



Inter-Parliamentary Union  
For democracy. For everyone.

# Webinar

## Building bridges between science and parliamentarians for the good of society Wednesday, 17 March 2021, 2:30 – 4pm (CET)

### Background

Basic science, applied research, innovation and advanced technology are all essential to the progress of humankind. They are linked by a virtuous circle: basic science and fundamental research foster our understanding of the world around us and, by doing so, they generate applied research, innovation and technology; these, in turn, directly improve people's quality of life and provide more and more powerful research tools. For example, science, particularly research into infectious diseases, is at the forefront of international efforts to fight COVID-19, and it is now more important than ever that we count on science for the well-being of humanity.

Parliaments, as the representatives of the people, must be able to identify and understand in depth the potential impact of science and technology on society, determining how it can be translated into concrete initiatives for the benefit of the people, and accompanying their implementation with appropriate legislation and political action. Parliaments and policymakers play a key role in ensuring the development of humanity through scientific progress, while protecting their citizens' human rights from the misuse of technological advances.

Thus, in recent years, the Inter-Parliamentary Union has brought back science and technology to the forefront of its work with the establishment of the Working Group on Science and Technology. The modalities of this Working Group are expected to be approved at the IPU's next Assembly, so that the Group can become operational and begin its important work.

In the wake of the approval of the Working Group, and taking into account the rapid evolution of science and technology, as well as the current global COVID-19 pandemic, the IPU will host a Webinar on 17 March 2021 to explore three important issues:

- 1) The importance of building a bridge between science and policy, including through the Working Group on Science and Technology, a Global Parliamentary Network, and an IPU strategy on science
- 2) Ethics in the use of science and technology
- 3) The importance of science for society and for peace

### Webinar timing and structure

The Webinar will take place on Wednesday, 17 March 2021 from 2:30 – 4pm (CET). The event will take place at this time in order to allow for the attendance of participants from a large number of time-zones. The Webinar will take place on Zoom, with interpretation available in English and French.

The event will be moderated by an expert from CERN, and will be structured as follows:

- Opening remarks by the IPU President, Duarte Pacheco
- A short introduction of the panel by the Moderator, Antonella del Rosso, CERN Education, Communication and Outreach Group
- Panel discussion with experts from the fields of science and politics:
  - Michel Larive, French MP, and main political driver behind the creation of the IPU Working Group on Science and Technology
  - Marianne Amir Azer, Former Egyptian MP and Member of the Global Advisory Board on Emerging Technologies (ISACA)

- Rolf Heuer, President of the SESAME Council and former Director General of the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN)
- Karen Hallberg, Research Director at the Bariloche Atomic Centre in Argentina and Laureate of the 2019 L'Oreal-UNESCO Award for Women in Science
- Participants' Q&A to panellists
- Closing remarks by the Moderator, Antonella del Rosso

### Guiding questions for panellists

- 1) How can the IPU, including through its Working Group on Science and Technology, best work to bridge the gap between science and policy, and harness science and technology to the benefit of society?
- 2) What are some lessons learned from the COVID-19 concerning the capability of parliaments to effectively use scientific advice for urgent legislative and policy-making decisions?
- 3) How can Parliamentarians increase public trust in the importance of science in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic?
- 4) How can parliamentarians work with the scientific community to ensure that scientific advancements respect ethical boundaries?
- 5) How can the IPU, through its Working Group on Science and Technology, contribute to the realization of a Charter on the Ethical Use of Science and Technology?

### Invited participants

- 1) Representatives from IPU Member Parliaments and associate members
- 2) Representatives of the media
- 3) Representatives from scientific and academic institutions