



Inter-Parliamentary Union  
For democracy. For everyone.

# 147th IPU Assembly and related meetings

Luanda, Angola  
23 – 27 October 2023

## Results of the proceedings



Inter-Parliamentary Union  
For democracy. For everyone.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page(s)

## Meetings and other activities

### 147th Assembly

1. Inaugural ceremony .....	4
2. Participation .....	5
3. Choice of an emergency item .....	6
4. Debates and decisions of the Assembly and its Standing Committees .....	7
5. Special accountability segment .....	11
6. The Cremer-Passy Prize .....	12
7. Concluding sitting of the Assembly .....	12

### 212th session of the Governing Council

1. Election of the President of the 147th Assembly .....	13
2. Report of the IPU President .....	13
3. Report of the Secretary General .....	13
4. Financial results for 2022 .....	14
5. Financial situation of the IPU .....	14
6. Consolidated budget for 2024 .....	15
7. Regional offices .....	15
8. Questions relating to membership and observer status .....	15
9. Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine .....	17
10. Anti-harassment policy .....	17
11. Code of Conduct for IPU Governance Officials and establishment of an Oversight and Ethics Committee .....	18
12. IPU priority theme for 2024 .....	18
13. Future inter-parliamentary meetings .....	18
14. Reports of committees and other bodies .....	18
15. Election of the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union .....	19
16. Tributes to the outgoing President .....	19

### 291st session of the Executive Committee

1. Activities report by the President .....	19
2. Interim report of the Secretary General on the activities of the IPU since the 211th session of the Governing Council .....	19
3. Members and permanent observers .....	20
4. Reporting by Members on IPU-related activities .....	20
5. Financial questions .....	20
6. Regional offices .....	21
7. Anti-harassment policy .....	21
8. Amendments to the Statutes and Rules .....	21
9. Election of a new IPU President .....	22
10. Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine .....	22
11. Questions relating to the Secretariat .....	22
12. Future inter-parliamentary meetings .....	22

13. Working Group on Transparency, Accountability and Openness .....	22
14. Cooperation between the IPU and the Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments (ASGP) .....	22
15. Election of IPU Vice-Presidents and of the Vice-President of the Executive Committee .....	22
16. Other business .....	22

#### Subsidiary bodies of the Governing Council

1. Forum and Bureau of Women Parliamentarians .....	22
2. Forum and Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians .....	23
3. Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians .....	23
4. Committee on Middle East Questions .....	24
5. Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law .....	24
6. Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine .....	25
7. High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism .....	26
8. Working Group on Science and Technology .....	26
9. Gender Partnership Group .....	27
10. Advisory Group on Health .....	28

#### Other activities and events

1. Joint meeting with the Chairs of the geopolitical groups and the Presidents of the Standing Committees .....	28
2. Second Global Parliamentary Summit on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism: <i>The Global Response to the Call of the Sahel</i> .....	30
3. Parity debate on the theme <i>I care to care: Male parliamentarians engage in equal caring responsibilities</i> .....	31
4. Open session of the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law on the theme <i>The role of parliaments in tackling the humanitarian impacts of climate-related displacement</i> .....	31
5. IPU-ASGP Joint Workshop on <i>The digital transformation of parliaments</i> .....	32
6. IPU-UNICEF joint event on <i>The role of parliaments in securing effective public spending for children's rights</i> .....	33
7. IPU-WHO Joint Workshop on <i>Unpacking the development of the Pandemic Accord</i> .....	33

## Elections, appointments and membership of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

#### Elections and appointments

1. IPU President .....	34
2. Executive Committee .....	34
3. Vice-President of the Executive Committee .....	34
4. Sub-Committee on Finance .....	35
5. Working Group on Transparency, Accountability and Openness .....	35
6. Bureau of Women Parliamentarians .....	35
7. Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians .....	35
8. Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians .....	35
9. Committee on Middle East Questions .....	35
10. Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law .....	35
11. High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG) .....	36
12. Working Group on Science and Technology .....	36
13. Internal Auditors for the 2024 accounts .....	36
14. Bureaux of the Standing Committees .....	36
15. Rapporteurs .....	38

Media and communications .....	38
--------------------------------	----

Membership of the Inter-Parliamentary Union .....	40
---	----

## Agenda, resolutions and other texts of the 147th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Agenda .....	41
--------------	----

**Luanda Declaration:**

<i>Parliamentary action for peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16)</i> .....	42
---	----

**Resolution**

• <i>Orphanage trafficking: The role of parliaments in reducing harm</i> .....	45
--	----

**Reports of the Standing Committees**

• Report of the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security .....	52
• Report of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development .....	54
• Report of the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs .....	57

**Emergency item**

• Results in the roll call vote on the request for the inclusion of an emergency item in the agenda of the Assembly .....	60
---	----

**Reports, decisions and other texts of the Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union****Reports, decisions and other texts**

• IPU Budget for 2024 .....	62
• Scale of contributions for 2024 .....	63
• Terms of Reference of the Oversight and Ethics Committee .....	67
• Report of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians .....	68
• Report of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians .....	69
• Report of the Committee on Middle East Questions .....	70
• Report of the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law .....	72
• 2023 IPU pledge to the Global Refugee Forum .....	74
• Report of the Advisory Group on Health .....	74
• Report of the High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG) .....	75
• Report of the Working Group on Science and Technology .....	77
• IPU priority theme for 2024 .....	79
• Statistics of the Gender Partnership Group .....	82

**Other documents available online**

- [Decisions of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians](#)
- [Policy to prevent and address harassment, including sexual harassment, at IPU Assemblies and other IPU events](#)
- [Code of Conduct for IPU Governance Officials](#)

**Future meetings**

• Future meetings and other activities .....	84
• Agenda of the 148th Assembly .....	88

**Other texts****Outcome document adopted by the Second Global Parliamentary Summit on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism**

• <i>The Global Response to the Call of Sahel</i> .....	89
---	----

**Motion adopted by the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs**

• <i>Bringing gender equality to the UN General Assembly</i> .....	91
--	----

## 147th Assembly

### 1. Inaugural ceremony

*The inaugural ceremony of the 147th IPU Assembly took place at Baía Luanda, Luanda, Angola at 19:00 on Monday, 23 October 2023.*

*The national anthem of Angola and the new IPU anthem were played by the Kaposoka Symphony Orchestra.*

**Ms. Carolina Cerqueira, President of the National Assembly of Angola**, welcomed delegates to Luanda on behalf of the people of Angola and the 220 members of its National Assembly, and said that their presence was testimony to their commitment to build bridges of dialogue and fraternity. The Assembly would see a historic milestone for the IPU, with the election of one of four African women candidates as President. In a time of conflict around the world, it was incumbent on parliamentarians to strive to build peace and enhance their commitment to justice and stronger institutions, in line with the theme of the Assembly.

In response to the proliferation of violent conflict around the world, the international community had to act to ensure the maximum preservation of human life and dignity, and join forces to fight for world peace. World leaders also needed to work to guarantee fundamental freedoms and create a world less prone to inequality. Angolans had had their lives torn apart by over 30 years of conflict, but had learned the route to peace, reconciliation and reconstruction, which in turn had led to development, stability and social cohesion. She wished delegates a pleasant stay in Luanda and expressed her hope that the Assembly would live long in their memories.

**Mr. Martin Chungong, Secretary General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union**, said that the 147th Assembly was an auspicious and momentous occasion, being the first ever to be held in a Portuguese-speaking African country. As an African himself, he was delighted that it was the second time in a year that an IPU Assembly was being held in Africa, following the 145th Assembly in Rwanda. He believed that Africa was full of potential and he urged the continent's leaders to mobilize that potential in support of their communities. He congratulated President Lourenço for being a champion of peace and inclusion, not only in Angola, but also in the wider region. Earlier in the year, he had visited several West African countries experiencing political instability and had been reassured to hear from their leaders that they were keenly aware of the challenges they faced in restoring peace, justice and strong institutions. He had come away with an even greater resolve to mobilize the global community to support the leadership and people of those countries.

In the context of the theme of the Assembly, the IPU understood strong institutions to mean strong parliaments first and foremost. He commended the countries of the Southern Africa region for the high level of representation of women in their parliaments; no less than 12 parliaments in the region were led by women Speakers. A further aspect that parliaments could not ignore in their quest to become stronger institutions was digital transformation, the potential of which needed to be harnessed to make parliamentary business more effective and more attuned to the needs and aspirations of the people. He hoped that, in their deliberations, delegates would make every effort to live up to the motto of the IPU: for democracy, for everyone.

**Mr. Parfait Onanga-Anyanga, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General to the African Union**, delivered a message on behalf of Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, who sent his warmest greetings and apologized for being unable to attend in person due to the many pressing issues on his agenda. The United Nations was grateful to the IPU for its work in promoting the domestication of international law and treaties, its relentless efforts to promote the rule of law globally and strengthen multilateralism, and its steadfast support for the implementation of the SDGs. In response to the overlapping global challenges of violent conflict, terrorism and extremism, the climate emergency, pandemics and widening inequalities – all inflicting the greatest suffering upon the most vulnerable – the United Nations Secretary General had called for a surge in diplomacy and dialogue to rebuild global consensus.

Angola had risen from the ashes of a decades-long fratricidal conflict to become a land of potential and it was no surprise that the African Union had appointed President Lourenço as its Champion for Peace and Reconciliation. Peace must be considered a paramount prerequisite for sustainable development and dialogue, and inclusive political systems were needed to build stronger and more harmonious nations. In Africa, 90% of the targets of the SDGs remained off-track, due to reductions in the

continent's share of global trade, the growth of violent conflict and weak or ineffective institutions. Strong institutions were required not just in Africa, but around the world and as part of a reinvigorated and reformed multilateral system.

**Mr. Duarte Pacheco, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union**, thanked the National Assembly of Angola for its capable hosting of the 147th Assembly. He had been shocked to learn at the start of his mandate that the IPU had not held an Assembly in a Portuguese-speaking country since 1962, in Brazil, and he was therefore thrilled that the final Assembly of his time in office was taking place in the beautiful city of Luanda, which for the next few days would be the global capital of parliaments. Luanda was an ideal city in which to talk about peace; after many years of conflict, Angolans knew all too well the fundamental role played by peace in ensuring economic and social development. The Assembly was taking place at a time when the front pages of newspapers were filled with stories of conflict: in Ukraine, in the Middle East, in Africa, in Myanmar and in Afghanistan. In all those situations, the IPU unreservedly condemned all barbaric and inhumane acts and encouraged the opposing sides to come together to engage in dialogue and seek a peaceful resolution of conflicts and disputes.

After the COVID-19 pandemic, people had thought it would be possible to return to a normal world, but many other challenges and crises had emerged. Parliaments therefore needed to step up their actions to implement the Paris Agreement on climate change, to achieve the SDGs by 2030, and to prepare for the impact of new technologies and digitalization on their own work and on society in general. In a year marked by the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, parliaments must look to uphold the rule of law and protect people's fundamental freedoms. Throughout his mandate as IPU President, which would come to an end at the present Assembly, he had worked tirelessly to reinforce the visibility of the IPU, implement its Strategy, fight for peace and development, and consolidate the Organization's good governance. He wished his successor, likely to be a woman from Africa, every success in taking the IPU into the next phase of its illustrious history.

**H.E. João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço, President of Angola**, expressed his personal satisfaction and the joy of all Angolans at the fact that the 147th Assembly would be taking place in Luanda. Angola was a country of peace and reconciliation, wide religious and cultural diversity, and extensive natural resources, which was engaging in constant efforts to promote sustainable development and social justice. Its National Assembly was the main guarantor of the rule of law, the promotion of citizens' freedoms and rights, and the development of policies representing the wealth of the country's diversity. Angola's greatest achievement was its national reconciliation and return to political stability, and it endeavoured to share and promote solutions for peace founded on those successes among its neighbours in the Great Lakes and Southern African regions.

Parliamentary diplomacy offered a valuable opportunity for resolving conflicts and guaranteeing universal peace and security. In response to the recent escalation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it was essential that the guns be silenced and the way cleared for all types of diplomacy in order to avoid a humanitarian catastrophe. Only the effective creation of a State of Palestine would put an end to the 75-year-long cycle of hatred and violence. Thanking again the Member Parliaments of the IPU for their choice of Angola as the host of the Assembly, he expressed his hope that their deliberations would contribute objectively and concretely to the solution of the various problems facing the world.

*H.E. João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço declared the 147th IPU Assembly open.*

## 2. Participation

Delegations from 128 Member Parliaments took part in the work of the Assembly\*:

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia (The), Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lesotho, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar\*\*, Namibia, Nepal,

\* For the complete list of IPU Members, see [page 40](#).

\*\* As per the decision of the Governing Council in Madrid in November 2021, the IPU continues to engage with the Committee to Represent Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH) for Myanmar. The corresponding delegation attends the Assembly in a non-voting observer capacity.



Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Türkiye, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The following eight Associate Members also took part in the Assembly: the Arab Parliament, the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), the Inter-Parliamentary Committee of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), the Latin American and Caribbean Parliament (PARLATINO), the Pan-African Parliament, the Parliament of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC), the Parliament of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and the Parliamentary Assembly of La Francophonie.

Observers included representatives of:

(i) the United Nations and related organizations: United Nations, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH), Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the World Health Organization (WHO);

(ii) parliamentary assemblies and associations: African Parliamentary Union (APU), Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union (AIPU), Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA), Collective Security Treaty Organization Parliamentary Assembly (CSTOPA), Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), Forum of Parliaments of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (FP-ICGLR), Global Organization of Parliamentarians against Corruption (GOPAC), Maghreb Consultative Council (MCC), International Parliament on Tolerance and Peace (IPTP), Parliamentary Assembly of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (AP-CPLP), Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic Speaking Countries (TURKPA), Parliamentary Assembly of the Union of Belarus and Russia, Parliamentary Union of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation Member States (PUIC), Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum (SADC-PF), UNITE Parliamentarians Network for Global Health;

(iii) International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI);

(iv) Socialist International (SI).

Of the 1,153 delegates who attended the Assembly, 622 were members of parliament (604 from Member Parliaments and 18 from Associate Member delegations). Those parliamentarians included 51 Presiding Officers, 42 Deputy Presiding Officers, 227 women MPs (36.5%) and 188 young MPs (31.28%).

In continuation of practices established at recent Assemblies, the 147th Assembly was an in-person event with adaptations for hybrid participation. All of the session rooms were equipped for external engagement and remote interpretation and these technical capacities were well used throughout the Assembly. All official side events, as well as all sittings of the Executive Committee and the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians (CHRP), allowed remote participation.

The proceedings of the Inaugural Ceremony, Forum of Women Parliamentarians, Assembly General Debate and all sittings of the Governing Council were live streamed in English and the original language, with a total of 12,368 views. See the [Media and Communications](#) section for more details.

### 3. Choice of an emergency item

On 24 October 2023, the IPU President informed the Assembly that the following four requests for the inclusion of an emergency item had been received:

- *Countering Islamophobia and the rise in extremist Islamophobic events through understanding and education, the promotion of tolerance and interfaith harmony, and fostering an environment that encourages respect and empathy among different faith communities* (Pakistan)
- *Stopping the war and violations of human rights in Gaza* (Algeria and Kuwait on behalf of the Arab Group, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), and South Africa on behalf of the African Group)
- *A multifaceted approach to the question of Palestine: Parliamentary diplomacy and Sustainable Development Goal 16* (Malaysia)

- *Towards common ground for peace* (Canada, on behalf of the delegations of Argentina, Austria, Croatia, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Sweden and United Kingdom)

In the subsequent presentations, Pakistan and Malaysia withdrew their proposals and expressed their support for the joint proposal entitled *Stopping the war and violations of human rights in Gaza*.

Algeria expressed opposition to the joint proposal entitled *Towards common ground for peace*, describing it as biased and lamenting its failure to condemn the aggressions committed towards the Palestinian people.

The Assembly then proceeded with a roll-call vote on the two remaining proposals (see [pages 60-61](#)).

The President announced the result of the votes: neither of the two proposals still on the table had obtained the requisite two-thirds majority. The President informed the Assembly that such an outcome meant that neither could be included on the agenda of the 147th Assembly. The IPU Secretary General confirmed that the President's statement was in accordance with the Rules of the Assembly (Rule 11.2(a)).

#### 4. Debates and decisions of the Assembly and its Standing Committees

- (a) General Debate: *Parliamentary action for peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16)*  
(Item 3)

During the three days of deliberations, some 146 legislators from 111 Member Parliaments, including 34 Presiding Officers and 21 young parliamentarians, as well as representatives of five Associate Members and nine permanent observers, contributed to the General Debate. The proceedings of the Debate were webcast, and many of the good practices and recommendations that emerged were reflected in the outcome document.

**Ms. C. Cerqueira, President of the National Assembly of Angola**, opened the General Debate on 24 October 2023 and noted the relevance of its theme in the context of growing conflict around the world. The three main aspects of SDG 16 – peace, justice and strong institutions – held the key to responding to the many challenges the world was facing. She hoped that delegates would take the opportunity of the Assembly to condemn all acts of warfare, attempts to destroy strong institutions and incitements to intolerance and hatred. She believed that dialogue and understanding could lead to consensual solutions in the interests of peace and development.

She had been heartened to hear the Secretary General report at the inaugural ceremony the previous evening on encouraging signs of improvements in the representation of women and young people in parliament, in particular in Africa. Unfortunately, the continent was also facing widespread armed conflict, which could only ever lead to social inequality. Angola was making considerable efforts to support peacebuilding in neighbouring countries. A final aspect of fulfilling the targets of SDG 16 would be for parliaments to reflect on how to become more transparent and accountable at all levels. Angola had made great strides in this regard in recent years, to become a thriving multi-party democracy.

**Mr. D. Pacheco, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union**, said that the theme of the General Debate corresponded directly to the core mandate of the IPU as a democracy-building organization. Without more effective institutions, it would be impossible to combat poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation and many other problems. SDG 16 offered a valuable roadmap for fixing the many ways in which politics had become dysfunctional, turning people off from participating and making it harder to achieve consensus.

No country could be considered perfect in terms of the operating methods of its institutions. The level of development of a country was no signifier of the strength of its institutions; many developing countries had diverse and accountable parliaments while many developed countries were falling behind, in areas such as transparency or violence against women, for example. He discouraged speakers from using the General Debate as an opportunity to denounce other Members for their failures, instead encouraging delegates to learn from one another the many ways in which parliaments could strengthen governance in the interests of sustainable development for all.

**Ms. C. López Castro (Mexico), President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians**, encouraged participants in the General Debate to consider the theme through a gender lens, putting the needs of women and girls, representing over half the world's population, at the centre. In its landmark resolution 1325 in 2000, the United Nations Security Council had recognized the importance of including gender perspectives in efforts to build peace and security. Increasing the number of women in parliament was part of that goal, given the potential for strong parliamentary contributions to peace processes.



Access to justice was another vital issue for women, and parliaments had a unique opportunity to reform legal frameworks to make justice systems gender-responsive. Parliaments themselves also needed to become more gender-sensitive, as per the commitment made by IPU Member Parliaments in the Kigali Declaration at the 145th Assembly.

In a video message, **Mr. D. Carden (United Kingdom), President of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians**, said that there was a certain resonance between the theme of the Assembly and the location in which it was being held, a country that had travelled a difficult road since its independence in 1975 to become a peaceful and just society with strong institutions. Around the world, many glaring examples of exclusion were still being experienced, of which the participation of young people was just one. The IPU was the custodian of indicators under SDG 16 on youth and women's participation, and its latest report on youth participation showed that progress was still falling short.

The young MPs of the IPU were the designated changemakers in improving that situation. Over 300 of them had gathered for the recent Ninth Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians in Hanoi, Viet Nam. The IPU's *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign continued to gain support for its pledges on youth quotas, lowering the age of eligibility, and other means of supporting youth involvement and empowerment. As part of the ongoing process to revise the IPU Statutes and Rules, the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians had put forward a proposal to lower the threshold below which an MP would be considered as young from 45 to 40 years of age.

**Mr. J.S. Caholo, Executive Secretary of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR)**, said that, although he believed that the Great Lakes region of Africa had boundless potential, it was also facing immense challenges, in the form of conflict, violence, poverty, arms trafficking and a lack of access to justice. The primary mission of the ICGLR was to promote peace, security, stability and development in the region, and thus SDG 16 provided a highly relevant framework in which to address those challenges and advance reconciliation and prosperity.

Parliamentarians had a duty to achieve the targets set out in SDG 16, by shaping legal frameworks, overseeing government action and voicing the aspirations of the people. Parliaments had a particular role in promoting peacebuilding and resolving conflicts and were an ideal forum in which to ensure inclusivity by considering the perspectives of women, youth, minorities and marginalized groups. Parliaments also had a responsibility to uphold justice and the rule of law, and finally to function efficiently and transparently. Parliamentary action constituted a formidable force for advancing peace, justice and strong institutions, the foundations on which a more prosperous and sustainable future could be built.

**Ms. P.F. Maharavo, Together for a New Africa**, said that, growing up in Madagascar, she had been driven by a desire to make her village and her country a better place to live. Following studies in Italy, she had returned to become a university lecturer. In parallel, she had participated in the *Come back to Africa* and later *Together for a New Africa* movements, which aimed to use mentoring and networking to promote peace and justice education among young people throughout the continent. Young people currently made up the majority of Africa's population and should therefore be a force for prosperity. However, conflict, unemployment, corruption and injustice prevented them from participating as active citizens.

The growth of a more individualistic outlook on life around the world was having a particular impact in Africa as it ran contrary to the continent's tradition of *ubuntu*, or "humanity towards others". Moreover, climate change, authoritarianism, violence, a loss of confidence in institutions and mass migration were all driving people to leave their countries in search of a better life or to stay and participate in one of Africa's growing number of coups d'état. Parliaments and other governing institutions needed to engage in co-responsibility, or even co-leadership, with young people and civil society more generally.

(b) Standing Committee on Peace and International Security

The Standing Committee on Peace and International Security held its sittings on 24 and 26 October 2023 with its President, Mr. M.B.M. Al-Ahbab (Qatar), in the Chair.

At its first sitting, on 24 October 2023, the Committee held two panels back-to-back. The first panel – an expert hearing on the social and humanitarian impact of autonomous weapons systems and artificial intelligence, was opened by Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs who, in her video message, called for urgent action to prohibit and regulate such systems, and urged parliamentarians to undertake prompt concrete action in that field. The presentations by three experts and the co-Rapporteur of the forthcoming draft resolution, were followed by a debate. The 16 delegates who took the floor addressed the need for an international

instrument on the prohibition and regulation of autonomous weapons systems that would bring back meaningful human control over such systems and counter the unpredictable aspects of new technologies of warfare.

The second panel on the theme *Inventory of tools for MPs to engage in dialogue, legislation, oversight and prevention in the pursuit of peace* was in follow-up to the 2022 IPU resolution on peace processes. Approaches to common security and human security were presented, as were the principles of peace, which all form the basis of a necessary paradigm shift in the understanding of security. Six delegates took the floor to share examples of good practices which can guide parliamentarians in their engagement in conflict prevention. The development of an inventory of tools was welcomed.

At its last sitting, on 26 October 2023, the Committee debated the theme *The role of parliaments in promoting a culture of transparency, anti-corruption and citizen engagement to restore trust in national and international institutions and strengthen peace*. The presentations by the three experts and the debate that followed, featuring 11 speakers, showed the extent to which fraud undermined peace by depriving it of vital funds that could be used to support actions to improve people's well-being. They also pointed out that cooperation between parliaments and supreme audit institutions was essential in that fight.

The Committee adopted its work plan as discussed by the Bureau during its meeting held on 25 October 2023.

The Committee elected Ms. A. Kuspan (Kazakhstan) as its new President, and Mr. M. Rezakhah (Islamic Republic of Iran) as Vice-President (see report on [page 52](#)).

#### (c) Standing Committee on Sustainable Development

The Committee met on 25 and 26 October 2023 and held three panel discussions featuring experts from the United Nations system and academia. About 50 delegations were in attendance. Mr. W. William (Seychelles), Vice-President of the Standing Committee, chaired the sessions.

The first panel featured a debate under the title *Partnerships for climate action: Promoting access to affordable green energy, and ensuring innovation, responsibility and equity*, which corresponds to the title of the resolution that will be presented to the Committee at its next session in March 2024.

The second panel presented the draft Outcome Document of the Parliamentary Meeting that will take place in the United Arab Emirates at the 28th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28), which is entrusted with the follow up to the Paris Agreement on climate change.

The third panel focused on the topic *Ensuring global food security*. It discussed various ways to transform agrifood systems to make them more sustainable and more resilient, as well as ways to deliver lower cost nutritious foods and affordable diets for all.

The Committee also approved its work plan for the next Assembly. It will dedicate all its sittings to the drafting of the abovementioned resolution.

The Committee elected Mr. W. William (Seychelles) as its new President, and Ms. M.S. Al Suwaidi (United Arab Emirates) as Vice-President (see report on [page 54](#)).

#### (d) Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights

The Standing Committee held two sittings, on 24 and 26 October 2023, with the President of the Standing Committee, Mr. A. Gajadien (Suriname), in the Chair.

The Committee considered the draft resolution on *Orphanage trafficking: The role of parliaments in reducing harm*. The resolution was introduced by the co-Rapporteur Ms. L. Reynolds (Australia). The second co-Rapporteur, Mr. E. Bustamante (Peru) was not able to attend the Assembly.

When examining the draft resolution, the Committee considered 194 amendments submitted by 26 parliaments (Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Benin, Canada, China, Cuba, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kenya, Lithuania, Malaysia, Nicaragua, Russian Federation, South Africa, South Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Türkiye, Ukraine, and the United Arab Emirates). Two amendments were proposed by the Forum of Women Parliamentarians.

The co-Rapporteur presented the revised draft resolution to the Committee at its final sitting on 26 October 2023. The draft resolution was adopted by acclamation. After the adoption of the resolution, the delegation of India expressed a reservation on operative paragraph 4. The delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran subsequently expressed a reservation on the reference to SDGs 4.1 and 4.2 in preambular paragraph 22.

The Bureau met on the morning of 26 October 2023. It considered proposals for the future work programme of the Committee. Two proposals for the subject item of the Committee's next resolution had been submitted before the deadline, one from Morocco and a joint proposal from Canada and the United Republic of Tanzania.

Following a recommendation by the Bureau, the Committee approved the proposal put forward by Canada and the United Republic of Tanzania entitled *The impact of artificial intelligence on democracy, human rights and the rule of law*. It also approved the nomination of Ms. M. Rempel Garner (Canada) and Ms. N. Lugangira (United Republic of Tanzania) as co-Rapporteurs. A preparatory debate would take place at the 148th Assembly in March 2024 and a resolution on the theme would be finalized at the 149th Assembly in October 2024.

The Committee approved the Bureau's recommendation to hold a panel discussion at the 148th Assembly on the theme *Sustainable actions to improve the life conditions of people with disabilities, including their chances for education and work opportunities*, which would not lead to a resolution.

The Chair noted that the theme of the next resolution and the panel discussion were well aligned with the focus areas the Committee had adopted for its work in the coming years, namely improvements to the functioning of parliaments; democracy and human rights in the digital era; and a more inclusive, fairer world. These focus areas should allow the Committee to deepen its expertise, increase its impact and strengthen its contribution to the IPU Strategy.

The resolution on *Orphanage trafficking: The role of parliaments in reducing harm* was presented by the co-Rapporteur Ms. L. Reynolds (Australia) to the Assembly at its plenary sitting in the afternoon of 27 October 2023. The resolution was adopted by consensus. The reservations that had been formulated by the delegations of India and the Islamic Republic of Iran were noted for the record (see resolution on [page 45](#)).

The Committee elected Ms. J. Mahmood (Maldives) as its new President, and Mr. A. Torosyan (Armenia) as Vice-President.

#### (e) Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs

The Committee met in two sessions with about 40 delegations attending and Mr. A. Gryffroy (Belgium) presiding. The first session featured Ms. Z. Virani, the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Angola, who explained that the UN work with Angola was focused on advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The discussion dealt with the role of parliamentarians in providing oversight of their governments and passing legislation to implement the SDGs agenda.

The second session focussed on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) reform and featured Mr. T. Albanai, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Kuwait to the United Nations and co-Chair of the UN Intergovernmental Negotiations (ING) on the question of UNSC reform, and Ms. A. Novosseloff, Research Associate at the University of Paris-Panthéon-Assas and expert on the UNSC.

The Committee passed its first motion entitled *Bringing gender equality to the UN General Assembly*. The motion calls on parliamentarians to take specific actions domestically to ensure more women are appointed as Permanent Observers to the United Nations and the ratio of 1:4 women to men in the UN General Assembly is improved (see motion on [page 91](#)).

The Committee chose to remove three Bureau members (Ms. H. Tigranyan of Armenia, Mr. A. Lins of Brazil and Ms. E. Qatrawi of the Republic of Moldova) from their positions for lack of participation.

The Committee elected Mr. D. McGuinty (Canada) as its new President, and Ms. C.L. Crexell (Argentina) as Vice-President (see report on [page 57](#)).

## 5. Special accountability segment

As in the last three Assemblies, the General Debate included a special accountability segment chaired by the IPU President, Mr. D. Pacheco. Delegations were invited to contribute with interventions on their actions to advance the IPU's declarations, resolutions and outcome documents, in line with the IPU's strategic focus on stronger accountability.

Ms. A. Filip, the IPU Director of the Division for Member Parliaments and External Relations, presented the annual Members' reporting exercise. Every year, on a rotational basis, a number of parliaments from all geopolitical groups were designated to report on parliamentary follow-up to IPU resolutions and decisions and, to that end, they were requested to complete a reporting survey. The rate of respondents to the 2023 survey had increased from the previous years to reach 71%. The survey's main finding was that 85% of reporting Members had shared Assembly outcomes within parliament and nearly half of the respondents had taken additional proactive measures towards implementing the 2022 IPU resolutions, particularly in the areas of climate change and gender equality. Good practices from IPU Members such as Fiji, Germany, Ghana, Latvia and Morocco were shared with the plenary. The IPU Members were encouraged to share Assembly declarations and resolutions within their parliaments, promote parliamentary debates on Assembly outcomes, draft legislation aligned with IPU resolutions and recommendations, and engage in the IPU's annual reporting exercise.

A total of 13 delegations, including the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH), an IPU Observer, took the floor to share their good practices in following up with recent IPU decisions, including the Nusa Dua Declaration *Getting to zero: Mobilizing parliaments to act on climate change* (144th IPU Assembly), the Kigali Declaration *Gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments as drivers of change for a more resilient and peaceful world* (145th IPU Assembly), the Manama Declaration *Promoting peaceful coexistence and inclusive societies: Fighting intolerance* (146th IPU Assembly), decisions regarding the human rights of parliamentarians, and other recent IPU resolutions on the topics of human-trafficking, cybercrime and humanitarian crises.

Examples of parliamentary action in follow-up to IPU resolutions included:

- Bahrain: Following the Kigali Declaration, Bahrain established a committee to ensure equal opportunities for men and women.
- Canada: Parliament established a committee on the status of women and mainstreaming gender sensitivity into the budgeting process.
- Fiji: Parliament took legislative action to address cyberbullying, harassment and cybercrimes.
- Germany: The German Bundestag launched the "Parliamentarians protect Parliamentarians" initiative, which aims to defend parliamentarians and human rights defenders whose rights are violated.
- Guinea: The Transitional National Council has been holding consultations and workshops with women's rights organizations and various international non-governmental organizations to mainstream gender issues into future legislation.
- Guyana: The IPU Assembly resolutions are systematically communicated by the Speaker to all MPs, who are asked to mainstream the outcomes of IPU meetings into their work. As a result, for example, women must constitute one third of all parliamentary candidates in Guyana and the women's parliamentary caucus has been reactivated.
- India: A bill reserving 33% of seats in the lower house and state assemblies for women was recently passed.
- Indonesia: Following the Kigali Declaration, the House of Representatives passed a bill on women's and children's welfare that aims at enhancing their rights, particularly in the workplace. Measures include an extension of maternity leave.
- Morocco: A law on negative carbon footprint in forests was recently passed.
- Thailand: The Speaker referred the Universal Periodic Review recommendations issued by the UN Human Rights Council to the Parliament's Foreign Affairs and Human Rights Committees, which launched an inquiry into the measures that could be undertaken to meet those recommendations.

