

Honoured President,

Dear colleagues,

My name is Mikkel Dencker. I am new Chair of the Danish delegation to the IPU.

I look forward to working with you in this important forum. And I am honoured to speak to you on this special date: October 7. 3 years after the barbaric massacre of more than 1000 innocent people in Israel.

But back to today's subject.

In many parts of the world, people are losing trust in public institutions.

Many feel that political decisions are made far away from their daily lives. They may also feel that leaders do not listen to them.

When trust becomes weaker, democracy also becomes weaker.

Good government is not only about rules and institutions. It is about the bond between citizens and those who govern.

People must know that public institutions are fair. They must be open about their decisions. And they must be able to solve real problems.

Trust grows when governments deliver clear results. It also grows when people know that their voice matters.

In Denmark, we have learned one important lesson:

Democracy works best when it is close to the people.

Many decisions in Denmark are made at the local level. People meet elected politicians in their towns and local communities.

This makes it easier to take part. It also gives people a sense of duty and ownership.

Strong local communities are also important.

Government cannot build trust on its own.

Families, sports clubs, local groups, charities and faith groups bring people together. They give people a place where they belong. They also help our society in difficult times.

Public institutions must also deliver results.

People expect good public services. They expect public money to be used with care. And they expect politicians to listen before they act.

Decisions should be based on facts, knowledge and common sense. They should also reflect the daily lives of ordinary people.

Technology can improve public services. It can also make contact with public institutions easier.

But technology must be our tool. It must never become our master.

It must support democracy. And elected representatives must remain in control.

Dear colleagues,

We do not measure a strong democracy by the number of laws it passes.

We measure it by the trust people have in their institutions.

We build trust by keeping decisions close to the people.

We build trust through strong families and local communities.

And we build trust when politicians govern with care, responsibility and common sense.

If we follow these principles, we can build stronger nations and stronger democracies for the next generation.

Thank you.