



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

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Speech by Mr. Martin Chungong, IPU Secretary General

31st PMNCH Board Meeting
Agenda ITEM 5 – Advancing Adolescent Health and Well-Being through
the Global Forum for Adolescents and 1.8b Campaign

22 June 2023

Dear PMNCH Board Members and Special Guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to address you during the session Item 5 of the 31st PMNCH Executive Board Meeting (EB). Unfortunately, I was not able to join you in person for the PMNCH EB meeting, but I am pleased to submit a written message on behalf of the IGO Constituency. PMNCH is a longstanding partner to the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), and I am pleased that our partnership continues to grow strong.

The IGO Constituency is very committed to supporting the mobilization for commitments and to engage more widely in the Global Forum of Adolescents as per the 5 asks outlined in the [Partner Engagement Kit](#).

Engaging global and regional political platforms (such as the G7, G20) as well as parliaments is critical to influencing their agendas and elevate the visibility of this important issue among key decision makers. While global engagements are underway, the IGO constituency is examining ways in which to revitalize itself including through expanding membership to **more strategic inter-state collaborations** and identifying strategic mechanisms to engage them.

PMNCH's Parliament Engagement Strategy is currently being implemented. Engaging parliaments and parliamentarians, in line with their accountability role in the commitment follow up and mobilization will be important as they play an important role in making laws, providing effective oversight, and in the budget process.

Different activities took place during the 146th IPU Assembly in Manama (March 2023) and several speakers and MPs expressed interest in understanding better the Adolescent Wellbeing Framework, as well as what would be needed to improve adolescent wellbeing, including good practices in legislation, policies, strategies finances and services. At the IPU Assembly, we also organized a workshop on Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) that aimed to inform parliamentarians why CSE is important for the health and wellbeing of young people and why political and governmental commitment is key to making it happen. The discussion had underscored the need to educate across the life course, but much more remained to be done and further considered. We are currently looking into ways to give these issues more visibility at the upcoming IPU Assemblies. The IPU Advisory Group on Health (AGH), of which PMNCH is a technical partner, will also be consulted and could support addressing adolescent wellbeing. The AGH supports the implementation of the health component of the IPU Strategy by focusing on inequalities and discrimination that stand in the way of universal access to services. One of the main areas of work of the AGH is women's, children's and adolescents' health and well-being.

As the AWB monitoring framework is currently being developed, we encourage linking it to ALMA's tools including the community scorecard. Making parliamentarians aware of this resource is equally important especially as it relates to their own country's accountability mechanisms will be critical.

For the Global Forum for Adolescents (GFA), ALMA's Youth Advisory Council have submitted an expression of interest to lead and contribute to the 5 core programmatic tracks, and side-events of the

Global Forum for Adolescents. The efforts of the National Youth Armies supported by ALMA (both in Africa and diaspora) could be very helpful in disseminating the chatbot link to the already engaged 3.5k African youth and their networks and soliciting their input on matters of importance to them – The chatbot link has been shared with ALMA’s malaria youth champions via the telegram group which has 1000 members. ALMA’s National Youth Armies could also strategically leverage to organize innovative national events.

Young parliamentarians could be encouraged to gather the voices of young people through their functions of constituency outreach. However, I need to point out here that the cut-off point for young MPs in IPU is 45 years of age and not 30. The IPU will promote the GFA through our social medial channels and will undertake future joint collaboration with PMNCH similar to the collaborative posting on Instagram across both the 1.8 Billion Campaign and the IPU channels during the 146th IPU Assembly in Manama which led to increased engagement of the 1.8 Billion campaign.

We are in constant contact with PMNCH and stand ready to mobilize parliamentarians as well as the IGO constituency around the GFA, as appropriate. The deliberations from today’s meeting will help the IGO Constituency to think further on how to support these exciting efforts.

IPU–PMNCH collaboration

The Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health have worked closely since 2008 to highlight the importance of women, children and adolescents’ health (WCAH) and the vital role parliamentarians play in making the issue a national priority, both political and financial. Collaboration has inspired parliamentarians all over the world to acquire skills and knowledge on the issue and intensify their engagement leveraging their constitutional powers. It also suggested a course of action for advancing parliaments’ role in women’s, children’s and adolescents’ health at various levels.

Collaboration to date between the IPU and PMNCH includes the 2020 launch of a ‘Handbook on Road map for action on women’s, children’s and adolescents’ health², as well as other important activities such as capacity building of parliamentarians to acquire skills and knowledge;; field visits in constituencies to raise awareness on the issue and to improve ability to represent people’s needs into sound parliamentary action; and providing input to various accountability mechanisms and reports on women’s, children’s and adolescents’ health.

A grant agreement between the IPU and PMNCH is currently being implemented. It includes a focus on parliamentary capacity building, and on delivering for marginalized and vulnerable communities in line with the new IPU Strategy 2022-2026. Activities are intended to take place in two WCAH commitment-making countries, selected jointly by the IPU and PMNCH, notably Zambia and Malawi. These country activities will also promote the implementation of the WCAH-AWB related provisions of the IPU resolution on universal health coverage (UHC).