

Speech for the IPU: Science and Technology for Humanity and Ecosystems

Your Excellences,

Science and Technology is our best ally in addressing major global challenges we face today, such as poverty, pandemics, climate crisis and environmental degradation. In recent years, we have witnessed exponential growth and an unprecedented surge in technological progress, such as in the fields of **research in genetics, Blockchain Technology and Internet of the Things, artificial intelligence and advanced robotics, Stand-Alone Renewable Energy Systems, and space technologies.**

This progress holds immense potential to transform industries, enhance education and communication, improve healthcare, manage efficiently our natural resources, achieve decarbonization, and contribute to the well-being of our societies. However, with great power comes great responsibility.

As we embrace the possibilities that science and technology present, we must also confront the risks they pose. The rapid development of **AI**, for example, while empowering machine- and human performance, it also raises profound ethical questions. How do we ensure that these systems operate transparently and fairly? How do we prevent biases, *via* the digital divide and job displacement, that may exacerbate existing inequalities? And how do we mitigate the negative impacts of technological applications on our natural environment? These questions are not mere technical issues; they are governance-related and legal questions that require our urgent political response and normative action.

Legislation plays a crucial role in shaping the future of science, technology and innovation. We, Parliamentarians, must work together to create frameworks that accelerate science and technology and promote innovation, while – at the same time - safeguard human rights. Regulations must keep pace with technological advancements that benefit humanity **and create an enabling environment for innovation to flourish.**

Yet, we must protect individuals and communities from potential risks regarding their human rights and dignity.

To this end, international cooperation is essential. We could share best legislative practices, develop global standards, and ensure that the benefits of science and technology are being distributed equitably and without posing any risks. We could empower every country to leverage **science and technology to achieve sustainable development goals.** Our development should be smart, sustainable and inclusive and none should be left behind.

To achieve this, we need, among others, to **invest in education and skills training**, in upskilling and reskilling. We must equip the present and the future generation with the knowledge and tools necessary to thrive in a digital world.

Dear colleagues, let us commit to a future where science and technology serve humanity and our natural environment; where **ethical principles and legislative frameworks** enhance them, but also prioritize the common good and contribute towards a better, safer and more equitable world, in democracy, for everyone.

The role of the IPU and our national parliaments is pivotal to this end.

Thank you very much.