders; noting that fragile societies, including societies plagued by conflict, tend to have weaker adaptation capacities to climate change than others, and that they lack the capacity to contribute for their part to climate change mitigation effectively,

Concerned that these and other human security impacts such as heightened food and water insecurity may exacerbate existing and create additional risks to national, regional and international security, and that the most vulnerable and marginalized peoples and parts of the world are particularly hit by both the climate crisis and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which is another crisis of global proportion, with one crisis exacerbating the other,

Bearing in mind that access to the resources and means required to cope with situations of dramatic change such as the climate crisis is structurally obstructed by existing forms of discrimination and vulnerability based on gender, race, ethnicity, religion, political or other affiliation, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, ability, indigeneity, age, tradition and institutional mistreatment, all of which can intersect and combine and should be duly considered in concepts of peacebuilding and conflict management as well as resilience and adaptation strategies,

Stressing that politics determine long-term sustainable climate action, which is why the responsibility to create a just transition through climate-sustainable policies cannot be shifted onto individuals and their individual choices as consumers, at least not predominantly,

1. *Calls for* immediate and multilateral action to address climate change and mitigate its effects on international stability and security with the same urgency as the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic; and therefore calls on all parliaments to expedite and facilitate the ratification and human-rights based implementation of the Paris Agreement in their respective countries;
2. *Calls on* the IPU Member Parliaments and their governments to invest in climate-resilient development programmes aimed at implementing the 17 Sustainable Development Goals;
3. *Welcomes* the many and diverse national commitments to address the climate-security nexus, confine climate change, and address climate-induced security threats through mitigation, resilience-building and adaptation; and stresses that measures tend to be more conflict-sensitive if both men and women, as well as marginalized and vulnerable groups, including Indigenous communities, are involved;
4. *Invites* the IPU Member Parliaments to encourage their governments to work with relevant regional and international institutions to advance robust climate-resilience strategies, especially regarding climate-related security risks, including joining and supporting the Group of Friends on Climate and Security established by Nauru and Germany, made up of more than 50 States, which works to ensure that the UNSC considers the relationship between climate and security in all its decisions so that the international community is prepared before conflicts erupt or escalate, wherever climate change threatens peace and security;
5. *Encourages* the IPU Member Parliaments to engage in civil conflict prevention and to support partnerships and meaningful consultations with affected communities in order to anchor risk analysis and forecasts in their policies, with a special focus on security related tipping points in the context of climate change, based inter alia on human rights indicators such as the incidence of sexual and gender-based violence;
6. *Stresses* the need to strengthen opportunities for cooperation among all stakeholders and affected communities to promote research, data collection and analysis of climate-related security risks including displacement resulting from rapid- and slow-onset disasters in the context of climate change, in order to be prepared for future challenges and develop prevention strategies;
7. *Calls on* parliaments to strengthen local and community governance capacities and adaptation capabilities in order to avoid human rights abuses and the destabilization of sub-regions or nations as a result of climate change;
8. *Encourages* parliaments concerned to adopt enabling climate-responsive and gender- and conflict-sensitive legislation, including key budget laws, as well as relevant public policies with due consideration of the effects of climate change on Indigenous communities and other marginalized populations, aimed at advancing the SDGs and sustaining peace agendas so that the climate-security nexus features appropriately in their parliamentary debates; and, in this context, to ensure that all peacebuilding and development efforts are assessed, where appropriate, for climate sensitivity to minimize predictable future destabilizing effects of climate change on security and prosperity; and conversely, that climate mitigation and adaptation programmes and strategies are conflict-sensitive and designed for maximising peacebuilding synergies;

9. *Calls on governments to take concrete measures to mitigate climate risks and promote resilience to climate change, while basing these measures on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities in light of different national circumstances; and, in this context, calls on governments and parliaments to support countries affected by climate-related disasters and to provide predictable and sustainable financial, technical and capacity-building assistance, in accordance with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement; also calls on parliaments to urge their governments to commit to providing financial support to middle- and low-income economies by contributing to the Green Climate Fund;*
10. *Also calls on parliaments to hold their respective governments accountable for achieving the progress required in addressing climate-related disasters and security risks, and to urge their governments to address funding gaps for activities redressing the consequences of climate change and for adaptive measures to equip the United Nations system, other multilateral institutions, States and other relevant actors to deal with the looming changes regarding food security, displacement, and increased risk of disasters;*
11. *Further calls on parliaments to monitor climate-change mitigation and adaptation processes in line with the commitments made under the Paris Agreement; to promote strong disaster risk governance to help all stakeholders coordinate at the community, regional and national levels in order to manage and reduce disaster and climate-related risks; to pay due regard to marginalized and vulnerable communities, such as Indigenous peoples, particularly affected by climate change; to pursue disaster risk prevention and reduction, as well as long-term financing in support of resilient, climate-proof infrastructure and nature-based solutions; and to effectively control State finances by ensuring full transparency of expenses;*
12. *Urges parliaments and their respective governments to take action to strengthen our common understanding of climate-related challenges; including drawing from traditional knowledge sources such as those held by Indigenous and local communities; to support initiatives that ensure that public awareness campaigns and proper educational programmes are implemented and included in school curricula; and to encourage the development of easily accessible early-warning systems;*
13. *Calls on parliaments to examine all means of enhancing the resilience of people adversely affected by climate change; to develop comprehensive gender-responsive national resilience mechanisms by fully including women and representatives of marginalized communities, such as Indigenous peoples, in the design and implementation of such mechanisms; to strengthen disaster risk reduction and prevention; and to enhance disaster preparedness;*
14. *Urges parliaments to promote and increase predictable, multi-year, unearmarked, collaborative and flexible humanitarian financing, including for disaster displacement; to connect the humanitarian-development-peace nexus with the effects of climate change; and to enable transition aid to cover urgent needs and the possibility of a stronger, faster and more inclusive rebuilding policy, according to the "build back better" approach;*
15. *Calls on parliaments to support partnerships involving civil society in order to strengthen political will to address the adverse impacts of climate change in a constructive, participative and forward-looking manner; and also calls in particular on all parliamentarians to engage in dialogue with youth, as they are the main group to face the consequences of climate change;*
16. *Also calls on parliaments to support the introduction of stronger corporate social responsibility measures in the private sector in order to mitigate tensions between enterprises and local communities over scarce resources;*
17. *Encourages governments to fully support international working groups on climate-related disaster displacement and migration; and to implement, within the architecture of the UNFCCC, the recommendations of the Warsaw International Mechanism's Task Force on Displacement;*

18. *Calls on* parliaments to support safe, orderly and legal migration for those who have to leave their home as a result of climate change; and to enable planned and dignified relocation;
19. *Encourages* governments and parliaments to fully implement the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement; to strengthen rights and local agreements on mobility of migrant workers, nomads and pastoralists; and to take into consideration the objectives and principles of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration;
20. *Also encourages* governments to reflect upon the concept of "climate passports" that would allow people who are existentially threatened by the effects of climate change and have no choice but to leave their home to exercise self-determination in deciding about their migratory options and enjoy the possibility of entering and settling in secure countries; and, in this context, to consider granting full access to civic rights to migrants who, expecting or following the complete disappearance of their country's territory, de facto or de jure lose their citizenship;
21. *Invites* the IPU Member Parliaments to make use of their right to speak at the UN General Assembly to request follow-up on displacement and migration including in the context of climate change as well as on the implementation of the Global Compacts on Migration and Refugees;
22. *Recommends* that all States concerned agree on a common position in order to impose an embargo on the export of arms to actors in States suffering from insecurity, fragility and conflicts – including as a result of climate-related disasters;
23. *Encourages* governments to include the attenuation of climate-change-related security risks in all operational areas of peacebuilding, including early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management, mediation and peace support operations and post-conflict rehabilitation; to enable the UN system to better recognize, assess and act on climate-security interlinkages; to call on the UNSC to acknowledge the threat that climate-related risks pose to international peace and security; and to support the newly created UN Climate Security Mechanism in facilitating the creation and dissemination of adequate risk assessments and risk management strategies by relevant UN actors;
24. *Calls on* parliaments to ensure increased international, regional, and cross-border cooperation on climate-related security risks in a quest to find appropriate collective responses to addressing current and future security risks related to climate change while drawing upon the experiences and good practices of countries;
25. *Welcomes*, in this regard, concrete initiatives to strengthen capacities in the field, that is by establishing the first climate and security advisor at the UN Mission in Somalia;
26. *Reminds* all States that ambitious climate protection, resilience-building and foresighted behaviour that places human beings and their needs at the centre of all political considerations is a prerequisite not only for achieving climate justice, but also for pursuing the sustaining peace agenda;
27. *Also reminds* all States of commitments made in the Universal Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples relating, among other matters, to their right to live in peace and security, to the conservation and protection of the environment and the productive capacity of their lands or territories and resources, to be consulted on priorities for the use of their lands or territories and other resources, and to the just and fair resolution of conflicts and disputes with States or other parties;
28. *Encourages* the IPU Member Parliaments to set up or step up regional "climate parliaments" and follow the examples of initiatives in Asia (Bangladesh, China and India), Latin America (Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador and Peru, as well as more broadly the ParlAmericas Parliamentary Network on Climate Change), the Middle East and

North Africa (Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia), Sub-Saharan Africa (Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Congo, Senegal and Tanzania, as well as cooperation with the Pan-African Parliament), and Europe (within the European Parliament) with the aim of educating and empowering parliamentarians in this context;

29. *Urges* parliaments to adopt, implement and monitor national action plans in line with the commitments made under the Paris Agreement and thereby establish strategies that prepare for the above-described challenges, threats and conflicts resulting from climate-related disasters and their consequences;
30. *Also urges* parliaments as part of the COVID-19 pandemic recovery measures to encourage a shift to cleaner energy alternatives, such as solar and wind energy, and to give priority to investment in clean energy, or to link aid and bank loans to companies to drastic reductions in their emissions, especially in carbon-intensive sectors, which contributes to promoting the concept of "green loans" directed to financing environmentally friendly projects, green stimulation, smart buildings, and green and public transportation;
31. *Invites* the IPU Member Parliaments to reinforce criminal law to prevent and punish widespread, long-term and severe damage to the environment, whether caused in peacetime or war, and to examine the possibility of recognizing the crime of ecocide to prevent the threats and conflicts resulting from climate-related disasters and their consequences;
32. *Urges* the IPU Member Parliaments and their governments to take stock of lessons learned from how the pandemic has been handled worldwide, as lessons from international cooperation and crisis management could prove to be of a significant value when it comes to meeting climate-related threats or other future threats in general;
33. *Also urges* the IPU Member Parliaments and their Governments to enact and execute policies that will reduce and eradicate non-climate stressors and man-made threats to the environment, such as illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and the unsustainable and inequitable utilization of water resources, among others, which further contribute to food and water insecurity caused by climate change;
34. *Invites* the IPU Member Parliaments to communicate to the secretariat of the IPU Standing Committee on Peace and International Security by the 146th Assembly the measures taken to achieve implementation of this resolution.

* The resolution was negotiated in keeping with the Special Rules of Procedure governing virtual sessions of the IPU Assembly and Standing Committees. Reservations were received from:

India and **Turkey**, which expressed a reservation to the entire text of the Resolution.

Nicaragua, which expressed reservations to operative paragraphs 3, 8, 11, 12, 13, 18, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, and 33.

Hungary, which expressed reservations to preambular paragraphs 9, 14, and 20, and to operative paragraphs 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21.

China, which expressed reservations to preambular paragraph 5, and operative paragraphs 9, 23, and 25.

Czech Republic and **Poland**, which expressed reservations to operative paragraphs 19 and 21.

Thailand, which expressed reservations to operative paragraphs 20 and 22.

Mainstreaming digitalization and the circular economy to achieve the SDGs, particularly responsible consumption and production

Resolution adopted by consensus by the 142nd IPU Assembly* (Virtual session, 27 May 2021)

The 142nd Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Fully endorsing the Political Declaration of the Sustainable Development Goals Summit (September 2019), which reaffirms the commitment to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and calls for accelerated action in order to achieve the SDGs,

Recalling the Ministerial Declaration of the 2019 United Nations Environment Assembly, particularly the commitment made by governments worldwide to "improve national resource management strategies with an integrated full life-cycle approaches and analysis to achieve resource-efficient and low-carbon economies", while taking into account national circumstances,

Noting the establishment of the Global Alliance on Circular Economy and Resource Efficiency, which aims to support the transition to a global circular economy for more efficient and equitable use of resources so as to achieve sustainable consumption and production, and inclusive and sustainable industrialization,

Underlining that the circular economy and digitalization, and the interplay between them, can make a major contribution to reaching the SDGs, particularly responsible consumption and production,

Mindful that due to the COVID-19 pandemic we are facing major disruptions that will force us to use our limited means even more efficiently against the background of the crisis,

Stressing that the COVID-19 pandemic has reversed hard-won development gains, particularly in achieving gender equality and reducing poverty, and has exposed the deep economic and social inequalities and the challenges addressed by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, thus making the achievement of the SDGs all the more necessary and urgent,

Emphasizing that responsible consumption and production are pivotal and cross-cutting elements of the SDGs, and are crucial means to build back better and greener, as they enable the efficient use of natural resources, minimize environmental degradation, pollution and waste, and consider each stage of the life cycle while creating opportunities for social and economic development, thus contributing to poverty eradication and shared prosperity,

Aware that the pandemic crisis has revealed the precariousness of long and complex value chains, and the flaws of the linear "take-make-use-dispose" pattern of production and consumption,

Noting that the price of products does not always reflect environmental or social costs, such as pollution effects or underpaid labour, which have a negative impact on people's health and quality of life,

Encouraging the disclosure of appropriate product information to consumers, and promoting the development of measures to increase transparency in production chains,

Stressing that circular economy transformation, although predominantly associated with product manufacturing or resource intensive industries and value chains, refers to the economy as a whole, including service dominated industries, thus requiring the engagement of the full range of actors across each industry and sector,

Noting that the world is currently in the midst of the creation of a more circular economy, through policy initiatives such as the European Circular Economy Action Plan, and of the digital revolution, both of which have the power to transform our economy and society,

Noting also that big efforts are currently being made by national and international policymakers to promote and regulate both transitions, and the increasing need to align their efforts or create bridges between policies,

Underscoring that, through the "digital for development" (D4D) policy, consideration is being given to how digitalization could change people's lives and result in inclusive, equitable, efficient, affordable, faster and, above all, sustainable universal growth,

Noting that digitalization gives rise to novel digital platforms, helps create new kinds of markets, which can be based on the virtualization of products and processes, and facilitates easier and more efficient networking, collaboration and co-creation with stakeholders,

Bearing in mind that digitalization helps to cut costs and increase efficiency, including efficiency of resources,

Underscoring the important role of international digital learning and collaboration platforms, often with virtual technologies, for learning, networking and co-creation, while the COVID-19 pandemic poses severe challenges to education across the world due to limited access to infrastructure and technologies,

Aware that digitalization is not a goal in itself but an enabler and an accelerator to effectively achieve all 17 SDGs,

Highlighting the fact that the COVID-19 crisis has accelerated digitalization,

Mindful that because of the restrained mobility of people due to the prescribed health protocol of physical distancing as a result of the pandemic, consumer behaviour towards digitalization has radically changed, especially in terms of transactions of both private and public goods,

Underscoring that any future disaster risk reduction strategy will be (big) data driven,

Paying due regard to avoiding the most vulnerable people becoming victims of the circular economy and digital transition by including solidarity in the recovery process in order to fully seize the opportunities of the current crisis,

Stressing that the shift to a circular economy has the potential to allow countries to decouple growth from resource use and environmental impact, generate economic opportunities, build long-term resilience, protect the environment and human health,

Underlining that the implementation of the circular economy principles in key sectors can play an important role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and successfully addressing climate change,

Bearing in mind that creating consumer demand for resource efficient products can be a challenge, as environmentally sustainable products may not be easily available, affordable, user-friendly or functional and attractive to consumers, especially at the early stages of their development,

Acknowledging the potential of digitalization to strengthen the circular economy, and stressing that circular economy and sustainability principles should be at the heart of digitalization,

Noting that digitalization and the circular economy are driven by the following "bridging technologies": the internet of things, artificial intelligence, robotics, big data, 3D printing, augmented reality, and blockchain,

Recognizing that the circular economy and digitalization have the potential to contribute to equitable economic growth and enable the economic empowerment of women and vulnerable populations, and youth-led collective action,

Emphasizing that mainstreaming digitalization and the circular economy requires ambition, political will and a fundamental change of vision at all levels, which go far beyond the standard digital and environmental political agendas, and must be based on a systemic national approach with the participation of all sectors of society, as well as on enhanced international cooperation,

1. *Invites* parliaments to give digitalization and the circular economy more prominence on the political agenda, as part of their efforts to address the SDGs, particularly responsible consumption and production;
2. *Calls on* parliaments to mainstream digitalization and circular economy principles into public policies and national strategies, and to adopt an enabling framework for their implementation;
3. *Notes* that reducing existing inequalities in terms of access to digital platforms on the part of women and many vulnerable populations as well as marginalized segments of society, including Indigenous people, racialized communities, and persons with disabilities in order to enhance their full participation in the digital economic transition should be duly regarded;
4. *Encourages* parliaments to promote adequate regulatory frameworks, including economic and financial incentives, with a view to enabling circular economy models to deliver sustainable products and services that are both scalable and competitive in terms of price, quality and convenience;
5. *Calls on* all actors to make the right innovative choices against the background of the pandemic and to prioritize future-proof and sustainable sectors and technologies while benefitting from the huge social, economic and ecological advantages of smart digitalization;
6. *Invites* parliaments to recognize the need for and opportunity of a resilient and low-carbon inclusive recovery from COVID-19, as an enabler for achieving the 2030 Agenda, and calls on them to ensure that recovery plans incorporate responsible consumption and production practices, based on digitalization and circular economy principles, among others, while taking into account national circumstances;
7. *Calls on* parliaments to adopt legislation that addresses food waste and loss at every phase and level of the food supply chain, and to stimulate the use of new technologies for the creation of an integrated agricultural and food system whereby food utilization is optimized and loss and waste of resources are minimized;
8. *Urges* parliaments to support policies that encourage repair, reuse and resource recycling, including the design of products suitable for recycling; the reduction of primary material consumption; and the utilization of secondary resources to facilitate sustainable resource management, and invites them to encourage new business and service models that are not dependent on mass consumption of disposable products;
9. *Requests* parliaments to ensure that the functioning of all public institutions, central and local, takes a more holistic approach to sustainability, while incorporating both digital and circular economy principles, including the adoption of green and sustainable procurement legislative frameworks and monitoring systems;
10. *Invites* parliaments to encourage international policy coordination of standards, regulations and policies for the circular economy;
11. *Calls on* parliaments to create an environment conducive to the development and application of digital solutions, such as the internet of things, artificial intelligence and blockchain, aimed at maximizing the potential of the circular economy;
12. *Also calls on* parliaments, as part of efforts to create an enabling environment for digitalization and the circular economy, to place special emphasis on data policies and common data architecture;
13. *Invites* parliaments to encourage research and development to increase innovation and knowledge-sharing including the transfer of technology, particularly to developing countries on mutually agreed terms for the uptake, upscaling and replication of resource-efficient and clean technologies and innovative business practices based on digitalization and the circular economy;

14. *Encourages* parliaments to promote collaboration with the Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries, established by UN General Assembly resolution 71/251, which has a critical role to play in the digital transformation of the LDCs, to attain sustainable development by facilitating access to and implementation of digital technologies and providing assistance with data management issues;
15. *Calls on* parliaments from donor countries to encourage international development cooperation agencies to mainstream digitalization and circular economy principles in their financial assistance and capacity-building programmes aimed at supporting COVID-19 economic recovery and SDG implementation;
16. *Also calls on* governments to integrate digital skills and a circular way of life in education at the earliest possible stage; and to conduct awareness campaigns to encourage consumers' engagement in sustainable practices;
17. *Invites* parliaments to create an enabling environment for citizens' access to digital solutions for their digital empowerment;
18. *Also invites* parliaments and governments to allocate appropriate financial resources to encourage the development of both digital and circular economy business models, while specifically empowering young and women entrepreneurs;
19. *Further invites* parliaments to promote gender-inclusive education frameworks and policies to boost education opportunities and digital skills development for women and girls in STEAM-subjects to narrow the gender digital divide;
20. *Encourages* parliaments to support efforts by regional and local institutions to foster urban sustainability through the development of inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable smart cities that digitally optimize communication, transport, energy, water and sanitation systems, according to circular economy and digitalization principles;
21. *Emphasizes* the urgent need to work towards a circular built environment by adopting building practices that minimize the use of raw materials to decrease emissions, by increasing the recovery rate of construction and demolition waste, and by improving the energy efficiency and extending the lifespan of existing buildings;
22. *Calls on* parliaments to encourage the integration of circular economy models into the national response to climate change, and invites them to ensure that climate change policies and strategies include measures to optimize the utility of products by maximizing their use and extending their lifespan and enhance recycling (using waste as a resource), while promoting a circular design that reduces material consumption and uses lower-carbon alternatives;
23. *Also calls on* parliaments to encourage full transparency pertaining to all used materials in manufacturing in order to limit any introduction of harmful chemical substances in the production cycle, and furthermore to promote the use of fully recyclable materials;
24. *Invites* parliaments to support the adoption, including through public-private partnerships, of sound environmental and social standards for the extractive industries, as well as of standards and policy frameworks that enhance the sustainable recycling of secondary materials and mitigate challenges associated with the digital economy;
25. *Calls on* parliaments to promote digitalization and circular solutions, including circular procurement, circular design and services instead of products, as a means to develop a more resilient, and economically and environmentally sustainable travel and tourism industry;
26. *Requests* parliaments to ensure that governments invest in adequate digital infrastructure for secure, accessible and affordable internet coverage, connectivity, regulatory frameworks for data protection/privacy, and cybersecurity standards and governance, in order to enable the circular economy and D4D to reach their full potential;

27. *Invites* parliaments to incentivize the implementation of circular business models with long-term benefits, such as changing consumer behaviour, stimulating innovation, and the scaling and diffusion of technologies;
28. *Calls on* parliaments to stimulate national and international networking and collaboration between schools, research institutions and networks, and other relevant stakeholders (for example, companies, NGOs and international organizations) to find digital solutions to challenges related to the circular economy, for example by encouraging co-creation through competitions and hackathons;
29. *Invites* parliaments to ensure that efforts to accelerate the transition to digitalization and the circular economy address potential risks, such as increasing material and energy use, increasing greenhouse gas emissions, deepening the digital gap among and within countries, and increasing the environmental footprint of the IT industry, as well as the transition's negative consequences in terms of security and human health;
30. *Calls on* the IPU to enhance cooperation with Member Parliaments and other organizations in order to gather evidence on the circular economy, environment and digitalization, to map the interplay between them and to promote guidelines for parliamentary action;
31. *Also calls on* parliaments to see to it that digitalization and circular-economy principles, and strengthened goals to this effect, are incorporated while approving future free trade agreements, which require parliamentary ratification;
32. *Invites* parliaments to support the use of standardized, comparable and high-quality digital data which is properly mined, investigated and managed, and stresses that promoting digitalization is an important tool to support efficient and reliable information collection and delivery, which are key elements for a safe and sustainable circular economy;
33. *Requests* parliaments to rationalize the discussion on data sharing by distinguishing between different types of data and to establish fair and functional data regulation based on common sense by securing fair access to data, as well as fair protection of data according to the internationally accepted data protection principles, intellectual property rights and other relevant legal frameworks as per national circumstances;
34. *Encourages* parliaments and governments to engage in dialogue with stakeholders (for example, civil society, companies and administrations) in order to increase their awareness of the importance of providing open data and turn them into active participants of the data economy and co-creators of knowledge when legally possible;
35. *Calls on* parliaments to envisage measures aimed at tackling people's lack of basic digital skills and e-literacy, and at increasing the number of IT, artificial intelligence, blockchain and other digital professionals, as a means to proactively shape a digital transformation centred around sustainable ecological, social and economic development dimensions;
36. *Invites* parliaments to exchange information and best practices and implement capacity-building programmes with a view to increasing awareness and knowledge among parliamentarians about the interplay between digitalization and the circular economy, and its potential in promoting a resilient and green recovery and achieving the SDGs, particularly responsible consumption and production.