Other delegations that took the floor during this segment were from Argentina and Portugal.

## 6. The Cremer-Passy Prize

In a special segment during the Assembly, the IPU President, Mr. D. Pacheco, presented the second annual Cremer-Passy Prize to Mr. Samuelu Penitala Teo, Speaker of the Parliament of Tuvalu.

This year, in view of the IPU's climate campaign, *Parliaments for the Planet*, nominees had to demonstrate a first-class track record of parliamentary action on climate change.

Nominations for the Prize were made by the IPU's six geopolitical groups, who were asked to submit one candidate from their region with a second nomination as an alternate.

The winner was selected, according to the Prize Rules, following the evaluation and the deliberations of the Prize Selection Board, made up of Honorary IPU Presidents or prominent MPs selected by the geopolitical groups.

Mr. Teo was nominated by the IPU's Asia-Pacific Group, currently chaired by Australia. The current Chair of the Asia-Pacific Group, the Speaker of the Australian Parliament, Mr. M. Dick, commended Mr. Teo on his outstanding record on climate action.

Mr. Teo has been a tireless advocate of climate action since 1998 when he first became an MP in the Parliament of Tuvalu and has raised awareness of the climate vulnerability of his country throughout his political career.

He became Minister for Natural Resources in 2015, followed by his nomination as Special Envoy on Climate Change and then Special Envoy for Disaster Risk Reduction. In 2019, he became Speaker of the Parliament.

## 7. Concluding sitting of the Assembly

At the concluding sitting on 27 October 2023, **Ms. C. Cerqueira, President of the 147th Assembly and Speaker of the National Assembly of Angola** introduced the Luanda Declaration on *Parliamentary action for peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16)* (see [page 42](#)). The Assembly unanimously endorsed the Luanda Declaration.

**Ms. L. Reynolds (Australia), co-Rapporteur of the resolution of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights**, presented the resolution *Orphanage trafficking: The role of parliaments in reducing harm* (see [page 45](#)). The Assembly adopted the resolution by consensus with reservations expressed by India on one paragraph and the Islamic Republic of Iran on one paragraph.

The Assembly took note of the Reports of the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security, presented by Bureau member **Ms. D. Bergamini (Italy)**, of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, presented by Bureau member **Ms. M.S. Al Suwaidi (United Arab Emirates)**, of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights, presented by its President, **Mr. A. Gajadien (Suriname)**, and of the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs presented by its Acting President, **Mr. A. Gryffroy (Belgium)** (see [pages 52-59](#)).

The Assembly approved the subject item for the resolution to be drafted by the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights for adoption at the 149th IPU Assembly, together with the rapporteurs that would be working on the draft resolution (see [page 38](#)).

At the conclusion of the Assembly, the representatives of the geopolitical groups took the floor: **Mr. M. Bouden (Algeria)** on behalf of the African Group, **Mr. A. Gryffroy (Belgium)** on behalf of the Twelve Plus Group, **Mr. M. Nader (Iraq)** on behalf of the Arab Group, **Ms. D. O'Neill (Australia)** on behalf of the Asia-Pacific Group, and **Mr. M. Nadir (Guyana)** on behalf of the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean. They conveyed their thanks to the leadership, members and staff of the National Assembly of Angola for the warm welcome that delegates had received, hailed the historic IPU presidential election with its four African women candidates, unanimously congratulated Ms. T. Ackson of the United Republic of Tanzania on her victory in that election, expressed appreciation for and bid farewell to Mr. D. Pacheco as his presidency came to an end, welcomed the IPU's newest Member, the Parliament of the Bahamas, and expressed hope that, at future Assemblies, Members could find ways to reach a consensual position on issues such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Exercising its right of reply, the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran rejected the comments made by the Chair of the Twelve Plus Group regarding a specific case that had passed through the Iranian judicial system (Nobel Peace Prize laureate Narges Mohammadi); comments which it believed constituted meddling in the internal affairs of another country.



In his concluding remarks, **Mr. D. Pacheco, IPU President** expressed his sincere thanks to the National Assembly of Angola and the IPU Secretariat for their work in preparing for the Assembly, which had been a resounding success and had realized his ambition for the IPU to hold an Assembly in a Portuguese-speaking country before the end of his mandate. He also thanked delegates for the time they had committed to preparing for and attending the Assembly. In the General Debate, speakers had presented many inspirational examples of good parliamentary practice with a view to achieving the objectives of SDG 16, many of which were reflected in the Luanda Declaration. He urged Member Parliaments to make the most of the IPU in difficult times, in particular in efforts to put an end to hostilities in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and to address the many recent coups d'état in the Sahel region. As his presidency drew to a close, he thanked the Members of the IPU for their trust in him and congratulated Ms. T. Ackson on her successful election.

In her concluding remarks, **Ms. C. Cerqueira, President of the 147th Assembly and Speaker of the National Assembly of Angola**, said that she felt a sense of great accomplishment at the closing of the Assembly, which had brought together the global parliamentary community in a spirit of friendship, cooperation and unity. She congratulated Mr. D. Pacheco on his resolve to bring an Assembly to a Portuguese-speaking country and for his highly successful tenure at the head of the IPU. She congratulated Ms. T. Ackson on her election as the first African woman President of the IPU and also congratulated the Parliament of the Bahamas on becoming the IPU's 180th Member Parliament. During the Assembly, Member Parliaments had demonstrated the importance of diversity by including many women and young parliamentarians in their delegations, which had facilitated discussions on a wide variety of issues. She thanked President João Lourenço for his support of the Assembly and encouraged delegates to experience Angola's rich culture before returning home.

She further thanked delegates for their participation, wished them safe travels and looked forward to seeing them again at the 148th Assembly in Geneva.

*Ms. C. Cerqueira declared the 147th IPU Assembly closed and the IPU anthem was played.*

## 212th session of the Governing Council

### 1. Election of the President of the 147th Assembly

At its first sitting on 24 October 2023, the Governing Council proposed that Ms. C. Cerqueira, Speaker of the National Assembly of Angola, be elected President of the 147th IPU Assembly.

### 2. Report of the IPU President

The Governing Council took note of the report of the IPU President on his activities since the 146th Assembly. The Governing Council took the opportunity to express its gratitude to the President, who had demonstrated a genuine commitment to the service of the IPU over the three years of his mandate.

### 3. Report of the Secretary General

The Governing Council took note of the IPU Secretary General's report on the activities carried out by the IPU over the past nine months to implement its Strategy. Since January 2023, the IPU had organized:

- 32 national support activities in 12 countries to build the capacity of parliaments institutionally and on key thematic issues,
- 47 regional and global events to mobilize and leverage parliamentary action and facilitate learning: 16 in person, 26 online and 5 in hybrid format.

The IPU had also launched eight publications.

Members expressed their appreciation to the Secretary General and his team for the outstanding work accomplished in such a short time and especially for adhering to the objectives of the IPU Strategy. The report confirmed the trust they had always placed in the Secretary General and his team, whom they encouraged to keep up the promising momentum for the successful achievement of all strategic objectives. In this vein, they also highlighted the necessity that the recommendations and resolutions emerging from the various activities carried out by the IPU be transformed into actions for the benefit of the people.

A more comprehensive report on the impact of the IPU's work in 2023 will be presented to Members at the next Assembly, as per usual practice.



#### **4. Financial results for 2022**

The Governing Council considered the Financial Report and Audited Financial Statements for 2022. As the first Assembly of 2023 had taken place unusually early in March and there had not been sufficient time to complete the external audit, the Governing Council had decided to approve the 2022 accounts at its second session of 2023 in Luanda.

The financial results for 2022 were introduced by Ms. J. Alm Ericson (Sweden), Chair of the Sub-Committee on Finance. The Financial Statements had been prepared in full compliance with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS). She reported that the External Auditor, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India, had expressed to the Sub-Committee on Finance that the financial statements were accurate and the IPU's internal controls were strong. During the year under review, net assets had decreased due to unrealized investment losses of CHF 0.8 million. Global markets had had their worst performance in more than a decade due to the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, interest rate rises and global inflationary pressures. Fortunately, the market situation had stabilized in 2023 and the IPU's long term investment returns remained positive and on target.

Ms. Alm Ericson took note that the situation of arrears of Member contributions had been increasing over recent years. The arrears of the Parliament of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela rose every year by around CHF 100,000 and now stood at CHF 626,000, and there were other Members in arrears across all regions with which the Secretariat was in regular contact. Ms. Alm Ericson encouraged all Members to work through their geopolitical groups to reduce the list of arrears. Nevertheless, she confirmed that the IPU had made a provision for all its long outstanding debts, should the Governing Council decide to suspend the IPU membership rights of any Member Parliaments and write off their contribution arrears.

The Internal Auditor, Mr. A. Gryffroy (Belgium), presented his report, in which he conveyed his opinion that the accounts gave a true and fair reflection of the financial situation of the IPU at 31 December 2022 and complied with all current standards and rules. The External Auditor had expressed a positive opinion with no reservations on the Financial Statements, confirming that all previous recommendations had now been completed or were under implementation. Only one minor recommendation was made, which the IPU management had accepted and was already implementing. The overall result for the year 2022 had been impacted by global investment market performance. Mr. Gryffroy noted that, since the start of his mandate as Internal Auditor, for the 2020 financial year, the total amount of arrears had increased by CHF 0.4 million although most of the increase arose from a few individual cases during a very challenging economic period. He also recommended that the IPU financial statements should always be circulated to the IPU Members as soon as they had been audited and finalized, and in any case no later than 30 June each year.

Mr. Gryffroy concluded that the financial management of the IPU had a strong foundation based on internal controls and its financial position was healthy. He recommended the 2022 financial statements and the Secretary General's administration for approval by the Governing Council.

There were interventions from the floor congratulating the Sub-Committee on Finance and the Secretariat team for its financial transparency, seeking clarifications about the process of review of the financial statements and requesting information on how the independence of the Internal and External Auditors was assured.

The Governing Council approved the Secretary General's financial administration of the IPU and the financial results for 2022.

#### **5. Financial situation of the IPU**

The Governing Council received a report on the financial situation of the IPU as at 31 July 2023 and an updated list of unpaid assessed contributions. Reporting on behalf of the Executive Committee, Ms. Alm Ericson noted that the IPU's budget performance was on track for the year to date and the Organization's finances were currently healthy and stable. Investment returns had already begun to recover during the first half of 2023 and the situation of voluntary funding was also healthy for the remainder of 2023. She was pleased to report that arrears of contributions continued to be paid during the Assembly, as all Members were keen to exercise their full voting and participation rights during an important week for the IPU.

## 6. Consolidated budget for 2024

The consolidated draft budget for 2024 was presented to the Governing Council. The draft budget had been prepared under the supervision of the Sub-Committee on Finance and had been reviewed in detail by the Executive Committee. Reporting on behalf of the Executive Committee, Ms. Alm Ericson summarized the draft budget, which was projected at a total of CHF 17.7 million in income and expenditure. She highlighted that the work of the IPU would continue right across the five objectives that were set out in the 2022-2026 Strategy, with added focus in a few specific areas. The IPU would maintain its momentum on climate action from 2023, and would also place a particular focus on its peace work, given the multiple crises and conflicts that were currently ongoing or emerging. At the same time, the Organization would continue to invest in its digital transformation to enhance impact as well as its delivery for Members.

In terms of income, the core budget included an increase of 3% in total assessed contributions, as had been agreed previously by the Governing Council, in order to rebalance total contributions by the end of the current Strategy period to return to their 2010 level. At the same time, voluntary income was initially projected to decrease slightly due to the expiry of some large multiyear grants. New grants were likely to be mobilized from donors but the contracts and agreements were not yet in place, so a prudent approach had been taken to reflecting that income in the budget. Ms. Alm Ericson encouraged all Members to help with the mobilizing of voluntary funds for the IPU from within their own countries and geopolitical groups.

The Governing Council approved the 2024 consolidated budget.

## 7. Regional offices

The Governing Council was apprised of the progress made regarding the establishment of IPU regional offices. An agreement had been signed with the Government of Uruguay in June 2023, giving the IPU the status of an international organization in Uruguay. The signature of the agreement was the first step towards the establishment of a Regional Office in the GRULAC region. The next step is the negotiation of an operational agreement with the Parliament of Uruguay to define the budgetary and logistical elements.

In addition to this, negotiations are currently ongoing between the Government of Egypt and the IPU Secretariat regarding the recognition of the IPU as an international organization with the appropriate immunities and privileges.

## 8. Questions relating to membership and observer status

On the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the Governing Council approved the accession of the Parliament of the Bahamas to the IPU. The Governing Council wished the Parliament of the Bahamas a warm welcome and urged it to fulfil the obligations that came with membership.

The Governing Council approved the recommendation of the Executive Committee to maintain the permanent observer status of the Nordic Council, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (AP-CPLP), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Economic Cooperation Organization (PAECO), and the Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas (COPA), and to reactivate the permanent observer status of the Organization of American States (OAS).

With 22 votes against, 10 in favour and 2 abstentions, the Governing Council rejected the request of the Association of the Secretaries General of Arab Parliaments for observer status, which had been recommended by the Executive Committee for approval earlier in the week.

The Governing Council was apprised of the situation of certain parliaments, organized into four categories according to the severity of the situation, and adopted a number of recommendations from the Executive Committee.

In the first category, non-functioning parliaments, there had been little development in the situation in **Afghanistan** since 2021, when the Taliban had suspended the Parliament. The Governing Council therefore maintained its previous decision to allow the former parliament to participate in IPU Assemblies in a non-voting observer capacity.

The situation had gradually worsened in **Haiti** and in January 2023 had reached a point where there was no longer a functioning parliament. Due to the security situation in the country, the prospects for elections were poor. Haiti had not paid its contributions to the IPU since 2019, which meant that it was

liable to have its membership rights suspended under Article 5.3 of the Statutes. On the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the Governing Council agreed to suspend Haiti's membership rights until the election of a new Parliament.

The situation in **Myanmar** was similar to that of Afghanistan. One positive development was the reports that the former leader Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi had now been moved from prison to house arrest, with some of the charges against her dropped. In light of no significant change in the situation, the Governing Council maintained its previous decision to recognize the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw as the IPU's interlocutor, with participation at IPU Assemblies in non-voting observer capacity.

**Niger** had been the fourth country in succession in Africa, after Guinea, Mali and Burkina Faso, to experience a coup d'état, on 26 July 2023. Niger had subsequently been suspended from the African Union. As a matter of principle, the IPU had condemned the coup in Niger. The Secretary General had remained in contact with some members of the dissolved Parliament. In a letter to the Secretary General, the Prime Minister of Niger had provided assurances that necessary arrangements were being made to establish a National Transitional Council. The Governing Council expressed concern regarding the situation, took note with regret of the current lack of a parliamentary institution, called for a swift return to constitutional order and recommended that the Secretary General pursue engagement with the country to explore how best it could provide assistance to the planned National Transitional Council.

In **Sudan**, the situation had changed for the worse, with no functioning parliament since April 2019 following a coup. Civil war had now broken out, with two military factions engaged in a murderous conflict, causing a serious humanitarian crisis in the country. In that view, the Governing Council maintained its former decision to suspend the Parliament of Sudan until new elections took place.

In the second category, transitional parliaments, **Burkina Faso** currently had a fully fledged inclusive and functioning Transitional Legislative Assembly. The Secretary General had visited Burkina Faso and confirmed the authorities' willingness to continue to work with the IPU in order to speed up a return to constitutional rule. The IPU had signed a technical assistance agreement with the transitional parliament. The transitional period was due to end in July 2024 but was likely to be delayed due to ongoing security concerns. The Governing Council took note of those developments, expressed the hope that efforts to speed up a return to constitutional rule would succeed, and reiterated the IPU's will to continue to support the Transitional Legislative Assembly.

In **Chad**, a transitional parliament had been established in October 2021 and had recently approved a new constitution, which would be submitted to a referendum. The IPU was providing capacity building support for the parliamentary administration. The Governing Council took note of the recent developments and urged the transitional authorities to speed up efforts towards a return to constitutional order, including the organization of the constitutional referendum in December 2023 and the subsequent organization of legislative elections.

**Gabon** was another addition to the list of countries in Africa that had recently experienced a coup d'état, in the present case on 30 August 2023 following parliamentary and presidential elections. The IPU had issued a statement condemning that turn of events as a matter of principle and the African Union had suspended Gabon. A transitional parliament had been established, and the Secretary General had met with its Speaker, who was leading a delegation to the present Assembly. The Secretary General hoped to visit the country soon in order to ascertain the commitment of the authorities to a return to constitutional rule. The Governing Council took note of the establishment of the transitional parliament and requested that the IPU continue to engage with the authorities to support a swift return to constitutional order.

**Guinea** was in a similar situation to Burkina Faso and Mali, with a transitional body that was working with the IPU. The Secretary General had visited the country in May 2023, where the authorities had explained that the military had stepped in to fix issues that had arisen as a result of the excesses of the previous administration. The military had pledged not to stay in power any longer than necessary. During his visit, the Secretary General had also attended and addressed the start of a constitutional debate, which was taking place with a view to adopting a new constitution and ending the transitional period by 2025. The Governing Council recommended to continue engaging with the transitional body and expressed a strong hope that Guinea would keep to the constitutional roadmap that would lead to elections being held in 2025.

**Libya** had been in an intractable situation for some time; the Parliament elected in 2014 remained the IPU's interlocutor but elections due in December 2021 had not taken place. Clashes between rival armed groups and the severe flooding in September 2023 had compounded an already difficult situation

in the country. Following the recent adoption of a new electoral law, elections were now expected to take place by June 2024. The Governing Council encouraged the authorities to ensure that they would stick to the announced schedule and urged the Secretary General to continue his engagement with the House of Representatives.

**Mali** was in a similar situation to Burkina Faso and Guinea. A new constitution had been adopted in June 2023 by referendum but the subsequent elections had now been delayed. The IPU had been providing assistance to members of the Transitional National Council to conduct outreach activities, as well as providing training to parliamentary staff. The Governing Council took note of the adoption of the new constitution, expressed concern that the elections had been delayed, and expressed hope that elections would take place as soon as possible so that a fully-fledged Parliament could be set up.

In **South Sudan**, the transitional parliament was functioning under difficult circumstances, with the transition period extended to February 2025, when elections were due to take place. The planned process to draft a new constitution had been delayed. The Governing Council expressed the hope that the constitution drafting process would get back on track and that elections for a fully-fledged parliament would take place as soon as possible.

In the third category, countries where the political situation impacted parliaments' capacity to function, in **Guinea Bissau**, long overdue elections had taken place in June 2023. A new parliament had been established and was functioning. The Governing Council noted with concern that the country had arrears in its contributions to the IPU since 2018, despite constant promises to pay. Guinea Bissau's voting rights were thus now liable for suspension unless the issue was resolved soon. The Governing Council took note of the positive political development and expressed its hope to see a full normalization of the situation in the country now that a functioning parliament was in place.

The Governing Council took note that the case of **Palestine** was being discussed extensively by the Committee on Middle East Questions, which would report separately on its deliberations.

The Governing Council was pleased to learn that the situation in **Tunisia** was returning to normality following elections for the lower house of the Parliament, which was now fully functional. The upper house would be elected in February 2024. The Governing Council took note that the Secretary General was in contact with the authorities with a view to possible IPU assistance.

The Governing Council took note that the situation in the **Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela** had not evolved, apart from the fact that elections were due to take place in 2024. The National Assembly elected in 2020 was the de facto legislature in the country and the National Assembly elected in 2015 was operating mostly in exile. The President of the 2015 National Assembly, Mr. Juan Guaidó, had been deposed. The Governing Council endorsed the Executive Committee's recommendation to mandate the Secretary General to reach out to the Venezuelan authorities with a view to a possible normalization of the Parliament's membership of the IPU.

In the case of **Yemen**, the Governing Council took note that no new substantive information had emerged. The Parliament continued to function under challenging conditions. The Governing Council requested that the Secretary General continue to monitor the situation.

Finally, the Governing Council took note of the situation in several countries where the political situation constituted a potential threat to parliament's capacity to function, namely **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, **Eswatini**, **Peru** and the **Syrian Arab Republic**. The Governing Council requested that the Secretary General continue to monitor the situation in those countries.

## 9. Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine

On 27 October 2023, Mr. P. Katjavivi (Namibia), Speaker of the National Assembly of Namibia and Vice-President of the IPU Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine, reported that the Task Force had convened virtually on a regular basis over the previous six months. Task Force members had dedicated their efforts to scrutinizing the evolving situation, upholding lines of communication with the parliamentary delegations of Ukraine and the Russian Federation, and formulating a roadmap for collaborative actions between the Task Force and the warring parties.

## 10. Anti-harassment policy

The Governing Council adopted a *Policy for the prevention of harassment, including sexual harassment, at IPU Assemblies and other events*. The Policy was presented by the Chair of the Gender Partnership Group, Mr. A.R. Al Nuaimi.

The Policy is a comprehensive framework which aims to ensure that everyone can participate in IPU Assemblies and events in an inclusive, respectful and safe environment, free from harassment and sexual harassment. It builds on definitions and approaches included in the *UN Code of Conduct to prevent harassment, including sexual harassment, at UN system events*.

The Policy includes three main components:

1. Prevention, to promote a common understanding of what is expected by everyone in a zero-tolerance environment for harassment.
2. Support and assistance to persons who report incidents of harassment.
3. Procedure to investigate, resolve matters and establish accountability.

The IPU Secretariat will develop and implement a plan of practical measures, including raising awareness and providing training, to accompany this Policy and ensure its effective implementation. The IPU Gender Partnership Group will regularly monitor the implementation of this Policy and its related plan and present a report every two years to the IPU membership, setting out the results and the way forward, including any potential revisions identified.

## **11. Code of Conduct for IPU Governance Officials and establishment of an Oversight and Ethics Committee**

The Governing Council adopted a Code of Conduct for IPU Governance Officials and Terms of Reference for an Oversight and Ethics Committee which were presented by Ms. J. Alm Ericson, Chair of the Working Group on Transparency, Accountability and Openness. The aim of this Code of Conduct was to reinforce and sustain a culture of trust and mutual accountability at all levels. To achieve the IPU's vision for transparency, accountability and openness, it was of utmost importance that IPU Governance Officials act in the best interest of the IPU and abide by the Organization's core values of equality, inclusiveness, respect, integrity and solidarity. These values applied when IPU Governance Officials exercised their governance and oversight duties over the IPU's committees, programmes, activities, missions and Assemblies.

The Oversight and Ethics Committee would oversee compliance with the Code of Conduct and would also serve as an oversight body for the implementation of the *Policy to prevent and address harassment, including sexual harassment, during IPU Assemblies and other events*.

## **12. IPU priority theme for 2024**

Following on from the IPU's focus on climate change in 2023, which would nonetheless continue into the following year, the Governing Council endorsed the IPU priority theme for 2024 of peace and security (see [page 79](#)).

## **13. Future inter-parliamentary meetings**

The Governing Council approved the list of future meetings and other activities to be funded by the IPU's regular budget and by external sources (see [page 84](#)). It was confirmed that the 148th Assembly would take place in Geneva, Switzerland in March 2024.

The Governing Council approved the recommendation of the Executive Committee to start preliminary preparations for the Sixth World Conference of Speakers Parliament, which would be held at the United Nations Office at Geneva in 2025.

## **14. Reports of committees and other bodies**

The Governing Council approved the recommendations contained in the reports on the activities of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians, the Forum of Young Parliamentarians, the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians, the Committee on Middle East Questions, the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law, the High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG), the Working Group on Science and Technology, the Gender Partnership Group and the Advisory Group on Health. The Council endorsed the new appointments to those bodies (see [page 34](#)).

The Governing Council adopted decisions concerning 121 parliamentarians in 9 countries submitted by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians (CHRP).



## 15. Election of the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

At its final sitting on 27 October 2023, following a single round of voting by secret ballot, the Governing Council elected Ms. T. Ackson (United Republic of Tanzania) as IPU President for a three-year term.

The outgoing President, Mr. D. Pacheco, was made an Honorary President of the IPU.

## 16. Tributes to the outgoing President

At the end of the Governing Council, a special segment was devoted to tributes to the outgoing President of the IPU, Mr. D. Pacheco. A video retrospective was played and representatives of the six geopolitical groups took the floor to pay their own tributes. The speakers unanimously commended Mr. Pacheco's warmth, good humour, humility, commitment to democracy and human rights, openness to dialogue and willingness to listen, and agreed that he was leaving behind a great legacy thanks to the considerable energy he had brought to the role. Representatives of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians and Forum of Young Parliamentarians praised Mr. Pacheco's constant engagement with the activities of the two Forums. The Secretary General said that Mr. Pacheco's presidency had been characterized by his commitment and selfless service to the IPU and congratulated him on the many concrete achievements of his three years in office.

# 291st session of the Executive Committee

## 1. Activities report by the President

The President shared with the Executive Committee an overview of his activities since the 211th session of the Governing Council, which fell under three categories, namely his efforts to reinforce the IPU's visibility, support the implementation of the IPU Strategy and consolidate the IPU's good governance. He had attended around 90 international and regional meetings and undertaken some 20 country visits. The President highlighted his joint efforts together with the Secretary General to achieve universal membership of the IPU, which had paid off with the accession of the Parliament of the Bahamas. The members of the Executive Committee paid tribute to the President, who had demonstrated an unconditional commitment to his role and set the bar extremely high for his successor.

## 2. Interim report of the Secretary General on the activities of the IPU since the 211th session of the Governing Council

The Executive Committee was apprised of the interim report of the Secretary General. It congratulated the Secretary General and his team for the impressive level of activity (47 global and regional events, and national events in 12 countries) over the past nine months. They commended the collaborative relationship between the Secretary General and the President which had facilitated these achievements.

The Executive Committee appreciated the efforts of the Secretariat to provide capacity building through the organization of various events, be it in-person or remotely. With a view to providing more visibility to these events, the Executive Committee recommended strengthening communications efforts so as to secure the strong participation of MPs.

The Executive Committee seized the opportunity to remind the IPU membership that such capacity-building activities were part of the tools for the implementation of the IPU's Strategy, which they had all committed to support. The Executive Committee therefore encouraged all Members to participate in these IPU activities both in-person and online.

The Executive Committee noted with satisfaction the encouraging achievements related to the IPU's ongoing digital transformation, including studies of possible tools to facilitate communication between the IPU Secretariat and Member Parliaments; the upgrade of the IPU Parline database, which provided useful information on parliaments, as well as statistics on women and young parliamentarians; and the continued organization of online and hybrid meetings.

The Executive Committee welcomed the IPU Secretariat's efforts to adapt to the digital era and encouraged it to maintain that momentum, which would facilitate the smooth flow of the Organization's communications. The Executive Committee also thanked Members for their invaluable contribution to those achievements.



The Executive Committee took note of ongoing efforts to promote interfaith dialogue and support parliamentary engagement in the subject, including the two-part report on religion and belief and the mainstreaming of related activities throughout the work of the Organization. The Executive Committee also supported the initiative to carry forward the recommendations of the successful Parliamentary Conference on Interfaith Dialogue held in Marrakesh earlier in the year, notably by gradually developing a permanent mechanism within the IPU to coordinate parliamentary action on this issue.

### **3. Members and permanent observers**

The Executive Committee recommended that the Governing Council approve the request for affiliation of the Parliament of the Bahamas to the IPU. The new affiliation would increase the number of IPU Members to 180.

The Executive Committee recommended that the Governing Council approve the request for Associate Membership status from the MERCOSUR Parliament (PARLASUR), which was currently a permanent observer.

Following on from a review of all IPU observers, the Executive Committee decided to restore permanent observer status to the Organization of American States (OAS), which had been removed from the list due to an absence of any communication with the IPU over several years, but had since expressed an interest in resuming and deepening its cooperation with the IPU.

The Executive Committee also decided to maintain permanent observer status for several parliamentary assemblies or associations which had similarly been considered inactive, but which had since expressed an interest in strengthening their ties with the IPU, namely:

- the Nordic Council;
- the Parliamentary Assembly of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (AP-CPLP);
- the Parliamentary Assembly of the Economic Cooperation Organization (PAECO);
- the Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas (COPA).

As for the African Union (AU), which had also been assessed as inactive in the review of observers, the Executive Committee decided to defer its decision pending the outcome of the forthcoming mission of the Secretary General to the headquarters of the AU in Addis Ababa.

The Executive Committee considered a request for observer status from the International Parliamentarians Congress (IPC). The Executive Committee agreed that the IPC did not meet the criteria for observer status at the present time and invited the Secretariat to pursue other avenues of cooperation, including the conclusion of memoranda of understanding where relevant.

The Executive Committee also considered a request for observer status from the Permanent Conference of Political Parties of Latin America and the Caribbean (COPPPAL) and agreed to defer further consideration of the request until such time as COPPPAL provided additional information on the global scale of its activities.

Further to a vote by secret ballot, the Executive Committee decided to recommend to the Governing Council that the Association of Secretaries General of Arab Parliaments be admitted as a permanent observer.

### **4. Reporting by Members on IPU-related activities**

The Executive Committee took note with satisfaction of the reporting by Members on IPU-related activities, which showed an encouraging increase in Members' successful implementation of the outcomes of IPU meetings. The Executive Committee took the opportunity to extend its thanks to the Members, whose increased involvement was a vivid illustration of their commitment to support the implementation of the IPU Strategy.

### **5. Financial questions**

The Chair of the Sub-Committee, Ms. J. Alm Ericson, informed the Executive Committee of the work of the Sub-Committee on Finance, which had met to discuss financial questions ahead of the session of the Executive Committee.

The Sub-Committee had examined the financial statements for 2022 and the External Auditor's report. The External Auditor had issued a positive audit opinion and confirmed the accuracy of the financial statements. The IPU's Internal Auditor for 2022 (Mr. A. Gryffroy, Belgium), the IPU Secretary General and the Chair of the Sub-Committee on Finance had held a meeting with the External Auditor to formally discuss the report. Only one minor recommendation had been issued.

The Sub-Committee on Finance had taken note of two particular aspects of the 2022 accounts that were also reported to the Executive Committee. Investment performance had suffered in 2022 due to the global market environment but fortunately the market situation had stabilized in 2023 and the IPU's long-term investment returns had remained positive and on target. It had also taken note that the amount of arrears due from Member contributions had been increasing steadily in recent years. The Sub-Committee on Finance encouraged the governing bodies to decide how to address this exceptional situation. Nevertheless, the Chair of the Sub-Committee confirmed that the IPU had made a financial provision for all long-outstanding debts in case of write-off.

The Sub-Committee had also reviewed the financial situation of the IPU at 31 July 2023. The Organization's budget performance was on track for the year so far and its finances were healthy and stable. The situation of voluntary funding was also healthy for the remainder of 2023.

The Sub-Committee had discussed the IPU's draft budget for 2024 and reviewed the budget document, which it presented to the Executive Committee in full. The core budget included the increase of 3% in total assessed contributions agreed previously by the Governing Council, aimed at rebalancing total contributions back to their level of 2010 by the end of the current Strategy period. At the same time, voluntary income was projected to decrease slightly due to the expiry of some large multiyear grants, so a prudent approach had been taken to reflecting that income in the budget.

The Executive Committee received and reviewed the Secretary General's usual update on the mobilization of voluntary funding.

The Executive Committee noted that the Comptroller and Auditor General of India had now completed his audit mandate. Due to other new commitments in Geneva, he would not be seeking a further extension of the mandate. The Secretary General had therefore approached the Indonesian supreme audit institution and was awaiting confirmation of their interest. The Executive Committee agreed that their appointment could be confirmed by silence procedure in due course.

At the conclusion of her mandate, the Chair of the Sub-Committee on Finance thanked the IPU Secretariat team for its outstanding work.

