

H.E. Mr President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Your Excellencies Speakers of Parliaments,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Excellencies,

We are honored to be at this General Assembly, which is being held in virtually, due to the restrictions imposed by the new coronavirus, to share ideas and gather experiences in overcoming this pandemic that ravages all of us without exception.

We therefore commend the IPU leadership for including in the agenda of the 142nd General Assembly a debate under the theme "overcoming the pandemic today and building a better tomorrow: the role of parliaments".

Excellencies,

In times of pandemic, the role of the Legislative Power is crucial in facing the crisis caused by this common enemy, an invisible and terrible enemy.

The world is currently experiencing a distressing health situation which in turn has plunged countries into a deep economic crisis, whose overcoming requires coordinated efforts and strategies.

In the response to this pandemic, parliaments play a key role, not only in safeguarding public health, but also for those who have been most affected by the economic consequences resulting from the measures put in place to limit contamination. In dealing with this issue, legislators are called upon to strike a balance between the imperative need to defend public health and an effort to prevent the collapse of the economy, which could trigger another crisis: "**coronahunger**".

Mozambique, one of the developing countries, had to anticipate the rapid spread of the pandemic by adopting a number of

measures, with Parliament having approved the State of Emergency three consecutive times, despite the fact that the country had around a dozen confirmed infections at the time.

Among the measures taken to prevent the rapid transmission of the new coronavirus were a ban on all public and private events, including religious services, the closing down of schools, the suspension of issuing visas and discouragement of large gatherings of people, the compulsory use of face masks, the washing and/or disinfection of hands, cough etiquette, social distancing and, currently, the curfew imposed in some urban centres, given the increase in infections, hospitalizations and deaths verified last January and February.

Excellencies,

In August 2020, the Mozambican parliament unanimously passed a law that allowed the management of situations of public calamity, including pandemics such as the Covid-19 pandemic, without having to resort to declaring a state of emergency.

This whole exercise shows how involved the parliament is in preventing and combating the pandemic, with the goal of overcoming it on the horizon.

However, there is a need to engage parliaments and parliamentarians in building a better tomorrow through the approval of laws exempting basic products, indispensable in the lives of citizens, to leverage the economy, since many companies closed their doors, and many workers lost their jobs because of this disease.

Education, even in these difficult times in which the world lives, must continue to be one of the priorities of parliamentarians.

Thank you very much!