* The resolution was negotiated in keeping with the Special Rules of Procedure governing virtual sessions of the IPU Assembly and Standing Committees. Reservations were received from:

India, which expressed reservations on preambular paragraphs 7 and 29.

Nicaragua, which expressed reservations on operative paragraphs 3, 8, 20, and 28.

Report of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights

*Noted by the 142nd IPU Assembly
(Virtual session, 27 May 2021)*

The Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights held two sittings in the run-up to the 142nd IPU Assembly.

On 28 April, the Committee met to discuss the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on democracy and human rights, and on the functioning of parliaments. With Committee Vice-President Ms. A. Gerken (Netherlands) in the chair, the Committee heard opening remarks from Ms. L. Thornton (Director for Global Programmes, International IDEA) and Mr. N. Bako-Arifari (member of the National Assembly, Benin), and later from Mr. A. Williamson (Senior Researcher, Centre for Innovation in Parliament, IPU) and Ms. C. López Castro (member of the Chamber of Deputies, Mexico).

During the debate, delegates observed that the pandemic had had a wide range of negative impacts on democracy and human rights. Fundamental rights such as the freedom of association had been restricted in the name of public health imperatives. A number of countries had declared a state of emergency. Delegates observed that restrictions on human rights must be time-limited, specified in law and proportional to the requirements of the situation. The full enjoyment of human rights and practice of democracy must be resumed as soon as the situation permitted.

Parliaments, like all institutions, had been severely challenged by the pandemic. Many parliaments had demonstrated an impressive capacity to find innovative solutions to continue to meet in virtual, hybrid or socially-distanced settings. The long-term impact of the pandemic on parliaments remained to be seen. On one hand, remote working had created new possibilities for parliamentarians to spend more time closer to the people they represented. On the other, it had made it more difficult to hold substantive debates and to discuss solutions to complex political issues.

Like everybody, delegates expressed the hope that the pandemic would soon be brought under control by the rapid and equitable distribution of vaccines, so that the Committee, the IPU and indeed society as a whole would be able to resume their normal functioning.

On 18 May, the Committee held a preparatory debate on the theme of the next resolution *Legislation worldwide to combat online sexual child exploitation*, with the Committee President, Mr. A.Y. Desai (India) in the chair. The debate started a process that would lead to the adoption of the resolution at the 143rd IPU Assembly later in 2021.

The Committee appointed a third co-Rapporteur, Mr. P. Limjaroenrat (Thailand) to join Ms. A. Gerken (Netherlands) and Ms. J. Oduol (Kenya) who had been appointed as co-Rapporteurs at the preceding Assembly.

Ms. M. F. Singhateh (UN Special Rapporteur on sale and sexual exploitation of children) highlighted that many laws already existed, as well as the difficulty that was frequently observed in implementing them. The internet knew no boundaries, and perpetrators might be in one country, victims in another and images of abuse stored on servers in yet another jurisdiction. Meanwhile, it was very difficult to gather evidence that met the standards required by the courts, suggesting that new approaches would be required. Ms. Singhateh laid out the case for developing model legislation to combat online sexual child exploitation that could be adopted by all countries.

Mr. J. Carr (Technical Adviser to ECPAT International) cited data about the scale of online sexual child exploitation and drew attention to the role of technology companies in taking action to remove abusive images. He reinforced the point that legislation was only one of the steps towards effectively addressing the problem. Parliamentarians could greatly contribute to raising public awareness of the issue, which in turn would increase the pressure on technology companies to step up their efforts.

During the debate, the rapporteurs and delegates shared experience from their countries and sought advice from the experts on possible courses of action. The inputs would help inform the preparation of the draft resolution.

The Bureau of the Committee met on 11 May to exchange perspectives on the major challenges to democracy and human rights, in the context of the revision of the IPU Strategy. Bureau members identified a range of pressing issues, such as online disinformation, hate speech and the fight against discrimination in all its forms, including on the basis of sexual orientation. They expressed the wish that the Committee be able to discuss any issue and thereby play its role in advancing democracy and human rights to the fullest extent possible.

At its last sitting on 18 May, the Committee elected a number of new members to the Bureau, on the basis of the nominations from the geopolitical groups.

Report of the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs

*Noted by the 142nd IPU Assembly
(Virtual session, 27 May 2021)*

Joint meeting with the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development on the overall theme of the 142nd Assembly (27 April)

This first sitting of the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs was held jointly with the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development to debate the overall theme of the 142nd Assembly *Overcoming the pandemic today and building a better tomorrow: the role of parliaments*.

The President of the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs, Mr. J.C. Romero (Argentina), and the President of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Ms. V. Muzenda Tsitsi (Zimbabwe), opened the session. The Committees adopted the agenda and the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs approved the summary record of its session held at the 141st Assembly in Belgrade.

Mr. J.C. Romero chaired the first panel which focused on the main components of the pandemic recovery phase, opportunities to advance towards a green economy, as well as renewed multilateral cooperation and dialogue to tackle global challenges, including new pandemics. Ms. S. Dinică (Romania), member of the Bureau of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, moderated the second panel on vaccines accessibility as a public good.

The two panels featured the following speakers: Ms. S. Rehman (Pakistan), Ms. M. Aubry (member of the European Parliament), Mr. T. Jackson (Professor, University of Surrey), and Mr. M. Frick (Deputy Special Envoy to the UN Food Systems Summit). About 75 members of parliament participated in the debate while 150 parliamentary staff members followed as observers.

Panel presentations gave rise to a total of 15 interventions (including two received in the chat line) from representatives of the following parliaments: Bahrain, Burundi, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Iran, Japan, Mongolia, Netherlands, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, and the United Arab Emirates.

The main takeaways from the discussion can be summarized as follows:

1. The COVID-19 pandemic magnified existing problems such as growing inequalities, and unsustainable development patterns nationally and globally. The post-COVID-19 recovery must bring about systemic change in the development model but also in the underlying commitment that people and countries needed to make to each other and to the international community. The development model should refocus on what matters to people most, namely, their health and that of their environment, particularly in developed countries where growth had already reached its limits. The underlying commitment must be centred more on solidarity rather than competition and must affirm the value of multilateralism as the best way for countries to tackle borderless problems such as climate change and pandemics.
2. The green economy and the circular economy were key to making the current development model more sustainable. However, the care economy, which consisted of the services to people (the old, the most vulnerable, the unemployed, etc.) that required relatively little material input but dramatically improved the quality of life and human security, must also be integrated into that model. Prosperity needed to be redefined in terms of good health and more time for oneself and family, rather than in terms of more high-input material production and consumption that involved more carbon emissions and extraction of finite resources. Steps in this direction would require, among other things, a new financial architecture, a more progressive tax system, and new programmes such as a universal basic income.

3. The current dysfunctional global food system that left hundreds of millions of people hungry or malnourished, led to enormous food waste, and caused a host of health and social problems, was a good illustration of what needed to change going forward. The pandemic had shown the vulnerability of global supply chains that also included food and basic staples. The food system needed to be more grounded within national borders and the ownership of key inputs protected from corporate monopolies.
4. A stronger focus on women was key to the post-pandemic recovery and to sustainability in general. Refocusing the development model on the care economy would benefit women in particular as they occupied the greater share of jobs in the service sector. Foreign aid needed to target women better. Women were also key to the food system and to food security in general as they were often the backbone of the informal sector and of rural economies.
5. The way in which the COVID-19 vaccine was being produced and distributed to people and countries around the world evinced a dramatic lack of global solidarity and would ultimately prove self-defeating unless corrective measures were adopted soon. The pandemic would not end until the vast majority of people in each country was vaccinated and herd immunity was reached. That objective was not attainable presently as the supply of vaccines was controlled by a handful of patent-holding pharmaceutical companies with limited productive capacities and more interest in profit making than in global public health. Governments needed to recognize the global emergency as one akin to a state of “war” and from there, act accordingly to deploy every conceivable tool to bring the pandemic under control as fast as possible and everywhere. One such tool should be the temporary waiving of vaccine patents so that every pharmaceutical company in the world with capacity to add to the global supply of vaccines could do so with no penalty. Patent-holding companies should be compensated for sharing their vaccine formula and technical know-how with others. At the same time, other tools already being deployed, such as the Covax facility, needed to be considerably more strengthened.

Discussion on the UN75 Declaration follow-up (29 April)

The second sitting of the Committee on United Nations Affairs considered the implications of the Declaration issued at the conclusion of the September 2020 High-level Meeting to Commemorate the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the United Nations (UN75).

The UN75 Declaration comprised 12 commitments – referred to as “Our Common Agenda” – on the currently most critical global challenges, from reversing climate change to reforming multilateralism. The Declaration requested the UN Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly in September 2021 with recommendations on how to advance the Common Agenda. As part of that endeavour, the UN was conducting a global consultation with key constituencies via an online facility at <https://un75.online/take-action/>.

Moderated by the Committee President Mr. J.C. Romero, the meeting proceeded in two parts: the first part featured a panel discussion with Ms. M. Joyni (Ambassador, Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations), Mr. B. Rae (Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations), and Ms. E. Cousens (President and CEO of the UN Foundation). The second part featured a live poll built on the nine leading questions of the UN global consultation on the Common Agenda. The elements of the consultation were introduced by Ms. M. Griffin (Senior Advisor, Office of the United Nations Secretary-General).

About 45 members of parliament participated in the session while over a hundred observers followed online. Interventions were voiced or submitted in writing from the following 13 Members: Bahrain, Belarus, Burundi, China, Costa Rica, India, Iran, Kuwait, Madagascar, Mongolia, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, and Turkey.

The panel discussion in the first part of the sitting highlighted the following points:

1. The current pandemic provided a powerful reminder of the value of multilateralism. For the pandemic to end the whole world needed to work together in solidarity toward common solutions. The solutions should also aim at making the response to future inevitable pandemics much more effective than had been the case with COVID-19, when countries and multilateral organizations alike had been caught totally unprepared.

2. The United Nations was not perfect but remained a key pillar of multilateralism. A stronger multilateral system necessarily needed to include all key constituencies, not just governments. Along with the private sector, civil society, and youth, parliaments and parliamentarians must play a greater role in developing innovative policy solutions and in implementing international commitments. Narrowing the digital divide was one important way to bring people together nationally and globally.
3. Putting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) back on track toward implementation by 2030 was critical to restore faith in government and in multilateralism. People's trust in governments and in the multilateral regime could only be restored by effectively addressing their problems on the ground.
4. Parliaments' role in implementing international agreements through the legislative and budget process, as well as by exercising effective oversight was key. The IPU's capacity to bring all political parties to multilateral forums added value to the UN's one-country-one-voice institutional set up.

As noted, the survey exercise with participants during the second part of the session focused on the same nine questions at the heart of the UN global consultation. The IPU had added multiple choice answers to those questions and had invited participants to choose their top two preferences. Additionally, participants could add one or more answers of their own. Top choices from the nine leading questions highlighted the following points:

- Strengthening data collection was key to analysing trends and future projections.
- Introducing a culture of peace curricula into schools was most important to bringing peace to the world.
- Investing massively in renewable energy and green industries was the most important step to curb climate change.
- Global public goods were best defined as all assets and services that must be accessible to all.
- Ensuring that all government documents were publicly accessible was key to restoring trust between people and institutions.
- Decision-making was most effective when the public was well informed of the relevant process in a timely manner.
- Ensuring access to education and health care to all was key to levelling the playing field in society.
- Enabling more parliamentary dialogue around global issues through the IPU was most important to global governance.
- Making the UN more inclusive and representative of the global community required amending the Charter of the United Nations to recognize the role of parliaments in global governance.

At the end of the session, the Committee President Mr. J.C. Romero announced that he had completed his second term as Committee president and wished every success to his successor, who would be appointed after the 142nd Assembly. Mr. Romero thanked the IPU Secretariat for its support and his fellow Bureau members for their work during his four-year tenure.

Statement on the occasion of the 2021 United Nations High-Level Meeting on HIV/AIDS

*Endorsed by the IPU Governing Council at its 207th session
(Virtual session, 25 May 2021)*

The Governing Council,

- *Noting* the Inter-Parliamentary Union's continued support over the years to the global AIDS response and engagement in United Nations high-level meetings on HIV/AIDS,
- *Recalling* United Nations General Assembly resolution 75/260 of 23 February 2021 on the organization of the 2021 High-Level Meeting on HIV/AIDS inviting the Inter-Parliamentary Union to contribute to the meeting,
- *Recalling also* the United Nations Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS adopted on 27 June 2001 and the political declarations on HIV/AIDS adopted at the high-level meetings of the General Assembly in 2006, 2011 and 2016,
- *Underlining* that the world's governments have set a target to end the AIDS epidemic by 2030 as part of the Sustainable Development Goals (in particular Goal 3, target 3),
- *Welcoming* the significant gains achieved in the AIDS response yet noting with concern that progress has been uneven among and within countries, and that gains remain fragile and reversible without renewed commitment, increased investments and accelerated action,
- *Expressing* deep concern that prior to the COVID-19 pandemic the world was not on track to meet the time-bound targets set out in the 2016 Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS, which expired at the end of 2020, and that the modelling of the COVID-19 pandemic's long-term impact on the HIV response shows a setback with an estimated 123,000 to 293,000 additional new HIV infections and 69,000 to 148,000 additional AIDS-related deaths between 2020 and 2022,
- *Noting* that 2021 marks 40 years since the first case of AIDS was reported, 25 years since UNAIDS commenced its valuable work and 20 years since the creation of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis & Malaria, which provides 21 per cent of all international financing for the global HIV response; as well as that a new Global AIDS strategy for 2021-2026 has been adopted,
- *Expressing* concern that 38 million people globally were living with HIV in 2019, that more than 12 million people still do not have access to HIV treatment, and that 1.7 million people became infected with HIV in 2019 because they did not have access to essential HIV services,
- *Noting* that HIV is not only driven by but also entrenches gender inequality, leaving HIV infected women more vulnerable to violence, coercion, stigma and discrimination, including violations of their sexual and reproductive rights, and that they are six times more likely to develop cervical cancer,
- *Noting also* with concern that every week, around 5,500 young women aged between 15 and 24 years become infected with HIV, and that young women in Sub-Saharan Africa are twice as likely as men to be living with HIV,
- *Noting further* that structural, legal, economic and other inequalities that foster stigma and discrimination increase HIV vulnerability, impede access to services and make key populations more likely to die of AIDS-related illnesses, as well as that, as reported by the *Global AIDS Strategy 2021-2026*, the risk of acquiring HIV is 13 times higher for transgender people, 26 times higher among gay men and other men who have sex with men, 29 times higher among people who inject drugs, and 30 times higher for sex workers,

Calls on parliaments to:

- Work to have States realize the right to health and implement health targets as part of the Sustainable Development Goals, including ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030.

- Bring HIV back to the public discourse since HIV continues to be a major public health crisis.
- Respond to the specific health needs of young women and adolescent girls and other groups of people disproportionately affected by HIV, particularly underserved communities such as indigenous and transgender populations, by raising awareness, ensuring prevention and access to treatment, and providing relevant services.
- Use both their mandate and public trust to engage communities and act in the interest of every citizen and every community, including people living with HIV and key populations, to build large scale public awareness and enable community mobilization towards a collective people's movement to achieve the promise of better health outcomes and a reduction in disparities.
- Promote evidence-based, people-centred guidance and tools to promote the autonomy and self-efficacy of people living with and at risk of HIV, including through access to self-care interventions.
- Review existing legislation and repeal or amend laws, including age-restrictive laws, that undermine access to HIV and health services for all, and that criminalize HIV transmission to ensure that no one is left behind.
- Enact laws that protect and promote the human rights of all citizens, including their right to health; that protect people living with HIV, in particular young women and adolescent girls, and key populations against stigma and discrimination; and that ensure access to quality, affordable sexual and reproductive health services and rights.
- Use their oversight and budgetary powers and engage with global partners to enable effective prioritization and more efficient allocation of resources for HIV and health, given the fiscal pressures exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, and support gender-sensitive budgeting as a tool for addressing women's, girls' and transgender people's health needs.
- Commit to resume health services disrupted on account of the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure equitable access to HIV testing and treatment.

The Governing Council renews its call on all countries to:

- Renew at the 2021 United Nations High-Level Meeting on HIV/AIDS their commitment to global efforts to end the AIDS epidemic and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.
- Protect the human rights of all persons without distinction in law and in practice and ensure all health policies and interventions are in conformity with international human rights standards.
- Strengthen already established strategic partnerships and create new ones that include governments, parliaments, affected communities, civil society, the private sector, academics, scientists and philanthropists.
- Mobilize adequate resources and funds to support the implementation and realize the objectives of the new *Global AIDS Strategy 2021-2026*, and also to mobilize all sources, public and private, domestic and international, to reverse the decrease in international support and close the US\$ 7 billion funding gap for the global AIDS response.
- Apply the lessons learned from the colliding HIV epidemic and COVID-19 pandemic and, at the **2021 United Nations High-Level Meeting on HIV/AIDS**, urge for more investments in global pandemic responses and the adoption of a new set of bold, ambitious but achievable HIV targets to end AIDS as a public health threat by 2030.
- Use the scientific progress achieved in developing effective mRNA vaccines against COVID-19 for the quick development of an HIV vaccine.
- Ensure that intellectual property rights are not an obstacle for any person living with HIV to receive modern antiretroviral therapy.

Parliamentary action in support of ending statelessness

Statement to mark the 60th anniversary of the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness

*Endorsed by the IPU Governing Council at its 207th session
(Virtual session, 25 May 2021)*

Statelessness, or the lack of possession of any nationality, affects millions of people worldwide, often denying them access to fundamental rights such as education, medical treatment, work and travel, and leaving them vulnerable to extreme forms of exploitation and abuse.

