

150th IPU Assembly

General Debate: “Parliamentary action for social development and justice”

Statement by Ms. Pia Maria WIENINGER, MP

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Honourable President,

Honourable Chairperson,

Dear Colleagues,

We need a new global framework— built on solidarity, dignity, and shared responsibility.

Austria’s own experience highlights the power of strong social systems. Universal healthcare, access to quality education, and robust public infrastructure are not luxuries—they are the foundation of a stable and inclusive society. These are values we must scale globally.

Our model is underpinned by Social Partnership—a key pillar of Austrian policy since the aftermath of World War II. It emerged as a response to the devastation of war and the dangers of social division. By fostering institutionalized dialogue between workers, employers, and government, Social Partnership ensures fair wages, strong protections, and economic resilience.

Importantly, the Austrian Parliament is closely intertwined with this system. Many MPs hold leading roles in trade unions, business chambers, or other key stakeholder groups.

This guarantees that diverse social and economic interests are embedded in lawmaking—from the earliest stages of policy development to final legislation.

So if we are talking about a new social contract, this contract must put people first—not markets, not profit. It should be fair, inclusive, and focused on what really matters: health, education, equality, and a safe planet. We need an economy that works for all, not just for a few. And we must measure progress by how people live, not just by how much we produce.

Let’s build a future that works for everyone.

Thank you!