## **6. Regional offices**

The Executive Committee was apprised of encouraging news relating to the establishment of an IPU regional office in Uruguay following the signing of an agreement between the Secretariat and the Government of Uruguay. Regarding the proposed office in Egypt, negotiations were underway to conclude a similar agreement. The Executive Committee congratulated Uruguay and expressed the hope that the Egyptian parliamentary authorities would conclude a similar agreement in the near future.

## **7. Anti-harassment policy**

The members of the Executive Committee recommended that the Governing Council approve the proposed *Policy to prevent and address harassment, including sexual harassment, at IPU Assemblies and other IPU events*, along with its implementation and oversight mechanism. Taking into consideration the long-term impact of the policy, the members of the Executive Committee agreed that it would promote a culture of protection, respect and dignity for women and men at IPU events as well as setting a good example for local communities.

## **8. Amendments to the Statutes and Rules**

The Executive Committee was apprised of the arrangements for amendments to the IPU Statutes and Rules. As per established practice, the process is being guided by the Executive Committee, which will therefore set up a working group – including a representative from each geopolitical group – to examine the amendments that have been proposed and report back to the membership. Pending the confirmation of the membership of that working group, the Executive Committee agreed that a realistic timeframe to adopt the amendments would be the Assembly in October 2024. The Executive Committee also agreed that the deadline for the submission of proposed amendments should be extended to the end of November 2023.

## **9. Election of a new IPU President**

The Executive Committee was briefed on the arrangements relating to the election of the President of the IPU. The Executive Committee requested that the organizing team ensure equal treatment of candidates so as to make the election as fair, open and transparent as possible.

## **10. Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine**

The Executive Committee received an update on the activities of the Task Force. The Executive Committee encouraged the Task Force in its efforts to find peaceful solutions, especially in light of the ongoing challenging situation in the region.

## **11. Questions relating to the Secretariat**

The Executive Committee was briefed on staff movements in the IPU Secretariat.

The Executive Committee agreed to renew the mandate of the Chair of the Consultative Commission, Mr. A. Kohler, for a period of four years starting 1 November 2023.

## **12. Future inter-parliamentary meetings**

The Executive Committee reviewed and endorsed the list of future meetings.

Furthermore, taking into account the prevailing geopolitical context, which would make visa guarantee uncertain for delegates to travel to New York, the Executive Committee recommended holding the Sixth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament at the United Nations Office at Geneva in 2025. It further recommended that the Preparatory Committee, traditionally composed of 20 Speakers of Parliaments representing all the geopolitical groups, be constituted and move ahead with the preliminary arrangements for this important global meeting.

## **13. Working Group on Transparency, Accountability and Openness**

The Executive Committee welcomed the efforts of the Working Group on Transparency, Accountability and Openness towards greater transparency, as illustrated by the development of a Code of Conduct for IPU Governance Officials, and the Terms of Reference for an Oversight and Ethics Committee. The Executive Committee recommended that the Governing Council approve both documents.

## **14. Cooperation between the IPU and the Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments (ASGP)**

The Executive Committee took note of the report on cooperation between the IPU and the ASGP. The members of the Executive Committee called for further strengthening of that win-win cooperation.

## **15. Election of IPU Vice-Presidents and of the Vice-President of the Executive Committee**

Mr. A.R. Al Nuaimi was unanimously elected as Vice-President of the Executive Committee. In light of the numerous vacancies on the Executive Committee arising at the 147th Assembly, the Executive Committee decided to defer the election of the IPU Vice-Presidents to a later date.

## **16. Other business**

The Executive Committee paid a well-deserved tribute to its outgoing members and awarded them each a membership certificate for their insightful contributions to the work of the Executive Committee.

# **Subsidiary bodies of the Governing Council**

## **1. Forum and Bureau of Women Parliamentarians**

The 36th session of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians was held on 23 October 2023. It brought together 196 participants, including 131 parliamentarians (102 women and 29 men) from 61 countries.

The President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, Ms. C. López Castro (Mexico), opened the session. The Forum elected Ms. F. Malaquias, member of the National Assembly of Angola, to the Presidency of its 36th session.

In order to contribute to the work of the Assembly, the participants examined, from a gender perspective, the draft resolution before the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights entitled *Orphanage trafficking: The role of parliaments in reducing harm*. The Forum then proposed to the Standing Committee a number of amendments to the draft resolution. All the proposed amendments were included in the resolution.

The Forum also organized a panel discussion on *Women in politics: To stay or not to stay?* during which the participants examined the challenges faced by women when taking up a political decision-making position, and when pursuing a long and fulfilling political career. The Forum called on parliaments to ensure that their working environment was respectful and gender-sensitive, and that they applied zero tolerance to all forms of gender violence. It was also necessary to adapt work to avoid burnout and the tension between political and personal life.

The Bureau held meetings on 23 and 27 October 2023. It called on the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians to speed up the elaboration of a procedure that was adapted to the needs of women parliamentarians who were victims of gender-based and sexual violence (see report on [page 68](#)).

## 2. Forum and Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians

Held on 24 October 2023, the Forum of Young Parliamentarians brought together 86 young MPs, 41% of whom were women. It was presided over by Ms. E.T. Muteka (Namibia), on behalf of the President of the Board of the Forum, Mr. D. Carden (United Kingdom), who was unavoidably absent. Following the opening remarks, the new IPU report *Youth participation in national parliaments: 2023* was presented. It highlighted the fact that levels of youth participation in parliament remained very low and put forward solutions to the issue.

The participating young MPs provided updates on recent developments in their countries. They contributed youth perspectives to the topics before the current IPU Assembly. They also held a hearing with candidates to the IPU presidency.

The Forum approved the nomination of Mr. S. Ismayilov (Azerbaijan), to the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians, and appointed Mr. W. Soto Palacios (Peru) and Ms. S. Falaknaz (United Arab Emirates) to prepare youth overview reports on the resolutions which will be examined at the 148th IPU Assembly in March 2024.

At its meeting earlier that day, the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians decided to establish a youth hub within the framework of the IPU Centre for Innovation in Parliament (CIP) (see report on [page 69](#)).

## 3. Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians

The Committee held its 172nd session from 22 to 26 October 2023. Mr. S. Cogolati (Belgium), President, Ms. M. Odhiambo (Kenya), Vice-President, Mr. E. Blanc (France), Mr. M. Hussain Sayed (Pakistan) and Mr. H. Kamboni (Zambia) participated in the session. Ms. L. Quartapelle (Italy) and Ms. C. Asiaín Pereira (Uruguay) also participated in the session remotely. Mr. B. Mbuku Laka (Democratic Republic of the Congo) and Ms. A. Reynoso (Mexico) were unable to take part in the session.

During the session, the Committee examined the situation of 131 parliamentarians (23% of whom were women) in 14 countries. New cases concerning 39 parliamentarians were declared admissible in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (four MPs), Myanmar (seven MPs), Pakistan (four MPs), South Sudan (one MP) and Zimbabwe (23 MPs). Two cases, concerning a former parliamentarian from Egypt and a parliamentarian from Peru respectively were declared inadmissible, and one case concerning three MPs in Myanmar and another concerning two MPs from the Philippines were closed. The Committee also held eight hearings (one of which took place online) with national delegations and complainants.

The Committee submitted decisions to the Governing Council for adoption on the situation of 121 parliamentarians in the following countries: Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eswatini, Iraq, Myanmar, Pakistan, Philippines, Senegal, Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe (see [decisions web page](#)).

#### 4. Committee on Middle East Questions

Since the last Assembly held in March 2023, the Committee on Middle East Questions met four times (21 July, 17 October, 23 and 26 October 2023) with at least six members in attendance at each sitting. The Committee agreed that the importance of its role lay in identifying concrete actions to establish constructive dialogue between Israel and Palestine and proposing solutions to achieve peaceful coexistence.

The Committee discussed the Israeli military operation in the Jenin refugee camp carried out on 3 and 4 July 2023. Violence was escalating to dangerous levels and what had happened in Jenin would repeat itself in other areas if no peace negotiations were on the horizon. Members of the Committee noted that the political hopelessness felt by young Palestinians could lead to a deterioration of the situation and that that knowledge should guide the Committee's approach to the conflict.

Members agreed on a set of recommendations with respect to the crisis in the Palestinian territories and Israel that erupted on 7 October 2023. The recommendations included: the cessation of all acts of violence by all parties by way of a complete ceasefire; the immediate, permanent and unimpeded lifting of the humanitarian aid blockade of the Gaza Strip; the immediate release of all hostages; and finally, the resumption of negotiations between both parties with the aim of establishing a two-State solution. The Committee agreed that the recent events reaffirmed the need to organize a visit to the region for members to see for themselves how they could contribute to the peace process (see report on [page 70](#)).

#### 5. Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law

The Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL) met on 24 October 2023.

The Committee heard an update on recent developments with regard to specific IHL and refugee crisis situations. These included: Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Myanmar, Nagorno Karabakh, Sudan and Ukraine. The Committee also focused on the question of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and heard a brief on the humanitarian situation in Gaza and Israel.

Committee members noted with concern the multiplication of conflict situations and the increasing number of men and women, boys and girls having to flee to escape from violence and persecution (more than 110 million forcibly displaced people by May 2023; a more detailed analysis is given in the full report on [page 72](#)). In view of the fact that the Democratic Republic of the Congo alone accounts for more than 5.5 million internally displaced persons on its territory, the Committee decided to monitor the situation in the country at its next sessions.

The Committee made a special plea with regard to the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan, especially after the recent decision by the Taliban to exclude women from working in national, international non-governmental and United Nations organizations, which significantly affected meaningful access to work for women and girls in need.

With regard to conflict-related situations, including the current situation in Gaza and Israel, Committee members reiterated the obligation of States and other parties to respect and ensure respect for IHL in all circumstances, as follows:

- All civilians must be protected from the effects of military operations, without any adverse distinction and in all situations, and not be objects of an attack, used as human shields or held hostage.
- Agreements must be passed to allow humanitarian corridors or safe passage of civilians out of areas of armed conflict or violence.
- Parties must allow humanitarian aid to reach civilians in need, and must facilitate rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian relief.
- Civilian objects must not be the objects of attacks; this includes objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population, such as hospitals, schools, water facilities and electricity infrastructure.
- Medical personnel and units exclusively assigned to medical duties must be respected and protected in all circumstances.

The Committee expressed a strong and urgent call for wars to stop, for IHL to be respected and for humanitarian assistance to be provided to affected civilians, including refugees and internally displaced populations. It recalled the importance of bearing in mind all decisions and discussions, the fact that, first and foremost, we are dealing with human beings, and that all lives are equally important.



The Committee discussed preparations for the Global Refugee Forum (GRF) that will be held in December 2023. Committee members agreed to reach out to all IPU Members to invite them to report back to the IPU on their involvement in the GRF and on their progress in the implementation of pledges.

The Committee furthermore updated the IPU's pledges submitted to the GRF in 2019. The text approved by the Committee and subsequently endorsed by the Governing Council, can be found on [page 74](#).

The Committee discussed work towards the universalization and domestic implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions. It called on MPs to begin by championing discussions on these two Conventions in their Parliaments, to assess the reasons why some States are not yet party to the Conventions and the degree of implementation of the Conventions in States that are signatories.

The Committee adopted a workplan for the coming year. Committee members also agreed to resume its missions to countries in crisis possibly including Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia and Poland.

The Committee re-elected as its Chair, for a one-year term, Mr. J.K. Waweru (Kenya).

## **6. Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine**

On 27 October 2023, Mr. P. Katjavivi (Namibia), Speaker of the National Assembly of Namibia and Vice-President of the IPU Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine, reported that the Task Force had convened virtually on a regular basis over the previous six months. Task Force members had dedicated their efforts to scrutinizing the evolving situation, upholding lines of communication with the parliamentary delegations of Ukraine and the Russian Federation, and formulating a roadmap for collaborative actions between the Task Force and the warring parties.

Deep concern continued to be expressed as the war persisted, resulting in countless casualties on both sides. The Task Force continued urging for a ceasefire and the resumption of negotiations. In the interim, it also directed its attention towards incremental measures that could potentially lead to constructive dialogue and enhanced mutual understanding. Notably, the Task Force identified a series of humanitarian issues on which to focus:

1. Nuclear safety
2. Food security
3. Access to, exchange of, and treatment of prisoners of war
4. Protection of ecologically hazardous sites
5. The situation of children affected by the conflict, particularly in the context of population displacements.

The Task Force noted that progress in any of these areas could result in a small win that would build confidence and serve as a stepping stone towards the peaceful resolution of the conflict. Even in the absence of immediate peace talks, Task Force members underscored that significant work could be done to alleviate human suffering, all in alignment with their core responsibility as parliamentarians to represent and safeguard the well-being of the people.

On the occasion of the 147th IPU Assembly, the Task Force held an in-person meeting on 25 October 2023 and engaged in discussions with the delegations of Ukraine and the Russian Federation. After fruitful discussions, it was evident that both delegations displayed particular interest in collaborating on the issue of children affected by the conflict. Consequently, the Task Force established a medium-term goal to intensify efforts and sustain consultations with both delegations on that specific humanitarian concern.

Furthermore, the Task Force agreed on diversifying its engagement options, including possibly conducting bilateral meetings between individual members and the warring parties. The Task Force acknowledged that each member brought unique connections and insights that could potentially unlock new avenues for dialogue. In this regard, the Task Force warmly welcomed Ms. S. D'Hose, President of the Senate of Belgium, as a new member, succeeding Ms. A. Gerkens, former Senator of the Netherlands.

During discussions with both delegations, the importance of in-person consultations between the IPU Assemblies was also underscored. Both parties concurred on the necessity for extensive parallel meetings with sufficient time to make tangible progress. Consequently, the Task Force decided it would



begin preparations for in-depth separate discussions with both delegations at the IPU Headquarters in Geneva in early 2024. These meetings would be conducted with the support of experts and specialized UN bodies.

## **7. High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism**

The High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG) held its fourteenth meeting (hybrid format) on 11 May 2023. Members were briefed on the second phase of HLAG's enhanced mobile application which was available to download.

The fourth and fifth thematic meetings of the *Call of the Sahel* that focused on development and education were held virtually on 27 and 28 September 2023. The meetings were attended by some 70 participants representing 25 parliaments and 20 panellists representing various specialized United Nations agencies, the World Bank, academia, the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), civil society, youth and women's organizations from the Sahel region, as well as regional parliamentary assemblies and the Secretariat of the Interparliamentary Committee of the G5-Sahel.

There was profound concern about the deteriorating situation in the Sahel region which posed a threat to the population and constituted a menace to global peace and security. The increased level of instability and insecurity jeopardized the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It was concluded that the solution to the Sahel's problems lay in investing in development and education, which were interrelated. Security and governance issues also had to be addressed. It was recommended that the roadmap for the second phase of the *Call of the Sahel* include a comprehensive analysis of the situation in each country, along with strategies for development projects, security policies and improvements in governance. Also, the international community needed to address the situation in the Sahel with the same urgency as it did with the other conflict situations in the world.

On 24 October 2023, the fifteenth HLAG meeting discussed the Sahel situation and the outcomes of the five thematic meetings under the *Call of the Sahel* initiative focused on: environment, communities, security, education and development. The aim of the meetings was to consider and comprehend the needs and aspirations of the Sahel's population. It was concluded that addressing development was the key solution to the challenges faced by the Sahel region. Also, development efforts must be coupled with solid security strategies, including improvements in good governance. Participants called for dialogue and international cooperation, increased global attention, investment and practical actions to support the region.

To ensure a comprehensive and sustainable response, it was proposed to establish an ad-hoc committee within the HLAG to monitor and follow up on the progress made. It was recommended that financial support be provided for education, particularly for the youth in the Sahel. A clear and well-defined roadmap with prioritized goals, deadlines and budget allocations was proposed to guide the efforts effectively. The international community was encouraged to adopt a more coordinated and concrete approach in addressing the challenges faced by the Sahel region.

Mr. D. Naughten, Chairperson of the IPU Working Group on Science and Technology, presented three key recommendations from the Science for Peace Parliamentary Meeting, held in September 2023 in Quy Nhon, Viet Nam. The recommendations, which could be a basis for development of projects in the Sahel countries, are the following: take evidence-based decisions on water and sanitation with open-source data to enhance collaboration between scientists and parliamentarians; encourage community engagement through scientific initiatives; share technologies and expertise and support the UN Water Convention while focusing on active implementation and integration into overseas development aid (see report on [page 75](#)).

## **8. Working Group on Science and Technology**

The Working Group on Science and Technology held three sittings: one online sitting on 6 September 2023, and two in-person sittings in Luanda on 24 and 26 October 2023. At least ten members attended each of the sittings.

The Working Group members gave briefings on their respective pilot projects and contributions on the engagement of parliaments with the scientific community. Based on the outputs of the pilot projects that are to be completed before 31 December 2023, the members agreed to publish a parliamentary toolkit on the engagement of parliaments with the scientific community at the upcoming 148th IPU Assembly.

The Working Group emphasized the importance of strengthening ties with IPU partner organizations including the United Nations, and agreed to participate in the upcoming Parliamentary Meeting on the occasion of the 28th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28), to be held on 6 December 2023 in the United Arab Emirates, as well as the upcoming 9th United Nations Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals, to be held on 9 and 10 May 2024 in New York.

The Working Group applauded the success of the Science for Peace Parliamentary Meeting on *Water security and insecurity: Rebuilding peaceful coexistence with science*, held in cooperation with the International Centre for Interdisciplinary Science and Education (ICISE) from 11 to 13 September 2023 in Quy Nhon, Viet Nam. The Meeting participants had exchanged legislative good practices and model legislation on harnessing technologies for monitoring and exploring new water resources. The outcome recommendations included urging countries to accede to the United Nations Water Convention and the proposal to hold a future Global Parliamentary Summit on Water and Food Security.

The Working Group members discussed the ethics of artificial intelligence (AI) as the theme of the next Science for Peace School, to be held at the Synchrotron-light for Experimental Science and Applications in the Middle East (SESAME), in Allan, Jordan. Discussions included critical aspects of AI, as well as the interplay between technological advancement, and the preservation of democratic values and human rights in an increasingly AI-driven world.

The Working Group was briefed by the Chairperson on progress in the drafting of the International Charter on the Ethics of Science and Technology, and set an action plan for finalizing the Charter and gathering expert feedback to be able to formally adopt it at the upcoming 148th IPU Assembly in Geneva. The Working Group reasserted its availability to assist the work of other IPU bodies (see report on [page 77](#)).

## 9. Gender Partnership Group

The Gender Partnership Group held its 48th session on 22 and 26 October 2023. In attendance were the Chair, Mr. A.R. Al Nuaimi (United Arab Emirates), and members Ms. J. Alm Ericson (Sweden), Mr. A. Saidov (Uzbekistan) and Ms. C. López Castro (Mexico), President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians.

As per its mandate, the Group reviewed the state of women's participation in national parliaments, as well as in IPU bodies and Assemblies. It examined in particular the composition of delegations at the 147th Assembly. As at 27 October 2023, 36.4% of the delegates at the Assembly were women (see [page 82](#)) which was above the average of the past two Assemblies (Kigali, October 2022, and Manama, March 2023), but lower than in Madrid (November 2021) and Nusa Dua (March 2022), where a record 38.9% women delegates had been achieved. Gender-balanced delegations attending the 147th Assembly were commended. In Luanda, 42 delegations out of 128 (or 32.8%) were gender-balanced, namely composed of 40 to 60% women or men. This is a clear improvement from the last Assembly, in Manama, when 27.2% of delegations were gender-balanced (37 out of 136 delegations). The aforementioned 42 gender-balanced delegations attending the 147th Assembly are listed on [page 83](#).

Of the 128 delegations present, 120 were composed of at least two delegates, of which 10 were all-male (8.3%). In addition, 3 delegations of two or more delegates were composed entirely of women. These 13 single-sex delegations are listed in the Annex on [page 82](#). All in all, 7 delegations are subject to sanctions at this Assembly, down from 11 at the last Assembly.

The Group also presented to the Executive Committee and Governing Council the new *Policy to prevent and address harassment, including sexual harassment, at IPU Assemblies and other IPU events* and began discussing an implementation action plan. As per its mandate, the Group pursued discussions on how to support parliaments with few women members. It expressed concern at the fact that over 11% of the world's single or lower chambers still had less than 10% women members (21 out of 185 chambers for which data is available).

In follow-up to the prior dialogues held at the 144th and 145th Assemblies, the Group met with the Nigerian delegation further to the elections held in February 2023 which saw a further decrease in the representation of women in Parliament. The Nigerian delegation assessed that gender stereotypes, combined with women's socioeconomic exclusion, were the main barriers to having a level playing field for women. Political party leaders continued to put forward all-male candidate lists at elections.

In addition, despite efforts to adopt constitutional amendment bills to enable electoral gender quotas, the bills had been rejected by the outgoing Parliament. Renewed efforts were being envisaged, including reintroducing constitutional amendment bills. Awareness raising and advocacy were crucial. Political parties must also become more gender sensitive and inclusive. In addition, capacity building for women would be very useful, as well as the provision of resources in campaigning and outreach.

The Group expressed its eagerness to support the Nigerian National Assembly's efforts. The Nigerian delegation agreed to develop a programme of work for implementation with IPU support. The Group will continue to monitor the situation of Nigeria at its next session.

## **10. Advisory Group on Health**

The IPU Advisory Group on Health met on 24 October 2023 with six out of 10 members in attendance, as well as technical partners from the World Health Organization (WHO), the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH), and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. The official cooperation agreements the IPU has with the WHO and PMNCH respectively, were presented to the Group.

The Group elected Ms. L. Clifford-Lee (Ireland) as its new Chair and Mr. F.E. Ndugulile (United Republic of Tanzania) as its new Vice-Chair, for a mandate of one year.

The Group discussed its rules and practices in the context of amendments to the IPU Statutes and Rules and expressed its wish to be consulted during the amendment drafting process.

The Group also discussed peace and security – the priority theme for 2024 – focusing on linkages between conflict, climate change, displacement and health. It highlighted the long-term consequences of conflict on health, including the disruption of health systems and mental health impact. It acknowledged that health can be a bridge for peace by way of collective and apolitical efforts in finding solutions to save lives and reduce suffering.

The Group reflected on the field visit it had conducted on 23 October 2023 at Hospital Materno Infantil Dr. Manuel Pedro Azancot de Menezes in Luanda, where it was apprised of the main indicators on maternal and child health. Despite progress, coverage of family planning remains low, with high rates of early pregnancies. The Group appreciated the Hospital's high standard but expressed concern regarding its accessibility to the population, including the most vulnerable and marginalized. It therefore recommended looking more closely at the primary health care level, and expressed its readiness to continue its exchanges with the National Assembly of Angola and to share good practices in the area of sexual and reproductive health and rights (see report on [page 74](#)).

## **Other activities and events**

### **1. Joint meeting with the Chairs of the geopolitical groups and the Presidents of the Standing Committees**

On 23 October 2023, the IPU President and Secretary General met with the Chairs of the geopolitical groups and the Presidents of the Standing Committees. The meeting was attended by: Ms. T. Ackson (United Republic of Tanzania), Chair of the African Group; Mr. A. Al-Salihi (Iraq), on behalf of the Arab Group; Mr. M. Dick (Australia), Chair of the Asia-Pacific Group; Mr. S. Rachkov (Belarus), Chair of the Eurasia Group; Ms. S. Carvajal (Mexico), Chair of the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC); and Mr. A. Gryffroy (Belgium), Chair of the Twelve Plus Group and Acting President of the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs; as well as by Mr. M.B.M. Al-Ahbab (Qatar), President of the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security; Mr. W. William (Seychelles), Acting President of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development; and Mr. A. Gajadien (Suriname), President of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights.

The IPU President gave a summary of his main projects and activities since the last Assembly, including efforts to increase the Organization's visibility and move closer to the IPU's long-standing goal of universal membership. He was pleased that the IPU had added two new Members in 2023: Liberia, which joined the IPU during the 146th IPU Assembly, and the Bahamas, which would become an IPU Member during the 147th Assembly. As a result, only 12 Parliaments of sovereign States were yet to become Members, mainly small Caribbean and Pacific islands. The President also visited the United States Congress but concluded that any decision to rejoin the IPU would be unlikely before the

country's 2024 presidential elections. Furthermore, the President noted that the IPU Executive Committee had extended the deadline for submitting amendment proposals to the IPU Statutes and Rules until the end of November 2023. The Executive Committee would then nominate a working group from among its members, with representatives from all geopolitical groups, to review all submissions and generate as much consensus as possible. Mr. A. Gryffroy (Belgium) suggested that the preliminary results of the working group could already be discussed during the 148th IPU Assembly in March 2024, an idea that the IPU President seconded. Lastly, the IPU President and Secretary General communicated that, in 2024, the IPU would focus on peace and security as its priority theme. The Organization would maintain its work on climate change (the 2023 priority theme) and, in parallel, mainstream the theme of peace and security throughout its bodies.

The Chairs of the geopolitical groups provided an overview of their recent activities. The African Group had decided to nominate Mr. J.F.N. Mudenda (Zimbabwe) for the Cremer-Passy prize. Ms. T. Ackson (United Republic of Tanzania) also highlighted that she visited the premises intended for the IPU Regional Office on the occasion of her visit to Uruguay.

The Chair of the Arab Group conveyed that the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union had recently managed to reestablish diplomatic parliamentary relations with the Parliament of the Syrian Arab Republic. He emphasized that the Arab Group would present an emergency item during the current 147th IPU Assembly to address the crisis in Gaza.

The Asia-Pacific Group Chair provided an overview of his work to engage with small Pacific islands and promote regular interaction within the geopolitical group. Efforts included visits to several countries, two regional seminars, and two regional forums. The Asia-Pacific Group had also submitted candidates for IPU positions, including Mr. M. Dick's (Australia) own nomination to the Executive Committee.

Similarly, the Chair of the Eurasia Group communicated that the Group had nominated several members of parliament to fill vacant positions in various IPU bodies.

The Chair of the Twelve Plus Group stated that multiple meetings had been organized since the Manama Assembly: a first session of the working group for the better implementation of IPU resolutions, a discussion concerning the group's proposals to amend the IPU Statutes and Rules, and joint Twelve Plus-GRULAC hearings with the four candidates for the IPU presidency.

The Presidents of the Standing Committees provided an overview of their activities and commented on the IPU priority themes for 2023 (climate change) and 2024 (peace and security). Mr. M.B.M. Al-Ahbab (Qatar) noted that the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security was the Organization's main institutional body shaping policy on this topic. Over the past 10 years, the Committee had addressed multiple issues, including disarmament, terrorism, conflict prevention, and new global challenges like cyber warfare and lethal autonomous weapons. He underscored that the Committee would continue collaborating with the IPU programmes to raise awareness of decisions taken and enhance their implementation.

The President of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development communicated that, in 2023, his Committee focused its efforts on legislation and its impact on vulnerable populations, policy and technological innovations, and multistakeholder cooperation to fight climate change. Within its mandate and thematic focus, the Committee would continue to explore the linkages between sustainable development and peace and security in 2024.

The President of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights reported that a joint workshop on climate change was convened at the 145th IPU Assembly in Kigali together with the President of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development. He was also pleased to support peace and security as the priority theme for 2024. Still, he sought to bring the issue of the economy to the table for consideration by the IPU for future years or inclusion in the next IPU Strategy. Mr. A. Gajadien (Suriname) added that the IPU, the primary global organization of parliamentarians, could enhance collaboration with the Bretton Woods Institutions.

The Acting President of the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs noted that the Committee was discussing United Nations Security Council reform, which could turn into a future motion. He stated the Committee was pleased with peace and security being the theme for 2024, as it was in keeping with the United Nations Secretary-General's new Agenda for Peace that would feed into the 2024 United Nations Summit of the Future.

## 2. Second Global Parliamentary Summit on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism: *The Global Response to the Call of the Sahel*

The Second Global Parliamentary Summit on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism was held on 25 October 2023. The event witnessed significant participation, with over 80 attendees hailing from diverse regions, including parliaments of the Sahel countries and the IPU geopolitical groups. Distinguished panellists from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), youth-focused non-governmental organizations, regional parliamentary assemblies, the Interparliamentary Committee of the G5-Sahel (CIP G5-Sahel), the President of the IPU Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, and a member of the IPU Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians also attended the Summit.

Participants and experts fully acknowledged the engaged efforts of the HLAG, the IPU Secretariat, and the partners of the Sahel initiative. They agreed with the outcomes of the five thematic meetings, which emphasized that investing in development was essential to solve the problems of the Sahel. It was however necessary to address the issues of security and governance to achieve sustainable development. The Summit attendees also agreed on the significance of enhancing good governance to foster strong, democratically organized civil societies, independent judiciaries, citizen-centric administrations and the effective management of shared resources. They stressed the need for actions that respected human rights, combatted abuse and corruption, and upheld the rule of law.

Furthermore, the participants agreed there was a need for better coordination of cooperation in the region. International cooperation must be based on the needs and priorities identified by the relevant countries whose opinions must be considered. They also highlighted the need for equality of the Sahel people in a new world order. It was important to uphold human rights and address basic needs such as access to water, education, food, security and primary healthcare, with special attention to young people, especially girls and women.

The global community should coordinate with the *Call of the Sahel* to implement projects on the ground to benefit the populations. It was also agreed that a road map – *The Global Response of the Call of the Sahel* – would be designed, with concrete projects and monitored by the IPU High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism.

Furthermore, the participants unanimously agreed on eleven main points:

1. The parliamentary community and international organizations, governments and civil society need to renew their global commitment to strengthen their support in preventing violent extremism in the Sahel.
2. International organizations must improve their coordination when implementing activities in line with the *Call of the Sahel* initiative.
3. The Sahel people must achieve equality in a new world order that will prioritize the well-being and future of the citizens in the Sahel countries.
4. The human rights of the Sahel population must be respected by ensuring access to basic needs, food, water, health and education, with special attention to the needs of young people, girls and the empowerment of women.
5. A focus on sustainable development is the solution to the challenges of the Sahel.
6. Good governance can be enhanced by building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions, that provide access to justice for all.
7. The G5 Sahel Joint Force must be supported and recognized pursuant to Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations.
8. To raise awareness of parliaments globally on the political situation and challenges the Sahel faces, a *Motion of the Sahel* should be drafted.
9. HLAG must develop *The Global Response of the Call of the Sahel* based on the outcomes of the five thematic meetings.
10. An ad hoc mechanism within the HLAG must be set up to coordinate, monitor and follow up on the second phase of the *Call of the Sahel*, including projects and development initiatives.
11. The global community must be urged to move forward with tangible actions and to implement projects on the ground that safeguard the human rights and well-being of the Sahel population.



### 3. Parity debate on the theme *I care to care: Male parliamentarians engage in equal caring responsibilities*

On 25 October 2023, the Forum of Women Parliamentarians organized a parity debate with 57 participants, including 46 parliamentarians (25 women and 21 men). The event was an opportunity to reflect on the equality of family responsibilities and also provided an opportunity to share advice and techniques for promoting an equitable division of tasks within the home, as well as discuss good practices in policy drafting. The aim was to support parliamentarians in implementing the [Kigali Declaration](#) adopted at the 145th Assembly, where parliamentarians undertook to set an example by equally sharing daily care work and by making parliaments institutions that are more attentive to the needs of men and women parliamentarians with family responsibilities.

Ms. C. López Castro (Mexico), President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, presided over the session. The discussion was enriched by contributions from three participants: Mr. W. van den Berg, Equimundo, Centre for Masculinities and Social Justice; Ms. B. Argimón, President of the Senate of Uruguay (via video message); and Mr. T. Loughton, member of parliament of the United Kingdom and Vice Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Fatherhood.

### 4. Open session of the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law on the theme *The role of parliaments in tackling the humanitarian impacts of climate-related displacement*

The IPU Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law held an open session debate on 26 October 2023 on *The role of parliaments in tackling the humanitarian impacts of climate-related displacement*. Panelists included Mr. I. Fry, UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change, Mr. A. Harper, Special Advisor on Climate Action, UNHCR, Ms. C. Dartora (Brazil), Vice-Chair of the Parliamentary Committee on International Migrations and Refugees, and Ms. D.-T. Avgerinopoulou (Greece), Chair of the Special Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Environmental Protection.

