

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

By the Speaker of the National Assembly of Tanzania 153rd Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Conference Arusha, Tanzania, 5th October 2026

Theme: Enhancing Good Governance and Empowering Communities through Inclusivity, Trust, and Opportunities for All

Your Excellency, Honourable Dr. Tulia Ackson, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Your Excellencies, Speakers and Presiding Officers,

Honourable Members of Parliament,

Members of Diplomatic Corps,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is with profound honour that I welcome you to Arusha, the diplomatic capital of East Africa, the cradle of Kiswahili, and the gateway to the Serengeti. Hosting this Assembly beneath the majestic Mount Meru is a testament to Tanzania's enduring commitment to parliamentary diplomacy, inclusivity, and democratic innovation.

Honourable President of the IPU, this Assembly convenes at a time when progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals has slowed, inequalities remain pronounced,

and insecurity is growing. In this context, good governance is not an abstract ideal; it is the daily reality of whether citizens can access services, participate in decisions, and trust that institutions will act fairly.

Good governance must be transparent, accountable, and inclusive. It must be capable, responsive, and effective. Decisions should be informed by reliable data, research, and public consultation. Evidence-based policymaking allows governments and parliaments to allocate scarce resources wisely, anticipate unintended consequences, and adjust policies when results fall short.

In Tanzania, we have embraced the Parliament of Proximity through constituency weeks, mobile committees, and live Kiswahili broadcasts ensuring that governance is not distant, but proximate and participatory.

Honourable President, trust is the oxygen of democracy. Without trust, institutions suffocate. Public confidence is strengthened when parliaments explain how decisions are taken, apply rules consistently, acknowledge shortcomings, and demonstrate results.

Trust is built when leaders embody integrity. Trust is sustained when service delivery is responsive and equitable. Trust is renewed when citizens feel heard, respected, and represented. Conversely, corruption, impunity, and perceptions of double standards erode legitimacy and weaken governance systems.

Honourable President, Good governance depends on inclusion and empowerment. Women, young people, persons with disabilities, and marginalized groups must not only be represented but meaningfully engaged. Representation matters, but so does the quality of participation.

Gender equality enriches decision-making. Youth empowerment transforms demographic realities into dividends. Community participation ensures locally owned solutions that respond to people's needs.

Tanzania renews its call for Kiswahili spoken by over 200 million people to be recognized as an official working language of the IPU. Inclusivity begins with the language of the people.

Honourable President, Empowerment is impossible without opportunity. Education equips citizens with tools to thrive. Economic empowerment reduces inequality and fosters innovation. Digital transformation must serve democracy, not disinformation.

Technology, when used responsibly, can widen access to information, improve service delivery, and strengthen accountability. But when misused, it can reinforce exclusion, spread disinformation, and undermine rights. Parliaments must legislate for *Digital Sovereignty*, ensuring that innovation remains transparent, inclusive, secure, and subject to democratic oversight.

Honourable President, a forward-looking approach to governance must invest in future generations. Civic education equips young people with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to understand democratic institutions, exercise their rights, and resist

misinformation and polarization. Creating meaningful avenues for youth participation today will renew democratic culture and strengthen trust for the long term.

Honourable President, Billions are pledged at global climate summits, yet parliaments are often absent from oversight. Climate justice without parliamentary scrutiny is theatre.

Tanzania proposes an IPU Standing Mechanism pairing donor-country parliaments with recipient-country parliaments to ensure joint oversight of climate finance — from the first pledge to the final project.

Honourable President, Distinguished delegates, we leave this conference not to return to comfortable chambers, but to return to difficult constituencies villages seeking electricity, mothers walking for clean water, and graduates searching for their first job.

The true test of governance is what it delivers in people's lives. Let the Tanzanian principle of *Ujamaa* familyhood guide us. No parliament prospers alone; no nation thrives in isolation.

Asanteni sana. Mungu ibariki Tanzania na mataifa yote. *(Thank you. God bless*

Tanzania and all nations.)