

**Intervention to the General Debate on the Theme: Parliamentary Action for peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16)**

**“An IPU fit for purpose, fit for everyone”**

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“Your Excellencies,  
dear colleagues,

“Ongoing and new violent conflicts around the world are derailing the global path to peace and achievement of SDG 16.” According to the May 2023 Report of the United Nations Secretary-General, progress towards SDG 16 is proceeding too slowly. If people around the world ask for peace, justice and security, but our global governance institutions are unable to provide these basic foundations of sustainable, peaceful and inclusive societies to them, then our global governance institutions are not fit for purpose and we have to reshape them.

IPU and Greece were strong advocates for SDG 16 to be included among the SDG list. And, it is, indeed, true that the key elements of IPU lie in the heart of the SDG strategies, in order to help build resilient and innovative institutions and parliaments become more democratic, fair, and sustainable. IPU itself is becoming better every year. But it is on all of us to make this institution more pertinent and even more fit for purpose.

The second oldest organization of the world, preexisting to and a co-founder of the United Nations, needs to redefine its position in the world today. Repositioning itself, as the “**Global Parliament Organization**”, the “**World Parliament**”, and representing the peoples around the world, and not just functioning as an inter-parliamentary body for the benefit of the parliaments themselves, would be a more appropriate path to take, in order to effectively tackle the serious issues our world is facing today.

This development should be an appropriate response to SDG 16.6 and SDG 16.7, advocating both for the development of effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels, and the

responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels respectively. This is a change that we should not be afraid of, that we should not oppose. On the contrary, we should embrace organizational change. The world needs this type of upscaling and rebranding of IPU.

First, this is a critical time to make a fundamental reshaping of Inter-Parliamentary Union. There is already a process for changing the Statute of the Union. Let's see how we could benefit out of this process and make the Union more effective and relevant. It came as a disappointment to many of us not to be able to adopt a commonly accepted resolution on an emergency item on the Middle East crisis yesterday. We need to redefine our deliberative and decision-making processes. We could not be inactive and ineffective in the face of humanitarian emergencies. The world needs a stronger IPU, in the wake of armed conflicts, climate criss, social injustice.

Secondly, the IPU work should be more visible to all the members of our Parliaments and our constituencies directly. Today this is feasible *via* the social media and Artificial Intelligence tools. We could do better use of them, in order not only to spread out our messages to the people, but also to hear and learn from the people directly. This is a call from Athens, the cradle of direct democracy. "*For Democracy, For Everyone.*" This is what we say at the IPU.

Last, but not least, we have to keep redefining our relationship with the UN and other global inter-governmental organizations. We have to deepen our cooperation in critical matters and make our participation more effective and integral to the UN processes. IPU has to fill the democratic gap that exists in the global governance sphere, that exists in the world.

Let's start realizing SGD 16, from our home, IPU, today.

Thank you!"