The open session addressed the humanitarian challenges arising from climate-related displacement, including those relating to the protection of refugees, internally displaced persons and stateless people, and their impacts on host communities.

[An average of more than 20 million people](#) find themselves forced to leave their homes and move to other areas in their countries each year due to climate-related events. At times, people have no option other than to cross international borders to flee from the severe effects of climate change, which may put them in a situation where international protection is needed.

Although the refugee definition under the 1951 Refugee Convention does not include persons who are internally displaced or have crossed an international border due to climate-related events, other instruments and initiatives aiming to ensure protection for those people have been adopted. The debate highlighted the need to expand the definition of refugees in order to secure protection of those displaced across borders by climate change. Regional legal instruments and laws in some countries have expanded the definition to include displacement linked to climate change. These were acknowledged as good practices. A call was made to build support, starting at the national level, for an expansion of the definition and for the adoption of a common understanding at the global level. Other countries have also begun to tackle the possibility of situations of statelessness resulting from the simple physical disappearance of countries. Parliaments from small island countries participating highlighted the growing risk of the disappearance of their countries, the fate of their inhabitants and their status and rights.

Other participants drew attention to the fact that climate change reinforced underlying vulnerabilities. [Around 76% of the world's refugees are hosted by low- and middle-income countries](#), which are likely to be the most affected by the adverse impacts of climate change. These displaced persons usually reside at the edge of cities in low-quality housing or in camps located in remote areas, which are particularly prone to extreme weather events, such as heavy rains and floods, droughts, extreme cold or cyclones. As a consequence, life in camps in precarious conditions and with lack of access to many services deteriorates rapidly. Children are particularly at risk of enhanced exploitation, such as trafficking, when they move away from their homes due to dire environmental situations.

Participants reiterated the importance of assisting and providing protection to those displaced due to climate change, but also to helping both host communities and displaced populations to address their vulnerabilities and increase their resilience to future climate events. This can be done by putting the



right legislation, policies and practices in place with the aim of reducing risks and addressing not only protection issues, but also the practical challenges faced by host communities. For that, parliaments also need to build their capacity to engage on such issues with the development of specific parliamentary mechanisms.

## 5. IPU-ASGP Joint Workshop on *The digital transformation of parliaments*

The workshop objective was to launch the new IPU-ASGP *Guide to digital transformation in parliaments* and to bring together parliamentarians and Secretaries General to exchange perspectives on the objectives, opportunities and challenges of digital transformation.

ASGP President Mr. N. El Khadi introduced the *Guide* alongside Mr. A. Richardson (IPU Programme Manager, Parliamentary Standards Setting and Knowledge Generation) on behalf of the IPU's Centre for Innovation in Parliaments (CIP). Mr. El Khadi stressed how essential digital tools had become in all areas of parliamentary life, though their adoption was not without difficulties and risks. The role of Secretaries General was pivotal in driving the process and ensuring a smooth transformation. Mr. Richardson pointed to the *Guide* as a practical reference that parliamentarians, Secretaries General and staff could draw inspiration from.

The *Guide* defines digital transformation as “the action of applying new digital-based tools and technologies to parliamentary processes and culture. It happens as part of the wider drive to modernize and improve parliaments, making them more efficient and effective. Digital transformation delivers optimized, more user-centric services to members, staff and the wider public”. While technology is important, it is only part of the equation. Digital transformation has an impact on culture, people and processes, as well as technology. “Transformation” is the operative term.

Ms. B. Sekgoma, Secretary General of the Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum (SADC-PF) moderated the workshop, which started with a discussion with Mr. M. Schäfer (Germany) and Ms. S. Falaknaz (United Arab Emirates).

Mr. Schäfer observed that digital transformation was a challenge in a secretariat the size of the Bundestag, which had over 700 members and more than 3,000 employees. There were an estimated 100 and 100 more planned ongoing projects within the Bundestag. Aligning stakeholders around common priorities and avoiding rivalry or competition created some difficulty. To address those challenges, he was working towards a draft strategy for digital transformation by the start of 2024. The aim was to establish consultative mechanisms with all stakeholders that could facilitate alignment around a shared strategy. Parliamentary processes could be extremely complex, having evolved over a long period in an organic way. It would not make sense to simply digitize existing processes. Digital transformation was an opportunity to rethink processes and make them simpler and more efficient.

Ms. Falaknaz described the dramatic change since she had joined the Federal National Council. Today, MPs accessed all parliamentary documents through a tablet instead of working on hard copies. That new approach to document management meant that information about parliamentary work was now more widely available to the public as well, so they could better know about the activities of their representatives. This one-stop-shop approach helped Ms. Falaknaz stay in constant communication with constituents via social media.

Ms. Sekgoma then invited workshop participants to discuss in small groups the four areas of impact – culture, people, process, technology – and to answer the question: If you could do one thing, in one of these four areas, what would it be?

A group including Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Somalia and the United Arab Emirates identified “culture” as the area most resistant to change. Steps towards culture change would include convincing all relevant actors of the need for digital transformation; training people in new digital tools; and ensuring that data confidentiality and security were built into digital systems.

A group led by Botswana added the idea of “timeliness”. New products need to be developed and rolled out in a timely manner, or they risk being obsolete by the time they are launched. The group underlined the importance of change management and addressing people's fears about change.

Cambodia, Canada and France noted that after priorities had been set and requirements had been gathered, the next challenge was securing the resources required to deliver the projects. They observed the need to manage expectations and to ensure ongoing consultation with stakeholders. As part of

planning for digital transformation, it was important to know exactly who the decision-makers were. In the opinion of South Africa, “process” was key. By taking a structured approach to culture change, better results could be achieved. As an institution, parliament should foster a culture of innovation.

## **6. IPU-UNICEF joint event on *The role of parliaments in securing effective public spending for children’s rights***

The IPU and the UNICEF Angola Country Office organized a side event on 24 October 2023. The event was a continuation of the discussion which had begun 18 months earlier in the context of the 144th IPU Assembly in Nusa Dua, Indonesia. The present event aimed to continue raising the alarm on children’s rights so as to secure more support, and also to identify and share good practices, alongside challenges and potential targeted solutions.

Ms. S. Kiladze, Vice-Chair of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, opened the debate in her capacity as the moderator of the event. She briefly presented the background to the meeting and, speaking as a former parliamentarian, highlighted the catalyzer role that MPs could play, for instance in terms of influencing the national budget in favour of the rights of the child.

Ms. L. Moreira-Daniels, Chief, Social Policy, UNICEF Angola, presented the advantage of securing specific budgetary allocations for children’s rights and shared several ways in which members of parliament could influence budgets, for instance by being guided by the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Ms. A.-E. Gomes Santos, Chair of Committee 5 on Finance, National Assembly of Angola, shared details of Angolan parliamentary practice. Prior to the budget session, the National Assembly organized a public platform discussion with civil society organizations to gather information about the people’s needs as background that could be used in parliamentary interactions with the executive.

Ms. E.T. Muteka, Vice-Chair, Standing Committee on Health, Social Welfare and Labour Affairs, Parliament of Namibia, noted that 53% of her country’s budget was allocated to social protection. This offered a great opportunity for work on children’s rights to get a fair share.

Parliamentarians from Benin, India, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, United Kingdom and Zambia contributed to the debate. They emphasized the necessity of ongoing training for parliamentarians on the issue and the importance of organizing hearings with children themselves, and encouraged the creation of global networks for experience sharing.

## **7. IPU-WHO Joint Workshop on *Unpacking the development of the Pandemic Accord***

The workshop was organized jointly by the IPU and the World Health Organization (WHO) as part of their longstanding partnership. It was held on 26 October 2023 and its aim was to provide a deeper understanding of the key elements, scope, potential implications and benefits of the Pandemic Accord; explain the role of parliamentarians; and foster dialogue among parliamentarians to share perspectives, concerns and ideas.

The event was moderated by Mr. G. Silberschmidt (Director, Health and Multilateral Partnerships, WHO). It was opened by Mr. M. Chungong, the IPU Secretary General, and Dr. T.A. Ghebreyesus, the WHO Director-General (speaking via video message). The speakers highlighted the role of parliamentarians in ensuring the negotiations of the Pandemic Accord were informed by the real-life experiences of people and in its ratification. They hoped the Accord would help build trust and solidarity.

In the first session, Ms. P. Matsoso (co-Chair, Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB), WHO) and Mr. S. Solomon (Principal Legal Officer, WHO) provided an overview of the negotiating process and what the Pandemic Accord aimed to achieve. The Pandemic Accord was established because there was a need for a comprehensive and coherent approach to address the gaps observed during the COVID-19 pandemic in preventing, preparing for and responding to health emergencies. The process was inclusive and transparent; it included public hearings and informal consultations with different stakeholders to ensure alignment with the needs of diverse communities and countries and to address specific health disparities, cultural sensitivities and regional variations.

Dr. F. Bustreo (Chair, Governance and Ethics Committee, Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH)) also emphasized the question of equity, adding that other epidemics and emergencies, before the COVID-19 pandemic, had also disproportionately impacted vulnerable populations. She highlighted the “shadow pandemic” of gender-based violence and called for gender equity, including in negotiating bodies at the international level.

The second session featured a panel discussion moderated by Dr. L.G. Sambo (former WHO Regional Director for Africa). The panellists Ms. E.T. Muteka (Namibia), and the IPU Advisory Group on Health members Dr. F.E. Ndugulile (United Republic of Tanzania) and Ms. H. Al-Helaissi (Saudi Arabia) reiterated the centrality of equity in access to treatment and vaccines, as well as the importance of building preparedness and response capacities in developing countries. They encouraged parliamentarians to advocate for their governments to sign the Pandemic Accord and to engage with communities to address misinformation.

## Elections and appointments

### 1. IPU President

Four candidates ran for the post of IPU President: Ms. A.D. Mergane Kanouté (Senegal), Ms. C. Gotani Hara (Malawi), Ms. T. Ackson (United Republic of Tanzania) and Ms. M. Abdibashir Hagi (Somalia).

In a single round of voting, Ms. A.D. Mergane Kanouté obtained 59 votes, Ms. C. Gotani Hara obtained 61 votes, Ms. T. Ackson obtained 172 votes, and Ms. M. Abdibashir Hagi obtained 11 votes.

The Governing Council consequently elected Ms. T. Ackson (United Republic of Tanzania) as President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union for a three-year term.

The outgoing President, Mr. D. Pacheco (Portugal), was made an Honorary President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

### 2. Executive Committee

The Governing Council elected the following seven members to the Executive Committee for a four-year term ending in October 2027:

#### *African Group*

- Mr. G.O. Akpabio (Nigeria)
- Ms. N.B.K. Mutti (Zambia)

#### *Asia-Pacific Group*

- Mr. M. Dick (Australia)
- Mr. F. Zon (Indonesia)

#### *Eurasia Group*

- Ms. S. Mikayilova (Azerbaijan)

#### *Group of Latin America and the Caribbean*

- Mr. C. Cajado Sampaio (Brazil)

#### *Twelve Plus Group*

- Ms. G. Morawska-Stanecka (Poland)

The Governing Council also elected the following three members to the Executive Committee:

#### *Twelve Plus Group*

- Mr. L.-J. de Nicolaÿ to replace Mr. F. Marchand (France), who is no longer a member of parliament. He will complete the latter's term, which expires in October 2026.
- Ms. D.-T. Avgerinopoulou to replace Ms. O. Kefalogianni (Greece), who has been appointed minister. She will complete the latter's term, which expires in October 2025.
- Mr. A. Almodobar to replace Mr. J.I. Echániz (Spain), who is no longer a member of parliament. He will complete the latter's term, which expires in October 2025.

### 3. Vice-President of the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee appointed Mr. A.R. Al Nuaimi (United Arab Emirates) as the Vice-President of the Executive Committee.

#### 4. Sub-Committee on Finance

The Executive Committee will appoint members from the following groups for a term ending in October 2025:

*African Group, Asia-Pacific Group, Eurasia Group, Group of Latin America and the Caribbean, Twelve Plus Group.*

#### 5. Working Group on Transparency, Accountability and Openness

The Executive Committee will appoint members from the following groups for a term ending in October 2025:

*African Group, Asia-Pacific Group, Eurasia Group, Twelve Plus Group.*

#### 6. Bureau of Women Parliamentarians

The Forum of Women Parliamentarians elected the following regional representatives to the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians:

*Arab Group*

- Ms. M. Saleh (Syrian Arab Republic) (end of term: March 2025)

*Eurasia Group*

- Ms. T. Vardanyan (Armenia) (end of term: March 2027)
- Ms. S. Khasayeva (Azerbaijan) (end of term: March 2027)

*Group of Latin America and the Caribbean*

- Ms. L. Carneiro (Brazil) (end of term: March 2025)

The Bureau welcomed new ex-officio members:

- Ms. F. Malaquias (Angola) (end of term: October 2025)
- Ms. D.-T. Avgerinopoulou (Greece) (end of term: October 2025)
- Ms. S. Mikayilova (Azerbaijan) (end of term: October 2027)
- Ms. G. Morawska-Stanecka (Poland) (end of term: October 2027)
- Ms. N.B.K. Mutti (Zambia) (end of term: October 2027)

#### 7. Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians

The Forum elected the following member to its Board for the seat that was not filled at the 146th IPU Assembly (end of term: March 2025):

*Eurasia Group*

- Mr. S. Ismayilov (Azerbaijan)

#### 8. Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians

The Governing Council elected Ms. L. Fehlmann Rielle (Switzerland) for a five-year term ending in October 2028.

#### 9. Committee on Middle East Questions

The Governing Council elected the following two members for a four-year term ending in October 2027:

- Mr. S. Mantamiharja (Indonesia)
- Ms. A. Erdoğan (Türkiye)

A vacancy remains for one member.

#### 10. Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law

The Governing Council elected the following members for a four-year term ending in October 2027:

*Group of Latin America and the Caribbean*

- Ms. L. Carvajal (Chile)

*Twelve Plus Group*

- Mr. A. Farrugia (Malta)

## **11. High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG)**

The Governing Council elected the following members for a four-year term ending in October 2027:

*Group of Latin America and the Caribbean*

- Mr. C. Arrien (Bolivia (Plurinational State of))

*Twelve Plus Group*

- Ms. L. Saint-Paul (France)
- Mr. Z. Mojskerc (Slovenia)
- Ms. C. Badertscher (Switzerland)

Two vacancies remain, for one member from the African Group and one member from the Eurasia Group.

## **12. Working Group on Science and Technology**

The Governing Council elected the following three members for a four-year term ending October 2027:

*African Group*

- Ms. N. Kpochan Razaki (Benin)
- Ms. C.M. Mumma (Kenya)

*Group of Latin America and the Caribbean*

- A vacancy remains for this group.

*Twelve Plus Group*

- Ms. Á. Vadai (Hungary)

The Working Group re-elected Mr. D. Naughten (Ireland) as Chair of the Group.

## **13. Internal Auditors for the 2024 accounts**

The Governing Council appointed the following Internal Auditors for the 2024 accounts:

- Ms. P. Glover-Rolle (Bahamas)
- Mr. A. Gryffroy (Belgium)

## **14. Bureaux of the Standing Committees**

Further to consultations within the Geopolitical Groups on the agreed formula for the distribution of the positions of Presidents and Vice-Presidents of the Standing Committees, the following office holders were elected for the next two-year cycle, October 2023–October 2025:

### **Standing Committee on Peace and International Security**

President: Ms. A. Kuspan (Kazakhstan)

Vice-President: Mr. M. Rezakhah (Iran (Islamic Republic of))

### **Standing Committee on Sustainable Development**

President: Mr. W. William (Seychelles)

Vice-President: Ms. M.S. Al Suwaidi (United Arab Emirates)

### **Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights**

President: Ms. J. Mahmood (Maldives)

Vice-President: Mr. A. Torosyan (Armenia)

### **Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs**

President: Mr. D. McGuinty (Canada)

Vice-President: Ms. C.L. Crexell (Argentina)



The Standing Committees also elected the following members to their respective Bureaux for terms ending in October 2025:

Standing Committee on Peace and International Security

*Arab Group*

- Mr. A. Salman (Bahrain) for a first term

*Eurasia Group*

- Mr. K. Bayramov (Azerbaijan) for a first term
- Ms. A. Kuspan (Kazakhstan) for a first term

*Group of Latin America and the Caribbean*

- Ms. A.A. Rodríguez Montero (Bolivia (Plurinational State of)) for a first term
- Ms. A.C. Dartorao (Brazil) for a first term
- Mr. L. Baez (Dominican Republic) for a first term

*Twelve Plus Group*

- Ms. F. Belhirsch (Netherlands) for a first term

Standing Committee on Sustainable Development

*African Group*

- Mr. W. William (Seychelles) for a second term

*Arab Group*

- Mr. H. Al-Matar (Kuwait) for a second term
- Mr. N. Al-Alou (Syrian Arab Republic) for a second term

*Eurasia Group*

- Ms. T. Vardanyan (Armenia) for a second term

*Group of Latin America and the Caribbean*

- Ms. I. Moreira (Uruguay) will complete the term of Mr. R. Lorenzo (March 2024), who is no longer a member of parliament

*Twelve Plus Group*

- Mr. A. Gerasymov (Ukraine) for a first term

Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights

*African Group*

- Ms. E.N. Matiko (United Republic of Tanzania) for a second term

*Asia-Pacific Group*

- Mr. G. Dhielafararez (Indonesia) to complete the second term of Mr. F. Zon (Indonesia)

*Eurasia Group*

- Mr. A. Torosyan (Armenia) to replace Mr. H. Konjoryan (Armenia) for his second term
- Ms. A. Aghazada (Azerbaijan) for a first term

*Group of Latin America and the Caribbean*

- Mr. A. Gajadien (Suriname) for a second term

*Twelve Plus Group*

- Mr. M. de Maegd (Belgium) for a first term

Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs

*Group of Latin America and the Caribbean*

- Ms. C.L. Crexell (Argentina) for a first term

*Twelve Plus Group*

- Mr. R. Lopatka (Austria) for a first term

## 15. Rapporteurs

The Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights appointed Ms. M. Rempel Garner (Canada) and Ms. N. Lugangira (United Republic of Tanzania) as co-Rapporteurs for the subject item *The impact of artificial intelligence on democracy, human rights and the rule of law*.

# Media and communications

IPU Assemblies are always a high point for the IPU's visibility and outreach, and the 147th IPU Assembly was no exception. The Assembly was particularly rich in terms of Member engagement and coverage in national media and, more generally, on social media.

The launch of a number of new IPU products and initiatives, including the new anthem, the second edition of the Cremer-Passy Prize, the first IPU long read feature on the Sahel, and four new publications, received considerable coverage. The election of a new President boosted website traffic and social media engagement significantly.

### Media

A media advisory and three press releases were sent to the IPU database of thousands of journalists, as well as to some 150 journalists who had registered to cover the Assembly.

The Assembly was headline news and was covered extensively in the national media in Angola, as well as across the wider region, the Portuguese-language media and the Arab press in light of the crisis in the Middle East.

The IPU Communications team also organized an opening press conference with the Host Parliament, attended by some 40 national media representatives.

### Livestreaming and web

News and new content for the website generated some 23,000 visitors to the website, close to the record. However, live streaming of the main plenary moments of the Assembly generated around 12,000 viewers, down on previous Assemblies (20,000 during the 146th IPU Assembly in Manama, Bahrain).

A lack of available bandwidth resulting in live stream buffering provides a partial explanation for this drop.

The high point of web traffic was on 27 October 2023, with 12,000 hits on the day the IPU Members elected their new President.

### Video on demand

The provision of video extracts of plenary speeches during the General Debate was again a popular service with delegates. By the end of the Assembly, the team had prepared dozens of video clips to send to individual MPs for their own amplification purposes.

### Social media

The social media wall continued to be a popular feature, with many parliamentarians joining the digital conversation using the hashtags #IPU147 and #Parliaments4thePlanet, linked to the IPU's climate campaign.

X (formerly Twitter) was by far the main source of content, followed by Meta (Instagram and Facebook) and LinkedIn.

On X (formerly Twitter), the IPU published 110 tweets over the period of the Assembly. Engagement, represented by clicks and likes, was 12 times the average, especially on election day, when it was 30 times the average. The IPU account surpassed 40,000 followers for the first time, with nearly 2,000 new followers added over the week. Some 3,000 accounts clicked through to the IPU account compared with 600 at the previous Assembly.

Across Meta platforms, the IPU continued the lighter approach first introduced in Bahrain, with more visually interesting posts, stories and reels to cater to this particular audience.

On Instagram, the team posted 188 items, including numerous videos and reels, and a record 160 stories. The strategy paid off, with engagement up by 5% and an additional 1,500 followers added, most of whom were MPs.

On Facebook, the IPU published 31 posts and acquired 317 new followers, three times higher than the previous Assembly.

### ***Parliaments for the Planet campaign***

New assets gave a boost to the IPU's climate change campaign, *Parliaments for the Planet*, with dozens of new video interviews of parliamentary good practice conducted on the dedicated climate stand.

These new interviews will be added to the portfolio of videos in which MPs from around the world talk about how climate change is affecting their country and what their parliament is doing about it.

### ***Photography***

Some 50 meetings were covered by the team of photographers supplied by the Host Parliament for the Assembly. The Communications team curated hundreds of photos, which were then downloaded by Member Parliaments.

## Membership of the Inter-Parliamentary Union<sup>1</sup>

### Members (180)

Afghanistan\*\*, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia (The), Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, \* Honduras\*, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar\*\*, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Palestine, Panama, Papua New Guinea\*, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

### Associate Members (15)

Andean Parliament, Arab Parliament, Central American Parliament (PARLACEN), East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), European Parliament, Interparliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States (IPA CIS), Inter-Parliamentary Committee of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), Latin American and Caribbean Parliament (PARLATINO), MERCOSUR Parliament (PARLASUR), Pan-African Parliament, Parliament of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Parliament of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC), Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC), Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) and Parliamentary Assembly of La Francophonie (APF).

---

<sup>1</sup> As at the close of the 147th Assembly.

\* Non-participating Members (all rights suspended)

\*\* Members participating in the work of the IPU in a non-voting observer capacity

## Agenda, resolutions and other texts of the 147th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

1. Election of the President of the 147th Assembly
2. Consideration of requests for the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda
3. General Debate on the theme *Parliamentary action for peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16)*
4. Special accountability segment on the implementation of IPU resolutions and other decisions
5. *Orphanage trafficking: The role of parliaments in reducing harm*  
(Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights)
6. Reports of the Standing Committees
7. Approval of the subject item for the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights at the 149th IPU Assembly and appointment of the Rapporteurs



## Luanda Declaration

### *Parliamentary action for peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16)*

*Endorsed by the 147th IPU Assembly  
(Luanda, 27 October 2023)*

The buck stops with us. This is the overarching message that we, parliamentarians participating in the 147th IPU Assembly in Luanda, retain from our General Debate on Parliamentary action for peace, justice and strong institutions, corresponding to Goal 16 of the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 16), also known as the “governance goal”.

Our discussion highlighted the critical role of good governance as a societal good in its own right and as a means to the attainment of all the Sustainable Development Goals that were adopted in 2015. Good governance is the glue that binds people to each other and to their institutions, nurturing solidarity, civic engagement and political citizenship. At the same time, as defined under SDG 16, good governance enables sound policymaking and direct accountability to the people, without which we will not succeed in our shared struggles against poverty, inequality, conflict and environmental degradation, including the climate emergency, that are being experienced in every corner of the world.

We have taken stock of the many governance issues highlighted in SDG 16 that need immediate attention according to United Nations reports but also, and more importantly, of our experience in our own countries, where popular disaffection with the institutions of government – and with politics in general – is becoming ever more palpable.

As representatives of the people, we are keenly aware of our responsibility to address this state of affairs. We end this Assembly fully aware that SDG 16, more than any other SDG, relates to parliament as the key institution of governance in every country. Having the power to enact laws, adopt budgets and oversee the executive, we are uniquely positioned to make government work better at all levels – national, sub-national and local – and to restore the conditions for peaceful coexistence that support sustainable development and democracy in all their dimensions.

Topping the list of governance issues that we must tackle most urgently is the need to strengthen trust and ensure the more active participation of citizens in institutions at all levels, beginning with our own parliaments, where women and youth, as well as the poor and other disadvantaged groups, must be more equitably represented.

We believe that inclusion and representation are essential to building legitimacy and transparency, as the keys to more effective accountability. By opening up institutions to people from all walks of life and without discrimination, we can strengthen the people’s trust in their institutions, provide public services that deliver and develop policies that leave no one behind. With regard specifically to the key issue of fair representation of the various groups and political forces in parliaments, we will strive to review and reform as needed our electoral systems in the light of the IPU Declaration on Criteria for Free and Fair Elections, as well as other international standards.

The new Indicators for Democratic Parliaments, developed by the IPU in collaboration with the United Nations and other partner organizations, provide an important tool to help us assess and strengthen our parliaments according to the principles set out in the SDGs, such as effectiveness, accountability, transparency and participation. We welcome the publication of these Indicators, which will help to guide the development of our institutions. We will do our utmost to turn these principles into action and to report back on progress made.

Among the various possible solutions to make parliaments more inclusive, we will consider measures to promote ambitious and well-designed quotas aiming at gender parity and equitable representation of all groups, as well as aligning the minimum age of eligibility for public office with the voting age. We will endeavour to review our own policies and processes, with the aim of ensuring that leadership positions are equally shared between men and women within our institutions and build a culture of inclusiveness and non-discrimination in line with the IPU Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments.

The rule of law, the idea that no one is above the law, that all people are equal under the law, and that everyone has the right to be protected by the law, must lie at the core of our action to strengthen governance.

With this fundamental principle in mind, we will aim to curb corruption so that public resources are not diverted for personal gain and policies are not tailored to particular interests at the expense of the common good. Along these same lines, we will endeavour to free government and relevant regulatory bodies from the “corporate capture” that is a frequent cause of distortion in policy outcomes. Inspired by recent global initiatives to combat illicit financial and arms flows, we will strive to tighten the rules and close the loopholes that enable these most nefarious forms of corruption. We support national audit institutions for their valuable role in ensuring transparency and accountability through independent verification of public spending and related government processes.

With regard to the justice system, we will aim to strengthen the impartiality of the courts, speed up trial times, extend legal aid and other facilities to improve access for the most vulnerable, expand the availability of less onerous processes such as arbitration and mediation, and ensure fairness in sentencing.

By extension, we will aspire to establish or strengthen independent national human rights institutions as essential tools for the promotion and protection of all human rights. We will seek to work closely with these institutions to implement their recommendations and to harmonize national legislation with international norms. In the context of this year’s 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, we pledge to revitalize our actions to promote and protect human rights. We will strive to uphold the right of all legitimately constituted civil society organizations to make their voices heard on behalf of the groups they represent. We will also examine measures to strengthen the regulatory frameworks that govern the right to information so that, except for the most sensitive national security reasons, government-held information can be made available to the public on request and in a timely fashion.

There can be no peace without justice. As conflicts within and between countries continue to become alarmingly more frequent and severe, undermining development gains, we will seek to address the root causes of conflict that can often be found in economic inequality and discrimination against entire groups, due to gender, racial, ethnic, religious or cultural differences. We will also aim to invest more in human security – defined as the provision of food, health care, environmental security and other such contributors to human well-being – as the main path towards peace and development.

We reaffirm most strongly our belief in the rule of law, at both the national and international level, as the foundation of conflict prevention and resolution, as well as in dialogue and diplomacy as the only way towards lasting peace. We call on parties in all armed conflicts to abide by the 1949 Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols with no exceptions. We encourage more frequent use of the International Court of Justice and other international judicial institutions as key tools to resolve disputes between countries peacefully.

We cannot ignore the fact that our Assembly here in Angola has taken place against the backdrop of a rapidly escalating crisis in the Middle East. We express grave concern about the humanitarian consequences of the crisis and we implore the international community to take definitive action to ensure the unimpeded passage of humanitarian relief into Gaza without delay. Above all, the hostilities in this region must cease and negotiations must resume towards a sustainable two-State solution, with Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security.

Recognizing that most armed conflicts and related mediation efforts tend to be male-dominated, we will support more robust involvement of women and youth in peace processes. We will strive to take all necessary measures to prevent and combat all forms of violence against women, especially women in politics, as well as against minority and marginalized groups, and provide assistance to survivors.

A key measure of good governance is the quality of the civil service and of the public sector in general, which provide the most immediate interface between government and the people. We recognize the need for deep reforms of public administrations so that they are adequately staffed through fair and transparent recruitment processes as well as equipped with the most modern tools to provide quality service to the public. Most importantly, we will seek to ensure more direct citizens’ input into public sector reforms and into the administration of public services, including health care, education and environmental preservation, so as to more effectively meet the needs of the people.

The success of all our reforms will depend most critically on the mobilization of financial and human resources. We are committed to reversing the tide of underinvestment in the institutions and processes that lie at the core of SDG 16. In particular, a more coordinated effort must be made to collect data on gender, age, income and other criteria that are key to identifying those most at risk of being left behind. Relatively modest as a share of national budgets, the implementation cost of SDG 16 will pay high dividends in terms of producing positive social cohesion, peace, and development outcomes across the board. In this connection, we call on countries to review their development cooperation policies so that due emphasis is given to investments and capacity building in recipient countries' governance sectors.

In view of the major global assessment of SDG 16 expected at the United Nations High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in 2024, we will aim to conduct a thorough review of our national plans for SDG 16 and of the public sector in general, including through parliamentary hearings, special parliamentary commissions and other such initiatives. We encourage the IPU to collect and disseminate the findings from this exercise, and to highlight the good practices that may help mobilize further parliamentary action.

We are deeply grateful to our host, the National Assembly of Angola, as well as the Angolan authorities and the Angolan people in general, for providing us with this valuable opportunity to come together as a global parliamentary community. We look forward to taking this Declaration back to our parliaments and to playing our part in ensuring its effective implementation.

## Orphanage trafficking: The role of parliaments in reducing harm

*Resolution adopted by consensus\* by the 147th IPU Assembly  
(Luanda, 27 October 2023)*

The 147th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

*Recalling* the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), its Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (2000), the Guidelines regarding the implementation of that Optional Protocol (2018), and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006),

*Welcoming* United Nations General Assembly resolution 74/133 of 18 December 2019 on the rights of the child, in particular its focus on children without parental care, its call for States to progressively replace institutionalization with quality alternative care, including, inter alia, family and community-based care, and to take appropriate measures and approaches, and its paragraph 35(t), which calls on United Nations Member States to take “appropriate measures to protect children who are victims of trafficking and are deprived of parental care, enact and enforce legislation to prevent and combat the trafficking and exploitation of children in care facilities, support children who are victims of human trafficking in returning to their families and in receiving appropriate mental health and psychological assistance that is victim-centred and trauma-informed”, and to take “appropriate measures to prevent and address the harms related to volunteering programmes in orphanages, including in the context of tourism, which can lead to trafficking and exploitation” (a phenomenon known colloquially as “voluntourism”, a form of tourism in which travellers participate in voluntary work overseas),

*Acknowledging* recommendation D.1 of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child 2021 Day of General Discussion Outcome Report, which, inter alia, calls on United Nations Member States to “adopt legislation and regulations to eliminate orphanage tourism and volunteering in orphanages, prevent incentives driving institutionalization and family separation and ensure adequate offences and penalties to prevent and enable the prosecution of violations of children’s rights in alternative care, including orphanage trafficking”,

*Highlighting* paragraph 93 of the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, welcomed in resolution 64/142 adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 18 December 2009, and included in its annex, which provides that “all alternative care settings should provide adequate protection to children from abduction, trafficking, sale and all other forms of exploitation”,

*Recalling* Articles 35 and 36 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which respectively require States Parties to “take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent the abduction of, the sale of or traffic in children for any purpose or in any form”, and to “protect the child against all other forms of exploitation prejudicial to any aspects of the child’s welfare”,

*Acknowledging* the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (2000), supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2000), in particular Article 3(c), which confirms that child trafficking involves the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation, and Article 9.5, which requires States Parties to “adopt or strengthen legislative or other measures, such as educational, social or cultural measures, including through bilateral and multilateral cooperation, to discourage the demand that fosters all forms of exploitation of persons, especially women and children, that leads to trafficking”,

*Underlining* the guiding principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006), i.e. the best interests of the child, non-discrimination, participation, protection, inclusion, and survival and development, that provide the framework for all actions concerning children,

*Recognizing* the urgent need to address orphanage trafficking, which is a multi-dimensional and complex phenomenon as it interacts with a wide range of factors that involve the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child into residential care for the purposes of

---

\* - The delegation of India expressed a reservation on operative paragraph 4.