Article 15 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognizes that all people have the right to a nationality, which in turn often serves as a gateway to other fundamental rights. The right to a nationality is also enshrined in numerous widely ratified international human rights treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

Recognizing that 2021 marks the 60th anniversary of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness (1961 Convention),

Recalling that the problem of statelessness has persisted over the years owing to gaps in nationality laws, weak birth registration systems and discriminatory legislation, including nationality laws that prevent women from conferring their nationality on their children on an equal basis to men,

We, Members of the IPU, call for renewed and urgent parliamentary action to help end the plight of stateless persons by:

- Taking appropriate legislative measures, such as reforms to nationality and related laws to ensure that they conform to the international standards that prevent and reduce statelessness and protect stateless persons, in particular by ensuring that nationality laws are free from discrimination and contain the safeguards that prevent statelessness;
- Encouraging relevant States to accede to and implement treaties that contain these international standards, including the 1961 Convention and the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons; and to support universal adherence to and implementation of these Conventions;
- Considering providing necessary support for the implementation of the 360 pledges to address statelessness made at the 2019 High-Level Segment on Statelessness and the 2019 first Global Forum on Refugees, as many of these require action to be taken by parliaments;
- Speaking out for stateless men, women, boys and girls in our countries and raising awareness of their situation;
- Making use of the tools produced by the IPU and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), such as the 2005 IPU-UNHCR handbook for parliamentarians *Nationality and Statelessness* (updated in 2014 and translated into 13 languages) and the 2018 handbook *Good practices in nationality laws for the prevention and reduction of statelessness* (available in eight languages); and
- Systematically upholding the right to a nationality for all and supporting efforts to meet the goals of the #IBelong Campaign to End Statelessness by 2024.

With less than four years remaining in the #IBelong Campaign to End Statelessness by 2024, and less than ten years to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and leave no one behind, the time for action is now.

Statement on Yemen

*Endorsed by the IPU Governing Council at its 207th session
(Virtual session, 25 May 2021)*

The IPU Committee on Middle East Questions expresses its strong concerns over the recent escalation in the brutal conflict in Yemen, causing what has become known as the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

The Committee strongly condemns the violations of UN Security Council resolutions regarding Yemen, especially as regards the embargo on arms sales to parties to the conflict, and requests the parliaments of relevant countries to conduct oversight of their governments in the implementation of such resolutions.

The Committee is disturbed by the increasing levels of famine in Yemen, adding higher levels of tragedy to this grave crisis, and thus calls upon the members of the global parliamentary community to assume their role in saving Yemeni lives.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS ***LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS***

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Président de l'Union interparlementaire

Mr./M. Martin Chungong
Secretary General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union
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(RND: National Democratic Rally / Rassemblement national démocratique)

(FLN: National Libération Front / Front de libération nationale)

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	Commission des affaires étrangères
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(DA: Democrats for Andorra / Démocrates pour Andorre)

(L'A: Liberal Party / Parti Libéral)

(CC: Committed Citizens / Citoyens engagés)

(PS: Social Democratic Party / Parti Social-démocrate)

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(UC: Unidad Ciudadana)
(FPV: Alianza Frente para la Victoria)
(FdT: Frente de Todos)
(PJ: Justicialist Party / Parti justicialiste)
(PRO: Propuesta Republicana)
(UFDP: Unidad Federal para el Desarrollo)
(UCRP: Unión Cívica Radical)

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(CC: Civil Contract / Contrat civil)

(PAP: Prosperous Armenia Party / Parti arménien de la prospérité)

(BA: Bright Armenia)

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(LPA: Liberal Party of Australia / Parti libéral australien)

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(SPÖ: Austrian Social Democratic Party / Parti social-démocrate autrichien)

(FPÖ: Austrian Freedom Party / Parti de la liberté)

(NEOS: Austrian Liberal Party / Parti libéral autrichien)

(Grüne: The Greens / Les verts)

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SALMAN, Jameela (Mrs.) Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law	Second Deputy Speaker of the Shura Council
ALTHAWADI, Abdullah Khalifa (Mr.)	Member of the Council of Representatives
ALARADI, Ali Abdulla (Mr.) Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians	Member of the Shura Council
ABBAS, Fatima (Mrs.)	Member of the Council of Representatives
ALSISI ALBUAINAIN, Mohammed (Mr.)	Member of the Council of Representatives
RAMZI FAYEZ, Hala (Mrs.)	Member of the Shura Council
ALAMER, Ahmed (Mr.)	Member of the Council of Representatives
ALBINMOHAMED, Bassam (Mr.)	Member of the Shura Council
ABUNAJMA, Rashed Mohammed (Mr.) Member of the ASGP	Secretary General of the Council of Representatives, Council of Representatives
Executive Secretary of the Group	

BANGLADESH

CHAUDHURY, Shirin Sharmin (Ms.) President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	Speaker of Parliament (BAL) Chairman of the Business Advisory Committee Chairman of the Committee on Petitions Chairman of the Standing Committee on Rules of Procedure
AHMED, Kaniz Fatema (Ms.)	Member of Parliament (BAL)
ALAM, Md Shah-E (Mr.)	Member of Parliament (BAL)
ALI, Rumana (Ms.)	Member of Parliament (BAL)
ASHRAF, Md. Ali (Mr.)	Member of Parliament (BAL)
AZIZ, Md Abdul (Mr.)	Member of Parliament (BAL)
HUSSAIN, Bodruddoza Md Farhad (Mr.)	Member of Parliament (BAL)
ISLAM, A B Tajul (Mr.)	Member of Parliament (BAL)
KHAN, Muhammad Faruk (Mr.)	Member of Parliament (BAL)
MAHMUD, Anisul Islam (Mr.)	Member of Parliament (JP)

(BAL: Bangladesh Awami League / Ligue Awami du Bangladesh)

(JP: Jatiya Party / Parti Jatiya)

BELARUS

KOCHANOVA, Natalia (Ms.) Leader of the delegation	Speaker of the Council of the Republic
RACHKOV, Sergei (Mr.)	Member of the Council of the Republic Chairman of the Standing Committee for Foreign Affairs and National Security
SAVINYKH, Andrei (Mr.)	Member of the House of Representatives Standing Commission on International Affairs
VASILEVICH, Maria (Ms.)	Member of the House of Representatives Standing Commission on Human Rights, National Relations and Mass Media
LEPESHKO, Anna (Ms.)	Counsellor in the Department of International Cooperation in the Secretariat of the House of Representatives

BELGIUM – BELGIQUE

COGOLATI, Samuel (M.) President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	Member of the Chamber of Representatives (Ecolo) Committee on Energy, Environment and Climate Foreign Affairs Committee Advice Committee regarding EU Matters
GRYFFROY, Andries (Mr.) Bureau of the Committee on UN Affairs	Member of the Senate (N-VA) Committee on Transversal Matters - Powers of the Regions
JADIN, Kattrin (Ms.)	Member of the Chamber of Representatives (MR) National Defense Committee Foreign Affairs Committee

LACROIX, Christophe (Mr.) Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law	Member of the Chamber of Representatives (PS) National Defense Committee Foreign Affairs Committee Committee on Economy, Consumer Protection and Digital Agenda
D'HAESELEER, Guy (Mr.)	Member of the Senate (VB) Committee on Democratic Renewal and Citizenship
LANJRI, Nahima (Ms.)	Member of the Chamber of Representatives (CD&V) Committee on Social Matters, Employment and Pensions
LACHAERT, Egbert (Mr.)	Member of the Chamber of Representatives (Open VLD) Committee on Rules of procedure and Reform of the Work of Parliament
YIGIT, Ayse (Ms.)	Member of the Senate (PVDA) Committee on Democratic Renewal and Citizenship Advice Committee on Gender equality Deputy director, Senate
VERCAMMEN, Peter (Mr.) Secretary of the Group	
DANG-DUY, Liêm (Mr.) Deputy Secretary of the Group	Senior Adviser, Chamber of Representatives
(Ecolo: Écologistes confédérés pour l'organisation de luttes originales)	
(N-VA: New Flemish Alliance / Nouvelle alliance flamande)	
(MR: Mouvement réformateur / Reformist Movement)	
(PS: Parti Socialiste / Socialist Party)	
(VB: Vlaams Belang)	
(CD&V: Flemish Christian Democrats / Démocrates chrétiens flamands)	
(PVDA: Labour Party / Parti travailliste)	

BENIN

SOSSOU, Dakpè (M.) Chef de la délégation	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (UP) Rapporteur du groupe parlementaire UP et membre de la Commission des finances et des échanges
BAKO-ARIFARI, Nassirou (M.) Président du Comité des droits de l'homme des parlementaires	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale, Président de la Commission des Relations extérieures
BABA MOUSSA, Mariam (Mme)	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (BR) Deuxième rapporteur de la commission des finances
KOUWANOU, Mathias (M.)	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (BR) Secrétaire de la Commission du Plan, de l'équipement et de la production
TCHAOU, Florentin (M.)	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (UP) Membre de la Commission des relations extérieures, de la coopération au développement, de la défense et de la sécurité
(UP: Progressive Union / Union Progressiste)	
(BR: Bloc républicain)	

BHUTAN – BHOUTAN

DORJI, Tashi (Mr.) Leader of the delegation	Chairman of the National Council
DORJI, Choining (Mr.)	Member of the National Council
DORJI, Gyem (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly (DNT)
DROLMA, Lhaki (Ms.)	Member of the National Council
NAMGYEL, Lungten (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly
WANGDI, Dorji (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly (DPT) Chairperson of the House Committee Economic and Finance Committee Good Governance Committee
PEMBA, Karma (Mr.)	Adviser, National Council
TSHERING, Chencho (Mr.)	Adviser, National Council
(DNT: Druk Nyamrup Tshogpa)	
(DPT: Druk Phunsum Tshogpa)	

BOLIVIA – BOLIVIE

ARRIEN CRONEMBOLD, Carlos (Mr.) Co-President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	Member of the Chamber of Deputies (CREEMOS)
TICONA QUISPE, Alicia (Ms.)	Member of the Chamber of Deputies (MAS-IPSP)
MENDOZA LEIGUE, Adolfo (Mr.)	Member of the Chamber of Deputies (MAS-IPSP)
RUIZ FLORES, Martha (Ms.)	Member of the Chamber of Deputies (MAS-IPSP)
ZUÑIGA ROJAS, Luis (Mr.)	Member of the Chamber of Deputies (CC)
RODRÍGUEZ MONTERO, Aleiza (Ms.)	Member of the Chamber of Deputies (CC)
OLLISCO BARRERO, Faustino (Mr.)	Member of the Chamber of Deputies (MAS-IPSP)
MERELIS GENARO, Ana (Ms.)	Member of the Chamber of Deputies (MAS-IPSP)

(CREEMOS)

(MAS-IPSP: Movement for Socialism / Mouvement pour le socialisme)

(CC: Comunidad Ciudadana)

BOTSWANA

SKELEMANI, Phandu T.C. (Mr.) President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	Speaker of the National Assembly
SALESHANDO, Dumelang (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly (UDC)
MAKWINJA, Nnaniki W. (Ms.)	Member of the National Assembly (BDP)
KEORAPETSE, Dithapelo (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly (UDC)
MOTAOSANE, Palelo (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly (BDP)
LETSHOLO, Thapelo (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly (BDP)
DITHAPO, Barbara Ntheeleng (Ms.) Member of the ASGP	Clerk of the National Assembly, National Assembly
GAOLAOLWE, Lesedi (Mr.) Member of the ASGP	Deputy Secretary General
KEEKAE, Lesedi (Mr.) Secretary of the Group	Assistant Clerk, Parliamentary Committees, National Assembly

(UDC: Umbrella for Democratic Change / Collectif pour le changement démocratique)

(BDP: Botswana Democratic Party / Parti démocratique botswanais)

BRAZIL – BRÉSIL

LINS, Átila (Mr.) President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	Member of the Chamber of Deputies (PP) President of the Committee on National Integration, Regional Development and the Amazon
CAJADO, Claudio (Mr.)	Member of the Chamber of Deputies (PP) Committee on Foreign Relations and National Defence
PORTELLA, Iracema (Ms.)	Member of the Chamber of Deputies (PP)
SANTOS, Soraya (Ms.)	Member of the Chamber of Deputies (PL)
ARAUJO, Silvia (Mrs.)	Coordinator, Federal Senate

(PP: Progressive Party / Parti progressiste)

(PL: Liberal Party / Parti libéral)

CAMEROON – CAMEROUN

CAVAYE YEGUIE, Djibril (M.)	Président de l'Assemblée nationale
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CANADA

McGUINTY, David (Mr.) Member of the Executive Committee President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	Member of the House of Commons (LPC)
ATAULLAHJAN, Salma (Ms.) Vice-President of the Group, President of the Committee on Middle East Questions	Member of the Senate (CPC) Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights
DZEROWICZ, Julie (Ms.)	Member of the House of Commons (LPC)
GILL, Marilène (Ms.)	Member of the House of Commons (BQ)
McPHEDRAN, Marilou (Ms.)	Member of the Senate (ISG)
McPHERSON, Heather (Ms.)	Member of the House of Commons (NDP)
REMPEL GARNER, Michelle (Ms.)	Member of the House of Commons (CPC)
SAINT-GERMAIN, Raymonde (Ms.)	Member of the Senate (ISG) Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade Standing Senate Committee on Internal Economy, Budgets and Administration
SPENGEMANN, Sven (Mr.) Bureau of the Committee on Democracy	Member of the House of Commons (LPC)

and Human Rights
KULKA, Jessica (Ms.) Procedural Clerk
Secretary of the Group
MYCHAJLYSZYN, Natalie (Ms.) Adviser
LEBLANC-LAURENDEAU, Olivier (Mr.) Adviser

(LPC: Liberal Party of Canada)
(CPC: Conservative Party of Canada / Parti conservateur du Canada)
(BQ: Bloc Québécois)
(ISG: Independent Senators Group / Groupe des Sénateurs indépendants)
(NDP: New Democratic Party of Canada / Nouveau parti démocratique canadien)

CHILE – CHILI

FLORES, Iván (Mr.) Member of the Chamber of Deputies (PDC)
Second Vice President of GRULAC, President of the Internal Regime and Administration
Leader of the delegation Committee
BORIC, Gabriel (Mr.) Member of the Chamber of Deputies (CS)
LETELIER, Juan Pablo (Mr.) Member of the Senate (PS)
Member of the Executive Committee President of the Treasury Committee
COLOMA, Juan Antonio (Mr.) Member of the Chamber of Deputies (UDI)
Constitution, Legislation and Justice Committee
President of the Education, Science, Technology
Committee
GARCÍA, René Manuel (Mr.) Member of the Chamber of Deputies (RN)
MIX, Claudia (Mrs.) Member of the Chamber of Deputies (Com)
Human Rights and Native Peoples Committee
Committee on Social Development, Overcoming Poverty
and Planning
OSES, Juan (Mr.) Sub Director of the Directorate of International
Relations, Senate
PEILLARD, Jacqueline (Mrs.) Director International Affairs of the Chamber of Deputies

(PDC: Christian Democratic Party / Parti démocrate-chrétien)
(CS: Convergencia social)
(PS: Socialist Party / Parti socialiste)
(UDI: Independent Democratic Union / Union démocratique indépendante)
(RN: National Renewal / Renouveau national)
(Com: Comunes)

CHINA – CHINE

WAN, E'xiang (Mr.) Deputy Speaker of the National People's Congress
Leader of the delegation (CPC)
CHEN, Guomin (Mr.) Member of the National People's Congress (CPC)
Vice-President of Executive Committee Vice Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee
CHEN, Fuli (Mr.) Member of the National People's Congress (CPC)
High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism Foreign Affairs Committee
and Violent Extremism
CAI, Ling (Ms.) Member of the National People's Congress (CDNCA)
Economic and Financial Affairs Committee
ZHUO, Xinping (Mr.) Member of the National People's Congress (CPC)
Ethnic Affairs Committee
DONG, Chuanjie (Mr.) Member of the National People's Congress (CPC)
Overseas Chinese Affairs Committee
CHEN, Yunying (Ms.) Member of the National People's Congress (RCCK)
Overseas Chinese Affairs Committee
DAI, Lizhong (Mr.) Member of the National People's Congress
CAO, Renxian (Mr.) Member of the National People's Congress (CPWDP)
FANG, Yan (Ms.) Member of the National People's Congress (CPC)
WANG, Mengmeng (Ms.) Member of the National People's Congress (CPC)

(CPC: Communist Party of China)
(CDNCA: China Democratic National Construction Association)
(RCCK: The Revolutionary Committee of the Chinese Kuomintang)
(CPWDP: Chinese Peasants' and Workers' Democratic Party)

COLOMBIA- COLOMBIE

ZAMBRANO ERAZO, Berner (Mr.) Leader of the delegation	Member of the Senate
AGUDELO GARCÍA, Ana Paola (Ms.)	Member of the Senate
GÓMEZ JIMÉNEZ, Juan Diego (Mr.)	Member of the Senate Chair, Committee on External Relations and National Defence
PÉREZ OYUELA, José Luis (Mr.)	Member of the Senate
ELJACH PACHECO, Gregorio (Mr.)	Secretary General of the Senate
GONZÁLEZ, Diego (Mr.)	Secretary of the Standing Committee of External Relations, Senate

COMOROS – COMORES

MDAHOMA, Abdou Said (M.) Chef de la délégation	Membre de l'Assemblée de l'Union (CRC)
NOURDINE SIDI, Hayda (Mme)	Membre de l'Assemblée de l'Union (CRC)

(CRC: Convention for the Renewal of Comoros / Parti de la Convention pour le Renouveau des Comores)

COTE D'IVOIRE - COTE D'IVOIRE

DIABY, Makani (Mme)	Vice-Présidente du Sénat (RHDP)
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(RHDP: Rally of Houphouetists for Democracy and Peace /
Rassemblement des Houphouëtistes pour la Démocratie et la Paix)

CROATIA – CROATIE

GRČIĆ, Branko (Mr.) Leader of the delegation	Member of the Croatian Parliament
ĆELIĆ, Ivan (Mr.)	Member of the Croatian Parliament (HDZ) Deputy Chairperson of the Health and Social Policy Committee
MARTINČEVIĆ, Natalija (Ms.)	Member of the Croatian Parliament
PRALAS, Đurđica (Ms.) Member of the ASGP	Deputy Secretary General of the Croatian Parliament
VUKAS, Stjepan (Mr.) Secretary of Group Member of the ASGP	Advisor, Croatian Parliament

(HDZ: Croatian Democratic Union / Parti démocratique croate)

CUBA

LAZO HERNÁNDEZ, Esteban (Mr.) Leader of the delegation	Speaker of the National Assembly of the People's Power
MARI MACHADO, Ana María (Ms.)	Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of the People's Power (CPC)
FERRER GÓMEZ, María Yolanda (Ms.) Member of the Executive Committee	Member of the National Assembly of the People's Power (CPC) Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee
LUNA MORALES, Estela Cristina (Ms.) Advisory Group on Health	Member of the National Assembly of the People's Power Health and Sports Committee (CPC)
SANTANA BELLO, Arellys (Ms.)	Member of the National Assembly of the People's Power (CPC) Chair, Standing Committee on Attention to Children, Youth and Equal Rights of Women
VELÁZQUES PÉREZ, Luis (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly of the People's Power
GONZÁLEZ BAREA, Teresa (Ms.)	Member of the National Assembly of the People's Power (CPC)
PALMERO FERNÁNDEZ, Raúl Alejandro (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly of the People's Power
MORA GONZÁLEZ, Jesús Rafael (Mr.) Secretary of the Group	Officer, National Assembly of the People's Power

(CPC: Communist Party of Cuba / Parti communiste cubain)

CYPRUS – CHYPRE

KOUTRA-KOUKOUMA, Skevi (Mrs.) Bureau of Women Parliamentarians Leader of the delegation	Member of the House of Representatives (AKEL) Chairperson of the House Standing Committee on Refugees-Enclaved, Missing, Adversely Affected Persons
SOCRATOUS, Socrates (Mr.) Member of the ASGP	Secretary General, House of Representatives
CHRISTOU, Avgousta (Mrs.) Secretary to the delegation	Senior International Relations Officer, House of Representatives
KOULLAPIS, Kostas (Mr.)	International Relations Officer, House of Representatives

(AKEL: Progressive Party of the Working People / Parti progressiste des masses laborieuses)

CZECH REPUBLIC - REPUBLIQUE TCHEQUE

POLANSKY, Ondrej (Mr.) Leader of the delegation	Member of the Chamber of Deputies (PP)
NYTRA, Zdenek (Mr.)	Member of the Senate (ODS) Vice-Chair of the Committee on Regional Development, Public Administration and Environment (Ind) Secretary General, Chamber of Deputies
MORÁVEK, Jan (Mr.) Member of the ASGP	Adviser, Senate
VOHRALÍKOVÁ, Jana (Ms.)	Director of the Office of Speaker
KOŠAŘÍKOVÁ, Kateřina (Ms.) Secretary of the Group	
TUČKOVÁ, Alena (Mrs.) Secretary of the Group	

(PP: Pirate Party / Parti pirate)

(ODS: Civic Democratic Party / Parti démocrate civique)

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO - REPUBLIQUE DEMOCRATIQUE DU CONGO

KABUND-A-KABUND, Jean Marc (M.) Chef de la délégation	Premier Vice-Président de l'Assemblée nationale (UPDS)
MANARA LINGA, Didi (M.)	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (PPRD) Comité des droits de l'Homme
NEEMA PAININYE, Grâce (Mme)	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (MLC)
MBUKU LAKA, Boris (M.)	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (ARC) Commission économique, financière et du contrôle budgétaire
SHE OKITUNDU LUNDULA Léonard (M.)	Sénateur Commission des relations extérieures
MAKANGU KABONGO, Georges Erick (M.)	Sénateur Commission de la défense, de la sécurité et des frontières
MANDZA ANDIA, Dieudonné (M.)	Sénateur Commission de l'environnement, du développement durable, des ressources naturelles et du tourisme
MUNGWANANJO BOYEKOMBO, Dieudonnette (Mme)	Sénatrice (CE) Commission des relations extérieures
GERENGO N'VENE Valentin (M.)	Commission des infrastructures et de l'aménagement du territoire
BOULU BOBUTU, Christophe (M.)	Conseiller politique du Président de l'Assemblée nationale
MWANDO, Mamy (Mme)	Conseillère diplomatique du Premier Vice-Président de l'Assemblée nationale
OKOKO LUKUTU, Donat (M.)	Conseiller juridique du Premier Vice-Président de l'Assemblée nationale
KANIKA SUMBAYI, Philibert (M.) Secrétaire administratif	Secrétaire administratif / Section nationale UIP/RDC, Assemblée nationale
TSHIALA MAYEMBE, Célestin (M.) Secrétaire administratif du Groupe	Sénat

