



Inter-Parliamentary Union  
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# 139<sup>th</sup> IPU ASSEMBLY AND RELATED MEETINGS

Geneva, 14-18.10.2018

## Panel discussion *Building bridges between the parliamentary and scientific communities*

*Tuesday, 16 October 2018, 2.30 to 4 p.m.  
Salle Genève, CCV Annexe building, CICG*

### Concept note

As the decision-makers of policies, governmental plans and budgets, parliamentarians are among the main architects of our societies. Science provides a vital source of knowledge, innovation, technological development and new ideas that change the way citizens and policy-makers perceive the world and live. A better understanding of science and technology is crucial for parliamentarians in order to effectively pass laws and bring important topics to the forefront of public debates. Nevertheless, the current gap between the world of science and the world of politics sometimes leads to ineffective laws and regulations.

The non-assiduous and detached relationships between the two communities are often due to a lack of access to scientific research for parliamentarians and an absence of dialogue. Furthermore, years of miscommunications have eroded mutual trust.

In complex and inter-connected societies, there is a growing need for evidence and expertise to inform policy-making. While parliamentarians are mandated to address areas that are complex, which requires compromise and pragmatism, scientific researchers play an important role in providing information to allow policy-makers to develop evidence-based policies and to assess properly their options for scientific policies. Besides, science forms the basis of judgement and insight while expanding the boundaries of knowledge. As such it cannot, and must not, be judged only in economic terms.

Additionally, ethical consideration of the human impact of policy decisions is crucial and should be an integral part of decision-making. Scientific advancements have resulted in a better quality of life for all. This includes more effective drugs to cure diseases, a better understanding of the matter we are made of and the world we live in (including the climate), an increasingly effective exploration of our universe, which represents the ultimate frontier. The development of technology has resulted, among other things, in Industry 4.0, commonly referred to as the fourth industrial revolution, which is the current trend of automation, data exchange and IoT (Internet of Things) in manufacturing technologies. Parliamentarians play an important role in working towards bringing humans back at the centre of science. Scientists are increasingly requested to provide quickly sustainable solutions to big problems, such as water supply, energy, the environment and even to address hunger. However, science requires time and expertise and this can only be built in years of trust, respect and actual investments decided by policy makers.

### **Modalities**

This event is organized in cooperation with the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) and will take the form of a panel discussion with a moderator and representatives of the world of science and that of politics.

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