



SPEECH
ON THE GENERAL DEBATE ON THE THEME:

***“ENHANCING GOOD GOVERNANCE AND
EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES THROUGH
INCLUSIVITY, TRUST AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR
ALL”***

BY

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Madam President ;

The Zimbabwean delegation acknowledges the outstanding hospitality and excellent logistical arrangements accorded to it by the Tanzanian Government and its Parliament. This is a testimony to the unflinching belief by the IPU President, Dr. Tulia Ackinson, who prevailed on the IPU for Tanzania to host the IPU Assembly and related meetings. Congratulations to her unfailing vision.

In the same vein, Zimbabwe and its Parliament through the President, Dr E.D. Mnangagwa, would like to thank profusely the governments of the IPU family for having voted resoundingly for Zimbabwe to be a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. In that regard, President Dr. E.D. Mnangagwa has pledged that Zimbabwe will advance efforts for global peace and security guided by the principle of preventive diplomacy and faithful adherence to multilateralism as well as the respect for International Law.

Regarding the theme of the Assembly, let us remember that ***Africa does not come to international parliamentary fora as a supplicant. We come as a continent of 1.4 billion people, 54 states, and constitutions that in many cases exceed the ambitions of wealthier nations. We come with lived experience of governance under conditions of resource constraint, inherited institutional fragility and external pressure that the architects of international governance frameworks rarely reflect. We ask not for approval of our approaches but for partnership in developing global standards that work for the majority of the world's people. To that an extent, we bring experience that should inform global norms – not merely be informed by them.*** Resultantly, in Zimbabwe our lived experience in governance is propagated by our Presidential development philosophy of LEAVING NO ONE AND NO PLACE BEHIND and THAT OUR COUNTRY OUGHT TO BE DEVELOPED BY ITS OWN PEOPLE as in the same Swahili idiom meaning that **Inchi**

hujengwa na watu wake wenyewe.¹ That is the spirit of inclusivity which engenders trust and creates opportunities for all. Practical measures that translate our national development policy of inclusivity is indicated through the establishment of parliamentary women and youth caucuses which provide institutional platforms for the empowerment of women and youth. There is also established the women and youth empowerment banks to achieve financial inclusivity. People with disability are catered for through the implementation of the Disability Act. Vulnerable groups and communities in general in Zimbabwe receive constitutional 5% devolution funds so that every Province has access to project funding, where applicable.

However, there is a threat to inclusive development because governance in the 21st century is increasingly digital. Public Services, Civic participation, economic

¹ The Assistant Counsel to Parliament assisted with translation into **Swahili**. "Inchi hujengwa na watu wake wenyewe" — *nchi* (country), *inajengwa* (is built, habitual passive), *na watu wake wenyewe* (by its own people).

opportunity and access to information are moving online at a pace that parliamentary legislation has not matched. Yet 2,6 billion people globally remain without internet access while sub-Saharan Africa's internet penetration stands at approximately 37%. Parliaments must, therefore, take responsibility for the regulatory framework of digital inclusion otherwise digital exclusion will entrench every other form of inequality. To avert digital exclusion, the Parliament of Zimbabwe has established a Committee of the Future which espouses a 50 year vision that should enhance efforts to craft a legal framework which harnesses the application of digital technologies, especially the emerging super artificial intelligence phenomenon. Let the IPU family of Parliaments march together in creating a robust legal framework which bolsters good governance and empowered communities through inclusivity, earned trust and opportunities for all.

Thank you for your attention.