



Inter-Parliamentary Union

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# Speech of Mr. Duarte Pacheco, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)

Delivered at the P20 Speakers' Summit

Rome, 7 – 8 October 2021

Distinguished Speakers of Parliament,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to join you today at the P20 Speakers' Summit. I would like to extend my warm thanks to the Italian Parliament for hosting this important event, and to congratulate Italy on its successful G20 presidency.

As representatives of the people, parliamentarians are ideally placed to listen and respond to citizens' concerns and aspirations by providing a conducive environment and legal framework, and by coordinating the efforts of different stakeholders. Parliaments therefore can and should make a substantive contribution to the achievement of the main G20 objectives.

Ladies and gentlemen,

With the impact of the pandemic, the challenges we face are increasing and the uncertainty surrounding our future is becoming greater than ever. COVID-19's devastating impact has shown the fragility of our socio-economic architecture, and shed light on the cruel afflictions of inequality, disparity, discrimination and poverty – in short, all the evils that we had resolved to address under the banner of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Dear colleagues,

I welcome the structuring of the P20 Summit under the four *Ps*, namely people, planet, prosperity and parliament. I am pleased to note that these topics complement and resonate well with the high-level declaration of the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, held just a few short weeks ago in Vienna, under the overall theme of *Parliamentary leadership for more effective multilateralism that delivers peace and sustainable development for the people and the planet*.

In the current dense fog of uncertainty, we need to restore hope among our populations. With renewed hope, people can regain a taste for life and dignity.

Next, we should tackle the pressing issue of inequality, especially in terms of access to treatment in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. It is common knowledge that the vaccine is concentrated in the hands of a tiny minority – this is neither just nor sustainable, and risks jeopardizing the gains we have made over these past 18 months. No one will be safe from COVID-19 until everyone is safe. We must also find new ways to cooperate in preparation for future pandemics.

We have pledged that nobody should be left behind. Let us reinforce this inclusive approach in our decision-making process and work towards the greater integration and empowerment of women, whose contribution is required for both the COVID-19 recovery and the consolidation of our socioeconomic architecture. The time is now for a new global social compact for gender equality, enabling the full and effective participation of women in all spheres of society.

As the designers of the future, our youth also deserve greater attention. Specific youth-related actions should include a plan for continuous assistance with their education, learning and professional integration. As parliamentary leaders, we should lead by example and help mobilize youth participation in public life. I encourage you all to join us in the IPU campaign *I say YES to youth in Parliament*, and pledge to take one or several transformative actions in your own parliaments.

Sluggish economic growth has translated into some of the slowest rates of trade growth in 70 years. The global economy should be guided by a set of fundamental principles, including a free and open market, fairness, non-discrimination, and a level playing field. And yet, we are witnessing a withdrawal behind national borders through protectionist and populist policies. These have no place in our interconnected and interdependent world.

The multilateral trading system, with the World Trade Organization at its core, must emerge stronger than ever. To make this happen, we must redouble our efforts, encourage imagination and innovation, and use our strong sense of responsibility to support global trade and ensure the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. A key component of the economic recovery will be the digital economy, and parliaments must take the lead in efforts to develop core digital infrastructure and enhance digital skills among their populations.

The climate crisis remains the most pressing issue of our times; it is a real existential threat to human health and security. Our recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic must be green, inclusive, innovative and sustainable. The forthcoming COP26 meetings in Glasgow will be a pivotal moment and a robust parliamentary contribution to that process will be vital to secure an ambitious outcome. We trust our parliamentary meetings in Rome and Glasgow will help build political momentum and bring about a positive outcome for robust action going forward.

In addition to significantly reducing carbon emissions, we must support the most vulnerable and marginalized populations and develop preventive strategies that mitigate climate risks and enhance resilience. The work of the Green Climate Fund is key to this, through its support of programmes, policies and other activities to help developing countries counter climate change.

Dear colleagues,

It is my belief that our discussions here in Rome will help cement our engagement in the G20 process for the well-being of our populations. As far as the IPU is concerned, we shall continue to engage and mobilize parliaments around major international global processes and commitments, with the aim of further strengthening the parliamentary dimension of global governance.

I thank you for your attention.