



Inter-Parliamentary Union

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Speaking Notes

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Opening of the General Debate on the theme:
*Getting to zero:
Mobilizing parliaments to act on climate change*
144th IPU Assembly and related meetings

21 March 2022

Mr. President,
Mr. Secretary-General,
Madam President of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians,
Distinguished guests,
Dear colleagues,

I am honoured to address the Assembly today as the First Vice-President of the IPU Bureau of Women Parliamentarians. I am proud to join this opening of the General Debate to replace the President of the Forum, Ms. Lesia Vasylenko of Ukraine as she defends her country and her people.

Today's theme of the General Debate on *Mobilizing parliaments to act on climate change* is one that is of great value to women and girls everywhere. Climate change is one of the greatest threats to our societies. Due to human emissions of greenhouse gases, we are on a warming trajectory that is changing how we live. The foundations of our societies; including food security, health, economy and infrastructure, will be in jeopardy. Furthermore, the most immediate impact will be on already vulnerable and marginalized populations.

With this in mind, let me turn to concrete solutions:

First, we must enact proactive measures to increase women's political participation if we are to advance in climate action. Indeed, we know that there is a strong positive correlation between the percentage of seats occupied by women in national parliaments and the prioritisation of climate change policy associated with lower CO2 emissions. Research indicates that greater representation of women in national parliaments lead countries to adopt more effective climate change policies.

However, there is a disproportionate lack of representation of women in national and global policy spaces. IPU data shows that as of January 2022, only 26.1% of parliamentarians around the world were women. While that figure represents a historic high, it is still far from gender parity. At the current rate, it will still take us 40 years to achieve it.

Second, we must advance on gender-responsive climate legislation and policy reform. Climate related policies and other social policies, including for gender equality, complement one another. The two goals work together and

no climate agenda can succeed without going hand-in-hand with the gender equality agenda.

Third, we need green and gender-responsive institutions. This change must start from our parliaments. New initiatives to make parliaments more environmentally friendly institutions are slowly taking root in different parts of the world. Many parliaments are going green by reducing their environmental footprint, lowering their greenhouse gas emissions and improving the overall sustainability of their activities.

These must go together with our efforts towards gender-sensitive parliaments as well. In moving towards an inclusive green economy, parliaments must take into account gender and other socially-differentiated needs.

Colleagues,

We must increase our actions, not just for our family's future, but for the future of our children's children. We know that we are stronger when we work together as members of parliament across regions. May our deliberations today bring us closer to our goals in climate response and gender equality.

Thank you for your attention and I wish us all fruitful deliberations.