



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

Information Seminar on the Structure and Functioning of the Inter-Parliamentary Union for the Parliaments in the Americas

7 - 9 June 2021, Online Event
Programme

7 June 2021 09:00 – 12:00 EST (NY time)	
09:00 - 09:15	Roundtable introductions <i>Participants will be invited to introduce themselves and refer briefly to their role in their Parliament/Organization and their key expectations from the information seminar.</i>
09:15 - 09:25	Welcoming remarks Video address by the IPU Secretary General, Mr. Martin Chungong <i>The IPU is keen to consolidate its relations with the parliaments from the Americas. Participants will hear an overview of the IPU: its history, strategy and priorities going forward.</i>
09:25 - 10:45	Parliamentary co-operation within the IPU framework: benefits for a Member Parliament <i>The IPU is a vibrant global organization committed to promoting peace, democracy and human rights, gender equality and youth participation, and sustainable development. IPU Members work together for positive change, both in their own countries and internationally.</i> <i>In this session, participants will discuss the value and benefits of inter-parliamentary co-operation and diplomacy within the IPU framework. They will also gain insight into the role of the Geopolitical Groups, with a particular focus on GRULAC.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ambassador Anda Filip, Director, Division for Member Parliaments and External Relations, IPU Secretariat• Presentation “<i>IPU and the role of Geopolitical Groups: particularities of GRULAC and how to pave the way for more structured dialogue and cooperation</i>”, Mr. Oscar Piquinela, Secretary of GRULAC (10 minutes)• Presentation “<i>Parliamentary diplomacy: concept and evolution</i>”, Mr. Ariel Sotelo, General Director of Parliamentary Diplomacy, National Congress of Argentina (10 minutes)• Questions and answers
10:45 - 11:00	Break

11:00 - 12:00	<p>Structure and functioning of the IPU: membership; rights and obligations; statutory bodies and engagement by Members</p> <p><i>The IPU's governance architecture is made up of different bodies with specific mandates and functions. The President is the political head of the institution. The Assembly, the only global forum of MPs, brings together parliamentarians to address and drive change on various issues. The Governing Council is the principal administrative and policy-making body of the IPU. The Executive Committee oversees the administration and makes recommendations to the Governing Council on various matters. The Secretariat implements the decisions of the membership.</i></p> <p><i>The participants will be briefed on the IPU's governance architecture and discuss modalities of interaction with the membership.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Dorin Vremis, Political Affairs Officer, Division for Member Parliaments and External Relations, IPU Secretariat • Presentation “<i>Preparing for IPU Assemblies and cooperation in the context of the work of the IPU Executive Committee</i>”, Ms. Celine Ethier, former Secretary of the Canadian IPU Group and Ms. Natalie Mychajlyszyn, Analyst, Library of Parliament (15 minutes) • Presentation “<i>Good practices in following up to IPU decisions and activities</i>”, Ms. Florencine Fernandez Flores, Senior Advisor, Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica (10 minutes) • Questions and answers
12:00	End of first day
8 June 2021 09:00 – 12:00 EST (NY time)	
09:00 - 09:40	<p>Parliaments during the COVID-19 pandemic: the IPU's programmes and work on strengthening parliaments</p> <p><i>The COVID-19 pandemic impacted the well-being of people, disrupted societies and economies, exacerbated the already high-level of inequalities and widened further the gap between developed and developing countries. Countries in the region were affected by economic difficulties and confronted by development imperatives. They also have their own specific vulnerabilities.</i></p> <p><i>In this session, participants will have the opportunity to learn about the IPU's work on strengthening parliaments. This will be followed by three interactive sessions on the IPU's engagement on Sustainable Development Goals; Gender Equality and Youth Participation; and Human Rights of Parliamentarians.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Kareen Jabre, Director, Programmes Division, IPU Secretariat • Presentation “<i>Good practices in strengthening parliaments</i>”, Mr. Patricio Alvarez Cabezas, Head of the Department of Information Technologies, Senate, National Congress of Chile (10 minutes) • Questions and answers
09:40 - 09:45	Break

09:45 - 10:30	IPU support to parliaments in implementing Sustainable Development Goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Aleksandra Blagojevic, Programme Manager, Secretary of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, IPU Secretariat • Representative of the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago (10 minutes) • Questions and answers
10:30 - 11:15	IPU's work to promote gender equality and youth participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation by Ms. Cynthia Lopez Castro, MP, Chamber of Deputies of Mexico (10 minutes) • Ms. Mariana Duarte Mutzenberg, Programme Officer, Gender Partnership, IPU Secretariat • Mr. Jonathan Lang, Project Officer, Youth Participation, IPU Secretariat • Questions and answers
11:15 - 12:00	IPU's role in defending and promoting the rights of parliamentarians <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Rogier Huizenga, Manager, Human Rights Programme, IPU Secretariat • Mr. Roberto Rodriguez, Human Rights Programme Officer, IPU Secretariat • Interactive Exercise with Participants
12:00	End of second day
9 June 2021 09:00 – 12:00 EST (NY time)	
09:00 - 09:45	The organization of an IPU Assembly <p><i>The IPU Assembly brings together parliamentarians to address and drive change on issues on the international agenda. It plays a pivotal role in addressing the issues that threaten peace, democracy and development.</i></p> <p><i>This session will aim to provide participants with an overview of the organization and proceedings of an IPU Assembly. It will also highlight the IPU's recent experience in driving digital transformation by convening the IPU Assembly and its related bodies in virtual format.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Emily Blitz, Consultant, Division for Member Parliaments and External Relations, IPU Secretariat • Presentation “<i>Good practices with IPU Assemblies</i>”, Ms. Silvia Cabral, National Congress of Brazil (10 minutes) • Questions and answers
09:45 - 10:00	Break

10:00 - 11:00	<p>Parliaments and global governance: cooperation with the UN and regional organizations</p> <p><i>The role of parliaments in global affairs is indispensable. Parliaments can help overcome the democratic deficit in international relations and ensure that international commitments are translated into national realities. At the same time, parliamentary organizations provide a framework conducive to empowering parliaments as the most representative institutions of governance.</i></p> <p><i>This session will introduce the work of the IPU in bringing a parliamentary dimension to United Nations processes. The discussions will also center around the role of regional organizations in this regard and their functioning during the COVID-19 pandemic.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Patricia Torsney, Head of the Office of the Permanent Observer of the IPU to the United Nations, New York Office, IPU Secretariat • Ambassador Brigitte Brenner, Permanent Observer of the IPU to the United Nations Office at Vienna, IPU Secretariat • Mr. Alessandro Motter, Senior Advisor on Economic and Social Affairs, Office of the Permanent Observer of the IPU to the United Nations, New York Office, IPU Secretariat • Mr. Elias Castillo, Executive Director, the Latin American and Caribbean Parliament (PARLATINO) (10 minutes)
11:00 - 11:30	<p>Open floor: participants are invited to put forward ideas/initiatives/solutions pertinent for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bringing a parliamentary dimension to United Nations processes</i> • <i>Enhancing cooperation with the IPU, GRULAC and regional parliamentary organizations</i> • <i>A resilient and empowered parliament in a post-pandemic world</i> • <i>Advancing towards universal membership in the IPU</i>
11:30	<p>Concluding remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambassador Anda Filip, Director, Division for Member Parliaments and External Relations, IPU Secretariat