



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

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Speech by Mr. Martin Chungong, IPU Secretary General

Parliamentary event at the SDG Summit and other High-Level Meetings

New York, 21 September 2023

Honourable Members of Parliament,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Coming to the end of this parliamentary event, let me thank our panellists and all of you for a rich and insightful discussion. We have heard of the dire status of the SDGs. We have heard of the many obstacles and challenges that stand in the way of more robust and sustained progress. But we have also heard of promising initiatives and how setbacks can be turned into opportunities. I hope you will leave this event with a sense of urgency and strong determination.

The issues that are on the table are not new, but there is only one thing that can drive progress and reverse the current trend on the SDGs: political will.

Political will means commitment: we have the renewed commitment of all countries coming from the SDG Summit and the High-Level Meetings on health. But commitment should be demonstrated through the investment of time, effort and resources, and this is where parliaments have a key role.

Political will also means leadership. It is essential for parliamentarians to be leaders for change to work across political divides and mobilize public support. And we need to empower women and youth so that they can also play their rightful role. For that, parliaments themselves must walk the talk and be places in which women and young parliamentarians can thrive.

Finally, political will means having a long-term vision. The multiple crises we are facing pose the risk of looking for short-term fixes. This is why the 2030 Agenda should inform all deliberations, to always remind us of our long-term goals and the consistent and sustained efforts that are required to achieve them.

The IPU will continue to be on your side in this journey. We will continue to promote these exchanges to define a clearer path for parliamentary action on the SDGs, and to provide a platform to enhance collective action. We will keep devising tools and working closely with national parliaments to ensure they are well equipped to understand and integrate the SDGs into their structures and work.

Parliaments can be strong agents of change, and this is what we need to realize the promise of the SDGs for all people.