- The delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran expressed a reservation on the reference to SDGs 4.1 and 4.2 in preambular paragraph 22.

exploitation and/or profit, and particularly the absence of legal safeguards and regulations and child protection systems, including those which are inadequate or contain loopholes, and which result in severe harm to children's physical, emotional and psychological well-being,

*Recognizing also* the urgent need for legislators and governments to take more proactive national steps to combat and reduce the risk of trafficking in human beings,

*Noting* that orphanage trafficking as a form of trafficking and modern slavery is a growing international concern that must be addressed through cross-border collaboration and cooperation between the countries of origin, transit and destination, including through measures to prevent such trafficking, to punish the traffickers and to protect the victims of such trafficking, which requires extensive and wide-ranging intervention at local, national, regional and international levels by all actors and stakeholders working together,

*Acknowledging* "A study on the exploitation and sexual abuse of children in the context of travel and tourism; a closer look at the phenomena of voluntourism", presented by the United Nations Special Rapporteur to the United Nations General Assembly in October 2023, on the sale, sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children,

*Acknowledging also* the efforts to eradicate the phenomenon of orphanage trafficking that is still widespread due to the scourges of war and internal conflicts, and which leads to the breakdown of child protection systems,

*Recognizing* the necessity of a multifaceted approach to prevent and combat orphanage trafficking, including the collection of reliable data on children in orphanages, in order to protect children from such exploitation in the first place, including within the travel and tourism sector, domestically and in destination countries,

*Recognizing also* the urgent need for States to strengthen child protection systems worldwide to safeguard the inherent rights and holistic well-being of all children, especially those in vulnerable situations, such as children with disabilities, refugees, internally displaced children, and children affected by armed conflicts,

*Recognizing further* that many orphan children worldwide who have been placed in care homes for a variety of reasons are the most affected during times of war and conflict because they are forced to contend with the ills of orphanhood, isolation and the repercussions of war, which expose them to an uncertain fate,

*Recognizing* that a family caregiving setting is the most conducive environment for the growth, well-being and safety of children, and that removing a child from the family should, wherever possible, only be considered as a temporary last resort,

*Concerned* that not all States currently have the necessary legal framework to combat orphanage trafficking, in particular legal provisions to criminalize it, or the budget, technical expertise or human resources to address the problem,

*Concerned also* by the lack of regular monitoring of orphans' residential care facilities and the lack of regulation of voluntourism, in particular voluntourism activities involving children, which place children at risk of commodification, exploitation and sexual abuse in the context of for-profit activities, and which increase vulnerabilities to human rights violations,

*Recognizing* the importance of creating awareness of the risks and indicators of orphanage trafficking and the harms associated with it, notably the adverse impacts on child rights, among the public, particularly parents, teachers, children, community leaders, social workers, legislators and other relevant policymakers and stakeholders,

*Highlighting* the precarious situation of the children involved in cases of orphanage trafficking where victims and survivors often lack appropriate legal remedy, support and access to justice, and the importance of a victim-centred and trauma-informed approach when combating the problem, as well as of child-centred rehabilitation processes,

*Noting* that orphanage trafficking is a commercial and exploitative act that may be driven by economic motivations, and may subject victims to various forms of exploitation including sexual exploitation, forced begging and forced labour, and may be exacerbated in conflict and post disaster contexts,



*Recognizing* that addressing orphanage trafficking will contribute towards achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their targets by 2030, including:

- SDG 1.3 on social protection systems and measures
- SDG 1.a on ending poverty
- SDG 4.1 on free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education
- SDG 4.2 on quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education
- all targets of SDG 5 on gender equality
- SDG 8.7 on the eradication of forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking and child labour
- SDG 16.2 on ending the abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children,

*Recognizing also* United Nations General Assembly resolution 77/159 of 14 December 2022 on enhancing the role of parliaments in accelerating the achievement of the SDGs,

*Highlighting* the importance of paragraph 31 of United Nations General Assembly resolution 74/133 of 18 December 2019 on the rights of the child, which urges States to “strengthen child welfare and child protection systems and improve care reform efforts”,

*Taking note* of the guiding principles stipulated in the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism adopted by the General Assembly of the World Tourism Organization in 1999, which advises States, the private sector and other stakeholders on responsible and sustainable development of tourism, including measures to prevent and protect children from sale and exploitation, particularly sexual exploitation, in the travel and tourism industry, as well as of the 2020 *Tips for a responsible traveller* developed by the World Committee on Tourism Ethics, which calls on tourists to observe human rights and protect children from exploitation and abuse,

*Concerned* that well-meaning support for institutions through donations, child sponsorship programmes, orphanage volunteering or tourism, and faith-based missions, can lead to unnecessary family-child separation, perpetuate institutional models of care, undermine the development of more appropriate family-based care services, and create an economic incentive for orphanage trafficking,

*Welcoming* the efforts of governments who have issued travel advisories and information materials to travellers, particularly tourists, in tourism source and destination countries, discouraging orphanage tourism and volunteering due to the risk of exploitation and profiteering,

*Highlighting* that poverty and inequality, as key drivers of orphanage trafficking, are exacerbated by humanitarian disasters, climate change, armed conflict, political instability, lack of education, inequitable social-economic structures, family violence and gender discrimination,

*Recognizing* the unique needs of children belonging to minority groups or who are of indigenous origins,

*Emphasizing* that cooperation and coordination between parliaments and their governments aimed at combating and eradicating the drivers of orphanage trafficking at the early stages are of utmost importance,

*Highlighting* that gender-based discrimination and violence against women and girls, as well as a lack of sexual and reproductive health services and education, often result in teenage or unwanted pregnancies which in turn increase the risk of orphanage trafficking,

*Recalling* Article 8.2 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child of 20 November 1989, adopted by United Nations General Assembly resolution 44/25, which provides that: “Where a child is illegally deprived of some or all of the elements of his or her identity, States Parties shall provide appropriate assistance and protection, with a view to re-establishing speedily his or her identity”,

*Recalling also* the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption of 29 May 1993, which establishes four main principles: the best interests of the child as the primary consideration; the prohibition of any profit to prevent trafficking; the double subsidiarity of international adoption (the latter is considered only if no solution can be found in the child’s country of origin); and the requirement to go through accredited bodies before being able to adopt,

*Recalling further* the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance of 23 December 2010,

*Deeply concerned* about illegal international adoptions, whereby thousands of children around the world have been taken away from their families and placed illegally on the international adoption market, whether through orphanages or not,

*Highlighting* the fact that, for the people concerned by these illegal adoptions, the consequences are dramatic in both human and administrative terms,

*Bearing in mind* that many States have undertaken or are undertaking investigations on illegal adoptions and are taking concrete measures to prevent them and help the victims,

*Bearing in mind also the Joint statement on illegal intercountry adoptions* issued by the United Nations Human Rights Office on 29 September 2022, which indicates that illegal intercountry adoptions can constitute crimes against humanity, and which establishes three obligations for States, as follows: to prevent, investigate and remedy such crimes,

1. *Condemns* all forms of orphanage trafficking and orphanage tourism, including orphanage volunteering;
2. *Emphasizes* the importance of cohesive international efforts to combat orphanage trafficking amidst armed conflicts or other humanitarian disasters;
3. *Calls upon* parliaments to cooperate and coordinate with their governments to introduce legal measures aimed at combating orphanage trafficking at the national level;
4. *Calls upon* the IPU to draft a model law for sending and receiving States, formalizing, in the best interests of the child, a clear legislative framework to combat orphanage trafficking and prevent orphanage tourism, address remaining gaps and ongoing challenges, in law and practice, whereby in all actions concerning children, their rights, education, voices, needs and security are at the centre of any proceedings that affect their well-being, and to share knowledge of existing legislation and implementation;
5. *Also calls upon* the IPU to prepare a parliamentary guide that sets out the working mechanisms for parliaments to discuss legislation on combating orphanage trafficking and prohibiting orphanage tourism, as well as to develop international principles and standards governing voluntourism activities that are in accordance with human rights norms and standards and particularly with the rights of the child, providing tools to monitor public policies on the protection of children from orphanage trafficking, and specific mechanisms of action that are applicable to parliaments in different regions of the world;
6. *Invites* those States that have not yet done so to consider ratifying and fully implementing the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (2000), and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (2000), as key international instruments in the fight against orphanage trafficking and related crimes;
7. *Stresses* the importance of multidisciplinary, multisectoral and international cooperation, including cross-border cooperation, in strategies to combat orphanage trafficking and tourism, and in ensuring the safe repatriation and rehabilitation of trafficked children;
8. *Calls upon* parliaments and parliamentarians to actively engage in promoting a shared, up-to-date national understanding of the nature of orphanage trafficking;
9. *Acknowledges* that migrant populations, including refugees and internally displaced persons, as well as children from war zones and temporarily occupied territories, are particularly vulnerable to orphanage trafficking and exploitation;
10. *Calls for* the protection of the rights of refugee and migrant children, especially those separated from their families and susceptible to orphanage trafficking, in accordance with international law and child protection standards;
11. *Encourages* parliaments to build synergies with their respective governments to implement appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures that take account of the differentiated needs and experiences of children according to their age, sex, gender, race, religion, ethnicity, culture, language, disability, migration status or other socio-economic

factors, while also taking account of parental responsibilities and ensuring children's participation in the development of measures pertaining to them, and by gathering and analysing data on gender in this domain;

12. *Also encourages* parliaments to ensure, through relevant legislation, that victims of trafficking are provided with long-term tailored assistance, irrespective of their readiness to cooperate with law enforcement;
13. *Urges* parliaments to adopt legislative and regulatory measures that promote the reintegration of children from institutions, such as orphanages, children's homes and rescue centres, back into their families, or their placement in suitable family-based care, such as foster care and kinship care,
14. *Calls upon* parliaments to provide adequate budgetary allocations and resources for the effective implementation of the laws and measures in place to deliver quality care to children in institutional and alternative care settings and to ensure the effective protection of children from exploitation and abuse in the context of orphanage trafficking and voluntourism;
15. *Urges* parliaments to ensure the development and implementation of robust screening processes for organizations and individuals involved in the establishment or funding of orphanages, to secure transparent, accountable and temporary practices;
16. *Strongly urges* parliaments to prioritize the allocation of resources for robust legislative frameworks and effective enforcement mechanisms to prevent and combat orphanage trafficking, including rigorous inspections of and licensing procedures for childcare facilities, and for comprehensive victim support systems;
17. *Emphasizes* the importance of a commitment by the private sector, including the travel industry, civil society, academia, charities and communities to work together and collaboratively with governments to combat orphanage trafficking and to stop the flow of funds and volunteers to institutions which commodify children;
18. *Urges* parliaments and parliamentarians to promote awareness, in both sending and receiving countries, among governments, civil society, charities, community groups, faith-based organizations, educational institutions and families of orphanage trafficking, of the harms of orphanage tourism, donations to orphanages, and the importance of family-based care, and thus provide protection to children to grow in a family-based environment under their own cultural conditions;
19. *Also urges* parliaments to enable the rapid exchange of information amongst anti-trafficking actors to adjust responses according to the constantly changing tactics of traffickers, as well as to promote awareness and monitoring among related agencies operating in the same space, with an emphasis on cooperation, technology and information sharing;
20. *Invites* the IPU to schedule periodic meetings and workshops with the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children, and with other stakeholders, experts and activists, emphasizing local and regional initiatives for preventing and tackling the problem of orphanage trafficking and orphanage tourism, and other activities to allow parliaments to exchange information regarding good practices and successful experiences in combating orphanage trafficking and prohibiting orphanage tourism in line with international human rights standards;
21. *Calls upon* national parliaments to accelerate their efforts in poverty eradication and reaffirm that investment in children and the realization of their rights through an integrated and multifaceted approach based on the well-being of children under the Sustainable Development Goals is one of the best ways to protect children from unnecessary institutionalization and the risk of trafficking and exploitation;
22. *Urges* parliaments to take effective action to implement international commitments and bring their domestic legal and regulatory framework into full conformity with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children and United Nations General Assembly resolution 74/133 of 18 December 2019 on the rights of the child, including by:

- a. Ensuring criminal laws enable the prosecution of orphanage trafficking and exploitation offences, including the unlawful removal of a child from parents or guardians and placement in a care facility for the purpose of exploitation and/or profit and/or to ensure that countries are not used as safe havens or channels for exploitation and abuse of children;
- b. Criminalizing the grooming of children and of trusted persons (parents, guardians, caregivers) to facilitate both online and offline sexual exploitation especially by persons in positions of power, authority or trust, and by undertaking efforts to adopt legislation that enhances online safety and establishes mandatory efforts and liability for technology companies, creates standards for monitoring and reporting of harmful online acts to protect potential victims and prevent future instances of exploitation;
- c. Establishing by law extraterritorial jurisdiction for all offences of child trafficking, exploitation and grooming;
- d. Establishing enforceable child protection regulations for the travel, volunteering and tourism industry that include a prohibition on orphanage volunteering and non-family visits to orphanages, and regulation of other forms of voluntourism activities involving children;
- e. Incorporating regulations on the participation of voluntourists, volunteers and visitors into existing child protection, child welfare and alternative care regulations, and specifically restricting non-family visits to and volunteering within residential childcare facilities;
- f. Ensuring that a child- and disability-friendly and gender-responsive reporting mechanism, as well as regular monitoring and supervision, is accessible to children in residential care, and to children and young people who have transitioned out of care, while ensuring the confidentiality and safety of the reporter and witnesses;
- g. Establishing sufficient not-for-profit sector regulations and ensuring charitable activities comply with international child rights norms, safeguard children's best interests, and protect children, especially children with disabilities, from harm, abuse and rights violations;
- h. Strengthening the implementation of child protection laws and regulations, including the licensing, monitoring and oversight of residential care facilities in cooperation with civil society, and of protective measures to avoid the re-traumatization and re-victimization of child victims as a result of any interactions with State authorities including in investigative and judicial processes;
- i. Ensuring that laws related to the protection and welfare of children provide that, insofar as possible, children remain in the custody and care of their families except in circumstances in which harm can only be prevented by temporarily placing the child in a home, orphanage or rescue shelter;
- j. Calling for robust measures to hold accountable all individuals or entities involved in orchestrating or facilitating the deportation and abduction of children from temporarily occupied territories, including through the potential use of orphanages for exploitation and profit;
- k. Establishing by law the right to remedies, including compensation, for children who are subjected to trafficking, including orphanage trafficking;
- l. Strengthening international adoption regulations to ensure that intercountry adoptions are conducted transparently, ethically and in the best interests of the child, with a focus on preventing trafficking and exploitation in the context of adoption;
- m. Preventing international adoption by parties to an armed conflict, particularly prohibiting such adoption of children from conflict-related regions;
- n. Developing and enforcing a domestic volunteering framework that includes conducting thorough background checks on volunteers and providing training and support to eradicate unskilled volunteering, ensuring that volunteers understand and respect the rights of children;
- o. Ensuring that children who are transitioning out of care upon reaching the age of majority receive dedicated, comprehensive assistance prior to leaving care that effectively and meaningfully prepares them for independently living out of care, including on how to enter the job market, and an assistance and measures package to meet their needs once they have left care, as well as a point of contact for ongoing and periodic safety and well-being reviews;

- p. Encouraging governments and national tourism authorities to improve their administrative and legal processes in regulating the private sector within the travel and tourism industry to ensure compliance with the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and child rights' obligations, and the "do no harm" principle by creating incentives for tourism operators to actively prioritize child protection to vulnerable children in touristic destinations and to undertake human rights due diligence, as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility programmes;
- q. Developing robust national databases on the scope and prevalence of voluntourism within national contexts by improving and securing a comprehensive approach to data collection through multisectoral partnership which is essential for developing targeted prevention;
- r. Providing national children and youth protection authorities with a sound legal basis, and sufficient financial and human resources to fulfill their tasks and enable continuous oversight of residential care facilities and effective protection of individuals entrusted to such institutions;
- s. Strengthening deinstitutionalization programmes and family-focused development targeting poor parents and disadvantaged families through formal education, training on parenting capacities and economic incentives;
- t. Advocating for the development and implementation of safe repatriation, reintegration and rehabilitation programmes for children who have been victims of orphanage trafficking, exploitation or forcible transfers;
- u. Prioritizing investment in multi-sectoral collaborative partnerships by working cooperatively with relevant stakeholders to find sustainable solutions to address the root causes of orphanage trafficking and voluntourism, which includes investment in poverty reduction, food security, sexual and reproductive health rights, security and the rule of law;
- v. Strengthening social services for child protection and making systems inclusive to respond to the needs of all children, regardless of their migration status, with a focus on both primary violence prevention for all children and more targeted prevention and child-friendly response services, particularly for children in vulnerable situations; as well as by giving priority to legal services and safeguards for children at risk or who are victims of sale, abuse and exploitation;
- w. Promoting inclusive and responsive family-oriented policies, including those designed to: strengthen parents' and caregivers' ability to care for children, support social policies that work towards the deinstitutionalization of children, address negative social norms that affect equal access to quality education, and prevent the exploitation of children within childcare institutions or alternative care;

23. *Calls upon* IPU Member Parliaments to request their governments to pay particular attention to situations of illegal intercountry adoptions and, if they have not already done so, to conduct investigations into the matter in order to shed full light on these facts and to understand the processes that have made it possible for illegal adoptions of abducted or trafficked children to be validated, legalized and authenticated;

24. *Also calls upon* IPU Member Parliaments and their governments to do their utmost, once such investigations have been terminated, to ensure that the conclusions drawn lead to concrete measures aimed at helping victims, on the one hand, and, on the other, at preventing other persons from becoming victims in the future;

25. *Further calls upon* IPU Member Parliaments and their governments, on the basis of such investigations, to acknowledge that cases of illegal adoption have indeed taken place and to recognize the persons concerned as victims.



## Report of the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security

*Noted by the 147th IPU Assembly  
(Luanda, 27 October 2023)*

The Standing Committee on Peace and International Security held two sittings on 24 and 26 October with its President, Mr. M.B.M. Al-Ahbab (Qatar), in the Chair.

On 24 October, after going through procedural items and official communications, the Committee held a hearing of experts on the theme Addressing the social and humanitarian impact of autonomous weapon systems and artificial intelligence. The hearing was opened by a video message from Ms. I. Nakamitsu, United Nations Under Secretary General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, who stated that urgent action by political leaders to prohibit and regulate such systems remained paramount. Parliamentarians must play a crucial role in holding governments accountable, in triggering concrete action and in ensuring transparency in governance.

The hearing featured several interventions starting with Ms. P. Peraza Aguilar, Minister-Counsellor with the Permanent Mission of Costa Rica to the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG), speaking on behalf of Mr. C. Guillermet-Fernández, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to UNOG, former deputy Minister for External Affairs. Costa Rica's efforts centred on the urgency of promoting the negotiation of an international instrument on the prohibition and regulation of autonomous weapons systems. Ms. G. Hinds, Legal Advisor at the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), focused on the legal and ethical concerns as a result of the unpredictability aspect of new technologies of warfare and on the work done to safeguard and strengthen humanitarian protection of civilians and combatants. Ms. C. Connolly, Manager of Automated Decision Research, the monitoring and research team of the Stop Killer Robots coalition, called for new international law on autonomy in weapons systems and for meaningful human control over systems that detected and applied force to a target based on sensor inputs rather than an immediate human command. Such a regulation was urgent not only for conflict situations, but also for everyday security as that technology could be used domestically by police forces. Ms. M. Stolbizer (Argentina), speaking on behalf of the co-Rapporteurs of the forthcoming draft resolution, confirmed that the drafting team was also focusing on the urgency of bringing back human control over weapons systems through strong regulation.

The debate that followed featured 16 interventions from parliamentarians and one from a permanent observer. Stress was placed on the pace of development of artificial intelligence (AI) and its integration in militaries around the world, raising concerns about the adverse, exacerbating consequences of the future integration of AI and autonomous weapon systems in the current climate of conflict and tensions. It was, however, also acknowledged that AI could serve humanity positively. Parliamentarians agreed that AI and autonomous weapons systems must be regulated, especially in terms of the ethics of granting a machine the ability to decide whether or not to kill humans. The need for multilateral interaction in building consensus around the topic of autonomous weapons and AI was emphasized, as well as the critical role of parliamentarians to uphold the values of human rights and international humanitarian law.

The second panel on the theme Inventory of tools for MPs to engage in dialogue, legislation, oversight and prevention in the pursuit of peace was held on the same day in follow-up to the 2022 IPU resolution on peace processes. Mr. P. Dziatkowiec, Director of Mediation and Peace Support at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP), introduced the panel by referring to the state of peace in the world. The interventions that followed highlighted the various approaches which formed the basis of a necessary paradigm shift in the understanding of security. Ms. H. Qasas, Executive Director of the Principles for Peace (P4P) Foundation, presented the principles for peace and their usefulness in parliamentary action towards peace. Societal peace was possible and lasting when parliaments actively orchestrated the transition from agreements to tangible change, to dignified, legitimate and accountable security. Mr. D. Kiniger-Passigli, expert in crisis resolution, development cooperation, public and labour affairs, speaking as Vice-President of the World Academy of Art and Science, emphasized that the human security approach was a universal and people-centred method that highlighted the interdependence between peace, security, sustainable development and human rights, and helped establish early prevention. The last speaker, Ms. A. Chenoy, Adjunct Professor at Jindal Global University, India, and Member of the International Peace Bureau (IPB) Common Security working

group, referred to common security as a method to fight against the insecurity some countries felt vis-à-vis others. Insecurity aggravated tensions and often led to conflicts. Common security focused on joint survival rather than on mutual destruction and it offered a viable alternative for a peaceful future.

Mr. J. Granoff, President of the Global Security Institute and an international lawyer in the field of human development and human security, opened the debate by pointing out that the three approaches were linked with parliamentary functions and could be used as tools by parliamentarians. He outlined some of the good practices that had been identified during the research conducted since the adoption of the 2022 IPU resolution and that would be showcased in the inventory of tools for parliamentarians when engaging in conflict prevention. The debate featured six speakers who all emphasized that parliamentarians had a key role in promoting peace and security and should therefore engage internationally to develop solutions to global threats. The speakers also shared some examples of parliamentary actions and welcomed the development of the inventory of tools with the hope that it would help parliamentary action to be more conducive to peace.

On 26 October, the Standing committee held a third event, a panel discussion on the theme The role of parliaments in promoting a culture of transparency, anti-corruption and citizen engagement to restore trust in national and international institutions and strengthen peace. The panel featured three experts. Mr. F. Zon (Indonesia), Chair of South East Asian Parliamentarians Against Corruption (SEAPAC) and Vice-Chair of the Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC), said that parliament could ensure public integrity, improve public institution legitimacy and uphold transparency by mobilizing political will and enhancing public engagement. Ms. C. Fredriksen, International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI) Development Initiative, highlighted the need for partnerships between parliaments and Supreme Audit Institutions to strengthen accountability ecosystems, and to better engage the public and other partners in promoting support for oversight and accountability, and subsequently transparency in their national environments. Mr. J. Granoff, speaking as former Permanent Observer for International Anti-Corruption Academy to the United Nations Secretary-General, recalled the importance of international cooperation in preventing and combating corruption, bribery and money laundering in all their forms, and taking back control over productive economies' stolen assets and illicit financial flows that were needed to fulfil the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The ensuing debate featured eleven speakers. It reinforced the idea that the fight against corruption required transnational cooperation, and that technologies could serve to monitor illicit transactions and help countries identify the channels through which corruption operated. Speakers were in agreement that transparency, integrity, citizen involvement, legislation, oversight, capacity building, cooperation and training were all concrete steps towards a culture of transparency that was well within the reach of parliamentarians.

The report on the work of the Committee was presented to the Assembly at its last sitting on 27 October by Ms. D. Bergamini (Italy) on behalf of the President of the Standing Committee, Mr. M.B.M. Al-Ahbab (Qatar).

The Bureau of the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security met on 25 October 2023. Six out of 13 members as well as the representatives of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians and the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians were present.

A lively debate took place where Bureau members agreed that the proliferation of conflicts was dividing humanity in a way that would not benefit any side and that it was worth remembering that the security of one nation could not be assured at the expense of another. They also agreed that as parliamentarians they were obliged to resolve conflict, and that in cases where resolution seemed impossible, where compromise seemed out of reach, they were bound to find a way forward – not for themselves, but for all those who they represented. To that end, they must show humility, dignity, solidarity and respect for others, and should strive to reinvigorate multilateralism to strengthen the links between nations, citizens and institutions and thus give peace a chance.

During the meeting, the Bureau discussed its workplan. It was agreed that all the time allocated for the 148th Assembly would be devoted to negotiating the next resolution. Bureau members also proposed that, for planning purposes, the Bureau should strive to meet online in between Assemblies to discuss the state of peace and security. Also, issues relating to the Committee's mandate must be regularly monitored and a relevant report should be prepared and shared with IPU Members to keep them abreast of the latest developments in the field of peace and security. The proposal was subsequently approved by the Standing Committee at the end of its last plenary sitting on 25 November.

## Report of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development

*Noted by the 147th IPU Assembly  
(Luanda, 27 October 2023)*

The Standing Committee on Sustainable Development held its sittings on 25 and 26 October. Both sittings were chaired by the Committee Vice President, Mr. W. William (Seychelles).

### **Debate on the theme of the next resolution entitled *Partnerships for climate action: Promoting access to affordable green energy, and ensuring innovation, responsibility, and equity***

The theme of the next resolution was introduced by two experts: Ms. T. Tollmann, Process Management Officer at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Secretariat, and Ms. A. Smagadi, Legal Officer, Officer in Charge of the Montevideo Coordination and Delivery Unit, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The draft resolution co-Rapporteurs Mr. S. Patra (India), Ms. L. Vasylenko (Ukraine) and Ms. M. Al Suwaidi (United Arab Emirates) were also present.

Ms. T. Tollmann (UNFCCC), citing the sixth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), emphasized the urgency of climate action and introduced the Global Stocktake (GST) as a critical mechanism within the Paris Agreement. The GST, occurring every five years, assesses parties' climate measures and informs their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). It focuses on mitigation, loss and damage, and means of implementation and support to enhance international cooperation and ambition. She highlighted the engagement of non-party stakeholders in the GST, emphasizing civil society's role, and outlined the three GST phases: information collection, technical assessment and outputs leading to COP28. In terms of governance, the process involves the Conference of the Parties (CMA) as the overall authority, supported by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI). A high-level committee, comprising CMA Presidencies and SBSTA/SBI Chairs, oversees high-level events in the global stocktake process, ensuring a structured and organized approach.

Ms. A. Smagadi (UNEP) discussed the alignment of legislation with the Committee's draft resolution and introduced the UNEP Montevideo Environmental Law Programme. The programme served as an intergovernmental platform dedicated to advancing environmental law priorities and had entered its fifth decade of action. A central focus of UNEP's activities within the programme was capacity building, aimed at equipping nations and regions with the knowledge and resources needed to create, implement and enforce environmental laws effectively.

Ms. Smagadi highlighted key thematic priorities, including addressing critical issues such as pollution, climate change and biodiversity crises through legal responses. Parliaments have a pivotal role in addressing these global challenges by developing and enacting environmental laws, both by way of overarching frameworks and specific climate change legislation. Parliaments can take rapid measures, define actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through sectoral laws and ensure the effective implementation of these laws through oversight. Recognizing the interconnectedness of environmental and climate-related legislation is crucial, and parliaments can draft legislation that establishes climate rights and obligations, creating a legal framework for climate action. They should also actively engage in discussions about emerging climate concepts to ensure the legal system remains adaptable.

To support these efforts, UNEP offers an online Law and Environmental Assistance Platform (LEAP), providing step-by-step assessments to identify specific legal needs, and a Law and Climate Change Toolkit to facilitate the implementation of legal measures to address climate-related issues. In conclusion, Ms. Smagadi emphasized that UNEP's Montevideo Environmental Law Programme underscored the vital role of parliaments in shaping and implementing environmental and climate legislation. It offers guidance and practical tools to assist in these efforts, contributing to the strengthening of legal frameworks necessary for addressing pressing global environmental challenges.

Following the expert presentations, the co-Rapporteurs addressed the Committee. Ms. M. Al Suwaidi (UAE) highlighted the urgent need for increased partnerships for climate action, emphasizing the visible impact of climate change on basic needs and the growing gap between stakeholders, underscoring the necessity for more effective climate action. Limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius was a challenge which is why parliaments must scrutinize governments to achieve that goal. To strengthen the parliamentary role in climate action, it was necessary to raise awareness, foster individual responsibility, initiate interactions between parliamentarians and stakeholders, and support regional and global efforts to align parliaments with international climate agendas. Mr. S. Patra (India) clarified the key components of the draft resolution, defined the crucial notions and elaborated on the nuances between climate action and climate change. He delved into the scope of “access”, affordability of green energy, responsibility, and equity. Partnerships involved both providing and receiving support. Ms. L. Vasylenko (Ukraine) focused on implementation, stressing the need to take practical steps for successful resolution implementation. She introduced the idea of including ecocide as an environmental crime.

Twenty delegates shared their countries’ climate action practices and challenges. Delegates raised critical questions about the pace of global climate action and concerns about exceeding temperature limits. Given the complexity of climate issues, it was important to remove technical and financial barriers. International collaboration and partnerships were essential. In view of the vulnerability of their nations to climate change, there was a need for coordinated efforts while bearing in mind the common but differentiated responsibilities among nations. The importance of sharing good practices on green energy transition and removing barriers for sustainable transformation was stressed. In terms of parliamentary functions, oversight of the Paris Agreement commitments, budget allocation for the green transition and the enacting of laws for carbon neutrality were emphasized. The pivotal role of parliamentary bodies in addressing pressing global environmental challenges was highlighted.

### **Preparations for the Parliamentary Meeting at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) in the United Arab Emirates**

The Chair recalled that the IPU had been promoting parliamentary engagement in climate change for more than a decade. To that end, the aim of the Parliamentary Meeting at COP28, that was being co-organized by the IPU and the Federal National Council of the UAE, was to give parliamentarians an opportunity to obtain first-hand information on the main issues to be discussed at COP28. It is the first time that the venue of the Parliamentary Meeting, which is to be held on 6 December in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, will be in the COP Green Zone thereby elevating the visibility of parliaments as key stakeholders in climate action.

The Parliamentary Meeting’s Rapporteur Ms. M. Al Suwaidi (UAE), Ms. S. Shaw, Senior Advisor at COP28, and Ms. H. Bourke, Green Zone Manager at COP28, shared the main points of the draft Outcome Document to be adopted as well as the practical arrangements for the meeting. The Standing Committee was invited to provide comments and ideas to further refine the text of the Outcome Document before its presentation at the Parliamentary Meeting.

The document is being drafted around thematic elements including clean energy transition, parliamentary engagement and international cooperation. A total of four delegates took the floor to share their ideas on the draft document. Comments included the suggestion to include wording on reducing methane emissions as a complementary method to address climate change. The importance of green development and climate finance was also highlighted.

### **Expert hearing on the theme *Ensuring global food security***

The discussion and key issues for consideration were introduced by Ms. A. Badejo, Deputy Regional Director for Operations, Regional Bureau for Southern Africa, World Food Programme (WFP), and Ms. S. Healy-Thow, Global Youth Campaigns Coordinator for the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN).

