



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

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Speech by Mr. Martin Chungong, IPU Secretary General

76th World Health Assembly

Geneva, 24 May 2023

Dear Mr. Director-General – Dear Dr. Tedros,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I bring good wishes and congratulations to WHO on the 75th anniversary.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union is the global organization of national parliaments, representing 179 national parliaments and more than 46,000 parliamentarians worldwide. I am pleased that our longstanding collaboration with WHO has contributed to bringing the parliamentary and scientific communities closer together to better deliver on health, equity and human rights.

With WHO, we share the belief that health is a precondition for and an outcome of sustainable development, but it is still not a right enjoyed by everyone. Although universal health coverage is enshrined in the SDGs, its successful implementation will continue to require strong political leadership, sustainable financing, good governance and an appropriate legal framework.

Strong and effective parliaments can and must be agents of change for the health and well-being of people and for the prosperity of their countries. This is why we engage with WHO and other partners to strengthen parliamentary institutions and capacity to act on health issues. We are pleased to be working with WHO to implement the resolution adopted in 2019 by the membership of the Inter-Parliamentary Union which urges parliaments to put in place effective UHC legislation and to ensure that the right to health and medical care is guaranteed for all in law and in practice, without discrimination.

With the interlocked crises of climate change, geopolitical tensions, economic slowdown and social inequality, the world in 2023 needs global cooperation more than ever before. I am keen to continue to mobilize Parliaments as part of the solution, as they can use their power to help address the challenges of today's rapidly changing world, by enabling people to connect with and participate in the law-making, policy formulation and oversight processes that impact their lives.

Only by moving with the times, while continuing to lay particular emphasis on the rights of the most vulnerable, will we be able to achieve the change our citizens want to see.

Thank you.