



Inter-Parliamentary Union

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## Opening speech

Ms. Cynthia López Castro  
President, Bureau of Women  
Parliamentarians

148th IPU Assembly and related meetings  
General Debate on *Parliamentary diplomacy:  
Building bridges for peace and understanding*

24 March 2024, 11:00 a.m.

Madam President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,  
Mr. President of the IPU Board of young parliamentarians,  
Mr. Secretary General,  
Dear colleagues,  
Distinguished guests,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to address the Assembly's General Debate in my role as President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians.

I am sure all of us here firmly believe in the immense potential of parliamentary diplomacy. I would like us to believe as strongly in the huge potential of women's contribution and leadership to peace and security in the world.

Next year, we will mark the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 which recognised women's role as vital in peace and security.

Regretfully, it has been 25 years that diplomatic and security practices fail to place women and gender equality at the centre of conflict prevention and resolution.

At a time when international and human security is under increasing threat, women and girls' rights and their empowerment are more and more at risk.

However, the women, peace and security agenda is an opportunity to redress the situation and address the danger of losses.

It is the powerful tool we need to build bridges to sustainable peace and to move from exclusion to democratic decision-making, from gender inequality to gender justice.

It is our greatest hope for building more peaceful, prosperous and stable societies.

And it is up to us, parliamentarians of the world, to make this agenda the central focus of our parliamentary diplomacy,

by:

Removing any obstacles to gender parity in decision-making.

Ensuring the participation and leadership of women into peace processes, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and security efforts.

Putting an end to violence against women - both online and offline - which holds women back in all sectors.

Let's support women's organisations that are fighting injustice, building peace and taking their rightful place at the negotiating table.

Let's support women and girls survivors of sexual violence in conflict and provide reparations for violations of their rights.

Let's put money into these policies and stop diverting funds from socio-economic rights into a mad arms race.

We can't wait another 25 years. We must build peace with women now.

This is what humanity needs and what our future depends on!

Thank you