Ms. Badejo (WFP) highlighted the profound challenges faced by the world’s most vulnerable populations in relation to food security. People living in fragile and conflict-affected regions were now also grappling with the added burden of the climate crisis. Frequent disasters were causing damage to lives, livelihoods and harvests. There was an urgent need for governments to take climate action. The El Niño phenomenon which reached its peak in September 2023, is expected to last until May 2024. It causes droughts and increased rainfall that jeopardize agricultural production and food security. The

paradox was that while some regions of the world faced both drought and flooding simultaneously, other regions were struggling to recover from the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Although food, fertilizers and energy prices had decreased, they were still higher than their pre-pandemic levels. Furthermore, global food needs were outstripping the humanitarian system's ability to meet those demands. Governments must invest in tackling the root causes of food insecurity and parliaments must bolster the political will and funding to enhance food security, improve people's lives worldwide, expand training programmes and focus on long-term resilience while promoting peace and sound economic policies.

Ms. Healy-Throw (GAIN) emphasized the critical importance of involving young people in discussions about their own future, especially when they were the ones directly impacted by the decisions made today. Food, a fundamental human need, holds immense significance not only in terms of nutrition but also in terms of its role in environmental degradation and even conflict. It was crucial to engage young people in developing solutions. She presented a set of actionable commitments aimed at ensuring food security, including making healthy food affordable, ending harmful chemical use in farming, providing every child with a healthy school meal, educating everyone about the environmental impact, halting land use degradation, banning single-use plastics, embracing indigenous food knowledge, ending destructive practices, and supporting local growers through tax incentives. It was important to involve young people in co-creating and driving these initiatives forward. She encouraged leaders to engage with youth councils and organizations in their respective countries.

A total of 22 delegates took the floor to share their experiences, insights and concerns on the pressing issue of ensuring a stable and sustainable food supply for the world's population. Delegates highlighted the intricate interconnectedness of countries and their food systems. Consequently, food and nutrition security was not merely a national concern but a global challenge that necessitated international collaboration. Parliaments, as the legislative bodies of nations, were pivotal in fostering this global collaboration. They hold the power to create and amend policies that can influence trade agreements, agricultural practices and food distribution on a national level. Nevertheless, food security cannot be achieved in isolation. Nations must work together to ensure that food is produced, distributed, and accessed fairly and sustainably on a global scale. Equitable access to food is a shared responsibility that parliaments must recognize. By fostering cooperation with other countries and international organizations, parliaments can help create a more inclusive and just global food system. This involves supporting initiatives to combat climate change, reduce conflicts and ensuring that vulnerable regions receive the aid they need. Moreover, the emphasis on sustainable agriculture underlines the importance of practices that do not deplete resources, harm the environment, or negatively impact other nations. Parliaments have a role in promoting policies that encourage responsible agricultural practices that consider the global consequences of local actions.

## Report of the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs

*Noted by the 147th IPU Assembly  
(Luanda, 27 October 2023)*

The Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs met in plenary session on 25 and 26 October with the Vice-President Mr. A. Gryffroy (Belgium) in the chair, and over 40 parliamentary delegations in attendance.

The first sitting consisted of a discussion on the role of the United Nations Resident Coordinator and the UN Country Team (UNCT) vis-à-vis the Government and National Assembly of Angola, which was followed by a debate on a draft motion outlining specific actions for parliaments to advocate actively for gender equality in the UN General Assembly.

The UN Resident Coordinator in Angola, Ms. Z. Virani, started the discussion with a presentation on the United Nations presence in Angola in support of national sustainable development. The UNCT worked with the Government of Angola, the private sector, civil society, religious entities, as well as the National Assembly, in order to serve the Angolan people.

Ms. Virani referred to the evolution of the United Nations work in Angola since the country's independence in 1975, during the years of the civil war (1976–2002), and over the last twenty years. The relationship between the UN and Angola had not always been an easy one, particularly towards the end of the civil war when UN peacekeepers were asked to leave the country. However, today in 2023, the country had taken on a peace building leadership role in the region, and on the continent, and enjoyed a strong partnership with the UN. The main basis for the UN work in Angola is the *United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2024-2028*, with the 2030 SDGs being the principal driving force.

The UNSDCF vision “is an empowered, peaceful, democratic and resilient Angola where all people equitably participate in and benefit from the sustainable, inclusive and structural socio-economic transformation of the country”. It is built on four pillars: people (human capital development, hopefully by 2028 more people benefiting from education), peace (democratic governance and human rights), prosperity (economic diversification – Angola is currently very dependent on oil as its principal source of revenue, and sustainable food systems), and the planet (climate resilience – currently, the south of the country is experiencing the most serious drought in the last forty years, and sustainable natural resources management).

With regard to the UN's work directly linked to the topic of the 147th IPU Assembly *Parliamentary action for peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16)*, the UN has engaged with the National Assembly of Angola as a whole and also with some of its standing committees. Some examples of the UN's work with the National Assembly include the development of Angola's first Voluntary National Review (VNR), bringing the SDGs closer to the parliament, gender-based budgeting, as well as sectoral analyses of Angola's General State Budget. The UN system works with Angolan parliamentarians reinforcing their fundamental role in institutionalizing a people-centred development model, which responds to citizens' needs for effective implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), leaving no-one behind.

Ms. Virani concluded her presentation by introducing the UN entities represented in the UNCT: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).



The Chair warmly thanked the UN Resident Coordinator for her very interesting presentation and invited delegate questions. Due to time constraints, only seven delegates placed questions and comments. Most noted the need for better communication channels between the UNCTs and parliaments, so that the latter could play their role in achieving the SDGs. There were observations on the current lack of progress in meeting the SDGs, as well as the importance of not only empowering youth and women, but also people with disabilities. In her response, the UN Resident Coordinator stressed that the UNCTs could offer support and tools to countries, and that parliamentarians should not hesitate to contact their UNCT.

The discussion followed up on the Manama Committee session, engaging the parliamentary community in advocating actively for gender equality in the UN General Assembly. Only one in four Permanent Representatives (ambassadors) in the General Assembly is a woman. This gender imbalance in the UN's top decision-making body gives the impression that the UN community does not practice what it preaches when it comes to gender equality. Making the General Assembly and other key UN bodies gender-equal will greatly strengthen the multilateral system and its ability to deliver to the people.

A draft motion was introduced by Mr. H. Aoyagi (Japan), member of the Committee's Bureau, who said that he, personally, was going to present the motion to the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Diet of Japan.

Mr. M. Chungong, IPU Secretary General, spoke of his work as Chair of the Global Board of International Gender Champions. The Global Board includes the UN Secretary-General, diplomats, leading civil society members, all striving to promote gender equality in the relevant institutions and ensure equal opportunities for men and women. The IPU was a trailblazer with regard to gender equality, institutional structures were in place, and the IPU Governing Council had just adopted an anti-harassment policy. Following recent discussions with the current President of the UN General Assembly, the latter became a gender champion and committed to promoting gender equality. The motion was excellent and the IPU needed to be seen as walking the talk. For example, the IPU Secretary General would only accept panel invitations if there were an equal number of men and women panellists.

The Chair thanked Mr. Aoyagi and the IPU Secretary General for their contributions and noted that in his own country, Belgium, gender equality was very poor in the foreign service higher ranks. Twelve delegates took the floor to explain the work carried out in their respective countries and parliaments. The delegate from Indonesia said that since parliament approved the appointment of ambassadors it should ensure that more female ambassadors were nominated. As a male parliamentarian, he too fought for laws and policies to achieve gender equality noting "it is a fight of both men and women".

The motion was adopted by acclamation.

The second sitting took place on 26 October and focused on the reform of the United Nations Security Council. The Permanent Representative of Kuwait to the United Nations in New York, Mr. T. Albanai, participated online as co-Chair of the UN Security Council informal reform process. Included in the process for equitable representation and an increase in the membership of the UN Security Council is an informal intergovernmental negotiation group whose role it is to bring in new ideas and allow for a free discussion. Especially in light of the Summit of the Future in 2024, the need for reform was evident. The UN Security Council was not representative of the UN members.

Ms. A. Novosseloff, expert on the UN Security Council, who joined the meeting online, provided insight as a researcher on the reform of the UN Security Council. She noted the UN Security Council lacked legitimacy primarily because a decisive number of resolutions were not implemented rather than on the grounds of representation. The UN Security Council was designed to be a body for fast decision making and, in her opinion, an enlarged UN Security Council would even be more divided than the current one. An increase in transparency in the working of the UN Security Council would be beneficial for its legitimacy.

In the discussion the representatives of Qatar, Japan, Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam, China, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Chile, South Africa, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), India, Egypt and Ukraine took the floor.

There was unanimous agreement that reform of the UN Security Council was urgent. It was felt that the gap between the expectations and the reality of the United Nations was far too large and led to opposition and despair by young people.

In response to a question, Mr. T. Albanai, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Kuwait to the United Nations, suggested parliaments could support the reform process by drawing the attention of their respective governments to the reform process and by staying involved as parliaments would need to ratify any changes. The two co-Chairs of this process acted as facilitators and had identified some steps to increase the UN Security Council's efficiency and effectiveness. Nonetheless every change in the working methods of the UN Security Council required acceptance from the current 15 members. Finally, he called on the IPU to submit its vision of a UN Security Council reform.

In her concluding remarks, Ms. A. Novosseloff, expert on the UN Security Council, said that it would be of utmost importance to guarantee UN Security Council resolutions were implemented. It was not the role of the UN Security Council to be the most democratic organ of the United Nations – that was the role of the UN General Assembly, but the UN Security Council must be effective and efficient. She defended the veto power as an instrument of security as it required compromise and consensus.

The Chair thanked the two experts for their time and their insights. In concluding he informed that Ukraine had made a proposal for the Committee's next motion on this topic which the Bureau would consider for adoption in the next meeting of the Standing Committee in Geneva in March 2024.

Before the elections to the Bureau, the Chair reiterated the rules for all Bureau members, noting that after being absent twice without prior information and/or replacement by someone else in the same delegation, a Bureau member's term expires. This being the case of members from Armenia, Brazil and the Republic of Moldova, the Committee decided to terminate their membership at the current Assembly.

This being the last session with Mr. A. Gryffroy (Belgium) chairing, he was thanked for all his hard work.

## Stopping the war and violations of human rights in Gaza

**Results of the roll-call vote on the request of the delegations of Algeria and Kuwait  
on behalf of the Arab Group, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), and South Africa  
on behalf of the African Group for the inclusion of an emergency item**

### Results

Affirmative votes .....607      Total of affirmative and negative votes.. 1,046  
Negative votes.....439      Two-thirds majority ..... 697  
Abstentions.....219

Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.
Albania			Absent	Gabon	11			Palestine	12		
Algeria	16			Gambia (The)	11			Peru			10
Andorra			Absent	Georgia			Absent	Poland		10	
Angola	15			Germany		19		Portugal		13	
Argentina			14	Ghana	15			Qatar	9		
Armenia			Absent	Greece		10		Republic of Korea			17
Australia		14		Guinea			Absent	Romania		10	
Austria		12		Guinea-Bissau	11			Russian Federation	20		
Azerbaijan	13			Guyana	10			Rwanda			Absent
Bahamas			Absent	Hungary		12		Sao Tome and Principe			10
Bahrain	11			Iceland		10		Saudi Arabia	15		
Bangladesh			Absent	India			23	Senegal	13		
Belarus	12			Indonesia	22			Serbia	6		6
Belgium		13		Iran (Islamic Republic of)	19			Seychelles	10		
Benin			Absent	Iraq	16			Sierra Leone	8		
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	8	5		Ireland		12		Slovenia		11	
Botswana	11			Italy		17		Somalia	13		
Brazil			Absent	Japan			20	South Africa	17		
Bulgaria		12		Kenya			Absent	South Sudan			Absent
Burkina Faso			Absent	Kuwait	11			Spain		16	
Burundi			Absent	Lao People's Dem. Republic			Absent	Sri Lanka			Absent
Cabo Verde			Absent	Latvia		10		Suriname	10		
Cambodia			13	Lesotho			Absent	Sweden		13	
Cameroon			14	Libya	12			Switzerland		12	
Canada		15		Liechtenstein		10		Syrian Arab Rep.	14		
Chad	11			Lithuania		8		Thailand			18
Chile	3	10		Malawi			Absent	Timor-Leste			Absent
China	23			Malaysia	15			Tonga			Absent
Côte d'Ivoire			Absent	Maldives	10			Türkiye	19		
Croatia			Absent	Mali			Absent	Tuvalu			Absent
Cuba	13			Malta		8		Uganda			16
Czech Republic		13		Mauritius			Absent	Ukraine		16	
DR of the Congo	19			Mexico			20	United Arab Emirates	12		
Denmark		12		Monaco		10		United Kingdom		18	
Djibouti			Absent	Morocco	15			United Republic of Tanzania			Absent
Dominican Rep.			Absent	Mozambique			Absent	Uruguay			11
Egypt	20			Namibia	11			Uzbekistan			Absent
Equatorial Guinea	11			Nepal			Absent	Viet Nam	10		9
Estonia		11		Netherlands		13		Yemen	13		
Ethiopia			18	Nigeria		22		Zambia			Absent
Fiji			Absent	Norway		12		Zimbabwe			Absent
Finland		12		Oman	11						
France		18		Pakistan	20						

N.B. This list does not include delegations present at the session which were not entitled to vote pursuant to the provisions of Articles 5.2 and 5.3 of the Statutes. Parliaments participating in the IPU in a non-voting observer capacity in accordance with the decision of the 209th session of the Governing Council in Nusa Dua do not appear on this list.

## Towards common ground for peace

**Results of the roll-call vote on the request of the delegations of Canada, on behalf of the delegations of Argentina, Austria, Croatia, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Sweden and United Kingdom for the inclusion of an emergency item**

### R e s u l t s

Affirmative votes..... 507      Total of affirmative and negative votes ..959  
 Negative votes ..... 452      Two-thirds majority.....639  
 Abstentions ..... 306

Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.
Albania		<i>Absent</i>		Gabon	11			Palestine		12	
Algeria		16		Gambia (The)		11		Peru			10
Andorra		<i>Absent</i>		Georgia		<i>Absent</i>		Poland	10		
Angola		15		Germany	19			Portugal	13		
Argentina	14			Ghana			15	Qatar		9	
Armenia		<i>Absent</i>		Greece	10			Republic of Korea	17		
Australia	14			Guinea		<i>Absent</i>		Romania	10		
Austria	12			Guinea-Bissau			11	Russian Federation		20	
Azerbaijan			13	Guyana			10	Rwanda		<i>Absent</i>	
Bahamas		<i>Absent</i>		Hungary	12			Sao Tome and Principe			10
Bahrain		11		Iceland	10			Saudi Arabia		15	
Bangladesh		<i>Absent</i>		India			23	Senegal		13	
Belarus		12		Indonesia		22		Serbia			12
Belgium	13			Iran (Islamic Republic of)		19		Seychelles	5		5
Benin		<i>Absent</i>		Iraq		16		Sierra Leone		8	
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	5		8	Ireland	12			Slovenia	11		
Botswana		11		Italy	17			Somalia		13	
Brazil		<i>Absent</i>		Japan			20	South Africa		17	
Bulgaria	12			Kenya		<i>Absent</i>		South Sudan		<i>Absent</i>	
Burkina Faso		<i>Absent</i>		Kuwait		11		Spain	16		
Burundi		<i>Absent</i>		Lao People's Dem. Republic		<i>Absent</i>		Sri Lanka		<i>Absent</i>	
Cabo Verde		<i>Absent</i>		Latvia	10			Suriname	5		5
Cambodia			13	Lesotho		<i>Absent</i>		Sweden	13		
Cameroon			14	Libya		12		Switzerland	12		
Canada	15			Liechtenstein	10			Syrian Arab Rep.		14	
Chad		11		Lithuania	8			Thailand			18
Chile	10	3		Malawi		<i>Absent</i>		Timor-Leste		<i>Absent</i>	
China		15	8	Malaysia		15		Tonga		<i>Absent</i>	
Côte d'Ivoire		<i>Absent</i>		Maldives		10		Türkiye		19	
Croatia		<i>Absent</i>		Mali		<i>Absent</i>		Tuvalu		<i>Absent</i>	
Cuba			13	Malta	8			Uganda			16
Czech Republic	13			Mauritius		<i>Absent</i>		Ukraine	16		
DR of the Congo			19	Mexico			20	United Arab Emirates		12	
Denmark	12			Monaco	10			United Kingdom	18		
Djibouti		<i>Absent</i>		Morocco		15		United Republic of Tanzania		<i>Absent</i>	
Dominican Rep.		<i>Absent</i>		Mozambique		<i>Absent</i>		Uruguay	11		
Egypt		20		Namibia		11		Uzbekistan		<i>Absent</i>	
Equatorial Guinea			11	Nepal		<i>Absent</i>		Viet Nam	5		14
Estonia	11			Netherlands	13			Yemen		13	
Ethiopia			18	Nigeria	22			Zambia		<i>Absent</i>	
Fiji		<i>Absent</i>		Norway	12			Zimbabwe		<i>Absent</i>	
Finland	12			Oman		11					
France	18			Pakistan		20					

N.B. This list does not include delegations present at the session which were not entitled to vote pursuant to the provisions of Articles 5.2 and 5.3 of the Statutes. Parliaments participating in the IPU in a non-voting observer capacity in accordance with the decision of the 209th session of the Governing Council in Nusa Dua do not appear on this list.

## IPU Budget for 2024

*Approved by the IPU Governing Council at its 212th session  
(Luanda, 24 October 2023)*

	2023 Budget	2024 Budget		
		Regular budget	Other sources	All funds
Assessed contributions	11,248,400	11,585,700		11,585,700
Working Capital Fund (IPSAS)	230,000	230,000		230,000
Working Capital Fund (liquid)	382,400	498,400		498,400
Staff assessment	1,158,500	1,159,400		1,159,400
Interest	100,000	100,000		100,000
Programme support costs	0	305,000	(305,000)	0
Other revenue	16,000	16,000		16,000
Voluntary contributions	5,386,800		4,116,900	4,116,900
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>18,522,100</b>	<b>13,896,500</b>	<b>3,811,900</b>	<b>17,708,400</b>
<b>1. Building effective and empowered parliaments</b>	<b>4,806,900</b>	<b>2,206,800</b>	<b>1,541,200</b>	<b>3,748,000</b>
<b>2. Promoting inclusive and representative parliaments</b>	<b>1,116,100</b>	<b>675,300</b>	<b>665,100</b>	<b>1,340,400</b>
<b>3. Supporting resilient and innovative parliaments</b>	<b>1,044,900</b>	<b>361,800</b>	<b>462,800</b>	<b>824,600</b>
<b>4. Catalysing collective parliamentary action</b>	<b>8,209,700</b>	<b>6,843,200</b>	<b>1,399,200</b>	<b>8,242,400</b>
<b>5. Strengthening the IPU's accountability</b>	<b>3,635,900</b>	<b>3,704,800</b>	<b>48,600</b>	<b>3,753,400</b>
Other charges	107,600	104,600		104,600
Eliminations	(399,000)		(305,000)	(305,000)
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>18,522,100</b>	<b>13,896,500</b>	<b>3,811,900</b>	<b>17,708,400</b>

### Approved 2024 capital budget

Item	2024
1. Replacement of computers and servers	35,000
2. Furniture	15,000
3. Website development	100,000
<b>Total capital expenditures</b>	<b>150,000</b>

## Approved programme and budget for 2024

### Scale of contributions for 2024 based on the UN scale of assessment

*Approved by the IPU Governing Council at its 212th session  
(Luanda, 24 October 2023)*

Country name	UN 2022–2024	Approved 2024 scale	
	Per cent	Per cent	CHF
Afghanistan	0.006%	0.110%	12,700
Albania	0.008%	0.110%	12,700
Algeria	0.109%	0.240%	27,800
Andorra	0.005%	0.110%	12,700
Angola	0.010%	0.110%	12,700
Argentina	0.719%	0.940%	108,800
Armenia	0.007%	0.110%	12,700
Australia	2.111%	2.470%	285,800
Austria	0.679%	0.890%	103,000
Azerbaijan	0.030%	0.140%	16,200
Bahrain	0.054%	0.170%	19,700
Bangladesh	0.010%	0.110%	12,700
Belarus	0.041%	0.150%	17,400
Belgium	0.828%	1.060%	122,700
Benin	0.005%	0.110%	12,700
Bhutan	0.001%	0.100%	11,600
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	0.019%	0.120%	13,900
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0.012%	0.120%	13,900
Botswana	0.015%	0.120%	13,900
Brazil	2.013%	2.370%	274,200
Bulgaria	0.056%	0.170%	19,700
Burkina Faso	0.004%	0.100%	11,600
Burundi	0.001%	0.100%	11,600
Cabo Verde	0.001%	0.100%	11,600
Cambodia	0.007%	0.110%	12,700
Cameroon	0.013%	0.120%	13,900
Canada	2.628%	3.030%	350,600
Central African Republic	0.001%	0.100%	11,600
Chad	0.003%	0.100%	11,600
Chile	0.420%	0.600%	69,400
China	15.254%	11.750%	1,359,600
Colombia	0.246%	0.400%	46,300
Comoros	0.001%	0.100%	11,600
Congo	0.005%	0.110%	12,700
Costa Rica	0.069%	0.190%	22,000
Côte d'Ivoire	0.022%	0.130%	15,000
Croatia	0.091%	0.220%	25,500
Cuba	0.095%	0.220%	25,500
Cyprus	0.036%	0.150%	17,400
Czech Republic	0.340%	0.510%	59,000
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	0.005%	0.110%	12,700
Democratic Republic of the Congo	0.010%	0.110%	12,700
Denmark	0.553%	0.750%	86,800
Djibouti	0.001%	0.100%	11,600
Dominican Republic	0.067%	0.190%	22,000
Ecuador	0.077%	0.200%	23,100
Egypt	0.139%	0.270%	31,200
El Salvador	0.013%	0.120%	13,900
Equatorial Guinea	0.012%	0.120%	13,900
Estonia	0.044%	0.160%	18,500



Country name	UN 2022–2024	Approved 2024 scale	
	Per cent	Per cent	CHF
Eswatini	0.002%	0.100%	11,600
Ethiopia	0.010%	0.110%	12,700
Fiji	0.004%	0.100%	11,600
Finland	0.417%	0.600%	69,400
France	4.318%	4.820%	557,700
Gabon	0.013%	0.120%	13,900
Gambia (the)	0.001%	0.100%	11,600
Georgia	0.008%	0.110%	12,700
Germany	6.111%	6.630%	767,200
Ghana	0.024%	0.130%	15,000
Greece	0.325%	0.490%	56,700
Guatemala	0.041%	0.150%	17,400
Guinea	0.003%	0.100%	11,600
Guinea-Bissau	0.001%	0.100%	11,600
Guyana	0.004%	0.100%	11,600
Haiti	0.006%	0.110%	12,700
Hungary	0.228%	0.380%	44,000
Iceland	0.036%	0.150%	17,400
India	1.044%	1.300%	150,400
Indonesia	0.549%	0.750%	86,800
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	0.371%	0.540%	62,500
Iraq	0.128%	0.260%	30,100
Ireland	0.439%	0.620%	71,700
Israel	0.561%	0.760%	87,900
Italy	3.189%	3.630%	420,000
Japan	8.033%	8.490%	982,400
Jordan	0.022%	0.130%	15,000
Kazakhstan	0.133%	0.270%	31,200
Kenya	0.030%	0.140%	16,200
Kuwait	0.234%	0.390%	45,100
Kyrgyzstan	0.002%	0.100%	11,600
Lao People's Democratic Republic	0.007%	0.110%	12,700
Latvia	0.050%	0.160%	18,500
Lebanon	0.036%	0.150%	17,400
Lesotho	0.001%	0.100%	11,600
Liberia	0.001%	0.100%	11,600
Libya	0.018%	0.120%	13,900
Liechtenstein	0.010%	0.110%	12,700
Lithuania	0.077%	0.200%	23,100
Luxembourg	0.068%	0.190%	22,000
Madagascar	0.004%	0.100%	11,600
Malawi	0.002%	0.100%	11,600
Malaysia	0.348%	0.520%	60,200
Maldives	0.004%	0.100%	11,600
Mali	0.005%	0.110%	12,700
Malta	0.019%	0.120%	13,900
Marshall Islands	0.001%	0.100%	11,600
Mauritania	0.002%	0.100%	11,600
Mauritius	0.019%	0.120%	13,900
Mexico	1.221%	1.500%	173,600
Micronesia (Federated States of)	0.001%	0.100%	11,600
Monaco	0.011%	0.110%	12,700
Mongolia	0.004%	0.100%	11,600
Montenegro	0.004%	0.100%	11,600
Morocco	0.055%	0.170%	19,700
Mozambique	0.004%	0.100%	11,600
Myanmar	0.010%	0.110%	12,700

Country name	UN 2022–2024	Approved 2024 scale	
	Per cent	Per cent	CHF
Namibia	0.009%	0.110%	12,700
Nepal	0.010%	0.110%	12,700
Netherlands	1.377%	1.670%	193,200
New Zealand	0.309%	0.470%	54,400
Nicaragua	0.005%	0.110%	12,700
Niger	0.003%	0.100%	11,600
Nigeria	0.182%	0.320%	37,000
North Macedonia	0.007%	0.110%	12,700
Norway	0.679%	0.890%	103,000
Oman	0.111%	0.240%	27,800
Pakistan	0.114%	0.240%	27,800
Palau	0.001%	0.100%	11,600
Palestine		0.100%	11,600
Panama	0.090%	0.210%	24,300
Paraguay	0.026%	0.130%	15,000
Peru	0.163%	0.300%	34,700
Philippines	0.212%	0.360%	41,700
Poland	0.837%	1.070%	123,800
Portugal	0.353%	0.520%	60,200
Qatar	0.269%	0.430%	49,800
Republic of Korea	2.574%	2.970%	343,700
Republic of Moldova	0.005%	0.110%	12,700
Romania	0.312%	0.480%	55,500
Russian Federation	1.866%	2.210%	255,700
Rwanda	0.003%	0.100%	11,600
Saint Lucia	0.002%	0.100%	11,600
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	0.001%	0.100%	11,600
Samoa	0.001%	0.100%	11,600
San Marino	0.002%	0.100%	11,600
Sao Tome and Principe	0.001%	0.100%	11,600
Saudi Arabia	1.184%	1.460%	168,900
Senegal	0.007%	0.110%	12,700
Serbia	0.032%	0.140%	16,200
Seychelles	0.002%	0.100%	11,600
Sierra Leone	0.001%	0.100%	11,600
Singapore	0.504%	0.700%	81,000
Slovakia	0.155%	0.290%	33,600
Slovenia	0.079%	0.200%	23,100
Somalia	0.001%	0.100%	11,600
South Africa	0.244%	0.400%	46,300
South Sudan	0.002%	0.100%	11,600
Spain	2.134%	2.500%	289,300
Sri Lanka	0.045%	0.160%	18,500
Suriname	0.003%	0.100%	11,600
Sweden	0.871%	1.110%	128,400
Switzerland	1.134%	1.400%	162,000
Syrian Arab Republic	0.009%	0.110%	12,700
Tajikistan	0.003%	0.100%	11,600
Thailand	0.368%	0.540%	62,500
Timor-Leste	0.001%	0.100%	11,600
Togo	0.002%	0.100%	11,600
Tonga	0.001%	0.100%	11,600
Trinidad and Tobago	0.037%	0.150%	17,400
Tunisia	0.019%	0.120%	13,900
Türkiye	0.845%	1.080%	125,000
Turkmenistan	0.034%	0.140%	16,200
Tuvalu	0.001%	0.100%	11,600

Country name	UN 2022–2024	Approved 2024 scale	
	Per cent	Per cent	CHF
Uganda	0.010%	0.110%	12,700
Ukraine	0.056%	0.170%	19,700
United Arab Emirates	0.635%	0.840%	97,200
United Kingdom	4.375%	4.870%	563,500
United Republic of Tanzania	0.010%	0.110%	12,700
Uruguay	0.092%	0.220%	25,500
Uzbekistan	0.027%	0.140%	16,200
Vanuatu	0.001%	0.100%	11,600
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	0.175%	0.320%	37,000
Viet Nam	0.093%	0.220%	25,500
Yemen	0.008%	0.110%	12,700
Zambia	0.008%	0.110%	12,700
Zimbabwe	0.007%	0.110%	12,700

Associate Member	UN 2022-2024	Approved 2024 scale	
	Per cent	Per cent	CHF
Andean Parliament		0.020%	2,300
Arab Parliament		0.020%	2,300
Central American Parliament		0.020%	2,300
East African Legislative Assembly		0.020%	2,300
European Parliament		0.060%	6,900
Interparliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States		0.020%	2,300
Inter-Parliamentary Committee of the West African Economic and Monetary Union		0.020%	2,300
Latin American and Caribbean Parliament		0.020%	2,300
Pan-African Parliament		0.020%	2,300
Parliament of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community		0.020%	2,300
Parliament of the Economic Community of West African States		0.020%	2,300
Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation		0.020%	2,300
Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe		0.040%	4,600
Parliamentary Assembly of La Francophonie		0.020%	2,300
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>	<b>11,585,700</b>

# Terms of Reference of the Oversight and Ethics Committee

*Approved by the IPU Governing Council at its 212th session  
(Luanda, 25 October 2023)*

## Background

At its 207th Session in May 2021, the Governing Council endorsed the recommendations of the Executive Committee to establish a Working Group on Transparency, Accountability and Openness.

A roadmap was prepared to guide the Working Group and its recommendations are being implemented.

One of the priorities of this roadmap was to set up an independent oversight board covering ethics, finance, fraud prevention, procedural compliance and other such matters, including the oversight of the Code of Conduct for IPU Governance Officials, also under preparation by the Working Group on Transparency, Accountability and Openness.

Moreover, at its 210th session, the IPU Governing Council endorsed the recommendation of the Gender Partnership Group to develop a *Policy to prevent harassment, including sexual harassment, at IPU Assemblies and other IPU events*. This Policy also requires the establishment of an independent review board. It is therefore proposed that one single Oversight and Ethics Committee be established for both purposes, as well as to deal with any other ethical issues that may arise. The Working Group is therefore proposing the establishment of an IPU Oversight and Ethics Committee with the following terms of reference.

## Objectives

The Oversight and Ethics Committee shall:

- Function as an independent body;
- Ensure compliance with the *Code of Conduct for IPU Governance Officials*;
- Review complaints filed under the *Policy to prevent and address harassment, including sexual harassment, at IPU Assemblies and other IPU events*;
- Review investigation reports of any prohibited conduct by IPU Governance Officials including but not limited to ethical violations, misconduct, fraud and harassment;
- Decide on disciplinary actions in accordance with the *Code of Conduct for IPU Governance Officials* and the *Policy to prevent and address harassment, including sexual harassment, at IPU Assemblies and other IPU events*;
- Oversee and evaluate the implementation process of disciplinary actions taken.

## Composition:

The Oversight and Ethics Committee shall comprise:

- The Vice President of the Executive Committee (Rule 5.2 of the Rules of the Executive Committee)
- The President of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians
- The President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians
- The Chair of the Sub-Committee on Finance
- The Chair of the Gender Partnership Group.

## Working arrangements

The Oversight Committee shall meet upon request of the IPU President or, where applicable, of the IPU Secretary General. Its sessions shall be held in camera.

## Chair

The Committee shall elect a Chair from among its members who shall preside over its deliberations. The term of office of the Chair shall be two years, renewable once.

## Reporting

The Committee shall report on its overall work to the Governing Council.

## Decisions

The Committee shall take decisions by majority vote.

# Report of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 212th session  
(Luanda, 27 October 2023)*

1. The 36th session of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians was held on 23 October 2023. It brought together 196 participants, including 131 parliamentarians (102 women and 29 men) from 61 countries and representatives from various international organizations.

## **Election of the President and delivery of welcome addresses**

2. The President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, Ms. C. López Castro (Mexico), opened the session. The Forum elected Ms. F. Malaquias, member of the National Assembly of Angola, to the Presidency of its 36th session. The Speaker of the National Assembly of Angola and the President of the 147th IPU Assembly, Ms. C. Cerqueira, and the IPU President, Mr. D. Pacheco, welcomed the participants to the Forum and to the 147th IPU Assembly.

