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## The role of parliaments in the localization of the SDGs

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

Parliaments are essential actors in the localization of the SDGs. Yes, the 2030 Agenda is a joint enterprise in which everyone - the government, civil society, the private sector, local authorities and many others – must play a role.

However, it is parliaments who are responsible for legislation that domesticates global agendas, sets national priorities and allocates budgets. National parliaments bring global agendas to the national level, and unless they are fully engaged in the implementation of the SDGs, the SDGs will fail.

Thanks in part to the work of the IPU, parliaments are becoming aware of the SDGs and many have taken steps to institutionalize them. However, we are not currently seeing the critical mass of parliamentary initiatives and processes to put the implementation of the SDGs on a solid footing. This is brought home most vividly by the results of this year's IPU survey of parliamentary engagement in the Voluntary National Reviews. Once again, just 16 out of 47 parliaments were involved with their governments' reports to the HLPF. Among the sixteen, only ten were engaged in some significant way.

So, how can parliaments help drive the localization of the SDGs? Given the limited time in which I have to speak with you today, I will focus only on 2 ways this can be done.

Firstly, in order to properly work with the SDGs at the local level, the SDGs must be mainstreamed in the work of parliament. The IPU, in conjunction with UNDP, created a self-assessment toolkit on the SDGs to enable parliaments to assess their current level of engagement with the SDGs and set the course for action. A number of parliaments from different countries have completed the SDG self-assessment. Thanks to the self-assessment, for example, the Serbian Parliament organized a public hearing on the draft Voluntary National Report to the HLPF, thereby providing an opportunity for the Serbian Parliament and other local stakeholders to provide input.

The second way parliaments can localize the SDGs is through fulfilling their representative function. Inclusive political institutions are a requirement for the successful implementation of the SDGs. However, discrimination based on age still exists. In two-thirds of countries youth are old enough to vote, but not old enough to be elected to parliament. IPU believes that if you are old enough to vote, you are old enough to run, this is why the IPU created the “not too young to run” campaign.

The IPU also advocates increasing the number of women in parliaments. IPU data shows that since 2008 the number of women parliamentarians has grown by nearly 7%. This is heading in the right direction, however there is still much more room for

improvement. Through our research, the IPU has observed that when the representation of women in a parliament is increased, the parliament is more engaged with social issues such as domestic violence. Thus, it is important for the parliament to be representative of the population, so that more of the SDG targets are addressed and no one is left behind.

In short, parliaments' have a crucial role to play in the localization of the SDGs and the IPU's mission to engage parliaments in all relevant SDG processes continues undeterred.

Thank you.