(UDPS: Union for Democracy and Social Progress / Union pour la Démocratie et le Progrès social)

(PPRD: People's Party for Reconstruction and Democracy / Parti du Peuple pour la Reconstruction et la
Démocratie)

(MLC: Movement for the Liberation of Congo / Mouvement de Libération du Congo)

(ARC: Alliance for Congo's Renewal / Alliance pour le renouveau du Congo)

(CE: Congo Espoir)

DENMARK – DANEMARK

SOENDERGAARD, Soeren (Mr.) President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	Member of the Danish Parliament (EL) Cultural Affairs Committee European Affairs Committee
ØKTEM, Fatma (Ms.) AMMITZBØLL, Katarina (Ms.) RIIS, Peter (Mr.) Secretary to the delegation	Member of the Danish Parliament (PL) Member of the Danish Parliament (KF) International Consultant, The Danish Parliament
(EL: The Red-Green Alliance / Unité-Alliance rouge-verte)	
(PL: Liberal Party / Parti libéral)	
(KF: Conservative Party / Parti conservateur)	

DJIBOUTI

ALI HOUMED, Mohamed (M.) Chef de la délégation	Président de l'Assemblée nationale
BOULHAN HOUSSEIN, Neima (Mrs.)	Member of the National Assembly (RPP) Membre de l'Assemblée nationale
MOHAMED AHMED, Idriss (M.)	Directeur de Cabinet du Président de l'Assemblée nationale
(RPP: People's Rally for Progress / Rassemblement populaire pour le progrès)	

ECUADOR – EQUATEUR

ANDRADE, Wilma (Ms.) MUÑOZ, Pabel (Mr.) LLORI, Guadalupe (Ms.) QUISHPE, Salvado (Mr.) JARAMILLO, César Alejandro (Mr.) CAMPAIN, Rina (Ms.) YUCAILLA, Christian (Mr.) VEGA, Consuelo (Ms.) ABEDRABBO, Amira (Ms.) Secretary to the delegation	Member of the National Assembly (Izquierda) Member of the National Assembly Member of the National Assembly Member of the National Assembly Member of the National Assembly Member of the National Assembly Member of the National Assembly Member of the National Assembly
(Izquierda: Izquierda democrática)	

EGYPT – EGYPTE

GEBALY, Hanafi (Mr.) Leader of the delegation	Speaker of the House of Representatives
EL-KARIM DARWISH, Karim Abd (Mr.)	Member of the House of Representatives Chair of the Foreign Relations Committee
EL BAZZAR, Sahar (Ms.) NASSIF, Aida (Ms.) MANNA, Ahmed (Mr.) Member of the ASGP	Member of the House of Representatives Member of the Senate Secretary General

ESTONIA – ESTONIE

KOKK, Aivar (Mr.) President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	Member of the Estonian Parliament (Isamaa) Chairman of finance committee of the Finance Committee State Budget Control Select Committee
HELME, Helle-Moonika (Mrs.)	Member of the Estonian Parliament (EKRE) Cultural Affairs Committee
KIVIMÄGI, Toomas (Mr.)	Member of the Estonian Parliament (RP) Deputy Chairman of the Legal Affairs Committee
TUUS-LAUL, Marika (Mrs.)	Member of the Estonian Parliament (ECeP) Social Affairs Committee
SEPP, Regina (Ms.) Secretary to the delegation	
(Isamaa: Pro Patria (Isamaa Erakond))	
(EKRE: Conservative People's Party of Estonia / Parti populaire conservateur)	
(RP: Estonian Reform Party / Parti de la réforme)	
(ECeP: Estonian Centre Party / Parti estonien du centre)	

FINLAND – FINLANDE

JÄRVINEN, Heli (Ms.) President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	Member of Parliament (G)
TYNKKYNEN, Sebastian (Mr.) Vice-President of the Group	Member of Parliament (PS)
KALMARI, Anne (Ms.)	Member of Parliament (CP)
KYLLÖNEN, Merja (Ms.)	Member of Parliament (Vas)
LÖFSTRÖM, Mats (Mr.)	Member of Parliament (RKP)
SALONEN, Kristiina (Ms.)	Member of Parliament (SD)
TANUS, Sari (Ms.)	Member of Parliament (PDC)
VIKMAN, Sofia (Ms.)	Member of Parliament (KoK)
HUTTUNEN, Marja (Ms.) Secretary of the Group	Assistant for the International Affairs, Parliament
VUOSIO, Teemu (Mr.) Secretary of the Group	Secretary for the International Affairs, Parliament
(G: The Greens / Les Verts)	
(PS: The Finns Party / Parti des Finlandais)	
(CP: Centre Party / Parti du Centre)	
(Vas: Left Alliance / Alliance de gauche)	
(RKP: Swedish People's Party / Parti populaire suédois)	
(SD: Social Democracy Party / Parti social-démocrate)	
(PDC: Christian Democratic Party / Parti démocrate-chrétien)	
(KoK: National Coalition Party / Parti de la coalition nationale)	

FRANCE

JULIEN-LAFERRIERE, Hubert (M.) Comité sur les questions relatives au Moyen-Orient, Chef de la délégation	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (EELV) Commission des affaires étrangères
DUMONT, Laurence (Mme) Comité des droits de l'homme des parlementaires	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (PS)
DEL PICCHIA, Robert (M.) Groupe consultatif de haut niveau sur la lutte contre le terrorisme et l'extrémisme violent	Sénateur (LR)
DALLIER, Philippe (M.) Bureau de la Commission de la paix et de la sécurité internationale	Sénateur (LR)
MARIE, Didier (M.) Bureau de la Commission de la démocratie et des droits de l'homme	Sénateur (PS)
LARIVE, Michel (M.)	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (FI)
RIOTTON, Véronique (Mme)	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (LREM)
MAUREY, Hervé (M.)	Sénateur (UC)
IACOVELLI, Xavier (M.)	Sénateur (RDPI)
VANCE, Loïc (M.) Secrétaire exécutif du Groupe	Conseiller, Sénat
SADOUN, Mohamed (M.)	Conseiller, Assemblée nationale
TAVERNIER, Eric (M.)	Conseiller, Sénat
(EELV: Europe Ecology, the Greens / Europe Ecologie, les Verts)	
(PS: Socialist Party / Parti Socialiste)	
(LR: The Republicans / Les Républicains)	
(FI: La France insoumise)	
(LREM: The Republic on the Move / La République en Marche)	
(UC: Union centriste / Centrist Union)	
(RDPI: Democrats, Progressives and Independents Rally / Rassemblements des démocrates progressistes et indépendants)	

GERMANY – ALLEMAGNE

WADEPHUL, Johann (Mr.) Leader of the delegation	Member of the German Bundestag (CDU/CSU) Deputy Chairman of the CDU/CSU Parliamentary Group for Foreign Affairs, Defence Policy and Council of Europe
ROTH, Claudia (Ms.)	Deputy Speaker of the German Bundestag (Bündnis90/Die Grünen) Subcommittee on Cultural and Education Policy Abroad Council of Elders

BEYER, Peter (Mr.)	Member of the German Bundestag (CDU/CSU) Committee on Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the United Nations, International Organisations and Globalisation
RADWAN, Alexander (Mr.)	Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe Member of the German Bundestag (CDU/CSU) Committee on Foreign Affairs Finance Committee
MANSMANN, Till (Mr.)	Member of the German Bundestag (FDP) Finance Committee
LECHTE, Ulrich (Mr.) Board of Young Parliamentarians	Member of the German Bundestag (FDP) Chairman of the Subcommittee on the United Nations, International Organisations and Globalisation Committee on Foreign Affairs
ALBIN, Silke (Ms.) Member of the ASGP	Deputy Secretary General for International Affairs and Director-General for Research and External Relations, German Bundestag
ZÁDOR, Katalin (Ms.) Secretary to the Delegation	International Parliamentary Assemblies Department, German Bundestag
BRAMMER, Claudia (Ms.) Assistant to the delegation	International Parliamentary Assemblies Department, German Bundestag
(CDU/CSU:	Christian Democratic Union/Christian Social Union / Union chrétienne démocrate/Union chrétienne sociale)
(Bündnis90/Die Grünen:	Green Party / Les Verts)
(FDP:	Free Democratic Party / Parti libéral démocrate)

GREECE – GRECE

KEFALOGIANNI, Olga (Mrs.) Head of the delegation	Member of the Hellenic Parliament (ND) Standing Committee on National Defence and Foreign Affairs, the Standing Committee on Production and Trade Permanent Committee on Institutions and Transparency Committee on European Affairs Committee on Defence Programs and Contracts
GIOGIAKAS, Vassileios (Mr.)	Member of the Hellenic Parliament (ND) Standing Committee on Social Affairs Standing Committee on Production and Trade Special Permanent Committee of the Regions
GKIKAS, Stefanos (Mr.)	Member of the Hellenic Parliament (ND) Standing Committee on National Defence and Foreign Affairs Special Standing Committee on Armament Programs and Contracts Committee on Parliament's Finances
MOUZALAS, Ioannis (Mr.)	Member of the Hellenic Parliament (SYRIZA) Standing Committee on National Defence and Foreign Affairs Special Permanent Committee on Equipment Programs and Contracts
PAPPAS, Nikos (Mr.)	Member of the Hellenic Parliament (SYRIZA)
KARTSAKLI, Aikaterini (Mrs.)	Head of the International Organization Section, Hellenic Parliament
SYRIGOS, Voula (Ms.)	Head of the Directorate
MOSCHOVAKOU, Katerina (Ms.)	Secretary, Directorate for International Affairs
PAPADOPOULOU, Thaleia (Mrs.)	Secretary, Hellenic Parliament
TSOUNI, Foteini (Ms.)	

(ND: New Democracy / Nouvelle démocratie)

(SYRIZA: Coalition of the Radical Left / Coalition de la gauche radicale)

GUINEA – GUINEE

SYLLA, Elhadj Dembo (M.) Chef de la délégation	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (UDG)
TOURÉ, Ibrahima Deen (M.)	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale
BAH, Kaly (M.)	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale
DORÉ, Domani (M.)	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale

(UDG: Democratic Union of Guinea / Union démocratique de Guinée)

GUYANA

NADIR, Manzoor (Mr.) President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	Speaker of Parliament of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana (PPC/C)
NANDLALL, Mohabir Anil (Mr.)	Member of Parliament of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana (PPP/C)
HASTINGS-WILLIAMS, Dawn (Ms.)	Member of Parliament of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana (PNCR)
CHARLES, Carlleta, (Ms.) Secretary of the Group	Parliamentary Executive Officer
RAMROOP, Christina (Ms.)	Parliamentary Executive Assistant (acting)
(PPP/C: Peoples's Progressive Party Civic)	
(PNCR: Peoples National Congress Reform)	

HUNGARY – HONGRIE

BALLA, Mihály (Mr.) Leader of the delegation	Member of the National Assembly (FIDESz) Vice-Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee
LATORCAI, János (Mr.)	Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly (KDNP)
BARTOS, Mónika (Ms.)	Member of the National Assembly (FIDESz) Committee on Legislation Committee on Foreign Affairs
STEINMETZ, Ádám (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly (Jobbik) Committee on Legislation, Committee on Agriculture
GURMAI, Zita (Ms.)	Member of the National Assembly (MSZP) Committee on Foreign Affairs
VADAI, Ágnes (Ms.) High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism	Member of the National Assembly (DK) Vice Chair of the Committee on Defence and Law Enforcement
SCHMUCK, Erzsébet (Ms.)	Member of the National Assembly (LMP) Chairman of the Committee on Sustainable Development
KOCSIS-CAKE, Olivio (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly (P) Vice Chairman of the Committee on Immunity
SUCH, György (Mr.)	Director General
SOMFAINÉ ÁDÁM, Katalin (Mrs.) Secretary of the Group	Head of IPU Office, Directorate for Foreign Relations, National Assembly
(FIDESz: Hungarian Civic Union / Union civique hongroise)	
(KDNP: Christian Democratic People's Party / Parti populaire chrétien-démocrate)	
(Jobbik: Movement for a Better Hungary / Mouvement pour une meilleure Hongrie)	
(MSZP: Hungarian Socialist Party / Parti socialiste hongrois)	
(DK: Democratic Coalition / Coalition démocratique)	
(LMP: Politics can be different / Faire de la politique autrement)	
(P: Párbeszéd)	

ICELAND – ISLANDE

ANDERSEN, Sigrídur (Mrs./Mme) Leader of the delegation	Member of Parliament (IP)
ÁGÚSTSSON, Ágúst Ólafur (Mr./M.)	Member of Parliament (SDA)
GUNNLAUGSSON, Sigmundur Davíð (Mr./M.)	Member of Parliament (CP)
BANG, Arna Gerður (Mrs./Mme) Secretary of the Group	Adviser, Parliament
(IP: Independence Party / Parti de l'indépendance)	
(SDA: The Social Democratic Alliance / Alliance sociale démocratique)	
(CP: Centre Party / Parti du Centre)	

INDIA – INDE

BIRLA, Om (Mr.) President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	Speaker of the House of the People (BJP)
MAHTAB, Bhartruhari (Mr.)	Member of the House of the People (BJD)
SCINDIA, Jyotiraditya (Mr.)	Member of the Council of States (BJP)

JAIKWAL, Sanjay (Mr.) Advisory Group on Health	Member of the House of the People (BJP)
DESAI, Anil (Mr.) President of the Committee on Democracy and Human Rights	Member of the Council of States (SS)
MAADAM, Poonamben (Mrs.) Bureau of Women Parliamentarians	Member of the House of the People
KHADSE, Raksha Nikhil (Mrs.) Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians	Member of the House of the People
RAM, Vishnu Dayal (Mr.)	Member of the House of the People (BJP)
GALLA, Jayadev (Mr.)	Member of the House of the People (TDP)
GAVIT, Heena Vijakumar (Mr.)	Member of the House of the People (BJP)
PATRA, Sasmit (Mr.) Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law	Member of the Council of States (BJD)
SINGH, Utpal Kumar (Mr.)	Secretary General, House of the People
VERMA, Desh Deepak (Mr.) Member of the ASGP	Secretary General, Council of States
KOUL, Prabhat Chandra (Mr.) Secretary to the Delegation	Additional Secretary, House of the People
KUMAR, Ajay (Mr.)	Chief of Protocol and Joint Secretary, House of the People
TIWARI, Mahesh (Mr.)	Joint Secretary, Council of States
RAMANA, Lingala Venkata (Mr.) Delegation Coordinator	Director, House of the People
KUMAR, Gautam (Mr.)	Deputy Secretary, Council of States
SINGH, Yogendra (Mr.)	Deputy Secretary, House of the People
(BJP: Bharatiya Janata Party / Parti Bharatiya Janata)	
(BJD: Biju Janata Dal)	
(SS: Shiv Sena)	
(TDP: Telugu Desam Party / Parti Telugu Desam)	

INDONESIA – INDONESIE

ZON, Fadli (Mr.) Leader of the delegation	Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives (Gerindra) Chair of the Committee for Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation
MAHARANI, Puan (Ms.)	Speaker of the House of Representatives (PDI-P)
SITORUS, Sihar (Mr.)	Member of the House of Representatives (PDI-P) Vice-Chair of the Committee for Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation
KOMARUDIN, Puteri Anetta (Ms.)	Member of the House of Representatives (G)
KAMRUSAMMAD (Mr.)	Member of the House of Representatives (Gerindra)
AKRAM, Arkanata (Mr.)	Member of the House of Representatives (Nasdem)
ALIYAH, Himmatul (Ms.)	Member of the House of Representatives (Gerindra)
BILBINA, Arzeti (Ms.)	Member of the House of Representatives (PKB)
FARAREZ, Gilang Dhiela (Mr.)	Member of the House of Representatives (PDI-P)
HIDAYAT, Surahman (Mr.)	Member of the House of Representatives (PKS)
PARIS, Andi Yuliani (Mr.)	Member of the House of Representatives (PAN)
SYAMSUDDIN, Didi Irawadi (Mr.) Adviser	Member of the House of Representatives (PD)
RETNOASTUTI, Endah (Ms.) GOPAC Executive Director, Member of the ASGP	Head of the Bureau of Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation, House of Representatives
PATRIA, Chairil (Mr.) Secretary to the delegation	Head of International Organization Cooperation Division, House of Representatives
ANGGORO, Heriyono Adi (Mr.) Adviser to the delegation	
ILYAS, Mochamad (Mr.)	Adviser
WIJAYANTI, Amelia (Ms.)	Adviser
PRATAMA, Tide Aji (Mr.)	Adviser

PRAWIRA, Yudi (Mr.)
Secretary to the delegation
RAMADHANI, Masyithoh Annisa (Ms.)
WIDIANI, Miranti (Ms.)
Secretary of the ASGP delegation

Adviser
Parliamentary Staff, House of Representatives

(Gerindra: Great Indonesia Movement Party / Mouvement pour une grande Indonésie)
(PDI-P: Indonesian Democratic Party-Struggle / Parti démocrate indonésien en lutte)
(G: Golkar)
(Nasdem: National Democratic Party / Parti national démocratique)
(PKB: National Awakening Party / Parti du réveil national)
(PKS: Justice and Prosperous Party / Parti de la justice et de la prospérité)
(PAN: National Mandate Party / Parti du mandat national)
(PD: Democratic Party / Parti démocratique)

IRAN (ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF) - IRAN (REPUBLIQUE ISLAMIQUE D')

GHALIBAF, Mohammad Baqer (Mr.)
Leader of the delegation
NADERI, Hamad (Mr.)
President of the Group
REZAKHAH, Motjaba (Mr.)
Secretary General of the Group
MOHSEN, Fathi (Mr.)
AZAD, Elham (Ms.)
MAHMOUDVAND, Morteza (Mr.)
AMOUEI, Aboufazi (Mr.)
DASHTI ARDAKANI, Mohammad Reza (Mr.)
NOROZI, Rahmatollah (Mr.)

Speaker of the Islamic Parliament of Iran
Cultural Affairs Committee
Member of the Islamic Parliament of Iran
Member of the Islamic Parliament of Iran
Member of the Islamic Parliament of Iran
Member of the Islamic Parliament of Iran
Member of the Islamic Parliament of Iran
Member of the Islamic Parliament of Iran
Member of the Islamic Parliament of Iran
Member of the Islamic Parliament of Iran
Member of the Islamic Parliament of Iran

IRAQ

MATAR, Hassan Karim (Mr.)
Leader of the delegation
HUSSEIN, Iqbal Abdul (Ms.)
DHIAB AL-KHARBIT, Abdullah (Mr.)
Bureau of the Standing Committee on Trade and Sustainable Development
KANNA, Yonadam Youssif (Mr.)
ISMAIL, Serwan Abdullah (Mr.)

First Deputy Speaker of the Council of Representatives
Member of the Council of Representatives
Member of the Council of Representatives
Foreign Relations Committee
Member of the Council of Representatives
Member and Secretary General of the Council of Representatives

IRELAND – IRLANDE

Ó FEARGHAIL, Seán (Mr.)
Leader of the delegation
HIGGINS, Emer (Ms.)
Ó CATHASAIGH, Marc (Mr.)
NAUGHTEN, Denis (Mr.)
O'CONNOR, James (Mr.)
KERRANE, Claire (Ms.)
MATHEWS, Bernadette (Ms.)
PRUNTY, Brian (Mr.)

Speaker of the House of Representatives (FF)
Member of the House of Representatives (FG)
Member of the House of Representatives (GP)
Member of the House of Representatives
Member of the House of Representatives (FF)
Member of the House of Representatives (SF)
Secretary, House of Representatives
Adviser

(FF: Fianna Fáil)
(FG: Fine Gael)
(GP: Green Party / Les Verts)
(SF: Sinn Féinn)

ISRAEL

DICHTER, Avi (Mr.)
Leader of the delegation
LAHAV HERTZANU, Yoray (Mr.)
MARGALIT, Liat (Ms.)
Secretary of the Group

Member of Parliament (Likud)
Member of Parliament (YA)

(Likud: Conservative / Conservateur)
(YA: Yesh Atid)

ITALY – ITALIE

CASINI, Pier Ferdinando (Mr.) President of the Group, IPU Honorary President, Leader of the delegation	Member of the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee
GRANDE, Marta (Mrs.) Board of Young Parliamentarians	Member of the Chamber of Deputies Foreign Affairs Committee (M5s)
VERDUCCI, Francesco (Mr.)	Member of the Senate (PD) Deputy Chair, Education and Cultural Affairs Committee Member of the Chamber of Deputies (IV) Foreign Affairs Committee
MIGLIORE, Gennaro (Mr.) High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism	Member of the Senate (M5s) Deputy Chair, Education and Cultural Affairs Committee
MONTEVECCHI, Michela (Ms.)	Member of the Chamber of Deputies (PD) Foreign Affairs Committee Adviser, Chamber of Deputies
QUARTAPELLE PROCOPIO, Lia (Ms.) Group of Facilitators for Cyprus	Official, Protocol, Chamber of Deputies
SORBELLO, Roberto (Mr.) Secretary General of the Group	Adviser, Foreign Affairs, Senate Official, Foreign Affairs Department, Senate
RADONI, Susanna (Ms.) Secretary of the Italian IPU Group	Official, Foreign Affairs Department, Senate
THAULERO, Stefano (Mr.)	
USIELLO, Antonella (Mrs.)	
DELLI PRISCOLI, Monica (Ms.)	