## **Initiatives taken to promote gender equality**

3. Ms. C. López Castro (Mexico) summarized the work of the 49th session of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, which had taken place in Manama in March 2023, and of its 50th session held immediately prior to the Forum meeting. She also summarized the work of the Bureau's online meeting held in August 2023 on amendments to the IPU Statutes and Rules to strengthen the provisions on gender parity.

4. Mr. A.R. Al Nuaimi (United Arab Emirates), President of the Gender Partnership Group, informed the participants about the gender balance in delegations to the 147th Assembly. He also announced that the new IPU policy against harassment, including sexual harassment, at IPU Assemblies and other meetings, on which the Group had been working for several years, would be submitted to the Governing Council for approval at the current Assembly. With that ambitious policy, which included preventive measures, a confidential reporting procedure, disciplinary sanctions and regular monitoring, the IPU would be a model of an inclusive, respectful and safe working environment.

5. Participants were informed of the IPU's recent and future activities on the issue of gender equality. Ms. C. López Castro (Mexico) reported on the round table entitled *Parliaments and women's rights: Implementing CEDAW, realizing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights for all*, organized jointly in June 2023 in Geneva with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). The Secretary of the Forum, Ms. Z. Hilal, presented the new edition of the Handbook for Parliamentarians on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol.

## **Contributions to the work of the 147th Assembly from a gender perspective**

6. In order to contribute to the work of the Assembly, the participants examined, from a gender perspective, the draft resolution before the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights entitled *Orphanage trafficking: The role of parliaments in reducing harm*. The debate was opened with a presentation by Ms. L. Reynolds (Australia), co-Rapporteur of the resolution, and a presentation by Ms. S. Kiladze, Vice-Chair of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child. The debate continued in plenary which was presided by Ms. H. Ramzy Fayez (Bahrein) and with Ms. V. Riotton (France) as Rapporteur.

7. The discussions highlighted the need for strong laws to combat child trafficking in orphanages, as well as for police, justice and immigration services that were well trained on those issues and equipped to intervene. Orphanage trafficking also requires international cooperation. Tourism agencies and online platforms must be held accountable and protect children by respecting their rights and applying a gender-sensitive approach. The discussion also focused on the need to tackle the root causes of trafficking and its gender-related aspects. Poverty and the discontinuation of schooling, as well as gender-based discrimination and violence against women and girls, and the lack of sexual and reproductive health services and education, are often at the root of early or unwanted pregnancies, which in turn increase the risk of orphanage trafficking.

8. The debate led to the formulation of two amendments to the Standing Committee's draft resolution, and several amendments proposed by national delegations were supported. The proposed amendments were incorporated into the text of the draft resolution, which strengthened the gender perspective.

**Panel discussion: *Women in Politics: To stay or not to stay?***

9. In this panel discussion, the participants examined the challenges faced by women when taking up a political decision-making position and when pursuing a long political career.

10. The discussion was opened with presentations by Ms. M. Rempel Garner, member of the Parliament of Canada and member of the IPU Bureau of Women Parliamentarians; Ms. C.M. Mumma, Senator in the Parliament of Kenya; Ms. C. López Castro, member of the Parliament of Mexico and President of the IPU Bureau of Women Parliamentarians; and Ms. K. McArthur, representative of Apolitical Foundation.

11. The participants stressed that when women entered politics, which was still largely dominated by men, they still faced obstacles and negative stereotypes. In the political sphere, expectations were often higher of women than of men. Women also run the risk of being included in politics only for the matter of form and of being relegated to the role of an object without being able to play an active role in political decision-making. They are also victims of sexism and gender-based violence, both online and offline, particularly psychological violence, which is widespread. This can affect their mental health. The participants called on women and their resilience to occupy the political space, to persevere and not to remain silent and isolated in the face of intimidation and the other obstacles they encountered. Shame must be reversed so that those who sought to silence women in politics were made to feel uncomfortable and were punished. Parliaments must ensure that their working environment was respectful and gender-sensitive, by adopting policies against harassment, including sexual harassment. Networks of women parliamentarians in parliaments enable women to get support and to combat these obstacles collectively. Finally, all women leaders must take the time to celebrate their victories and so find the strength to persevere and give a strong positive meaning to their political commitment.

**Elections to the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians**

12. The Forum elected Ms. M. Saleh (Syrian Arab Republic) to fill the vacant seat of the Arab Group; Ms. T. Vardanyan (Armenia) and Ms. S.S. Khasayeva (Azerbaijan) to fill the two vacant seats of the Eurasia Group; and Ms. M.L. Carneiro (Brazil) to fill the vacant seat of the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean.

**Bureau of Women Parliamentarians**

13. The Bureau held meetings on 23 and 27 October 2023. The meeting of 23 October was dedicated to the Forum's discussions and the meeting of 27 October took stock of the results of the 147th Assembly from a gender perspective and dealt with its future work.

14. The Bureau pursued its discussions with the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians to identify the best way to support women parliamentarians who were victims of gender-based violence and whose rights had been violated. After having worked for two years on this issue, the Bureau wished to speed up the elaboration of a procedure that was adapted to the needs of women parliamentarians who were victims of gender-based or sexual violence.

---

## **Report of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians**

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 212th session  
(Luanda, 27 October 2023)*

The Forum of Young Parliamentarians was held on 24 October 2023. It brought together almost 100 participants, including 86 parliamentarians (35 young women and 51 young men) from 57 countries, as well as representatives from organizations. Pursuant to its rules, in the absence of the President of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians, Mr. D. Carden (United Kingdom), the meeting was presided over by the youngest present Board Member, Ms. E.T. Muteka (Namibia).

In his opening remarks, the IPU President, Mr. D. Pacheco, reiterated his strong support for the work of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians. He encouraged young MPs to remain steadfast in leading their own destinies. At that point, a delegate called for peace in the Middle East and for a humanitarian response to people's suffering in Gaza.



The IPU Secretary General, Mr. M. Chungong, proceeded by highlighting the latest IPU report *Youth participation in national parliaments: 2023*, which showed that levels of youth participation in parliament remained low, and that more action was needed to make progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The report included global data on levels of youth representation in parliaments, country rankings, the relationship between age and gender, as well as the solutions promoted by the IPU *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign to enhance youth participation, such as: quotas, lowering ages of eligibility, youth caucuses, training for young MPs, mentoring aspirants and advocacy. The IPU was keen to support parliaments seeking to empower youth in their countries.

The young MPs updated the Forum on their countries' recent developments, such as: recent elections, where higher numbers of young MPs took office (Thailand); elevation of young MPs to leadership positions in international conferences, such as in the upcoming COP 28 (United Arab Emirates); and enhanced public outreach activities to building capacities of young aspirants (Burkina Faso). As a means to remove some of the barriers faced by young people, some delegates also proposed limiting electoral campaign funding and the number of mandates a politician could have.

Contributing a youth perspective to the work of the 147th Assembly, participants examined the theme of the General Debate of the Assembly, *Parliamentary action for peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16)*, from a youth perspective. They discussed the key leadership roles that young MPs should play in fostering parliamentary diplomacy for peace and mutual learning. They also stressed the importance of eliminating harassment of women. A youth overview report on the draft resolution considered at the Assembly on *Orphanage trafficking: The role of parliaments in reducing harm* was presented. It called on parliaments and young MPs to take stronger measures to combat trafficking and raise awareness.

The Forum held a hearing with candidates running for the IPU Presidency. In the ensuing questions and answers session, the candidates reiterated their commitment to the *I Say Yes!* campaign and pledged to ensure greater numbers of young MPs at Assemblies and related leadership structures if elected.

The Forum approved the nomination of Mr. S. Ismayilov (Azerbaijan), to the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians left vacant by the Eurasia geopolitical group at the last Board's renewal held in March 2023, in Manama. In preparation for the 148th IPU Assembly, to be held in March 2024 in Geneva, the Forum appointed Mr. W. Soto Palacios (Peru) to prepare a youth overview report on the proposed resolution *Addressing the social and humanitarian impact of autonomous weapon systems and artificial intelligence*, and Ms. S. Falaknaz (United Arab Emirates), to prepare a youth overview report on the proposed resolution on *Partnerships for climate action: Promoting access to affordable green energy, and ensuring innovation, responsibility and equity*.

Taking stock of youth participation at the 147th Assembly at its meeting earlier that day, the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians, reiterated its call to amend the Statutes and Rules of the IPU to lower the age limit to be considered a young MP to 40 years old. They agreed that they needed to be more active to galvanize more youth participation within the IPU. The Board decided to take steps to establish a youth hub within the framework of the IPU Center for Innovation in Parliament (CIP) and agreed on such a hub's objectives. They began a discussion on possible themes for the Tenth Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians to be held in 2024.

---

## Report of the Committee on Middle East Questions

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 212th session  
(Luanda, 27 October 2023)*

Since the last Assembly, the Committee on Middle East Questions has met four times, on 21 July, 17 October, 23 October and 26 October 2023, with at least six members in attendance at each sitting. The Committee agreed that the importance of its role lay in identifying concrete actions to establish constructive dialogue between the Israeli Knesset and the Palestinian National Council, as well as proposing solutions to achieve peaceful coexistence. The Committee agreed to invite young Israeli and Palestinian parliamentarians to its next meeting to listen to their innovative ideas in the search for new solutions for peace. The Committee agreed that the international community should move beyond merely treating the symptoms of the problem and start laying the foundations for a mechanism for peace based on the two-State solution.

At its sitting on 21 July 2023, the Committee discussed the military operation in the Jenin refugee camp on 3 and 4 July 2023. The IPU Secretariat explained that violence was escalating to dangerous levels, and what had happened in Jenin would repeat itself in other areas if no peace negotiations were on the horizon. The Committee was briefed by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, Ms. F. Albanese. She noted that Palestinians in the West Bank had been experiencing ongoing expansion of Israeli settlements, demolition of Palestinian structures and daily violence. The way forward was the holistic application of international law premised on the realization of the right to self-determination of Palestinians. In the short term, it was essential to ensure the protection of civilians in the occupied Palestinian territories. Members noted that the political hopelessness felt by young Palestinians could lead to a deterioration of the situation. This hopelessness would not help in establishing regional peace, and it is this knowledge that should guide the Committee's approaches to the conflict.

At its sitting on 21 July 2023, members were briefed by representatives from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) on the Agency's role and the impact of the recent events on the fulfilment of its mandate in providing aid to Palestinian refugees in the region. UNRWA's services provided a sense of stability within communities. However, what UNRWA delivered could not be taken for granted due to its precarious financial situation and a deteriorating security environment, hindering its ability to fulfil its mandate. The erosion of UNRWA services would have a significant impact on its regional stabilizing role and peace and security in the region. At its sittings on 17 and 23 October 2023, the Committee agreed that, in light of the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, it was essential that members encourage their respective parliaments and governments to provide more assistance to UNRWA and to the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to ensure that essential humanitarian aid was delivered to those in need in Gaza.

At its sittings on 21 July and 23 October 2023, the Committee agreed that recent events had reaffirmed the necessity of organizing a visit to the region, which was essential for members to see for themselves the situation on the ground and how they could contribute to peace. A regional visit would be a good opportunity to foster dialogue with parliamentarians from the region.

At its sitting on 26 October 2023, the Committee discussed the humanitarian situation in Eastern Libya following the flooding that had occurred in mid-September 2023. A representative from Libya outlined developments in Eastern Libya following the widespread flooding and the tragic loss of life and livelihoods of thousands. She condemned foreign interference in Libyan affairs and the role that the international community had played in preventing Libyan people from making their own decisions. The IPU recognized the Libyan House of Representatives, unlike the United Nations. Meanwhile, the representatives from Yemen explained that the situation in their country continued to be dire. The Yemeni representatives were seeking the establishment of a regional parliamentary forum to mobilize support for the humanitarian crisis and a better distribution of humanitarian assistance and, to that end, asked the IPU leadership to convey their message to the United Nations Security Council.

At its sitting on 17 October 2023, members of the Committee were briefed on the ongoing crisis in Israel and the Palestinian territories following the events that had occurred on and after 7 October 2023. An operation had been launched by Hamas targeting Israel, followed by a retaliatory Israeli operation in the Gaza Strip. Hundreds had been taken hostage by Hamas, and two million people were under siege in Gaza. Civilians had been among the victims on both sides. In Gaza, the siege had produced a catastrophic humanitarian situation, with critical water, food and fuel shortages. Members expressed their deep concern regarding the ongoing crisis, the humanitarian situation, the loss of human lives, and the vulnerable position of women and children. The Committee agreed that, in the short term, the priorities were to ensure humanitarian access to Gaza and the release of hostages, and in the long-term, to revive the peace process in line with international law and United Nations resolutions for a two-State solution, without which there could be no peace in the region. At its sittings on 17 and 23 October 2023, the Committee agreed that if the Assembly were to adopt an emergency item proposal focused on the crisis in Israel and Palestine, members of the Committee, as the IPU's specialized body on the Middle East peace process, should contribute to the work of the drafting committee by expressing the views agreed upon in the Committee's sittings.

At its sitting on 23 October 2023, the Committee agreed that it was important to encourage the international parliamentary community to transcend differences and unite on the topic of the crisis, demonstrating a commitment to finding peaceful solutions on behalf of human beings. If a common position could not be reached, it would be a failure of the international community for both Israelis and Palestinians. At its sitting on 26 October 2023, the Committee agreed that the utmost priority was stopping the bloodshed. The Committee took note of the joint statement issued on 26 October 2023 by

the Foreign Ministers of Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, Egypt and Morocco. The Committee supported this common statement, which included condemnation of the targeting of civilians and all violations of international law, including international humanitarian and human rights law, by any party, including the targeting of civilian infrastructure and facilities, and emphasized the necessity of the immediate release of civilian hostages and ensuring their safe, dignified and humane treatment in accordance with international law. The statement further emphasized the role of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Members agreed at their sitting of 23 October 2023 to propose a set of recommendations on the crisis, namely:

1. The cessation of all acts of violence by all parties by way of a complete ceasefire;
2. The immediate, permanent and unimpeded lifting of the humanitarian aid blockade of the Gaza Strip;
3. The immediate release of all hostages;
4. The unconditional and absolute respect of international human rights law, international humanitarian law and United Nations resolutions, including in particular the full protection of Palestinian and Israeli civilians, who must never be a target of violence;
5. The resumption of negotiations between both parties with the aim of establishing a two-State solution;
6. A visit to the region at the earliest opportunity by a delegation of members of the IPU Committee on Middle East Questions.

---

## Report of the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 212th session  
(Luanda, 27 October 2023)*

The Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL) met on 24 October 2023.

### **Review of humanitarian crisis situations**

The Committee heard an update on recent developments with regard to specific IHL and refugee crisis situations which it had been monitoring over the past few years. Those include recent developments with regard to refugees or displaced populations in/from Afghanistan, Myanmar and Ukraine. In 2023, the Committee additionally examined the situation of refugees related to the crises in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Nagorno Karabakh and Sudan, and also focused on the question of internally displaced persons (IDPs). In view of the current situation in the region, the Committee also heard a brief on the humanitarian situation in Gaza and Israel.

In general, Committee members noted with concern the multiplication of situations of conflict and the growth in the number of men and women, boys and girls having to flee to escape from violence and persecution reaching a record number of more than 110 million forcibly displaced people by May 2023 as a result of persecution, conflict, violence or human rights violations. In most of the countries the Committee reviewed, the majority of those displaced fleeing conflict were women and children. These displaced populations require particular care, often living in dire and difficult situations. Access to food and water, health care and education are challenging, insecurity is high and, in many of the countries reviewed, humanitarian needs are tremendous. Risks of starvation and death are elevated and particular attention is required for the provision of assistance and protection of vulnerable populations. Women are at particular risk of gender-based violence, exploitation, inequality and harmful practices; and children are exposed to malnutrition, trafficking and abuse. Minorities and discriminated groups that are forcibly displaced also see their vulnerability increased.

The Committee also drew attention to the impact of climate-related disasters or extreme weather conditions which have a disproportionate impact on displaced populations. Cyclone Mocha, for instance, in Myanmar and Bangladesh, destroyed homes and infrastructures, including IDPs and refugee hosting areas, impacting 7.9 million people including 93,000 Rohingya refugees.

The Committee took note of the fact that in 2022 there were 62.5 million IDPs. Nearly 75% of the world's IDPs live in just 10 countries: Afghanistan, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Nigeria, Somalia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine and Yemen. The reasons for internal displacement include: conflict, violence, disaster climate change and human rights violations.

The DRC alone accounts for more than 5.5 million internally displaced persons on its territory, the majority of whom are children. In view of the magnitude, the Committee decided to monitor the situation in the DRC at its next sessions.

The Committee highlighted the challenges faced by agencies and international organizations in providing humanitarian assistance and aid. In keeping with IHL, parties to an armed conflict must allow and facilitate access to humanitarian relief to civilians in need.

The Committee made a special plea with regard to the situation in Afghanistan. Life-saving efforts have become a priority for support agencies involved in the country. The Committee stressed the particular situation of women and girls and expressed concern with regard to the recent decision by the Taliban to exclude women from working in national, international non-governmental and United Nations organizations, which has significantly affected meaningful access to work for women and girls in need.

With regard to conflict-related situations, including the current situation in Gaza and Israel, Committee members reiterated the obligation of States and other parties to respect and ensure respect for IHL in all circumstances. In concrete terms, this means that:

- All civilians must be protected from the effects of military operations, without any adverse distinction and in all situations, and not to be objects of an attack, used as human shields or held hostage.
- Agreements must be passed to allow humanitarian corridors or safe passage of civilians out of areas of armed conflict or violence.
- In keeping with IHL, parties must allow humanitarian aid to reach civilians in need, and must facilitate rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian relief.
- Civilian objects must not be the objects of attacks; this includes objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population, such as hospitals, schools, water facilities and electricity infrastructure.
- Medical personnel and units exclusively assigned to medical duties must be respected and protected in all circumstances.

The Committee expressed a strong and urgent call for wars to stop, for IHL to be respected and for humanitarian assistance to be provided to affected civilians, including refugees and internally displaced populations. It recalled the importance of bearing in mind in all decisions and discussions, the fact that, first and foremost, we are dealing with human beings, and that all lives are equally important.

### **Global Refugee Forum**

The Committee discussed preparations for the Global Refugee Forum (GRF) that will be held in December 2023. The GRF will provide an opportunity to take stock of progress in the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR). The IPU Members were invited to follow up on their country's pledges in that regard (see: <https://globalcompactrefugees.org/index.php/>). The Committee took note of the progress on the implementation of the pledges in Argentina and Australia. It welcomed Argentina's adoption of specific legislation on the situation of stateless people, the provision of educational opportunities to refugees, including language training, and of regulations on climate and disaster-related displacement implemented through its National Refugee Council. Bahrain had also taken initiatives towards providing legal aid to the displaced populations it hosts.

The Committee encouraged parliaments to further engage in the implementation of the GCR with new pledges. Committee members agreed to contact immediately all IPU Members to invite them to report back to the IPU on their involvement in the GRF and on their progress in the implementation of pledges. The Committee would then review the reports received at the 148th Assembly.

The Committee furthermore updated the IPU's pledge, which were submitted to the GRF in 2019. The proposed revised version maintains the existing pledges and adds objectives linked to universalization of international conventions related to refugees and stateless populations. The text of the approved text by the Committee, submitted to the Council for endorsement, is in Annex.

### **Conventional weapons treaties**

The Committee discussed work towards the universalization and domestic implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions. It began reviewing a checklist of proposed actions for parliaments to take towards the national implementation of key

obligations under both conventions. The Committee called on MPs to begin by championing discussions on these two conventions, to assess the reasons why some States are not yet party to the Convention and the degree of implementation of States that are signatories of the conventions.

### **Committee workplan**

The Committee adopted a workplan for the coming year, which includes the organization of several raising awareness initiatives such as a webinar on refugee and education, and a briefing on National IHL Committees. Committee members also agreed to resume missions to countries in crisis including possibly Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia and Poland.

---

## **2023 IPU pledge to the Global Refugee Forum**

*Endorsed by the IPU Governing Council at its 212th session  
(Luanda, 27 October 2023)*

### **1. Pledge to the Global Refugee Forum 2023**

The Inter-Parliamentary Union commits to:

- Raise awareness of parliaments, at each IPU Assembly, on progress and challenges in developing comprehensive refugee responses.
- Engage MPs, and in particular young parliamentarians and women parliamentarians, and support them in taking action in support of refugees and host countries.
- Collect, with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), good parliamentary practices and disseminate to the parliamentary community.
- Organize, with the UNHCR, trainings and capacity building initiatives for MPs in legislative work complimentary to national pledges.
- Encourage parliaments of States which have not yet done so to accede to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol.
- Encourage parliaments of States which have not yet done so to withdraw reservations and/or declarations to the 1951 Convention and/or its 1967 Protocol.

### **2. Pledge on statelessness**

The Inter-Parliamentary Union pledges to:

- Raise political awareness of parliaments, monitor progress and draw attention to legislative and other reforms to address statelessness at each IPU Assembly.
  - Engage young parliamentarians and women parliamentarians in efforts to address statelessness, in particular in addressing gender-based discrimination in nationality laws.
  - Provide support to parliaments concerned in reforming nationality laws to prevent statelessness and addressing discrimination in law.
  - Raise awareness of parliaments regarding the universalization of the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.
  - Encourage parliaments of States which have not yet done so to accede to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.
  - Support and contribute to work of the Global Alliance to End Statelessness which will be launched in 2024.
- 

## **Report of the Advisory Group on Health**

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 212th session  
(Luanda, 27 October 2023)*

The IPU Advisory Group on Health met on 24 October 2023 with six out of 10 members in attendance, as well as technical partners from the World Health Organization (WHO), the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH), and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

The Group elected its new Chair, Ms. L. Clifford-Lee (Ireland) and Mr. F.E. Ndugulile (United Republic of Tanzania) as the new Vice-Chair, for a mandate of one year.



The Group discussed its rules and practices in the context of amendments to the IPU Statutes and Rules and expressed its wish to be consulted during the amendments process. To make informed proposals on how to strengthen the Group, the members requested the IPU Secretariat to prepare an overview of the different IPU bodies and their functioning.

The Group also discussed peace and security — the priority theme for 2024, focusing on linkages between conflict, climate change, displacement and health. It highlighted the long-term consequences of conflict on health, including the disruption of health systems and mental health impact. It acknowledged that health can be a bridge for peace by way of collective and apolitical efforts in finding solutions to save lives and reduce suffering.

The Group reflected on the field visit it conducted on 23 October 2023 at Hospital Materno Infantil Dr. Manuel Pedro Azancot de Menezes in Luanda, where it heard briefings by the Angolan Ministry of Health, the Angolan National Assembly and the WHO Country Office. It learned of the main indicators on maternal and child health, and of the commitment of both the Government and National Assembly to improve health outcomes of women, children and adolescents. Despite progress, coverage of family planning remains low, with high rates of early pregnancies. Given the very young population of Angola, the Group members reflected among themselves on the need to also look at education and employment policies. The Group appreciated the Hospital's high standard but expressed concern regarding its accessibility to the population, including the most vulnerable and marginalized. It therefore recommended looking more closely at the primary health care level, and expressed its readiness to continue its exchanges with the National Assembly of Angola and to share good practices in the area of sexual and reproductive health and rights. According to its mandate, the Group will continue conducting field visits on priority health topics, ensuring engagement with concerned parliaments and communities.

Finally, the Group heard an update on activities carried out by its technical partners. It welcomed the extension for a period of six months of the Memorandum of Understanding with the WHO and looked forward to enhancing its partnership with the latter in areas of universal health coverage, global health security and health promotion for vulnerable groups. The Group was also updated on the ongoing collaboration with the PMNCH on women's, children's and adolescents' health.

---

## Report of the High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG)

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 212th session  
(Luanda, 27 October 2023)*

The HLAG held its fourteenth meeting in hybrid format on 11 May 2023. The Chairperson welcomed all the new members of the group who were elected at the 146th IPU Assembly in Manama. These new members include India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel, Mexico, Oman, Sweden and Saudi Arabia. The members were updated on the second phase of the mobile application, which can now be downloaded. The application will make it possible for parliamentarians to hold meetings, exchange messages and documents among its other functionalities.

The Fourth and Fifth thematic meetings of the *Call of the Sahel* which respectively focused on development and education were held virtually on September 27 and 28. There were approximately 70 participants from 25 parliaments, including Austria, Belarus, Benin, Burkina Faso, Canada, Chad, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Maldives, Mali, Morocco, Niger, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Somalia, Sweden, Thailand, and the United Arab Emirates. In addition to a number of HLAG members (Algeria, Belarus, Hungary, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel, Maldives, Sweden, and Thailand), as participants there were 20 panellists from specialized United Nations agencies, the World Bank, academia, the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), civil society, youth and women's organizations from the Sahel, regional parliamentary assemblies, and the Secretariat of the Interparliamentary Committee of the G5-Sahel (CIP G5 Sahel).

It was highlighted in both meetings that the situation in the Sahel region was critical and was exacerbated by ongoing attacks from terrorist groups, which continue to threaten populations and create instability and insecurity. It was emphasized that the international community must address this situation with the same urgency as it addressed other conflict situations in the world. The Sahel countries expressed their concern that the daily suffering caused by terrorism in the region often went unnoticed in the media. There was general agreement that education and development were interrelated.



Investing in development and addressing security and governance issues, which were the main obstacles to development were the solution to Sahel's problems. It was recommended that the roadmap for the second phase of the *Call of the Sahel* include a comprehensive analysis of the situation in each country, along with strategies for development projects, security policies and improvements in governance.

The fifteenth meeting of the HLAG was held on 24 October 2023. The main point of the discussion was the situation with the *Call of the Sahel*. The Sahel has been undergoing significant changes with eight coup d'états occurring since the first summit in Vienna in September 2021. This ongoing instability makes the region vulnerable and necessitates global attention. The HLAG group firmly believes that the Sahel situation should be regarded with the same level of concern as any other global crisis. The outcomes of the five thematic meetings of the *Call of the Sahel* on environment, communities, security, education and development were presented to the members.

All five thematic meetings had concluded that development was the solution to the challenges faced by the Sahel. Addressing development with a solid security strategy was the key to combating terrorism and achieving regional stability. The countries must improve good governance, as corruption and insecurity were major obstacles to sustainable development. Addressing development with a broad vision that included implementing education, health, human development and environmental projects will help resolve the Sahel region's issues.

Mr. D. Naughten, Chairman of the IPU Working Group on Science and Technology, presented three key recommendations from the Science for Peace Parliamentary Meeting, held in September 2023 in Quy Nhon, Viet Nam. The recommendations, which could be a basis for development of projects in the Sahel countries, are the following: take evidence-based decisions in water and sanitation with open-source data to enhance collaboration between scientists and parliamentarians; encourage community engagement through scientific initiatives; share technologies and expertise and support the UN Water Convention while focusing on active implementation and integration into overseas development aid.

## **Second Global Parliamentary Summit on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism**

The Second Global Parliamentary Summit on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism was held on 25 October 2023. The event witnessed significant participation, with over 80 attendees hailing from diverse regions, including parliaments of the Sahel countries and the IPU geopolitical groups. Distinguished panellists from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the IEP, youth-focused NGOs, regional parliamentary assemblies, the CIP G5-Sahel, the President of the IPU Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, and a member of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians also attended the Summit.

Participants and experts fully acknowledged the engaged efforts of the HLAG, the IPU Secretariat, and the partners of the Sahel initiative. They agreed with the outcomes of the five thematic meetings, which emphasized that investing in development was essential to solve the problems of the Sahel. It was however necessary to address the issues of security and governance to achieve sustainable development. The Summit attendees also agreed on the significance of enhancing good governance to foster strong, democratically organized civil societies, independent judiciaries, citizen-centric administrations and the effective management of shared resources. They stressed the need for actions that respected human rights, combatted abuse and corruption, and upheld the rule of law.

Furthermore, the participants unanimously agreed on eleven main points:

- The parliamentary community and international organizations, governments and civil society need to renew their global commitment to strengthen their support in preventing violent extremism in the Sahel.
- International organizations must improve their coordination when implementing activities in line with the *Call of the Sahel* initiative.
- The Sahel people must achieve equality in a new world order that will prioritize the well-being and future of the citizens in the Sahel countries.
- The human rights of the Sahel population must be respected by ensuring access to basic needs, food, water, health and education, with special attention to the needs of young people, girls and the empowerment of women.
- Focus on sustainable development is the solution to the challenges of the Sahel.

- Good governance can be enhanced by building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions, that provide access to justice for all.
- The G5 Sahel Joint Force must be supported and recognized pursuant to Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations.
- To raise awareness of parliaments globally on the political situation and challenges the Sahel is facing, a *Motion of the Sahel* should be drafted.
- HLAG must develop “The Global Response of the *Call of the Sahel*” based on the outcomes of the five thematic meetings.
- An ad hoc mechanism within the HLAG needs to be set up to coordinate, monitor and follow up on the second phase of the *Call of the Sahel*, including projects and development initiatives.
- The global community must be urged to move forward with tangible actions and to implement ground projects that safeguard the human rights and well-being of the Sahel population.

## Report of the Working Group on Science and Technology

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 212th session  
(Luanda, 27 October 2023)*

Three sittings of the Working Group were held, online on 6 September 2023 and in Luanda on 24 and 26 October 2023. At least ten members attended each of these sittings both in person and virtually.

During its sitting on 6 September 2023, the Working Group discussed the ongoing final preparations for the upcoming Science for Peace Parliamentary Meeting. The Chair briefed the members on the advancement of the proposed pilot projects on the engagement of the scientific community with parliaments, and asked the members for their feedback and updates on their respective projects and contributions. Acknowledging the crucial role that the pilot projects played in raising awareness among their fellow parliamentarians, the Group members agreed to launch a survey on the engagement of parliamentarians with science among IPU Members by January 2024, in order to be able to promote its results in the upcoming 148th IPU Assembly in Geneva.

During its sitting on 24 October 2023, the Working Group was briefed on the remote participation of certain members at the workshop on *Epistemology of Evidence-Based Policy* held on 28 and 29 June 2023 at the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research (ZiF) of Bielefeld University in Germany. In this regard, the Working Group members agreed to participate at the upcoming Forum on the Future of Evidence-Based Policy from 14 to 16 December 2023 at the same venue. The Working Group members will provide support and guidance to the organizers of the Forum to prepare a policy paper on the future of evidence-based policy, and will also benefit from the experience of the academic researchers participating in the Forum when finalizing the drafting of the IPU International Charter on the Ethics of Science and Technology.

The Working Group was briefed on the participation of certain members at the *8th UN Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals*, held on 3 and 4 May 2023 in New York. They emphasized the importance of strengthening ties with IPU partner organizations including the UN and UNESCO, and agreed to participate in the upcoming 9th edition of the Forum, to be held on 9 and 10 May 2024 in New York, with the possibility of also holding a meeting of the Working Group at the IPU's New York office.

The Working Group members were briefed by the Chair on his participation in the Science Diplomacy Week Immersion Programme 2023 at the Geneva Science Diplomacy Anticipator (GESDA), as a unique learning and networking experience, touching on several themes of interest for the work of parliamentarians, including advanced artificial intelligence (AI) and the quantum revolution, global health and human augmentation, climate change, decarbonization, the future of the global commons, anticipatory science diplomacy tools and new diplomatic methods. The members were further invited to consider their individual participation in the next Science Diplomacy Week Immersion Programme from 3 to 7 June 2024 in Geneva.

The Working Group was briefed by the members from China, Czech Republic, Ireland, Malaysia, Romania and Suriname on the advancement of their respective pilot projects and contributions on engagement of the scientific community with parliaments. Based on the outputs of the pilot projects that are to be completed before 31 December 2023, the Working Group members agreed to publish a parliamentary toolkit on the engagement of the scientific community with parliaments at the upcoming 148th IPU Assembly.

