

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



THE SENATE

**143<sup>RD</sup> ASSEMBLY OF THE INTER- PARLIAMENTARY UNION(IPU) AND RELATED  
MEETINGS**

*26<sup>th</sup>– 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021, Madrid, Spain.*

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**General Debate**

**Contemporary challenges to democracy: Overcoming division and building community**

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**Presentation by: Hon. John Waweru Kiarie, MP (KENYA)**

*Young Parliamentarian*

I am greatly honoured to be speaking on the topic: “*Contemporary challenges to democracy: Overcoming division and building community*”

Honourable Members, we are the people in Parliaments today... We are the people for “a time such as this”!!

On the present theme at this Assembly, from where we sit in Kenya, we have identified political instability, corruption and poor governance structures, limited responsiveness and representation, climate change and information overload as real challenges to democracy today.

Dwelling just for a moment on that last challenge that is mostly fueled by technology and, more so, by social media, let me declare that democracy, a concept that is over 2,500 years old, today faces real challenges of distorted truths, ambiguous and fuzzy moral and ethical positions and fake news. All these are circulated, perpetrated and broadcast across and around the globe at the speed of light, every waking moment, 24 hours a day! This poses a great challenge to unity of purpose, making it difficult to coalesce and build on positions of goodwill in parliamentary democracies.

Allow me to associate myself with the words of the great Franz Fanon who opined: *“Every generation must, out of relative obscurity, discover its mission, fulfill it or betray it”!*

As I said at the beginning, we are the people in parliaments today. If our mission is to overcome the challenges, let us then as parliamentarians decide to fulfill this mission. We are the people that democracy is depending on to overcome the challenges identified above. We inherited democracy from our forebearers. Let us protect it boldly and, most importantly, innovatively so that we can bequeath this beautiful system to future generations!

Let us decisively save democracy, jealously guard it, defend it and keep it alive at least for another 2,500 years! Let us secure the future of democracy!

Presented by: **Hon. John Waweru Kiarie, MP**

29<sup>th</sup> November, 2021

IFEMA, Madrid, Spain