(M5S: Movimento 5 Stelle / Five Stars Movement / Mouvement Cinq Etoiles)
(PD: Partito Democratico / Democratic Party / Parti Démocrate)
(IV: Italia Viva)

JAPAN – JAPON

SUZUKI, Shunichi (Mr.) Leader of the delegation	Member of the House of Representatives (LDP) Director of the Standing Committee on Fundamental National Policies
KAMEI, Akiko (Ms.)	Member of the House of Representatives (CDP) Director of the Standing Committee on Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Member of the Special Committee for Regional Revitalization
SHINDO, Kanehiko (Mr.)	Member of the House of Councillors (LDP) Director of the Committee on General Affairs Director of the Special Committee on Regional Revitalization and Consumer Affairs Member of the Committee on Budget Member of the Special Committee on Reconstruction after the Great East Japan Earthquake
MAKIYAMA, Hiroe (Ms.)	Member of the House of Councillors (CDP) Director of the Committee on Financial Affairs Director of the Research Committee on National Life and Economy Member of the Special Committee on Political Ethics and Election System
YOSHIZUMI, Ikuko (Ms.)	Adviser, House of Representatives
NISHIHARA, Narumi (Ms.)	Adviser, House of Representatives
NISHIKIDO, Kazuma (Mr.)	Adviser, House of Councillors
ONO, Chihiro (Ms.)	Adviser, House of Councillors

(LDP: Liberal Democratic Party / Parti libéral démocrate)
(CDP: The Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan / Parti démocrate constitutionnel du Japon)

JORDAN – JORDANIE

AL-ODAT, Abdelmonem (Mr.) Leader of the delegation	Speaker of the House of Representatives
BANI YASSIN, Moh'd (Mr.)	Member of the House of Representatives
AL WAKED, Abdel Rahim Maher (Mr.) Member of the ASGP	Secretary General of the House of Representatives
HAWAMDEH, Hazem Mamdouh Abdel Aziz (Mr.)	Director of Inter-Parliamentary Affairs

KAZAKHSTAN

SHAKIROV, Askar (Mr.) Leader of the delegation	Deputy Chairman of the Senate (Nur Otan)
SULTANOV, Yerik (Mr.)	Member of the Senate (Nur Otan) Deputy Chairman of the Committee on Economic Policy, Innovative Development and Entrepreneurship
BEKNAZAROV, Nurlan (Mr.)	Member of the Senate Member of the Committee on Constitutional Legislation, Judicial System and Law Enforcement Agencies
NURZHIGITOVA, Dana (Ms.)	Member of the Senate Member of the Committee on International Relations, Defense and Security
KUSPAN, Aigul (Ms.)	Member of the Mazhilis (Nur Otan) Chairperson of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defense and Security
YESPAYEVA, Daniya (Ms.)	Member of the Mazhilis (Ak Zhol) Deputy Chairperson of the Committee on Finance and Budget
IMASHEVA, Snezhanna (Ms.)	Member of the Mazhilis (Nur Otan) Deputy Chairperson of the Committee on Legislation, Judicial and Legal Reform
ADAMBEKOV, Tilektes (Mr.)	Member of the Mazhilis (Nur Otan) Member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defense and Security
RAMAZANOVA, Lyazzat (Ms.)	Member of the Mazhilis (Nur Otan) Member of the Committee on Social and Cultural Development
(Nur Otan: People's Democratic Party "Nur Otan" / Parti populaire et démocratique " Nur Otan ") (Ak Zhol: Democratic Party of Kazakhstan «Ak Zhol» / Parti démocratique 'Ak Zhol')	

KENYA

LUSAKA, Kenneth (Mr.) Leader of the delegation	Speaker of the Senate Chairperson of the Senate Business Committee
KIHIKA, Susan (Ms.) President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians Ex officio Member of the Executive Committee	Member of the Senate (JP) Business Committee Standing Committee on Justice, Legal Affairs and Human Rights Standing Committee on National Security, Defence and Foreign Relations
MARIRU, Patrick (Mr.) Co-Rapporteur Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade	Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly (JP) Sessional Committee on Procedure and House Rules Sessional Committee on Delegated Legislation
ODUOL, Jacqueline (Ms.) High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism	Member of the National Assembly (ODM) National Cohesion and Equal Opportunities Departmental Committee on Sports, Culture and Tourism
SAKAJA, Johnson (Mr.)	Member of the Senate (JP) Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Labour and Social Welfare Vice-chairperson of the Standing Committee on National Security, Defence and Foreign Relations
LESUUDA, Naisula (Ms.)	Member of the National Assembly (JP) Chairperson of the Sessional Committee on Regional Integration Budget and Appropriations Committee
KIARIE, John Wawedu (Mr.)	Member of Parliament (JP)
ABDI NOOR, Sophia (Ms.)	Member of Parliament (PDR)
KASANGA, Sylvia (Ms.)	Member of Parliament (WDM-K)
MOGENI, Okong'o (Mr.) Adviser	Member of Parliament (ODM)
NYEGENYE, Jeremiah (Mr.)	Clerk of the Senate
Member of the ASGP	
SIALAI, Michael (Mr.) Member of the ASGP	Clerk of the National Assembly

KIOKO, Serah (Ms.) Member of the ASGP	Deputy Clerk, National Assembly, National Assembly
ALI, Mohamed (Mr.) Member of the ASGP	Deputy Clerk, Senate
GICHANGI, Eunice (Ms.)	Deputy Clerk, Senate
MUSANDU, Anna (Ms.)	Senior Clerk Assistant
MGHANGA, Innocent Mbaya (Mr.) Secretary of the Group	Clerk Assistant I, Senate

(JP: Jubilee Party / Parti Jubilee)
(PDR: Party for Development and Reform / Parti pour le développement et la réforme)
(ODM: Orange Democratic Movement / Mouvement démocratique orange)
(WDM-K: Wiper Democratic Movement / Mouvement démocratique Wiper)

KUWAIT – KOWEIT

ALGHANIM, Marzouq (Mr.) President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	Speaker of the National Assembly
AL-HAMAD, Ahmad (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly
AL-DOUSARI, Nasser (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly
AL-SHOHOUMI, Ahmad (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly

LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC - REPUBLIQUE DEMOCRATIQUE POPULAIRE LAO

XAYACHACK, Sounthone (Ms.) Leader of the delegation	Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly
PRASEUTH, Sanya (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly
KEOBOUHOME, Bounelome (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly
ANOTHAY, Khemphone (Mr.)	Director General of Inter-Parliamentary Relations Department, National Assembly
ANANTHA, Soutsakhone (Mr.) Secretary to the delegation	Head of the Inter-Parliamentary Relations Division
SOUTHAMMAVONG, Siriphone (Ms.)	Deputy Head of Inter-Parliamentary Relations Division
KEOLA, Anyphet (Ms.)	Secretary to the Deputy Speaker, National Assembly
LOUANGPHANE, Chanthone (Mr.)	Officer
PHANDANOUVONG, Vilaysak (Ms.)	Officer

LATVIA – LETTONIE

DAUDZE, Gundars (Mr.) President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	Member of Parliament (ZZS) Legal Affairs Committee Secretary of the Parliamentary Inquiry Committee
MUIZNIECE, Anita (Ms.)	Member of Parliament (NCP) Education, Culture and Science Committee European Affairs Committee
BAUMANE, Krista (Ms.)	Member of Parliament (AP)
TEIRUMNIEKS, Edmunds (Mr.)	Member of Parliament (NA) Social and Employment Matters Committee Secretary of the Sustainable Development Committee
PAURA, Sandra (Mrs.) Secretary of the Group	Head of the Interparliamentary Relations Bureau, Parliament

(ZZS: Union of Farmers and Greens / Union des Verts et des paysans)
(NCP: The New Conservative Party / Nouveau parti conservateur)
(AP: Development/for !)
(NA: National Alliance / Alliance nationale)

LEBANON – LIBAN

JABER, Yassine (Mr.) Leader of the delegation	Member of the National Assembly President of the Foreign Affairs and Emigrants Committee
EL-TABSH, Rola (Ms.)	Member of the National Assembly (Al-Tayyar)
MOUSSA, Michel (Mr.) Bureau of the Committee on Democracy and Human Rights	Member of the National Assembly

(Al-Tayyar: Free Patriotic Movement / Mouvement libre patriotique)

LESOTHO

RAMOHLANKA, Lebohlang (Ms.) Leader of the delegation	Member of the National Assembly
HLAO, Mapulumo (Ms.)	Member of the National Assembly (BNP)
AU, Tsukutlane (Mr.)	Member of the Senate (AD)
MAIME, Makoe (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly (ABC)
LELIMO, Mosito Carolus John Paul (Mr.) Secretary to the delegation	
(BNP: Basotho National Party / Parti national Basotho)	
(AD: Alliance of Democrarts / Alliance des démocrates)	
(ABC: All Basotho Convention / Convention des Basotho)	

LIECHTENSTEIN

FRICK, Albert (Mr.) President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	Speaker of the Diet (FBP)
BÜHLER-NIGSCH, Dagmar (Ms.)	Member of the Diet (VU)
WACHTER, Gabriele (Ms.) Secretary of the Group	Secretary, Diet
(FBP: Progressive Peoples Party / Parti des citoyens progressistes)	
(VU: Patriotic Union / Union patriotique)	

LITHUANIA – LITUANIE

MOGENIENÉ, Laima (Ms.) Leader of the delegation	Member of Parliament
PINSKUS, Jonas (Mr.)	Deputy Speaker of Parliament
MORKŪNAITĖ-MIKULĖNIENĖ, Radvilė (Ms.)	Member of Parliament
ZINGERIS, Emanuelis (Mr.)	Member of Parliament
SKIRMANTIENĖ, Asta (Ms.) Member of the ASGP Secretary to the delegation	

LUXEMBOURG

ETGEN, Fernand (M.) Président du Groupe, Chef de la délégation	Président de la Chambre des députés (PID)
BARRA, Isabelle (Mrs.) Secrétaire du Groupe, Membre de l'ASGP	Secrétaire générale adjointe, Chambre des députés
GERGES, Yann (M.)	Secrétaire administratif
TENNINA, Tania (Mme) Secrétaire du Groupe	
(PID: Democratic Party / Parti démocratique)	

MADAGASCAR

RAZANAMAHASOA, Christine (Mme) Présidente du Groupe, Chef de la délégation	Présidente de l'Assemblée nationale (TGV)
RAKOTOMALALA, Miarintsoa Andriantsitonta (M.)	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale Président du Réseau des jeunes parlementaires de Madagascar
IMBIKI, Herilaza (M.)	Vice-Président du Sénat
RANDRIAMANANTENASOA, Landy Mbolatiana (Mme)	Sénatrice
TOVONDRAY, Retsanga Brillant De L'or (M.)	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale
RAHARINIRINA, Sidonie (Mme)	Sénatrice
RATSIRAKA, Iarovana Rolland (M.)	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale
TSILIVA DIDIOT, Christophe (M.)	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale
NAKANY, Charly Zafimagnely (M.)	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale
RANDRIAMAHAFANJARY, Calvin (M.) Secrétaire du Groupe, Membre de l'ASGP	Secrétaire général, Assemblée nationale
(TGV: Tanora MalaGasy Vonona)	

MALAWI

GOTANI HARA, Catherine (Mrs./Mme) Leader of the delegation	Speaker of the National Assembly (MCP)
JOLOBALA, Esther (Ms./Mme)	Member of the National Assembly (UDF)
MLOMBWA, Claude Clement (Mr./M.)	Member of the National Assembly (MCP)
MUSOWA, Victor (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly
KAPICHIRA MUSSA, Misolo (Mr./M.)	Member of the National Assembly (UDF)
KALEMBA, Fiona (Mrs./Mme) Member of the ASGP	Clerk of Parliament, National Assembly
MWENYEHELI, Jeffrey (Mr./M.) Secretary to the delegation	Assistant Clerk of Parliament, National Assembly
(MCP: Malawi Congress Party / Parti du Congrès du Malawi)	
(UDF: United Democratic Front / Front démocratique unifié)	

MALAYSIA – MALAISIE

HUSIN, Asmak (Mrs.) High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism Leader of the delegation	Member of the Senate (PAS)
MOHD YUSOFF, Mohd Yusmadi (Mr.)	Member of the Senate (PKR)
SULAIMAN, Ma'mun (Mr.)	Member of the House of Representatives Member Special Select Committee on Rights and Gender Equality (WARISAN)
IBHARIM, Nurul Fadhilah (Ms.) Secretary to the delegation	Assistant Secretary, International Relations and Protocol Division, House of Representatives
ABDUL MALEK, Mohsin (Mr.) Secretary to the delegation	Executive Officer of International Relations and Protocol Division, House of Representatives
(PAS: Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party / Parti islamique pan-malaisien)	
(PKR: People's Justice Party / Parti pour la justice du peuple)	
(WARISAN: Sabah Heritage Party / Parti Warisan Sabah)	

MALDIVES

ABDULLA, Eva (Ms.) Leader of the delegation	Deputy Speaker of the People's Majlis (MDP)
SHAREEF, Adam (Mr.)	Member of the People's Majlis (PNC) Security Services Committee Ethics, Immunities and Privileges Committee Government Oversight Committee (PNC)
NASYM, Meekail Ahmed (Mr.)	Member of the People's Majlis (MDP)
NIUSHA, Fathimath (Ms.) Member of the ASGP	Secretary General, People's Majlis
(MDP: Maldivian Democratic Party / Parti démocratique des Maldives)	
(PNC: People's National Congress / Congrès national populaire)	

MALI

TRAORE, Hamidou (M.) Président du Groupe, Chef de la délégation	Vice-Président du Conseil national de transition
SANOOGO, Oumou (Mme)	Membre du Conseil national de transition
SIDIBE, Modibo (M.) Secrétaire de Groupe, Membre de l'ASGP	Secrétaire Général, Conseil national de transition
TOURE, Ibrahim (M.) Secrétaire du Groupe	Chef du Service des Relations Internationales

MALTA – MALTE

BEDINGFIELD, Glenn (Mr.) Leader of the delegation	Member of the House of Representatives (PL)
GALEA, Mario (Mr./M.)	Member of the House of Representatives (PN)
(PL: Labour PARTY / Parti travailliste)	
(PN: Partit Nazzjonalista)	

MAURITIUS – MAURICE

PHOKEER, Soorojdev (Mr.) Leader of the delegation	Speaker of the National Assembly
RAMCHURN, Urmeelah Devi (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly
JUTTON, Teenah (Ms.)	Member of the National Assembly (MSM)
RAMDHANY, Anjiv (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly (MSM)
ASSIRVADEN, Patrick (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly (MLP)

(MSM: Mouvement Socialiste Militant)
(MLP: Mauritius Labour Party / Parti travailliste mauricien)

MEXICO – MEXIQUE

VASCONCELOS, Héctor (Mr.) Leader of the delegation	Member of the Senate (Morena)
BAÑUELOS DE LA TORRE, Geovanna del Carmen (Ms.) Committee to Promote Respect for IHL	Member of the Senate (PT) Chair, Committee on Mining and Regional Development Committee on Administration Committee on Justice Committee on Foreign Affairs
REYNOSO SÁNCHEZ, Alejandra Noemí (Ms.) Vice-President of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians	Member of the Senate (PAN) Foreign Affairs Committee Committee on Federalism and Municipal Development Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change Committee on Border and Migration Issues
VILLAREAL ANAYA, Américo (Mr.)	Member of the Senate (Morena)
ENRÍQUEZ HERRERA, José Ramón (Mr.)	Member of the Senate (Morena)
HERNÁNDEZ PÉREZ, María Eugenia (Ms.)	Member of the Chamber of Deputies (Morena)
NAVARRO PÉREZ, Montserrat (Ms.)	Member of the Chamber of Deputies (Morena)
ADAME CASTILLO, Marco Antonio (Mr.)	Member of the Chamber of Deputies (PAN)
SALDAÑA PÉREZ, María Lucero (Ms.)	Member of the Chamber of Deputies (PRI)
GÓMEZ VENCES, Isaías (Mr.)	Member of the Chamber of Deputies (Morena)

(Morena: National Regeneration Movement / Mouvement de la régénération nationale)
(PT: Labour Party / Parti du travail)
(PAN: National Action Party / Parti de l'Action nationale)
(PRI: Institutional Revolutionary Party / Parti révolutionnaire institutionnel)

MONACO

NOTARI, Fabrice (M.) Président du Groupe, Chef de la délégation	Membre du Conseil national (PM) Président de la Commission pour le suivi de la Négociation avec l'Union Européenne
FRESKO-ROLFO, Béatrice (Mme)	Membre du Conseil national (HM)
ALIPRENDI-DE CARVALHO, Karen (Mme)	Membre du Conseil national (PM)
CAMPANA, Victoria (Mme) Secrétaire de la délégation	Chef de section pour les affaires internationales, Conseil national

(PM: Primo! Monaco as Priority / Primo ! Priorité Monaco)
(HM: Monaco Horizon / Horizon Monaco)

MONGOLIA – MONGOLIE

NYAMAA, Enkhbold (Mr.) Leader of the delegation	Member of the Ulsiin Ih Hural (State Great Hural)
TSEND, Munkh-Orgil (Mr.)	Member of the Ulsiin Ih Hural (State Great Hural)
MUNKHUU, Oyunchimeg (Ms.)	Member of the Ulsiin Ih Hural (State Great Hural)
BATSUKH, Saranchimeg (Ms.)	Member of the Ulsiin Ih Hural (State Great Hural)
DAMBA, Batlut (Mr.)	Member of the Ulsiin Ih Hural (State Great Hural)
NYAM-OSOR, Uchral (Mr.) Bureau of the Standing Committee on UN Affairs	Member of the Ulsiin Ih Hural (State Great Hural)
BAAGAA, Battumur (Mr.)	Member of the Ulsiin Ih Hural (State Great Hural)
BATTOGTOKH, Choijilsuren (Mr.)	Member of the Ulsiin Ih Hural (State Great Hural)
SANDAG, Byambatsogt (Mr.)	Member of the Ulsiin Ih Hural (State Great Hural)

LUVSANDORJ, Ulziisaikhan (Ms.)
Member of the ASGP
TSERENDORJ, Narantungalag (Ms.)
MARUUSH, Batbold (Mr.)
ERDENE-OCHIR, Anujin (Ms.)