During its sitting on 26 October 2023, the Working Group was briefed on the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the IPU and the International Centre for Interdisciplinary Science and Education (ICISE) during the Science Diplomacy Week in May 2023. The Working Group applauded the success of the Science for Peace Parliamentary Meeting on *Water security and insecurity: Rebuilding peaceful coexistence with science*, held in cooperation with ICISE on 11-13 September 2023 in Quy Nhon, Viet Nam. Members were invited to share their views on how best to achieve the outcome recommendations of the Parliamentary Meeting, the purpose of which was to build on the first report on the Science for Peace Schools, serving as a reference for legislative good practices and model legislation on harnessing technologies for monitoring and exploring new water resources.

The Science for Peace Parliamentary Meeting highlighted the importance of international cooperation to address the imminent risk of a global water crisis directly affecting global food security and recommended establishing a parliamentary expert community on water for institutional cooperation through exchanging experiences and good practices. In its outcome recommendations, the Parliamentary Meeting also urged countries' accession to the UN Water Convention, highlighted the need for a global legislative database encompassing water laws from the 179 IPU Member Parliaments and proposed holding a future Global Parliamentary Summit on Water and Food Security, to address the ongoing global crisis in relation to water scarcity and hunger.

In this regard, the Working Group members were informed of the invitation that the IPU had received to hold a Parliamentary Meeting on Water on the sidelines of the 10th World Water Forum, to be held on 18-24 May 2024 in Bali, Indonesia, in collaboration with the IPU Standing Committee on Sustainable Development. The Working Group was briefed by Mr. John Oldfield, Founder and CEO of Accelerate Global, LLC, on the importance of water as a human right, the critical global water crisis and possible ways to achieve the outcome recommendations of the Parliamentary Meeting, including launching parliamentary caucuses on water and the mechanism of these caucuses.

The Working Group agreed to participate in the upcoming Parliamentary Meeting on the occasion of the 28th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28), to be held on 6 December 2023 at Dubai Expo City, United Arab Emirates.

The Working Group members discussed the ethics of AI as the theme of the next Science for Peace Schools programme, to be held at the Synchrotron-light for Experimental Science and Applications in the Middle East (SESAME), Allan, Jordan. The Group was briefed on the topic of AI by Ms. Rempel Garner, Member of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians and co-Chair of the Canadian Parliamentary Caucus on Emerging Technology.

Discussions included critical aspects of AI, such as the menacing threat of deep fakes, the contentious issue of data ownership, the implications of scraped data and the utilization of AI models in various contexts. The Working Group also considered the connection between AI and the ongoing work of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights, as to the interplay between technological advancement and the preservation of democratic values and human rights in an increasingly AI-driven world.

The Working Group was briefed by the Chair on progress in the preparation of the International Charter on the Ethics of Science and Technology, and set an action plan for finalizing the Charter and gathering expert feedback in order to be able to formally adopt it at the upcoming 148th IPU Assembly in Geneva. Finally, the Working Group re-elected Mr. Denis Naughten as its Chair, commended his leadership and agreed on the Working Group's work plan for 2023-2024, which would reassert its role in assisting and facilitating the work of other IPU bodies.

## IPU priority theme for 2024 on peace and security: Contribution of the IPU Member Parliaments, Standing Committees and other IPU bodies

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 212th session  
(Luanda, 25 October 2023)*

### **Background: IPU priority theme for 2023 on climate change**

The 2022–2026 Strategy has given the IPU a renewed mandate to strengthen and connect parliaments in four priority policy areas identified by Member Parliaments as requiring urgent intervention: climate change; democracy, human rights, gender equality and youth participation; peace and security; and sustainable development for all.

Supporting parliaments and parliamentarians in their efforts to combat climate change was the IPU's priority theme for 2023. Indeed, since the adoption of the Paris Agreement in 2015, the IPU has established a solid record of bringing climate change to the attention of parliaments and building political resolve to address the environmental crisis. Parliaments are critical players in addressing climate change because they have the ability to translate international agreements into domestic legislation supported by budgets, to scrutinize government actions on climate change and ensure accountability, and to generate political will to address the climate crisis by bridging the gap between constituents and governments.

As the 2022–2026 Strategy identified climate change as a top priority, the IPU has endeavoured to mainstream climate action throughout its work. This includes:

- Mobilizing parliaments politically around climate action through a number of climate-related declarations and resolutions, such as *Getting to zero: Mobilizing parliaments to act on climate change* (declaration endorsed by the 144th IPU Assembly in Nusa Dua on 24 March 2022) and *Parliamentary efforts in achieving negative carbon emission balances of forests* (resolution adopted by consensus by the 146th IPU Assembly in Manama on 15 March 2023)
- Underscoring the interconnections between climate change and other IPU workstreams, and incorporating these links into the IPU's programmatic work, such as the IPU events on the role of parliaments in tackling the humanitarian impacts of climate-related displacement, and on gender and climate change adaptation
- Building the capacity of parliaments to effectively tackle the climate crisis through workshops, training sessions and seminars held nationally, regionally and globally, such as the virtual briefing on COP28 and the findings of the IPCC Synthesis Report, and the regional seminar on climate action and sustainable development for parliaments of Latin America and the Caribbean
- Rolling out a communications campaign to galvanize parliamentary action for greener parliaments and the implementation of the Paris Agreement
- Showcasing good practices among parliaments in advancing climate action through the special accountability segments at IPU Assemblies, the annual reporting exercise by Members, case studies and interviews published on the IPU website, and social media posts
- Producing knowledge products to increase climate knowledge and guide parliamentary decision-making

### **IPU priority theme for 2024 on peace and security**

In 2024, the IPU will maintain its work on climate change but will, in parallel, add a new priority theme: peace and security. Indeed, recent times have seen a surge in global conflicts and political instability, including the war in Ukraine, the reactivation of the conflict on the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan, a series of coups in West Africa, and the escalation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The IPU was founded in 1889 as the first political multilateral organization in the world, with the aim of encouraging countries to meet and mediate rather than to resolve their differences through conflict and war. Since then, the IPU has continued to provide a forum for parliamentary diplomacy and dialogue between nations. In today's context of ever-increasing tensions, where challenges are global, many governments worldwide seem intent on solving problems with outdated methods. In contrast, at the parliamentary level, the IPU promotes an innovative approach to peace and security policymaking grounded in absolute compassion for the human condition and based on the guiding principle that one nation's security cannot be achieved at the expense of another nation.

The IPU's 2022–2026 Strategy identifies a number of key areas where parliaments and parliamentarians can make a difference in building and maintaining peace, based on the main focus areas of the IPU's current work:

- Universalizing and fully implementing relevant United Nations (UN) instruments and initiatives related to disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation, as well as to humanitarian and refugee law
- Advancing national and multilateral dialogue on peaceful coexistence, preventing conflict escalation, fostering reconciliation, and building and sustaining peace
- Countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism
- Anticipating and mitigating the peace and security impact of global challenges such as climate change and pandemics, as well as artificial intelligence and other new technologies, particularly in cyberspace and outer space.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Overview of the IPU's work on peace and security

### Who works on peace and security issues?

At the most senior institutional and political level, **mediation efforts** to assist in the facilitation of conflict resolution are conducted by the **Secretary General** and the **President**.

As subsidiary bodies of the Assembly, the **Standing Committees** also play a critical role:

- The **Standing Committee on Peace and International Security** plays a leading role in shaping the IPU's policy on peace and security, taking into account the views of different Member Parliaments when reviewing and debating relevant issues.
- The **Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs** has the unique mandate to strengthen awareness of UN institutional processes and reforms and, as such, also deals with international processes and institutional mechanisms relating to peace and security.
- The **Standing Committee on Sustainable Development** and the **Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights** provide important inputs, since several of their outcome documents inform the IPU's broader policy related to peace and security from the point of view of their respective mandates.
- The **emergency item** process allows **Member Parliaments** to express their collective opinion on a peace and security issue.

The IPU has also set up **specialized bodies** to promote and discuss specific conflict-related issues:

- The **Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law** raises awareness about the law of armed conflict, which regulates the actions of States in the conduct of warfare, and protects civilians and other non-combatants from its effects. The Committee also promotes refugee protection.
- The **Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians** examines cases referred to it and adopts decisions with a view to settling conflict at the level of individual parliaments, and to creating situations conducive to dialogue and more peaceful relationships.
- The **High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism** serves as the global parliamentary focal point for counter-terrorism efforts, working closely with relevant UN agencies, as well as with international organizations, academia, and religious and community leaders, in order to promote resolutions and strategies to prevent and combat terrorism.
- The **Working Group on Science and Technology** provides the global parliamentary community with a neutral, scientific, evidence-based approach to political decision-making and emphasizes the importance of science as an enabler of peace.

The **Forum of Women Parliamentarians** and the **Forum of Young Parliamentarians** are also key players in the IPU's peace and security efforts, ensuring that gender and youth perspectives and good practices on conflict prevention are mainstreamed in its work. They both hold discussions on relevant issues, focusing on the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) (women, peace and security) and of UN Security Council resolution 2250 (2015) (youth, peace and security) respectively. They also provide inputs to the resolutions of the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security at different stages of the procedure.

The IPU has also established a number of ad hoc bodies to discuss pressing issues in specific parts of the world. The purpose of these bodies is to facilitate dialogue among parliamentarians from all parties to a conflict through parliamentary diplomacy:

- The **Committee on Middle East Questions** is dealing with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but has also become a platform for discussions and dialogue on other crises in the Middle East, including in Libya, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen.
- The **Group of Facilitators for Cyprus** fosters contacts between representatives of the political parties of the country's two conflicting communities with the aim of reaching agreements on several specific points.
- The **Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine** aims to enable the IPU to advance peaceful solutions and encourage dialogue with and between parliamentarians in the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

## Main programmatic activities

### Disarmament

In a bid to operationalize the numerous IPU resolutions related to disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation, the IPU is working holistically to promote the UN Secretary-General's 2018 Agenda for Disarmament through awareness-raising and capacity-building initiatives, as well as by developing tools and running promotion campaigns on treaties and issues pertaining to:

- The fight against nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction
- The fight against illicit flows of small arms and light weapons
- Better regulation of new and emerging weapon technologies

Particular attention is also paid to the good governance of the security sector, through awareness-raising on oversight and broader governance issues, including military expenditure.

### Reconciliation, dialogue and conflict prevention

The IPU is providing capacity-building and advisory assistance, and is developing tools aimed at:

- Helping parliaments to address the wounds of the past, to overcome bottlenecks and obstacles to allow the restoration of constitutional order, to promote dialogue, including at the religious level, and to advance reconciliation
- Advocating for human rights and the protection of civilians and combatants in conflict around the world, monitoring adherence to the Geneva Conventions, and raising awareness of the treatment of refugees and internally displaced people, as well as of the issue of statelessness

The IPU is also working towards integrating human security and common security into its work related to peace and security. Such an approach is very much aligned with the work of parliamentarians, as it helps to identify and address cross-cutting issues affecting citizens, complements State security, and brings together the "human elements" of security, rights and development.

### Countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism

The IPU, through capacity-building activities, aims to facilitate the transposition of international resolutions and decisions related to counter-terrorism and the prevention of violent extremism into domestic legislation, as well as to promote parliamentary cooperation. Several tools have been developed:

- Model Legislative Provisions for victims of terrorism
- An interactive map of counter-terrorism legislation
- The Global Parliamentary Network on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism
- A mobile app serving as a one-stop hub for all counter-terrorism updates

Part of this work focuses on assisting and supporting the Sahel countries through the Call of the Sahel, a holistic approach that covers five key areas: environment, security, committees, development and education. This approach aims to identify the needs of the countries in question and to develop a road map for further assistance.

### Countering global challenges to peace

The IPU is working to mitigate the impact of climate change, which is taking a heavy human toll and undermining development, peace and security all over the world. To support climate action, the IPU runs capacity-building and awareness-raising activities, develops tools for parliamentarians, and has launched a global campaign. Artificial intelligence, as well as other new technologies – especially in cyberspace and outer space – also present an increasingly pressing challenge to peace. The IPU is therefore starting to work in these areas, including by promoting a global dialogue on ethical issues in science and technology.



## Statistics of the Gender Partnership Group

Status of participation of women delegates at the 147th Assembly of the IPU (at 27 October 2023)

### Composition of delegations of IPU Members attending the last eight IPU statutory meetings (April 2019 - present)

Meeting	Total delegates	Total/percentage of women delegates		Total delegations	Total/percentage of all-male delegations (2 or more)		Total all-female delegations (2 or more)	Total single-sex delegations (2 or more)	Total single-member delegations (male and female)
Luanda (10/2023)	604	220	36.4	128	10	8.3	3	13	8
Manama (03/2023)	661	228	34.5	136	21	16	3	24	5
Kigali (10/2022)	553	196	35.4	120	14	12.6	4	18	9
Nusa Dua (03/2022)	393	153	38.9	101	13	14.4	3	16	11
Madrid (11/2021)	509	198	38.9	117	10	9.3	3	13	10
Virtual Geneva (05/2021)	755	287	38	133	8	6.2	2	10	4
Belgrade (10/2019)	719	221	30.7	149	15	11.4	0	15	17
Doha (04/2019)	721	219	30.3	147	16	11.8	0	16	12

### Single-sex, multi-member delegations of IPU Members present in Luanda (status on 27 October 2023)

N°	Country	Luanda Oct23			Manama Mar23			Kigali Oct22			Nusa Dua Mar22			Madrid Nov21			Virtual May21			Belgrade Oct19			Doha Apr19		
		Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total
1	Albania	0	5	5	2	4	6	1	3	4	absent			absent			absent			2	3	5	1	3	4
2	Argentina*	3	0	3	4	0	4	2	0	2	absent			absent			4	5	9	1	3	4	1	3	4
3	Ethiopia*	0	4	4	0	3	3	absent			absent			absent			absent			1	3	4	3	4	7
4	Iceland	2	0	2	1	2	3	0	2	2	0	2	2	0	1	1	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	1	2
5	Kuwait	0	6	6	1	4	5	absent			1	5	6	0	6	6	0	4	4	1	7	8	1	7	8
6	Lesotho	2	0	2	absent			absent			absent			absent			2	2	4	0	2	2	1	3	4
7	Malta*	0	3	3	0	3	3	0	2	2	0	1	1	0	3	3	0	2	2	0	1	1	0	3	3
8	Peru	0	2	2	1	3	4	1	2	3	absent			2	2	4	absent			3	0	3	3	2	5
9	Qatar*	0	7	7	0	7	7	1	4	5	1	2	3	1	5	6	1	4	5	1	5	6	1	1	2
10	Tuvalu	0	2	2	absent			absent			absent			absent			absent			absent			absent		
11	Uruguay	0	2	2	3	5	8	0	3	3	0	1	1	3	3	6	4	4	8	1	1	2	1	1	2
12	Uzbekistan	0	2	2	3	4	7	0	2	2	absent			3	2	5	4	5	9	1	2	3	1	3	4
13	Yemen*	0	4	4	0	4	4	0	6	6	0	5	5	0	5	5	0	8	8	0	8	8	absent		

### Single-member delegations of IPU Members present in Luanda (status on 27 October 2023)

N°	Country	Luanda Oct23			Manama Mar23			Kigali Oct22			Nusa Dua Mar22			Madrid Nov21			Virtual May21			Belgrade Oct19			Doha Apr19		
		Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total
1	Dominican Republic	0	1	1	absent			absent			absent			1	1	2	absent			1	1	2	1	1	2
2	Greece	1	0	1	1	1	2	1	3	4	0	3	3	1	2	3	1	4	5	1	3	4	2	3	5
3	Laos	0	1	1	1	1	2	absent			1	2	3	absent			1	2	3	1	2	3	2	1	3
4	Latvia	0	1	1	1	3	4	absent			0	2	2	0	3	3	2	2	4	0	2	2	1	3	4
5	Lithuania*	1	0	1	1	0	1	absent			absent			1	1	2	2	2	4	1	1	2	absent		
6	Maldives	0	1	1	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	3	4	1	3	4	1	2	3	1	3	4	0	4	4
7	Poland	1	0	1	3	1	4	3	2	5	2	0	2	2	2	4	4	5	9	0	3	3	0	4	4
8	Sierra Leone*	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	2	3	1	4	5	2	4	6	absent			1	3	4	0	3	3

\* Delegations subjected to sanctions at the 147th Assembly, pursuant to Articles 10.4 and 15.2.c of the IPU Statutes, for being composed exclusively of representatives of the same sex for two consecutive Assemblies.

## 48th session of the Gender Partnership Group

Luanda, Angola, 27 October 2023

### Delegations with 40 to 60% women parliamentarians

The Gender Partnership Group promotes gender parity within the delegations of IPU Member Parliaments to the Assemblies and has decided to give visibility to those that are composed of a minimum of 40% and maximum of 60% of each gender.

The countries below are ordered according to the percentage of women parliamentarians in their delegations at the 147th IPU Assembly.

There are a total of 42 gender-balanced delegations out of 128 IPU Member delegations (32.8%) attending the 147th IPU Assembly (as at 27 October 2023).

#### Delegations with 40 to 49.9% women parliamentarians (16):

Australia	40%	Angola	41.7%
Bangladesh	40%	Burkina Faso	42.9%
Brazil	40%	Democratic Republic of the Congo	42.9%
Burundi	40%	Thailand	42.9%
Czech Republic	40%	United Arab Emirates	42.9%
Libya	40%	Zambia	42.9%
Saudi Arabia	40%	Ghana	44.4%
Uganda	40%	United Republic of Tanzania	44.4%

#### Delegations with 50% women parliamentarians (22):

Andorra	Monaco
Belarus	Netherlands
Bulgaria	Palestine
Canada	Republic of Korea
Central African Republic	Romania
Croatia	Rwanda
Finland	Slovenia
France	Sweden
Iraq	Tonga
Italy	Türkiye
Liechtenstein	Zimbabwe

#### Delegations with 50.1 to 60% women parliamentarians (4):

Kenya	55.6%
Senegal	57.1%
Sao Tome and Principe	60%
United Kingdom	60%

# Calendar of future meetings and other activities

*Approved by the IPU Governing Council at its 212th session  
(Luanda, 25 October 2023)*

WHO-IPU African Parliamentary High-Level Conference on Strengthening Health Security Preparedness	ACCRA (Ghana) 15 – 17 November 2023
Parliamentary Meeting at COP28	DUBAI (United Arab Emirates) 6 December 2023
Series of workshops on human security and common security with partners including the International Peace Bureau and the World Academy on Art and Sciences	Virtual/Hybrid January – December 2023
Workshops on comprehensive disarmament: Focus on the Arms Trade Treaty	Virtual/Hybrid January – December 2023
Series of webinars on disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation as well as military expenditures, co-organized with Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (PNND) and other partners	Virtual January – December 2023
Global webinar co-organized with UNHCR on education and refugees	Virtual 13 November 2023
Briefing for parliaments participating in 2024 Voluntary National Reviews	Virtual 15 November 2023
Climate change webinar organized with Adaptation at Altitude	Virtual 20 November 2023
IPU-APU Webinar for African Parliaments on Preventing and Responding to Violence against Women in Parliaments	Virtual 22 or 23 November 2023 (Dates to be confirmed)
Regional meeting for parliamentarians on SDG5 (target 5.4) with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia	Virtual November 2023 (Dates to be confirmed)
Series of webinars on climate change and health	Virtual November 2023 – February 2024
Global empowerment series: Briefings and training courses for young parliamentarians	Virtual (Quarterly) 2023
Series of briefings for parliaments of countries that will be reviewed in 2023 and early 2024 by the UN Human Rights Council under its Universal Periodic Review; by the UN Committee on the Rights of Child; by the UN Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families; and by the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women	Virtual Regular webinars throughout 2023
Webinar series on public engagement in the work of parliament, in follow-up to the 2022 Global Parliamentary Report	Virtual Regular webinars throughout 2023
Webinar series on digital transformation in parliaments, organized by the IPU's Centre for Innovation in Parliament	Virtual Regular webinars throughout 2023
Series of regional and global virtual workshops on gender equality and women's empowerment	Virtual 2023 (Series dates to be announced later)

Series of regional and sub-regional webinars on statelessness	Virtual 2023 (Series dates to be announced later)
Third regional seminar for the Twelve Plus Group on achieving the SDGs	PARIS (France) 18 – 19 January 2024
Parliamentary Conference on the WTO (PCWTO), preceded by the PCWTO Steering Committee	ABU DHABI (United Arab Emirates) 24 – 25 February 2024
Annual Parliamentary Hearing at the UN	NEW YORK (USA) February 2024 (Dates to be confirmed)
148th Assembly and related meetings	GENEVA (Switzerland) 23 – 27 March 2024
Annual parliamentary meeting at the Commission on the Status of Women	NEW YORK (USA) March 2024 (Dates to be confirmed)
Second Science for Peace School	ALLAN (Jordan) April 2024 (Dates to be confirmed)
Parliamentary meeting on the occasion of the 10th World Water Forum	BALI (Indonesia) 18 – 24 May 2024
Workshop for members of Parliamentary Human Rights Committees from English-speaking countries that have recently or will soon be reviewed by the Human Rights Council – Organized in collaboration with CPA and OHCHR	GENEVA (Switzerland) May 2024 (Dates to be confirmed)
17th Workshop of Parliamentary Scholars and Parliamentarians, co-sponsored by the IPU and the Centre for Legislative Studies, University of Hull, United Kingdom	WROXTON (United Kingdom) July 2024 (Dates to be confirmed)
Parliamentary Forum at the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development	NEW YORK (USA) July 2024 (Dates to be confirmed)
149th IPU Assembly and related meetings	2024 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Workshop for members of Parliamentary Human Rights Committees from French-speaking countries that have recently or will soon be reviewed by the Human Rights Council	GENEVA (Switzerland) 2024 (Dates to be confirmed)
Sixth Interregional Seminar on Parliamentary Capacity-building and the Further Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals	BEIJING (China) 2024 (Dates to be confirmed)
Side event at the Human Rights Council, co-organized with UNFPA, to launch the final report of the High-Level Commission on the Nairobi Summit on ICPD25 Follow-up	GENEVA (Switzerland) 2024 (Dates to be confirmed)
Side event at the 6th Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA 6)	NAIROBI (Kenya) 2024 (Dates to be confirmed)
Regional workshop for parliamentarians and parliamentary staff from Latin America and the Caribbean, co-organized with the World Trade Organization (WTO)	GEORGETOWN (Guyana) 2024 (Dates to be confirmed)
Information seminar on the structure and functioning of the Inter-Parliamentary Union for French-speaking participants	GENEVA (Switzerland) 2024 (Dates to be confirmed)

Speakers' Summit (P20) on the occasion of the G20	Brazil 2024 (Dates to be confirmed)
Regional meeting on Health Security for Asia	Thailand 2024 (Venue and dates to be confirmed)
Tenth IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians	Armenia 2024 (Venue and dates to be confirmed)
Regional workshop for parliaments and State Audit Institutes co-organized with INTOSAI Development Initiative (IDI)	Caribbean 2024 (Venue and dates to be confirmed)
Parliamentary roundtable on statelessness and nationality laws	2024 Venue and dates to be confirmed
World e-Parliament Conference 2024	2024 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Fifth Expert Roundtable on the Common Principles for Support to Parliaments	2024 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Third regional seminar for African Parliaments on Achieving the SDGs	2024 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Regional seminar on climate action and sustainable development for parliaments of Latin America and the Caribbean	2024 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Regional workshop on promoting the rights of the child for the parliaments of the East and South Asia region	2024 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Capacity-building regional workshop on countering terrorism and violent extremism for the African Group	2024 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Capacity-building regional workshop on countering terrorism and violent extremism for the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC)	2024 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Capacity-building regional workshop on countering terrorism and violent extremism for the Eurasia Group	2024 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Third Summit of Parliamentary Committees of the Future (to be co-organized with a Parliamentary Committee of the Future)	2024 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Parliamentary meeting at COP29	2024 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Regional workshop on promoting the rights of the child for the parliaments of West Africa	2024 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Series of workshops on human security and common security with partners including the International Peace Bureau and the World Academy on Art and Sciences	Virtual 2024 (Series dates to be announced)
Series of workshops on disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation as well as military expenditures, co-organized with partners including Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (PNND) and the Parliamentary Forum for Small Arms and Light Weapons	Virtual 2024 (Series dates to be announced)
African regional dialogue on climate action co-organized with UNEP	Virtual 2024 (Dates to be confirmed)

Joint online event on the SDGs with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)	Virtual 2024 (Dates to be confirmed)
Series of briefings for parliaments of countries that will be reviewed in 2023 and early 2024 by the UN Human Rights Council under its Universal Periodic Review; by the UN Committee on the Rights of Child; by the UN Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families; and by the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women	Virtual 2024 Regular webinars throughout 2024
Webinar series on public engagement in the work of parliament, in follow-up to the 2022 Global Parliamentary Report	Virtual Regular webinars throughout 2024
Webinar series on digital transformation in parliaments, organized by the IPU's Centre for Innovation in Parliament	Virtual Regular webinars throughout 2024
Global empowerment series: Briefings and training courses for young parliamentarians	Virtual 2024 (Quarterly)
Series of regional and global virtual workshops on gender equality and women's empowerment	Virtual 2024 (Series dates to be announced later)
Information Seminar on the structure and functioning of the Inter-Parliamentary Union for Spanish-speaking participants	Virtual 2024 (Dates to be confirmed)
150th IPU Assembly and Related Meetings	Uzbekistan March 2025 (Dates to be confirmed)
Second Parliamentary Conference on Interfaith Dialogue	ROME (Italy) June 2025 (Dates to be confirmed)
Sixth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament	GENEVA (Switzerland) 2025 (Dates to be confirmed)
Fourth regional seminar for the Twelve Plus Group on achieving the SDGs	2025 Venue and dates to be confirmed



## Agenda of the 148th Assembly

*(Geneva, 23-27 March 2024)*

1. Election of the President of the 148th Assembly
2. Consideration of requests for the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda
3. General Debate
4. Special accountability segment on the implementation of IPU resolutions and other decisions
5. *Addressing the social and humanitarian impact of autonomous weapon systems and artificial intelligence*  
(Standing Committee on Peace and International Security)
6. *Partnerships for climate action: Promoting access to affordable green energy, and ensuring innovation, responsibility and equity*  
(Standing Committee on Sustainable Development)
7. Reports of the Standing Committees
8. Approval of the subject items for the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security and for the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development for the 150th Assembly and appointment of the co-Rapporteurs

# Second Global Parliamentary Summit on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism

## *The Global Response to the Call of the Sahel*

*Outcome document adopted by the Summit  
(Luanda, 25 October 2023)*

We, the parliamentarians gathered at the Second Global Parliamentary Summit on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism,

*Reaffirming* our joint commitment to global efforts to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism, to work together on security and stability around the world, to closely monitor the Sahel region and pay particular attention to its development and stability,

*Recalling* the declaration adopted at the First Global Parliamentary Summit on Counter-Terrorism held in Vienna in September 2021 entitled the *Call of the Sahel*,

*Welcoming* the implementation outcomes of the *Call of the Sahel* action plan, which focuses on five main areas: environment, security, community, development and education,

*Expressing deep concern* at the deteriorating Sahel situation, which has reached unprecedented levels of proliferation of terrorism and instability in recent years which, in turn, threaten the fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially the goals' central principle "leave no one behind",

*Acknowledging* that the Sahel region faces numerous challenges, such as terrorism and transnational organized crime, human and illicit drug trafficking, illegal migration and weapons proliferation, that are not only a threat to the neighbouring regions but are also a global threat to peace and security; and *acknowledging also* that the lack of development in the region directly impacts people's life opportunities, causes food insecurity, nutritional crises and internal displacement among other,

*Bearing in mind* the aspirations of all peoples to live in peace and security, which are the basic preconditions for the material well-being, development and progress of countries, and for the full implementation of fundamental human rights and freedoms,

*Recognizing* that development in parallel with a security strategy in the region is the solution to all the challenges the Sahel faces,

*Convinced* that good governance leads to robust, democratically organized civil societies, independent judiciaries and administrations that are close to the citizens, and enables the correct management of common resources and guarantees the realization of human rights through actions free of abuse and corruption and with due respect for the rule of law,

*Emphasizing* that, where applicable and upon request, the enhancement of the capabilities and capacities of state institutions to prevent and counter terrorism is a pivotal component of successful efforts against terrorism,

*Reaffirming* the important role of the IPU Member Parliaments and their respective national institutions in countering terrorism and addressing the concerns of their constituents,

*Recognizing* the support of different international organizations, United Nations agencies, the academia and civil society, as well as the essential role of the Inter-Parliamentary Committee of the G5 Sahel and other regional parliamentarian assemblies, all of whom have as their ultimate aim to support the people of the Sahel region,

1. *Call upon* the global parliamentary community, international organizations, governments and civil society to renew their global commitment to strengthen their international cooperation with the Sahel countries and their peoples in preventing and combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and to reaffirm that any act of terrorism is a criminal and unjustifiable act in accordance with international law;
2. *Call upon* international organizations to coordinate their activities in line with the spirit of the *Call of the Sahel* and to seek the necessary support from United Nations organizations to implement their strategies and resolutions on the ground;
3. *Express* the need for equality of the Sahel people in a new world order, with a new regional and political contract that prioritizes the well-being and future of citizens in the Sahel countries;
4. *Emphasize* the importance of upholding human rights and of addressing critical needs of the Sahel population, such as ensuring access to clean water, quality education, food, security and primary healthcare, as well as of paying special attention to the specific needs of young people as engines of development, to education for girls and the empowerment of women;
5. *Stress* that sustainable development is the solution to many challenges the Sahel region faces;
6. *Urge* the Sahel States to enhance good governance by building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels and providing access to justice for all, thus promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development;
7. *Call upon* the international community and the United Nations Security Council to support the G5 Sahel Joint Force by recognizing it pursuant to Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations;
8. *Urge* all parliaments to raise awareness in their respective parliaments of the political situation and challenges the Sahel countries face by drafting a *Motion of the Sahel*;
9. *Request* the IPU ad hoc High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism to design, on the basis of the outcomes of the thematic meetings, the second phase of the *Call of the Sahel* that would include projects and development initiatives in the Sahel countries and act as "The Global Response of the *Call of the Sahel*";
10. *Resolve* to create an ad hoc mechanism within the IPU High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism to coordinate, monitor and follow up on the second phase of the *Call of the Sahel*, which will include projects and development initiatives in the Sahel countries, and be carried out jointly with the Inter-Parliamentary Committee of the G5 Sahel, relevant United Nations agencies, other international organizations, academia – such as the Institute for Economics and Peace, and the civil society among others;
11. *Urge* the global community to move forward with tangible actions to implement ground projects that safeguard the human rights and well-being of the Sahel population.

## Bringing gender equality to the UN General Assembly

*Motion adopted by the IPU Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs  
(Luanda, 25 October 2023)*

The IPU Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs believes that gender equality is a critical enabler of democracy and sustainable development.

Gender equality is recognized in a number of high-level international commitments, including the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Achieving gender equality in decision-making at all levels, including in parliaments, is a key objective of the IPU and of the United Nations.

Resolution 76/269 of the General Assembly acknowledges the underrepresentation of women in diplomacy and proclaims 24 June the International Day of Women in Diplomacy.

However, 75% of Permanent Representatives in the General Assembly of the United Nations are men.

The Committee calls upon all parliaments to:

1. Review their recruitment process for their national foreign service to ensure that women are encouraged to apply and given equal opportunity for advancement as men;
2. Urge the government to set a deadline by which women and men will be represented in equal numbers in the foreign service and to provide the parliament with regular updates;
3. Use parliamentary processes to review their government appointment of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations (New York, Geneva, Vienna) and senior diplomats to capitals around the world from a gender perspective;
4. Meet with their Permanent Representatives to the United Nations yearly, inquiring specifically about advances toward a more gender-equal UN General Assembly;
5. Mark the International Day of Women in Diplomacy with a parliamentary hearing and other initiatives to raise the visibility of this issue in government policy and in national media and with the public at large.