

Speech of **Mr Peeter Tali**, Vice President of the IPU Estonia group at the General Debate
“Enhancing good governance and empowering communities through inclusivity, trust and opportunities for all”.

153rd IPU Assembly, Arusha, Tanzania

Distinguished Chair, dear colleagues, honourable hosts!

There is little value in discussing how to enhance good governance and empower communities through inclusivity, trust, and opportunities for all if we ignore the harsh reality confronting our world today.

As we gather here in beautiful Tanzania, people elsewhere are dying. More than 130 wars and armed conflicts continue across the globe. Violence affects Africa, Asia, the Americas, Europe, and the Middle East. Families are displaced, communities are shattered, and entire generations are growing up knowing conflict rather than peace.

In Europe, Russia's aggression against Ukraine has brought war back to our continent. For more than twelve years, Ukrainians have defended their independence, sovereignty, and democratic future, despite Russia's continued terror attacks against Ukrainian cities and civilians. I call on all parliamentarians, including our Russian colleagues, to do everything within their power to help bring an end to this unjust war. It is not too late to choose peace over violence.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union was founded in 1889 with a noble goal of preventing conflicts from escalating into world wars. The IPU has failed twice.

History tells us that dialogue cannot be reduced to words alone. The world witnessed two devastating world wars. Millions of lives were lost, and countless

nations paid a terrible price. Peace cannot be taken for granted. It must be protected, defended, and strengthened every day.

One of the core principles of the IPU is promoting international dialogue to solve problems through cooperation and diplomacy. Another is strengthening international peace and security through parliamentary engagement. These principles are not abstract ideals.

These are practical tools for preventing conflicts, reducing tensions, and building understanding between nations.

However, the dialogue must also be honest. We cannot speak only about trust while turning a blind eye to aggression. We cannot discuss opportunities while people are being denied their most basic right: the right to live in peace or even to live.

Every nation, large or small, deserves security, dignity, and prosperity. We cannot accept a world where powerful countries take what they want by force and where borders are changed through violence. International law must apply equally to all. Our citizens expect more from us than speeches. They expect leadership. They expect courage. Above all, they expect results.

Let us therefore reaffirm the principle on which this organisation was founded. That dialogue must serve peace, and that peace must serve people. If we stand together, speak honestly, and act decisively, we can help build a world where future generations know cooperation instead of conflict, and hope instead of war.

And perhaps it would be wise to elect the Australian candidate, Milton Dick, as our new President. Coming from a continent that has been spared the devastation

of war on its own soil for generations, he may bring a particularly balanced perspective. His ability to take everybody into account is remarkable.

Every nation deserves peace. Every person deserves a future. Let us be judged not by the speeches we delivered, but by the wars we prevented, the lives we protected, and the peace we secured.

That is our responsibility.

That is our mission.

Thank you for your attention!