Secretary General of the Ulsiin Ih Hural (State Great Hural)
Executive Secretary of the Executive Committee
Secretary of the Executive Committee
Secretary

MONTENEGRO

BOGAVAC, Jovanka (Ms.)
Leader of the delegation
PAVICEVIC, Srdjan (Mr.)
SEPANOVIC, Marta (Ms.)
BOZOVIC, Milo (Mr.)
SEHOVIC, Damir (Mr.)
VUJOVIC, Tamara (Ms.)
MARAS, Marija (Ms.)
Secretary to the delegation

Member of Parliament
Member of Parliament
Member of Parliament
Member of Parliament
Member of Parliament
Member of Parliament

MOROCCO – MAROC

EL MALKI, Habib (M.)
Chef de la délégation
BENCHAMACH, Abdelhakim (M.)
BOUFFARACHEN, Hayat (Mme)
EL AZAMI EL IDRISSE, Driss (M.)
LAZREK, Nourddine (M.)
TOUMI, Ahmed (M.)
Bureau de la Commission permanente des affaires
des Nations Unies
CHEIKHI, Nabil (M.)
BENMASSOUD, Mohamed Salem (M.)
EL KHADI, Najib (M.)
Vice-Président de l'ASGP
KHOUJA, Abdelouahid (M.)
Membre de l'ASGP
BELCAID, Amal (M.)
HACHOUMY, Kamal (M.)
SATRAOUY, Said (M.)
Secrétaire administratif du Groupe
DRIOUICHE, Abdelwahad (M.)
Secrétaire de la délégation
BENNANI, Nahid (Mme)

Président de la Chambre des Représentants (USFP)
Président de la Chambre des Conseillers (PAM)
Membre de la Chambre des Représentants (PAM)
Membre de la Chambre des Représentants (PJD)
Membre de la Chambre des Représentants (UC)
Membre de la Chambre des Représentants (PI)
Membre de la Chambre des Conseillers (PJD)
Membre de la Chambre des Conseillers (PI)
Secrétaire général, Chambre des Représentants
Secrétaire général de la Chambre des Conseillers
Directeur des relations internationales et
de la coopération, Chambre des Représentants
Chef de Cabinet du Président de la Chambre des
Représentants
Chef de la Division des relations multilatérales,
Chambre des Représentants
Conseiller général chargé de la diplomatie
parlementaire, Chambre des Conseillers
Conseillère, Chambre des Conseillers

(USFP: Socialist Union of Popular Forces / Union socialiste des forces populaires)
(PAM: Authenticity and Modernity Party / Parti Authenticité et Modernité)
(PJD: Justice and Development Party / Parti de la justice et du développement)
(UC: Constitutional Union / Union constitutionnelle)
(PI: Istiqlal Party / Parti Istiqlal)

MOZAMBIQUE

MULEMBWE, Eduardo (Mr.)
President of the Group, Leader of the delegation
BIAS, Esperança (Mrs.)
MALEMA, Lucinda Bela (Ms.)
MUSSAGY, Gania (Ms.)
MANJATE, Narcisio (Mr.)
Secretary of the Group, Member of the ASGP
BONIFACIO, Cesar Joao (Mr.)
Secretary of the Group, Member of the ASGP

Member of the Assembly of the Republic (FRELIMO)
Speaker of the Assembly of the Republic (FRELIMO)
Member of the Assembly of the Republic
Vice Chairman of the Social Affairs Committee
(FRELIMO)
Member of the Assembly of the Republic (RENAMO)
Director of Committee's Supporting Division, Assembly
of the Republic

(FRELIMO: Mozambican Liberation Front / Front de libération du Mozambique)
(RENAMO: Mozambican National Resistance / Résistance nationale du Mozambique)

NAMIBIA – NAMIBIE

KATJAVIVI, Peter (Mr./M.) President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	Speaker of the National Assembly Chairperson of the IPU; Standing Committee on Standing Rules and Orders and Internal Arrangements; Standing Committee on Privileges (SWAPO)
KAUMA, Victoria Mbawo (Ms.) DIENDA, Elma (Mrs.)	Vice-Chairperson of the National Council (SWAPO) Member of the National Assembly (PDM) Member Committee on Human Resources and Community Development Public Accounts Committee on Gender Equality, Social Development and Family Affairs
AMUPEWA, Emilia (Ms.) AUPINDI, Tobie (Mr.) BECKER, Elizabeth (Ms.) HENGARI, Koviao (Ms.) IIPUMBU, Longinus (Mr.) KARUPU, Sebastiaan (Mr.) NAMISEB, Tousy (Mr.) PHILEMON, Theresa Selma (Ms.) Co-Secretary of the Group SHALI, Auguste Tegelela (Ms.) UUYUNI, Norbert (Mr.) Co-Secretary of the Group	Member of the National Assembly (SWAPO) Member of the National Assembly (SWAPO) Member of the National Assembly (PDM) Member of the National Assembly (PDM) Member of the National Assembly (NEFF) Member of the National Assembly (SWAPO) Secretary, National Council Chief Parliamentary Clerk Parliamentary Clerk, National Council Parliamentary Clerk

(SWAPO: South West Africa People's Organization / Organisation du peuple du Sud-Ouest africain)
(PDM: Popular Democratic Movement / Mouvement démocratique populaire)
(NEFF: Namibia economic Freedom Fighters / Les Combattants pour la liberté économique de Namibie)

NEPAL

TIMILSINA, Ganesh Prasad (Mr.) Leader of the delegation KARKI, Surendra Kumar (Mr.) MIYA, Akabal (Mr.) PANDEY, Badri Prasad (Mr.) RAWAL THAPA, Dil Kumari 'Parbati' (Ms.) RIJAL, Minendra (Mr.) GAUTAM, Bharat Raj (Mr.) Member of the ASGP GURAGAIN, Pradeep (Mr.) PHUYAL, Rajendra (Mr.)	Speaker of the National Assembly Member of the House of Representatives Member of the House of Representatives Member of the House of Representatives Member of the National Assembly Member of the House of Representatives General Secretary of the Federal Parliament Secretary, House of Representatives Secretary, National Assembly
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NETHERLANDS - PAYS-BAS

ATSMA, Joop (Mr.) Leader of the delegation GERKENS, Arda (Mrs.) Vice-President of the Committee on Democracy and Human Rights GEERDINK, Paulien (Mrs.) MULDER, Agnes (Ms.) Bureau of the Committee on Sustainable Development BAKKER-DE JONG, Femmy (Mrs.) Secretary to the delegation WESTERHOFF, Arjen (Mr.) Secretary to the delegation	Member of the Senate (CDA) First Deputy Speaker of the Senate (PS) Member of the Senate (VVD) Member of the House of Representatives (CDA) House of Representatives House of Representatives
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(CDA: Christian Democratic Appeal / Appel chrétien-démocrate)
(PS: Socialist Party / Parti socialiste)
(VVD: People's Party for Freedom and Democracy / Parti populaire pour la liberté et la démocratie)

NEW ZEALAND - NOUVELLE-ZELANDE

WALL, Louisa (Mrs.) President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	Member of the House of Representatives (L)
SIMPSON, Scott (Mr.)	Member of the House of Representatives (NP)
HART, Wendy (Ms.) Member of the ASGP Secretary of the Group and to the delegation	Senior Inter-Parliamentary Relations Adviser

(L: New Zealand Labour Party / Parti du travail néo-zélandais)
(NP: National Party / Parti national)

NICARAGUA

ESPINALES, Maritza (Mrs.) Leader of the delegation	Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly (FSLN) Member Committee on Education, Culture, Sports and Social Media
ALONSO GÓMEZ, Arling Patricia (Ms.)	Member of the National Assembly (FSLN) Chair of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee
FIGUEROA AGUILAR, José Santos (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly (FSLN) Deputy Chair, Production, Economy and Budget Committee

(FSLN: Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional)

NIGERIA

WASE, Ahmed, Idris (Mr.) Leader of the delegation	Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives (APC) Chairman of the ECOWAS Parliament and Constitutional Review
AHMAD IBRAHIM, Lawan (Mr.)	Speaker of the Senate (APC)
AKWASHIKI, Godiya (Mr.)	Member of the Senate (APC) Vice Chairman of the Media and Public Affairs
GAYA, Kabiru Ibrahim (Mr.)	Member of the Senate (APC) Chairman of the Works Committee
APIAFI, Betty (Ms.)	Member of the Senate (PDP)
ONYEWUCHI, Ezenwa, (Mr.)	Member of the Senate (PDP) Vice Chairman of the State and Local Government
FULATA, Abubakar Hassan (Mr.)	Member of the House of Representatives (APC) Chairman of the Rules and Businesses Committee
WAZIRI ABBA IBRAHIM, Khadijat (Ms.)	Member of the House of Representatives (APC)
GALADIMA, Zakariyau (Mr.)	Member of the House of Representatives (APC)
ARCHIBONG, Henry (Mr.)	Member of the House of Representatives
TUKURA, Kabir Ibrahim (Mr.)	Member of the House of Representatives (APC)
AKINYELURE, Ayo (Mr.) Adviser	Member of the Senate (APC)
DANZARIA, Victor Mela (Mr.) Adviser	Member of the House of Representatives (APC)
ESEKE, Augustine (Mr.)	Secretary, Senate
ORUMWENSE, Felix (Mr.)	Secretary, Senate
SHEHU, Umar (Mr.) Secretary of the Group	Director IPU Desk, Senate
UMEKWE, Udo Ogbu (Mr.) Secretary to the delegation	Secretary, Senate

(APC: All Progressive Congress / Congrès progressiste)

(PDP: People Democratic Party / Parti démocratique du peuple)

NORTH MACEDONIA - MACEDOINE DU NORD

XHAFERI, Talat (Mr.) President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	Speaker of the Assembly of the Republic (DUI)
VELKOVSKI, Dime (Mr.)	Member of the Assembly of the Republic (SDSM)
MITRESKI, Jovan (Mr.)	Member of the Assembly of the Republic (SDSM)
MICEVSKI, Nikola (Mr.)	Member of the Assembly of the Republic (VRMO-DPME)
PANOVA, Eli (Ms.)	Member of the Assembly of the Republic (VRMO-DPME)

ADEMI, Arber (Mr.)	Member of the Assembly of the Republic (DUI)
REXHEPI, Skender (Mr.)	Member of the Assembly of the Republic (A)
IVANOVA, Cvetanka (Mrs.)	Secretary General, Assembly of the Republic
Member of the ASGP	
OGNENOVSKA, Biljana (Mrs.)	Head of Division, Assembly of the Republic
Co-Secretary to the Delegation	
PREKOPUCA, Rexhep (Mr.)	Head of Division, Assembly of the Republic
Co-Secretary to the delegation	
(DUI:	Democratic Union for Integration / Union démocratique pour l'intégration)
(SDSM:	Social Democratic Union of Macedonia / Union social-démocrate de Macédoine)
(VMRO-DPME:	VMRO-Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity / VMRO-Parti démocratique pour l'unité nationale de Macédoine)
(A:	Alternative)

NORWAY – NORVEGE

LEIRSTEIN, Ulf Isak (Mr.)	Member of Parliament
President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	Sub-Committee on Scrutiny and Constitutional Affairs
LIADAL, Hege Haukeland (Ms.)	Member of Parliament (L)
	Sub-Committee on Energy and Environment
TRELLEVIK, Ove Bernt (Mr.)	Member of Parliament (C)
	Sub-Committee on Local Government and Public Administration
	Senior Adviser
FRASER, Thomas (Mr.)	
Secretary to the delegation	
STOCK, Lisbeth Merete (Ms.)	Adviser
Secretary to the delegation	
(L: Labour Party / Parti du travail)	
(C: Conservative Party / Parti Conservateur)	

OMAN

AL MAWAALI, Khalid Hilal (Mr.)	Chairman of the Shura Council
Leader of the delegation	
AL SAADOON, Muna (Ms.)	Member of the Shura Council
AL IBRAHIM, Ahmed (Mr.)	Member of the Shura Council
AL SARMI, Hilal (Mr.)	Member of the Shura Council
AL SAADI, Khalid (Mr.)	Secretary General, State Council
AL NADABI, Ahmed (Mr.)	Secretary General, Shura Council
AL OWSI, Aiman (Mr.)	
Secretary of the Group	
AL AMRI, Summaya (Ms.)	International Relations Researcher

PAKISTAN

NAEK, Farooq (Mr.)	Member of the Senate (PPPP)
Leader of the delegation	
ALI, Sher (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly
ARSHAD, Fawzia (Ms.)	Member of the Senate
BALOGH, Agha Hassan (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly
CHEEMA Nisar Ahmad (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly
HABIB, Farrukh (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly
HAIDER, Syed Hasnain (Mr.)	Member of the Senate
HAQ, Syed Ammen ul (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly
IQBAL, Walid (Mr.)	Member of the Senate (PTI)
REHMAN, Faisal Saleem (Mr.)	Member of the Senate (PTI)
Bureau of the Standing Committee on Trade and Sustainable Development	
MARRI, Shazia (Ms.)	Member of the National Assembly
High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism	
KHAN, Mohammad Qasim Samad (Mr.)	Member of the Senate
Adviser	
TIWANA, Malik Ehsanullah (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly
Adviser	
(PPPP: Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians / Parlementaires du Parti du peuple pakistanais)	
(PTI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf / Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf)	

PALESTINE

ALAHMAD, Azzam (Mr.) Committee on Middle East Questions, President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	Member of the Palestinian National Council Member Political Affairs Committee (F)
ALWAZIR, Intisar (Mrs.)	Member of the Palestinian National Council Member Committee on Social Affairs (F)
QASIM, Bilal (Mr.)	Member of the Palestinian National Council Member Social Affairs Committee (PLF)
HAMAYEL, Omar (Mr.)	Member of the Palestinian National Council Member Committee on Economic Affairs (F)
KHRISHI, Ibrahim (Mr.) Member of the ASGP	Secretary General, Palestinian National Council
SULAIMAN, Bashar (Mr.) Secretary of the Group	Director General of Inter-Parliamentary Relations, Palestinian National Council

(F: Fatah)
(PLF: Palestine Liberation Front / Front de libération de la Palestine)

PANAMA

CANO, Corina (Ms.) Leader of the delegation	Member of the National Assembly (MOLIRENA)
ARCE, Fernando (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly (PRD)
GARCÍA, Emelie (Ms.)	Member of the National Assembly (PRD)

(MOLIRENA: Nationalist Republican Liberal Movement / Mouvement libéral républicain et nationaliste)
(PRD: Democratic Revolutionary Party / Parti révolutionnaire démocratique)

PARAGUAY

LLANO, Blas (Mr.) President of GRULAC, Leader of the delegation	Member of the Senate (PLRA)
KEMPER, Patrick (Mr.)	Member of the Senate
GONZÁLEZ, Katty (Ms.)	Member of the Chamber of Deputies

(PLRA: Partido Liberal Radical Autentico)

PHILIPPINES

SOTTO III, Vicente (Mr.) Leader of the delegation	President of the Senate (NPC)
RECTO, Ralph (Mr.)	President <i>pro tempore</i> of the Senate (NP)
DRILON, Franklin (Mr.)	Member of the Senate (LP)
VILLAR, Cynthia A. (Ms.)	Member of the Senate (NP)
CAYETANO, Pia (Ms.)	Member of the Senate (NP)
LEGARDA, Loren (Ms.)	Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives (NPC)
HOFER, Ann K. (Ms.)	Member of the House of Representatives (PDP-Laban)
ROBES, Florida P. (Ms.)	Member of the House of Representatives
VARGAS, Alfred D. (Mr.)	Member of the House of Representatives (PDP-Laban)
TOLENTINO, Francis N. (Mr.)	Member of the Senate
VILLARICA, Myra Marie (Ms.) Member of the ASGP	Secretary of the Senate
MENDOZA, Mark Llandro (Mr.) Member of the ASGP	Secretary General of the House of Representatives
SIPIN, Jocelia Bighani (Ms.)	Deputy Secretary General of the House of Representatives
DE GUZMAN JR., Antonio (Mr.) Secretary of the Group	Director General, Office of International Relations and Protocol, Senate
VILLANO-MILLERA, Sheela (Ms.) Technical Staff of Senate President Sotto	Legislative Staff Head, Office of Senate President Sotto
BANTUG JR., Renato (Mr.)	Chief-of-Staff of Senator Franklin Drilon, Senate
DAYOT-CORPUZ, Armi Minda (Ms.)	Chief-of-Staff of Senator Cynthia Villar, Senate
GANA-TEVES, Joanna Kristine (Ms.)	Chief-of-Staff of Senator Pia Cayetano, Senate
MARALIT, Cherbett Karen (Ms.)	Chief-of-Staff of Deputy Speaker Loren Legarda, House of Representatives
AYSON, Esperanza (Ms.) Deputy Secretary of the Group	Deputy Director General, Office of International Relations and Protocol, Senate

RYE, Lourdes Rajini (Ms.)

Executive Director, Inter-Parliamentary Relations and
Special Affairs Bureau, House of Representative
Committee Secretary, Committee on Foreign Affairs,
House of Representatives

APOSTOL, Imelda F. (Ms.)

(NPC: National People's Coalition / Coalition populaire nationaliste)
 (NP: Nacionalista Party / Parti nationaliste)
 (LP: Liberal Parti / Parti libéral)
 (PDP-Laban: Partido Demokratiko Pilipino)

POLAND – POLOGNE

BABINETZ, Piotr (Mr.)

Member of the Sejm (PiS)

President of the Group, Leader of the delegation

MORAWSKA-STANECKA, Gabriela (Ms.)

Vice-President of the Senate (S)

GOŁOJUCH, Kazimierz (Mr.)

Member of the Sejm (PiS)

SAWICKI, Marek (Mr.)

Member of the Sejm (PSL)

ZWIEFKA, Tadeusz (Mr.)

Member of the Sejm (CC)

BARTUŚ, Barbara (Ms.)

Member of the Sejm (PiS)

BUDNER, Margareta (Ms.)

Member of the Senate (PiS)

LUBNAUER, Katarzyna (Ms.)

Member of the Sejm (CC)

FOGIEL, Radosław (Mr.)

Member of the Sejm (PiS)

KACZMARSKA, Agnieszka (Ms.)

Secretary General, Sejm

Member of the ASGP

NIEMCZEWSKI, Adam (Mr.)

Secretary General of the Senate

KARWOWSKA-SOKOLOWSKA, Agata (Ms.)

Director of the Analysis and Documentation Office,
Senate

Member of the ASGP

GŁOWACKA, Karolina (Ms.)

Deputy Director, Chancellery of the Sejm

GRUBA, Wojciech (Mr.)

Sejm

Secretary of the Group

WÓJCIK, Agata (Ms.)

Expert, Chancellery of the Senate

WNUK, Przemysław (Mr.)

Interpreter

PRZEPIÓRKOWSKA, Danuta (Ms.)

Interpreter

(PiS: Law and Justice / Droit et justice)

(S: Spring)

(PSL: Polish Peasant Party / Parti paysan polonais)

(CC: Civic Coalition / Coalition civique)

PORTUGAL

MATOS, Sofia (Ms.)

Member of the Assembly of the Republic (SDP)

President of the Group, Leader of the delegation

MARTINS, Hortense (Ms.)

Member of the Assembly of the Republic (PS)

Committee on Middle East Questions

Economy Committee

PEREIRA, Carlos (Mr.)

Member of the Assembly of the Republic (PS)

SOUSA, Constança (Ms.)

Member of the Assembly of the Republic (PS)

CARNEIRO, Hugo (Mr.)

Member of the Assembly of the Republic (PS)

LACÃO, Jorge (Mr.)

Deputy Speaker of the Assembly of the Republic (PS)

Constitutional Affairs Committee

CARMO, Pedro (Mr.)

Member of the Assembly of the Republic (PS)

SANTOS, Suzana (Mrs.)

Adviser of the International Relations and Cooperation

Secretary of the Group

Division Department, Assembly of the Republic

(SDP: Social Democratic Party / Parti social-démocrate)

(PS: Socialist Party (PS) / Parti socialiste)

QATAR

AL MAHMOUD, Ahmed Bin Abdulla Bin Zaid (Mr.)

Speaker of the Shura Council

President of the Group, Leader of the delegation

ALHAIDAR, Nasser Sulaiman (Mr.)

Member of the Shura Council

AL-HAMAD, Dahlan Bin Jaman (Mr.)

Member of the Shura Council

AL-AHBABI, Mohammed Bin Mahdi (Mr.)

Member of the Shura Council

Bureau of the Standing Committee on Peace
and International Security

AL-MANSOORI, Reem Bint Mohammed (Mrs.)

Member of the Shura Council

AL-KHAYARIN, Fahad Mubarak (Mr.)

Secretary General, Shura Council

Member of the ASGP

BOUCHKOUJ, Nouredine (Mr.)
AL-MASLAMANI, Rashid (Mr.)

Legal Expert, Shura Council
Follow-up Affairs Officer, Speaker's Office, Shura Council

ALHAMADI, Hamad (Mr.)
Secretary to the delegation
ALHASSAN, Mohammed (Mr.)

International Affairs Researcher, Shura Council
International Affairs Researcher, Shura Council

REPUBLIC OF KOREA - REPUBLIQUE DE COREE

NAM, In-soon (Ms.)
Leader of the delegation
YUN, Hee-suk (Ms.)
KANG, Sun-woo (Ms.)
JANG, Hye-young (Ms.)
KIM, Bolam (Ms.)
LIM, Karen (Ms.)
Secretary to the delegation

Member of the National Assembly (DPK)
Member of the National Assembly (PPP)
Member of the National Assembly (DPK)
Member of the National Assembly (JP)
Deputy Director
Program Officer

(DPK: Democratic Party of Korea / Parti démocrate coréen)

(PPP: People Power Party)

(JP: Justice Party / Parti de la justice)

REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA - REPUBLIQUE DE MOLDOVA

BOLOGAN, Victor (Mr.)
Leader of the delegation
PILIPETCAIA, Alla (Ms.)
CIUBUC, Nicolae (Mr.)
MALCOCI, Cristina (Mrs.)
Secretary of the Group

Member of Parliament (PSRM)
Committee on Foreign Policy and European Integration
Member of Parliament (PSRM)
Member of Parliament (PDM)
Chief Consultant, Inter-Parliamentary Relations Unit,
Directorate for Foreign Affairs, Parliament

(PSRM: Party of Socialists / Parti des socialistes)

(PDM: Democratic Party of Moldova / Parti démocrate de Moldova)

ROMANIA – ROUMANIE

DINICĂ, Silvia-Monica (Mrs.)
Bureau of the Standing Committee on Sustainable
Development, Leader of the delegation

Member of the Senate (SRUPLUS)
Chair, Committee for Economic Affairs, Industries
and Services
Committee for Information Technologies and
Communications

ZAMFIR, Daniel-Cătălin (Mr.)

Member of the Senate (SDP)
Deputy Chair, Committee for Economic Affairs,
Industries and Services
Committee for Energy, Energy Infrastructure and
Mineral Resources

FECHET, Mircea (Mr.)

Member of the Chamber of Deputies (NLP)
Deputy Chair, Committee for Environment and
Ecological Balance
Committee for European Affairs

AELENEI, Dănuț (Mr.)

Member of the Chamber of Deputies (AUR)
Committee for Industries and Services

MERKA, Adrian-Miroslav (Mr.)

Member of the Chamber of Deputies (GNM)
Committee for Budget, Finance and Banks
Committee for Youth and Sports

ZAKARIAS, Zoltan (Mr.)

Member of the Chamber of Deputies (DAHR)
Committee for Health and Family
Committee for European Affairs

DINU, Cristina-Elena (Ms.)

Member of the Chamber of Deputies (SDP)
Committee for Human Rights, Cults and National
Minorities Issues

CUPȘA, Ioan (Mr.)

Committee for Health and Family
Member of the Chamber of Deputies (NLP)
Deputy Chair, Committee for Legal affairs, Discipline
and Immunities
Committee for Constitutionality

HANGAN, Pollyanna-Hanellore (Mrs.)	Member of the Chamber of Deputies (SRUPLUS) Committee for Economic Policy, Reform and Privatisation Secretary General of the Senate
BUCUR, Ciprian (Mr.) Member of the ASGP	
MIHALCEA, Silvia-Claudia (Mrs.) Member of the ASGP	Deputy Secretary General of the Chamber of Deputies
DUMITRESCU, Cristina (Mrs.) Secretary of the Group	Director, External Multilateral Relations Directorate, Senate
POTERAȘU, Teodora (Ms.) Secretary of the Group	Parliamentary Adviser, General Directorate for Foreign Affairs, Chamber of Deputies
BADEA, Adriana (Ms.) Secretary of the delegation (ASGP)	Parliamentary Adviser, External Multilateral Relations Directorate, Senate
TEODOREL, Luminița (Ms.) Secretary of the delegation	Parliamentary Adviser, Secretariat of the Romanian IPU Group, Senate

(SRUPLUS: Save Romania Union PLUS / Union Sauvez la Roumanie)
(SDP: Social Democratic Party / Parti social-démocrate)
(NLP: National Liberal Party / Parti libéral national)
(AUR: Alliance for the Union of Romanians / Alliance pour l'unité des Roumains)
(GNM: Group of National Minorities / Groupe des minorités nationales)
(DAHR: Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania / Union démocrate magyare de Roumanie)

RUSSIAN FEDERATION - FEDERATION DE RUSSIE

KOSACHEV, Konstantin (Mr.) High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism Leader of the delegation	Deputy Speaker of the Council of the Federation
TOLSTOY, Petr (Mr.) Bureau of the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security	Deputy Speaker of the State Duma (UR)
GUMEROVA, Liliia (Mrs.) Bureau of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade, Bureau of Women Parliamentarians	Member of the Council of the Federation Chair of the Science, Education and Culture Committee
UMAKHANOV, Iliyas (Mr.)	Member of the Council of the Federation First Deputy Chair of the Committee on Science, Education and Culture
AFANASIEVA, Elena (Ms.)	Member of the Council of the Federation Committee on Foreign Affairs
KLIMOV, Andrei (Mr.)	Member of the Council of the Federation Foreign Affairs Committee
STAVITSKY, Valery (Mr.) Secretary of the Group	Senior Consultant of the Department on Interparliamentary Cooperation, State Duma
SHMACHKOVA, Olga (Ms.) Secretary to the delegation	Adviser, International Relations Department, Council of the Federation
GROMOGLASOVA, Elizaveta (Ms.)	Assistant
NOVIKOV, Ivan (Mr.) Diplomat	
(UR: United Russia / Russie unifiée)	

RWANDA

NYIRASAFARI, Esperance (Ms.) Leader of the delegation	Vice-President of the Senate (RPF)
DUSHIMIMANA, Lambert (Mr.)	Member of the Senate (RPF)
MUZANA, Alice (Ms.)	Member of the Chamber of Deputies (PSD)
CYITATIRE, Sosthène (Mr.) Member of the ASGP	Clerk to the Senate
MULIGANDE SENGABO, Charles (Mr.) Secretary of the Group	Parliament Diplomacy Specialist, Chamber of Deputies
(RPF: Rwanda Patriotic Front / Front patriotique rwandais)	
(PSD: Social Democratic Party / Parti social-démocrate)	

SAN MARINO - SAINT-MARIN

MULARONI, Mariella (Mrs.) President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	Member of the Great and General Council (PDCS)
MONTEMAGGI, Marica (Ms.)	Member of the Great and General Council (LIBERA)
RONDELI, Paolo (Mr.)	Member of the Great and General Council (RETE)
CONTI, Sara (Ms.)	Member of the Great and General Council (RF)

(PDCS: Christian Democratic Party of San Marino / Parti chrétien-démocrate saint-marinais)
 (LIBERA: Libera)
 (RETE: Movimento Civico R.E.T.E.)
 (RF: Repubblica futura)

SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE - SAO TOME-ET-PRINCIPE

MONTEIRO, Filomena (Ms.)	Member of the National Assembly (MLSTP-PSD)
COTÚ, Danilson (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly (PDC/MDFM/UDD)
FERREIRA, Samora Member of the ASGP	Secretary General, National Assembly
XAVIER, Ludmila (Ms.) Secretary of the Group	

(MLSTP-PSD: Sao Tome and Principe Liberation Movement / Mouvement de libération de Sao Tomé-et-Principe)
 (PDC/MDFM/UDD: Democratic Convergence Party / Force for Democratic Change Movement - Union of Democrats for Citizenship and Development / Parti de la convergence démocratique / Mouvement pour les forces de changement démocratique - Union des démocrates pour la citoyenneté et le développement)

SAUDI ARABIA - ARABIE SAOUDITE

ALSHEIKH, Abdullah (Mr.) Leader of the delegation	Speaker of the Consultative Council
ALHELAISSI, Hoda (Ms.) Advisory Group on Health	Member of the Consultative Council
ABUNAYAN, Raedah Abdullah (Ms.)	Member of the Consultative Council
BINZAGR, Ghazi (Mr.)	Member of the Consultative Council
ALMOFLEH, Ibrahim (Mr.)	Member of the Consultative Council
ALMETAIRI, Mohammed (Mr.) Member of the ASGP	Secretary General, Consultative Council
ALQAHTANI, Faris (Mr.)	Researcher

SENEGAL

GADIAGA, Hamady (M.) Président délégué du Groupe, Chef de la délégation	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (APR)
KANE, Mor (M.)	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (PDS)
MERGANE, Adji Diarra (Mme) Membre du Comité exécutif Membre ex-officio du Bureau des femmes parlementaires	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (BBY)
SOW, Yoro (M.)	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (APR)
SALL, Fanta (Mme)	Membre de l'Assemblée nationale (APR)
CISSE, Baye Niass (M.) Secrétaire du Groupe	Secrétaire général adjoint, Assemblée nationale

(APR: Alliance for the Republic / Alliance pour la République)
 (PDS: Senegal Democratic Party / Parti démocratique sénégalais)
 (BBY: Benno Bokk Yaakaar)

SERBIA – SERBIE

DACIC, Ivica (Ms.) President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	Speaker of the National Assembly (SPS)
GRUJIC, Mladen (Mr.) Member of the Executive Committee	Member of the National Assembly (SNS) European Integration Committee Foreign Affairs Committee
MIJATOVIC, Milorad (Mr.) Group of Facilitators for Cyprus	Member of the National Assembly (SDPS) Foreign Affairs Committee Security Services Control Committee Committee on Finance, State Budget and Control of Public Spending

MATEJIC, Ilija (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly (SNS)
MIJATOVIC, Jelena (Mrs.)	Member of the National Assembly (SNS) Committee on the Economy, Regional Development, Trade, Tourism and Energy Committee on Kosovo-Metohija Committee on the Rights of the Child
POPOVIC, Ivana (Ms.)	Member of the National Assembly (SNS)
OGNJANOVIC, Olivera (Ms.)	Member of the National Assembly (SNS)
PETROVIC, Mira (Mrs.)	Member of the National Assembly (PUPS)
KRAJNOVIC, Marijana (Ms.)	Member of the National Assembly (SNS)
DJURASINOVIC RADOJEVIC, Dragana (Ms.)	
Secretary of the Group	
FILIPOVIC, Vladimir (Mr.)	
Adviser	
(SPS: Socialist Party of Serbia / Parti socialiste serbe)	
(SNS: Serbian Progressive Party "For our children" / Parti progressiste serbe "Pour nos enfants")	
(SDPS: Social Democratic Party of Serbia / Parti social-démocrate serbe)	
(PUPS: Party of United Pensioners of Serbia / Parti des retraités unis de Serbie)	

SEYCHELLES

MANCIENNE, Roger (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly (LDS)
President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	
WILLIAM, Waven (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly (LDS)
AGLAE, Egbert (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly (US)
SAMYNADIN, Kelly (Ms.)	Member of the National Assembly (LDS)
ISAAC, Tania (Mrs./Mme)	Deputy Clerk, National Assembly
Member of the ASGP	
Secretary to the delegation,	
(LDS: Seychelles Democratic Alliance / Union démocratique seychelloise)	
(US: United Seychelles / Seychelles unies)	

SINGAPORE – SINGAPOUR

PILLAI, Murali (Mr.)	Member of Parliament (PAP)
Leader of the delegation	
BIN MOHD TAHA, Mohamed Sharael (Mr.)	Member of Parliament (PAP)
GIAM YEAN SONG, Gerald (Mr.)	Member of Parliament (WP)
LI HUI, Cheng (Ms.)	Member of Parliament (PAP)
LEE, Ethan (Mr.)	
Member of the ASGP	
Secretary to the delegation	
PANNIR SELVAM, Veeramany (Mr.)	
Secretary to the delegation	
HAMID, Hartina (Ms.)	
Secretary to the delegation	
(PAP: People's Action Party / Parti d'action populaire)	
(WP: Workers' Party / Parti des travailleurs)	

SLOVENIA – SLOVENIE

GREGORCIC, Monika (Ms.)	Member of the National Assembly (PMC)
President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	Chair of the Committee on Foreign Policy
DIMIC, Iva (Ms.)	Member of the National Assembly (NSi) Chair of the Committee on Education, Science, Sport and Youth Member of the Committee on Health (
PANDEV, Tanja (Ms.)	Head of Section for International Relations, Protocol and Translation, National Assembly
Secretary of the Group	
(PMC: Party of Modern Centre / Parti du centre moderne)	
(NSi: New Slovenia-Christian Democrats / Nouvelle Slovénie - Parti chrétien-démocrate)	

SOMALIA – SOMALIE

JAMA, Ali Ahmed (Mr.) Committee on Middle East Questions President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	Member of the House of the People Chairman of the Infrastructure Committee
MOHAMUUD, Said Mohamed (Mr.)	Member of the House of the People Constitution Review Committee
IBRAHIM, Fadummo Farah (Mrs.)	Member of the House of the People Immunity and Discipline Committee
MOHAMED, Mohamed Ahmed (Mr.)	Member of the House of the People Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Committee
FARAH, Abdo Mah (Mr.)	Member of the House of the People Telecommunication and Post committee

SOUTH AFRICA - AFRIQUE DU SUD

MODISE, Thandi (Ms.) President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	Speaker of the National Council of Provinces (ANC)
LUCAS, Sylvia (Ms.)	Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly (ANC)
NTOMBELA, Madala Louis (Mr.)	Member of the National Council of Provinces (ANC)
NTSUBE, Itumeleng (Mr.)	Member of the National Council of Provinces (ANC)
MALATJI, Thlologelo (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly (ANC)
BERGMAN, Darren (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly (DA)
CHETTY, Mergan (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly (DA)
MSANE, Thembi (Ms.)	Member of the National Assembly (EFF)
KHUZWAYO, June (Ms.)	International Relations and Protocol
MONNAKGOTLA, Roseline Mpho (Mr.)	Researcher, International Relations and Protocol Division, National Council of Provinces
NGOAKO, Rakgale (Mr.)	Content Specialist, Office of the Speaker
PAULSE, Cheryl-Anne (Ms.)	Adviser
SITHOLE, Dumisani Job (Mr.)	Adviser
TYAWA, Penelope Nolizo (Ms.)	Acting Secretary to Parliament

(ANC: African National Congress / Congrès national africain)

(DA: Democratic Alliance / Gauche démocratique)

(EFF: Economic Freedom Fighters / Combattants de la liberté économique)

SPAIN – ESPAGNE

ECHANIZ, José Ignacio (Mr.) President of the Group, President of the Committee on Peace and International Security Vice-President of the Advisory Group on Health Leader of the delegation	Member of the Congress of Deputies (PP)
ESTEBAN BRAVO, Aitor (Mr.)	Member of the Congress of Deputies (PNV)
GARCÍA DÍEZ, Joaquín (Mr.)	Member of the Congress of Deputies (PP)
GIL GARCÍA, Ander (Mr.)	Member of the Senate (PSOE)
GONZÁLEZ MODINO, Pilar (Ms.)	Member of the Congress of Deputies (UP)
MARTÍNEZ ZARAGOZA, Ana (Ms.)	Member of the Congress of Deputies (PSOE)
RAMÍREZ CARNER, Arnau (Mr.)	Member of the Congress of Deputies (PSOE)
SÁNCHEZ del REAL, Victor (Mr.)	Member of the Congress of Deputies (Vox)
GUTIÉRREZ VICEN, Carlos (Mr.) Member of the ASGP	Secretary General of the Congress of Deputies
CAVERO GÓMEZ, Manuel (Mr.) Member of the ASGP	Secretary General of the Senate
BOYRA, Helena (Mrs.) Secretary of the Group	Adviser, Congress of Deputies
GÓMEZ-BERNARDO, Teresa (Ms.) Secretary to the delegation	Secretary of Spanish Delegations in International Parliamentary Organizations, Congress of Deputies

(PP: People's Party / Parti populaire)

(PNV: Partido Nacionalista Vasco)

(UP: Unidas Podemos)

(PSOE: Spanish Socialist Workers' Party / Parti socialiste ouvrier espagnol)

(Vox)

SRI LANKA

ABEYWARDANA, Mahinda Yapa (Mr.) President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	Speaker of Parliament (SLLP) Chair, Committee on Parliamentary Business Chair, Committee on High Posts Chair, Committee on Standing Orders Chair, Liaison Committee Chair, Committee of Selection
C. DOLAWATTE, Premnath (Mr.)	Member of Parliament (SLLP) Committee on Public Enterprises Ministerial Consultative Committee on Urban Development & Housing Legislative Standing Committee
WIJERATNE, Rohini Kumari (Mrs.)	Member of Parliament (SJB) Ministerial Consultative Committee on Wildlife & Forest Conservation Women Parliamentarians Caucus in Parliament 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
WICKRAMARATNE, Eran (Mr.)	Member of Parliament (SJB) Committee on Public Enterprises 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
DODANGODA, Isuru (Mr.)	Member of Parliament (SLLP) Ministerial Consultative Committee on Education Committee on Public Finance
DASANAYAKE, Dhammika (Mr.) Secretary of the Group, Member of the ASGP	Secretary General, Parliament
(SLLP: Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna) (SJB: Samagi Jana Balawegaya)	

SURINAME

BOUVA, Melvin (Mr.) President of the Forum of Young MPs Ex-officio Member of the Executive Committee Leader of the delegation	Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly (NDP)
GAJADIEN, Asiskumar (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly (VHP)
HUUR, MIQUELLA (Ms.)	Member of the National Assembly (PL)
VREEDZAAM, Jennifer (Ms.)	Member of the National Assembly (NDP)
WANG, Chuanrui (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly (VHP)
(NDP: National Democratic Party / Parti national démocratique) (VHP: Progressive Reform Party / Parti progressiste et réformiste) (PL: Pertjajah Luhur)	

SWEDEN – SUEDE

WIDEGREN, Cecilia (Ms.) Member of the Executive Committee Chair of the Sub-Committee on Finance Leader of the delegation	Member of Parliament (M) Committee on Foreign Affairs
LARSSON, Dag (Mr.)	Member of Parliament (SDP)
LINDH, Eva (Ms.)	Member of Parliament (SDP)
BURWICK, Marlene (Ms.)	Member of Parliament (SDP)
SANDER, Mats (Mr.)	Member of Parliament (M)
ANTONI, Helena (Ms.)	Member of Parliament (M)
KARLSSON, Mattias (Mr.)	Member of Parliament (SD) Committee on Labour

SONDÉN, Björn (Mr.) International Adviser
Acting Secretary to the delegation
HERMANSSON, Ralph (Mr.) International Adviser
Deputy Acting Secretary to the delegation

(M: Moderate Party / Parti modéré)
(SDP: Social Democratic Party / Parti social-démocrate)
(SD: The Sweden Democrats / Les démocrates suédois)

SWITZERLAND – SUISSE

LOHR, Christian (M.) Membre du Conseil national (CVP/PDC)
Président du Groupe, Chef de la délégation Commission de la sécurité sociale et de la santé publique

JOSITSCH, Daniel (M.) Membre du Conseil des Etats (SP/PS)
Vice-Président du Groupe Vice-Président de la Commission des affaires juridiques
Commission de politique extérieure,
Commission de la politique de sécurité
Commission des institutions politiques

FEHLMANN RIELLE, Laurence (Mme) Membre du Conseil national (SP/PS)
Membre du Comité exécutif Présidente de la Commission des affaires juridiques,
Bureau des Femmes parlementaires Commission de l'immunité
BADERTSCHER, Christine (Mme) Membre du Conseil national (GPS/PES)
Commission de politique extérieure
Commission des finances

CARONI, Andrea (M.) Membre du Conseil des Etats (FDP/PLR)
Comité des droits de l'homme des parlementaires Président de la Commission des institutions politiques,
Président de la Commission judiciaire,
Commission de politique extérieure

GAPANY, Johanna (Mme) Membre du Conseil des Etats (FDP/PLR)
Vice-Présidente de la Commission des finances

HURTER, Thomas (M.) Membre du Conseil national (SVP/UDC)
Commission de la politique de sécurité
Commission des transports et des télécommunications

WEHRLI, Laurent (M.) Membre du Conseil national (FDP/PLR)
Bureau de la Commission permanente des Affaires Commission de politique extérieure
des Nations Unies, Comité sur les questions relatives Président de la Délégation auprès de l'Assemblée
au Moyen-Orient, Comité directeur des Douze Plus parlementaire de la Francophonie
EQUEY, Jérémie (M.) Relations internationales
Secrétaire du Groupe et de la délégation

GNÁGI, Anna Lea (Mrs.) Relations internationales
Secrétaire adjointe du Groupe,
Secrétariat de la délégation

(CVP/PDC: Christian Democratic People's Party / Parti démocrate-chrétien)
(SP/PS: Socialist Party / Parti socialiste)
(GPS/PES: Green Party / Parti écologiste)
(FDP/PLR: The Liberals / Les Libéraux-Radicaux)
(SVP/UDC: Swiss People's Party / Union démocratique du centre)

SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC - REPUBLIQUE ARABE SYRIENNE

SABBAGH, Hammouda (Mr.) Speaker of the People's Assembly (BAP)
Leader of the delegation

ALAJLANI, Mhd. Akram (Mr.) Deputy Speaker of the People's Assembly

ALSALLOUM, Salloum (Mr.) Member of the People's Assembly (BAP)

ALSALEH, Maysaa (Mrs.) Member of the People's Assembly (BAP)

AZBEH, Faiza (Ms.) Member of the People's Assembly (BAP)

ABRACH, Mhd. Sulaiman (Mr.) Member of the People's Assembly (NCP)

MERJANEH, Boutros (Mr.) Member of the People's Assembly
Chair of the Arab and Foreign Affairs Committee

ABBAS, Zein Elabiddin (Mr.) Member of the People's Assembly

MITRAS, Maryam (Ms.) Member of the People's Assembly (BAP)

DIAB, Abdul Azim (Mr.) Director of P.R., People's Assembly
Secretary of the Group

(BAP: Baath Arab Party / Parti Baath arabe)
(NCP: Parti du Pacte national)

TAJIKISTAN – TADJIKISTAN

AHMADZODA, Rajabboy (Mr.) Leader of the delegation	Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly
MAHMADSHOH, Gulzoda (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly Chair of the Committee on Social Protection, Science, Education, Culture and Politics among Youth and Women
DILBAR, Odilzoda (Ms.)	Member of the National Assembly Committee on Social Protection, Science, Education, Culture and Politics among Youth and Women

THAILAND – THAILANDE

LEEKPAI, Chuan (Mr.) President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	President of the National Assembly and Speaker of the House of Representatives (DP)
KRAIRIKSH, Pikulkeaw (Ms.) Member of the Executive Committee	Member of the Senate
SITTHEEAMORN, Kiat (Mr.) SIRIVEJCHAPUN, Suwannee (Ms.) Bureau of Women Parliamentarians	Member of the House of Representatives (DP) Member of the Senate
SUWANMONGKOL, Anusart (Mr.) Bureau of the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security	Member of the Senate
TOHMEENA, Pechdau (Ms.) Bureau of the Committee on UN Affairs Advisory Group on Health	Member of the House of Representatives (BJT)
LIMJAROENRAT, Pita (Mr.) SEREEWATTHANAWUT, Issara (Mr.) Bureau of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development	Member of the House of Representatives (MFP) Member of the House of Representatives (DP)
UNNOPORN, Saratsanun (Ms.) TAIPIBOONSUK, Steejit (Ms.) Secretary to the delegation	Member of the House of Representatives (PTP) Advisor on Foreign Affairs
BAMRUNGPON, Tanukom (Mr.) Assistant Secretary to the Delegation	Director of the IPU Division

(DP: Democrat Party / Parti démocrate)
(BJT: Bhumjaithai Party)
(MFP: Move Forward Party)
(PTP: Pheu Thai Party / Parti Pheu Thai)

TIMOR-LESTE

MARQUES LEMOS MARTINS, Veneranda Eurico (Mrs.) Leader of the delegation	Member of the National Parliament (CNRT) Health and Education Commission Social Security and Gender Equality
DA SILVA, Abel Pires (Mr.)	Member of the National Parliament (PLP) President Infrastructure Commission
DIAS XIMENES, David (Mr.)	Member of the National Parliament (FRETILIN) Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Security
RANGEL DA CRUZ, Maria Angelica (Mrs.)	Member of the National Parliament (FRETILIN) Public Finance Committee
DA COSTA, Helder (Mr.) Member of the ASGP	Secretary General

(CNRT: National Congress for the Reconstruction of Timor-Leste / Congrès national pour la reconstruction du Timor)
(PLP: People's Liberation Party / Parti de libération populaire)
(FRETILIN: Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor / Front révolutionnaire pour l'indépendance du Timor-Leste)

TOGO

TSEGAN, Yawa Djigbodi (Mme) Chef de la délégation	Présidente de l'Assemblée nationale (UNIR)
IHOU, Attigbé Yaovi (M.)	Membre du Parlement (UNIR)
KAGBARA, Ulejja Yabisse Innocent (M.)	Membre du Parlement (PDP)

NOMAGNON, Akossiwa Gnonoufia (Mme)
TCHALIM, Tchitchao (Mr.)

Membre du Parlement
Membre du Parlement (UNIR)

(UNIR: Union for the Republic / Union pour la République)

(PDP: Pan-African Democratic Party / Parti pour la démocratie panafricaine)

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

WEST, Allyson (Ms.)
Leader of the delegation

Member of the Senate
Minister of Public Administration and Digital
Transformation

WADE, Mark (Mr.)

Member of the Senate
Leader of Opposition Business in the Senate

DILLON-REMY, Maria (Ms.)

Member of the Senate

REANEY, Nilijah (Ms.)

Graduate Research Assistant

Secretary to the delegation

TUNISIA – TUNISIE

BEN BELGACEM, Fathi (M.)

Membre de l'Assemblée des Représentants du Peuple

Chef de la délégation

HADDAD, Leila (Mme)

Membre de l'Assemblée des Représentants du Peuple

CHRIGUI, Sihem (Mme)

Membre de l'Assemblée des Représentants du Peuple

BOUSSEN, Mohame Ennaceur (M.)

Membre de l'Assemblée des Représentants du Peuple

BEN ABDELEAALI, Sami (M.)

Membre de l'Assemblée des Représentants du Peuple

SAAD, Thameur (M.)

Membre de l'Assemblée des Représentants du Peuple

ZAMMEL, Ayachi (M.)

Membre de l'Assemblée des Représentants du Peuple

JENAYAH, Hussein (M.)

Membre de l'Assemblée des Représentants du Peuple

AYARI, Houda (Mme)

Directrice générale de l'Unité des relations extérieures

AOUAITI, Najoua (Mme)

Conseillère parlementaire

Secrétaire du Groupe

TURKEY – TURQUIE

KAVAKCI KAN, Ravza (Ms.)

Member of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (AK)

President of the Group, Leader of the delegation

POLAT DUZGUN, Arife (Ms.)

Member of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (AK)

SATIROGLU, Nevzat (Mr.)

Member of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (AK)

YILDIZ, Zeynep (Ms.)

Member of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (AK)

EMIR, Murat (Mr.)

Member of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (CHP)

ARSLAN, Ednan (Mr.)

Member of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (CHP)

OZSOY, Hisyar (Mr.)

Member of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (HDP)

KARAKAYA, Mevlut (Mr.)

Member of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (MHP)

ANDICAN, A. Ahat (Mr.)

Member of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (İYİ)

KUMBUZOGLU, Mehmet Ali (Mr.)

Secretary General, Grand National Assembly of Turkey

Member of the ASGP

KOCAK, Konur Alp (Mr.)

Deputy Director, Grand National Assembly of Turkey

Member of the ASGP

GUNER, Mumtaz (Mr.)

Grand National Assembly of Turkey

AKSELI, Saren (Ms.)

Secretary to the delegation

(AK: Justice and Development Party / Parti de la justice et du développement)

(CHP: Republican People's Party / Parti populaire républicain)

(HDP: People's Democratic Party / Parti démocratique populaire)

(MHP: Nationalist Movement Party / Parti d'action nationaliste)

(İYİ: İyi Parti)

TURKMENISTAN

KOMEKOV, Nury (Mr.)

Member of the Assembly

TUVAKOV, Merdan (Mr.)

Member of the Assembly (DPT)
Committee on International and Inter-Parliamentary
Relations

TORAYEV, Dovletmyrat (Mr.)

Diplomat

(DPT: Democratic Party of Turkmenistan / Parti démocratique du Turkménistan)

UKRAINE

RUDENKO, Olga (Ms.) Leader of the delegation	Member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (SN) Committee on Foreign Policy and Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation
VASYLENKO, Lesia (Ms.) Bureau of Women Parliamentarians	Member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (Holos) Budget Committee
SHKRUM, Alona (Mrs.) Bureau of the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security	Member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (BP) Chairwoman of the Committee on State Building, Regional Policy and Local Self-Government
SHPENOV, Dmytro (Mr.)	Member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Legal Policy Committee
ZHMERENETSKYY, Oleksii (Mr.)	Member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (SN)
FURMAN, Oleksandr (Mr.) Secretary	First Deputy Director, Inter-Parliamentary Relations Office, Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine
MOSOLOV, Yuri (Mr.) Deputy Secretary	Deputy Director, Secretariat of the Committee on Foreign Policy and Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation, Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine
MYKHALIUK, Oksana (Ms.)	Adviser
(SN: Servant of the People / Le Serviteur du peuple)	
(Holos: Voice / Voix)	
(BP: Batkivschyna Party / Parti Batkivshyna)	

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES - EMIRATS ARABES UNIS

GHOBASH, Saqr (Mr.) President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	Speaker of the Federal National Council
ALNUAIMI, Ali (Mr.) President of the Group	Member of the Federal National Council
ALSUWAIDI, Meera (Ms.)	Member of the Federal National Council
FALAKNAZ, Sara (Ms.)	Member of the Federal National Council
AHMAD, Ali (Mr.)	Member of the Federal National Council
ALAMERI, Mouza (Ms.)	Member of the Federal National Council
ALMHERI, Marwan (Mr.)	Member of the Federal National Council
ALSHAFAR, Osama (Mr.)	Member of the Federal National Council
ALNUAIMI, Omar (Mr.) Member of the ASGP	Secretary General of the Federal National Council
ALBASTI, Afra (Ms.) Member of the ASGP	Deputy Secretary General of the Federal National Council
ALSHEHHI, Abdulrahman (Mr.)	Director of the Parliamentary Division Department, Federal National Council
ALAQILI, Ahmed (Mr.)	Chief Specialist International Relations, Federal National Council
AL SHIHHI, Roudha (Ms.)	Adviser, Federal National Council

UNITED KINGDOM - ROYAUME-UNI

BALDWIN, Harriett (Ms.) President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	Member of the House of Commons (C)
SOBEL, Alex (Mr.)	Member of the House of Commons (L)
Rt Hon D'SOUZA CMG, Frances (Baroness)	Member of the House of Lords (XB)
LIDDELL-GRAINGER, Ian (Mr.)	Member of the House of Commons (C)
Rt Hon DHOLAKIA OBE PC DL, Navnit (Lord)	Member of the House of Lords (Lib Dems)
CHAPMAN, Douglas (Mr.)	Member of the House of Commons (SNP)
SHARMA, Virendra (Mr.)	Member of the House of Commons (L)
Rt Hon MILLER, Maria (Ms.)	Member of the House of Commons (C)
NIMMO, Rick (Mr.)	Director of BGIPU
REES, Dominique (Ms.)	Deputy Director BGIPU
LIBEROTTI-HARRISON, Gabriella (Ms.)	BGIPU Head of Multilateral Programme
EDWARDS, Rhiannon (Ms.)	International Project Manager BGIPU
BURNET, Fiona (Ms.)	International Project Manager BGIPU, House of Commons
SMYTH, Liam Laurence (Mr.) Member of the ASGP	Clerk of Legislation, House of Commons,
DAVIES, Sarah (Ms.) Member of the ASGP	Clerk Assistant, House of Commons

BURTON, Simon (Mr.) Member of the ASGP	Clerk of Parliaments, House of Lords
MAWSON, Chloe (Ms.) Member of the ASGP	Clerk Assistant, House of Lords
MOELLER, Daniel (Mr.) Assistant to the ASGP Secretariat	
GARVIE-ADAMS, Elektra (Ms.) Secretary of the ASGP	

(C: Conservative / Parti conservateur)
(L: Labour / Parti travailliste)
(XB: Cross Bench)
(Lib Dems: Liberal Democrats / Démocrates libéraux)
(SNP: Scottish National Party / Parti national écossais)

URUGUAY

ARGIMÓN, Beatriz (Ms.) Member of the Executive Committee President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	Speaker of the Senate (PN)
GANDINI, Jorge (Mr.)	Member of the Senate (PN)
BONOMI, Eduardo (Mr.)	Member of the Senate (FA)
RODRÍGUEZ, Gloria (Ms.)	Member of the Senate (PN)
NIFFOURI, Amin (Mr.)	Member of the Senate (PN)
NANE, Silvia (Ms.)	Member of the Senate (FA)
LOZANO, Raúl (Mr.)	Member of the Senate (CA)
GALÁN, Lilián (Ms.)	Member of the House of Representatives (FA)
COUTINHO, Germán (Mr.) Adviser	Member of the Senate (PC)
SÁNCHEZ, Gustavo (Mr.) Member of the ASGP	Secretary, Senate
MONTERO, José Pedro (Mr.) Member of the ASGP	Secretary, Senate
GALVALISI, Carina (Mrs.) Secretary of the Group and of GRULAC	Head of International Relations, House of Representatives
PIQUINELA, Oscar (Mr.) Secretary of GRULAC	

(PN: National Party / Parti national)
(FA: Frente Amplio / Front élargi)
(CA: Cabildo Abierto)
(PC: Partido Colorado)

UZBEKISTAN – OUZBEKISTAN

ISMOILOV, Nurdinjon (Mr.) Leader of the delegation	Speaker of the Legislative Chamber
SAIDOV, Akmal (Mr.) Member of the Executive Committee	First Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Chamber
NARBAEVA, Tanzila Kamalovna (Ms.)	Chairwoman of the Senate
TADJEV, Odiljon (Mr.)	Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Chamber
ASLONOV, Abdullo Ubayduloevich (Mr.)	Member of the Legislative Chamber Committee on International Affairs and Inter- Parliamentary Relations
ABDULLAEVA, Oydin Utamurodovna (Ms.)	Member of the Oliy Majlis Committee on Science, Education, Culture and Sport Affairs
LITVINOVA, Olga (Ms.)	Member of the Oliy Majlis Committee on Science, Education, Culture and Sport Affairs
TUYCHIEV, Anvar (Mr.)	Member of the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, Investments and Tourism
ATANIYAZOVA, Aral (Mrs.) Advisory Group on Health Leader of the delegation	Member of the Senate Committee on the Development of the Aral Sea Region

VIET NAM

MAN, Tran Thanh (Mr.) Leader of the delegation HA, Vu Hai (Mr.)	First Vice-President of the National Assembly
CUONG, Bui Van (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly Vice-Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee Chair of the National Assembly Office, Secretary General of the National Assembly
DUONG, Quoc Anh (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly Vice Chairman of the Committee on Economy
NGUYET, Le Thi (Mrs.)	Member of the National Assembly Vice Chair, Social Affairs Committee
MINH, Tran Van (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly Vice Chair, Science, Technology and Environment Committee
DON, Tuan Phong (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly Committee on Foreign Affairs
LE, Thu Ha (Mrs.)	Member of the National Assembly Committee on Foreign Affairs
DINH, Cong Sy (Mr.)	Member of the National Assembly Foreign Affairs Committee
PHAM, Hoang Hai (Mr.)	Secretary
TRAN, Kim Chi (Mrs.)	Head of Division, Department of Foreign Affairs, National Assembly
NGUYEN, Thi Quynh (Mrs.)	Officer, Department of Foreign Affairs, National Assembly
HO, Thi Hoai (Ms.)	Secretary
TRUC, Ba Dinh (Mr.)	Secretary
TRAN, Thi Ninh (Mrs.)	Secretary
NGUYEN, Hong Phong (Mr.)	Technical Staff
LUU, Anh Tuan (Mr.) Interpreter	

YEMEN

ALBARKANI, Sultan (Mr.) Leader of the delegation	Speaker of the House of Representatives (GPC)
AL-SHADADI, Mohamed Ali (Mr.)	Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives
BASORAH, Mohsen Ali (Mr.)	Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives
AL-ATWANI, Sultan Hezam (Mr.)	Member of the House of Representatives
AL-HEGRI, Abdulrazaq Ahmed (Mr.)	Member of the House of Representatives
AL-QOBATY, Mohammed Saleh (Mr.)	Member of the House of Representatives (YSP)
AL-WAGEH, Sakhar Ahmed (Mr.)	Member of the House of Representatives
BIN-MADI, Mabkhout (Mr.)	Member of the House of Representatives (GPC)
AL-MUGHALLES, Sultan Abdulqader (Mr.)	Secretary, House of Representatives
ZUHRA, Ameen (Mr.)	Secretary, House of Representatives
AL-SHAMIRI, Abdulqawe Abdulwahab	Secretary, House of Representatives

(GPC: General People's Congress / Congrès général du peuple)

(YSP: Yemeni Socialist Party / Parti socialiste yéménite)

ZAMBIA – ZAMBIE

MATIBINI, Patrick (Mr.) President of the Group, Leader of the delegation	Speaker of the National Assembly
MBEWE, Cecilian Nsenduluka (Mrs.) Secretary of the Group, Member of the ASGP	Clerk of the National Assembly, National Assembly
BWALYA, Barnabas (Mr.)	Adviser, National Assembly
KAWIMBE, Stephen (Mr.)	Adviser, National Assembly
Mpolokoso, Anthony K (Mr.)	Adviser
MONGA, Pauline (Ms.)	Adviser, National Assembly
MUSONDA, Chongo (Mr.)	Official, National Assembly

ZIMBABWE

MUDENDA, Jacob Francis Nzwidamilimo (Mr.) Member of the Executive Committee Leader of the delegation	Speaker of the National Assembly (ZANU/PF)
MUKUNYAIIDZE, Spiwe (Ms.)	Member of the National Assembly (ZANU/PF)
CHOKUDA, Kennedy Mugove (Mr.) Member of the ASGP	Clerk to Parliament, National Assembly
NYAMAHOWA, Frank Mike (Mr.)	Director in the Speaker's Office
MARIMO, Ndamuka (Mr.) Member of the ASGP	Director in the Clerk's Office, National Assembly
CHISANGO, Rumbidzai Pamela (Ms.)	Principal External Relations Officer, National Assembly
MUSHANDINGA, Martha (Ms.)	Principal Executive Assistant, National Assembly
SIBANDA, Robert (Mr.)	National Assembly

(ZANU/PF: Zimbabwe African National Union - Patriotic Front / Union nationale africaine - Front patriotique du Zimbabwe)

II. ASSOCIATE MEMBERS - MEMBRES ASSOCIES**ARAB PARLIAMENT
PARLEMENT ARABE**

ALASOOMI, Adel Bin Abdul Rahman (Mr.) Speaker
President of the Group, Leader of the delegation

ASSEMBLEE PARLEMENTAIRE DE LA FRANCOPHONIE

GAUDREAU, Maryse (Mme) Membre
Présidente du Réseau des femmes
parlementaires de l'APF

**EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY (EALA)
ASSEMBLEE LEGISLATIVE EST-AFRICAINE**

NGOGA, Karoli Martin (Mr.)	Speaker
Leader of the delegation	Chairperson of the EALA Commission
AHINGEJEJE, Alfred (Mr.)	Member
RUTAZANA, Francine (Ms.)	Member
USSI, Yahya Mariam (Ms.)	Member
NGWARU JUMANNE, Maghembe (Mr.)	Member
NAKAWUKI, Susan (Ms.)	Member
MBIDDE, Mukasa Fred (Mr.)	Member
GARANG AHER, Arol Gabriel (Mr.)	Member
MBUGUA, Simon (Mr.)	Member
BAHATI, Alex (Mr.)	Member
Adviser	
LEONARDO, Anne Itto (Ms.)	Member
Adviser	
AMODING, Priscilla (Ms.)	Senior Administrative Assistant to the Speaker

**LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN PARLIAMENT (PARLATINO)
PARLEMENT DE L'AMÉRIQUE LATINE ET DES CARAÏBES**

PIZARRO, Jorge (Mr.)	Speaker
MEZA, Lucía (Ms.)	Member and Secretary General
NIÑO, Karine (Ms.)	Member, Secretary of Inter-Parliamentary Relations
GONZÁLEZ PATRICIO, Rolando (Mr.)	Member, Committee Secretary
CASTILLO G., Elias A. (Mr.)	Commission of Public Infrastructure and Channel Affairs
Executive Secretary	

**PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION/PABSEC
ASSEMBLEE PARLEMENTAIRE POUR LA COOPERATION ECONOMIQUE DE LA MER NOIRE**

MAKRYGIANNIS, Miltiadis (Mr.) Deputy Secretary General

III. OBSERVERS – OBSERVATEURS**WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO)
ORGANISATION MONDIALE DE LA SANTE (OMS)**

SILBERSCHMIDT, Gaudenz (Mr.), Director for Partnerships and Non-State Actors
SCOLARO, Elisa (Ms.), Partnerships Officer, Parliamentary Engagement
KESSLER, Sarah (Ms.)

**AFRICAN PARLIAMENTARY UNION (APU)
UNION PARLEMENTAIRE AFRICAINE**

IDI GADO, Boubacar (Mr.), Secretary General

**ARAB INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION
UNION INTERPARLEMENTAIRE ARABE**

AL-SHAWABKEH, FAYEZ (Mr.), Secretary General
NIHAWI, Samir (Mr.)

**ASIAN PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY (APA)
ASSEMBLEE PARLEMENTAIRE ASIATIQUE**

HASHEMI, Seyed Javad (Mr.), Director of International Affairs
MAJIDI, Mohammad Reza (Mr.), Secretary General

COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION (CPA)

TWIGG, Stephen (Mr.)

**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
BOTH, Jeni (Mr.), Programme Manager

**PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF TURKIC SPEAKING COUNTRIES (TURKPA)
ASSEMBLEE PARLEMENTAIRE DES PAYS DE LANGUE TURCQUE**

MAMAIUSUPOV, Altynbek (Mr.), Secretary General

PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE UNION OF BELARUS AND RUSSIA**ASSEMBLEE PARLEMENTAIRE DE L'UNION DU BELARUS ET DE LA FEDERATION DE RUSSIE**

STRELCHENKO, Sergey (Mr.), Secretary General of the Assembly

LIBERAL INTERNATIONAL

BENNION, Philip (Mr.)
EL HAITE, Hakima (Ms.)

SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

AYALA, Luis (Mr.), Secretary General
PERRY, Latifa (Ms.), Coordinator

COMMITTEE TO REPRESENT THE UNION ASSEMBLY OF MYANMAR (CRPH)

HTUN, Myat Thida (Ms.), Member of Parliament
NYUNT, Aung Kyi (Mr.), Member of Parliament

**SPECIAL GUESTS TAKING PART IN ACTIVITIES FORESEEN ON THE OCCASION OF THE 142nd
ASSEMBLY OF THE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION
INVITES SPECIAUX PRENANT PART A DES ACTIVITES PREVUES A L'OCCASION DE LA 142ème
ASSEMBLEE DE L'UNION INTERPARLEMENTAIRE**

Assembly

CLARK, Helen (Ms.), Former Prime Minister of New Zealand and UNDP Administrator, Chair of the PMNCH Board, Co-Chair of the Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response
SUNDARAM, Jomo (Mr.), former UN Assistant Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs, Academic at Columbia University and the International Islamic University in Malaysia
GUPTA, Anuradha (Ms.), Deputy CEO of GAVI – The Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization, former head of the National Health Mission of India

Standing Committee on Peace and International Security

FERNANDEZ-TARANCO, Oscar (Mr.), UN Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding

Standing Committee on Sustainable Development

JACKSON, Tim (Mr.), Director of the Centre for the Understanding of Sustainable Prosperity at the University of Surrey

FRICK, Martin (Mr.), Deputy to the Special Envoy for the UN Food Systems

AUBRY, Manon (Ms.), Member of the European Parliament

Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights

THORNTON, Laura (Ms.), Director for Global Programmes, International IDEA

WILLIAMSON, Andy (Mr.), Senior Researcher, Centre for Innovation in Parliament, IPU

CARR, John (Mr.), Technical Adviser to ECPAT International, and Secretary of the British Children's Charities' Coalition on Internet safety

SINGHATEH, Mama Fatima (Ms.), Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children

Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs

JACKSON, Tim (Mr.), Director of the Centre for the Understanding of Sustainable Prosperity at the University of Surrey

FRICK, Martin (Mr.), Deputy to the Special Envoy for the UN Food Systems

JOYNI Mathu (Mr.), Ambassador, Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations,

RAE, Bob (Mr.) Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations

COUSENS, Elizabeth (Ms.) Ambassador, President and CEO of the UN Foundation.

GRIFFIN, Michele (Ms.), Senior Advisor, Office of the United Nations Secretary-General

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
Sustainable Development

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
Développement durable

Trade
Training
Truth
Underprivileged
Ways and Means
Wildlife
Women, Children and Youth

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

*Commerce
Formation
Vérité
Défavorisés
Voies et moyens
Faune
Les femmes, les enfants et les jeunes*

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*