



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

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Geneva – Switzerland

Geneva, 20 January 2023

Dear Madam Speaker,
Dear Mr. Speaker

I am pleased to invite you and members of your Parliament working on issues related to children's rights to participate in a discussion on *The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Inter-Parliamentary Union: Working together to mobilize parliaments in support of children rights*. This meeting will be held in hybrid format on **Monday, 6 February 2023, from 13:15 to 14:45** (Geneva time).

Over the last 20 years, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) has continually provided and supported parliamentary contributions to the global effort to safeguard the rights of the child as enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In line with this longstanding engagement, the IPU and the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) committed in a joint statement to work together to enhance the contribution of parliaments to the promotion and protection of children's rights. A copy of the statement is enclosed.

The objectives of this meeting on 6 February are twofold: to launch the partnership between the two institutions, and to explore avenues for increased parliamentary impact on the promotion and protection of the rights of the child. The event will be addressed by parliamentarians, CRC members and representatives from non-governmental organizations' experts and will be followed by an interactive discussion. The access link for remote participation is contained in the enclosed provisional agenda. Participants are kindly invited to register for the event at the following link as soon as possible as this will enable the organizers to ensure the smooth conduct of the meeting:
<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUodOmoz4pHd1AnefsWUjTAX0Pd1V3c-29>.

I look forward to your Parliament's participation in the discussion.

Yours sincerely,

Martin Chungong
Secretary General



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UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS
TREATY BODIES

The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Inter-Parliamentary Union:

Working together to mobilize parliaments in support of children's rights

PROGRAMME

Monday, 6 February 2023, 13:15–14:45 CET (Geneva time)

Registration Link

<https://us06web.zoom.us/join/register/tZUodOmopz4pHd1AnefsWUiTAX0Pd1V3c-29>

13:15–13:20	Opening <i>Moderator:</i> Mr. Luis Pedernera Reyna , Member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child
13:20–13:30	Keynote speakers: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ms. Mikiko Otani, Chairperson of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child• Mr. Martin Chungong, Secretary General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union
13:30–14:15	Presentations How can the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child take better account of the role of parliaments in its own efforts to strengthen implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ms. Sophie Kiladze, Member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, Focal Point for IPU What impact are parliaments having in the promotion and protection of children's rights? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Peter Katjavivi (Namibia), Speaker of the National Assembly• Ms. Arda Gerken (Netherlands), Senator What role can other actors, including the executive and non-governmental organizations, play in the global efforts to scale up children's rights? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Páll Magnússon, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Iceland, Geneva
14:15–14:45	Q&A and discussion What are the opportunities for and challenges to stronger parliamentary engagement on children's rights and to more robust interaction with the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child?
14:45	Closing ■



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The Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Joint Statement on the Role of Parliaments in the Implementation of the Convention of the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols

1. The Committee on the Rights of the Child (Committee) underscores the importance of the role of parliaments at the national and subnational levels in the promotion and protection of the rights of the child as elaborated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Convention) and its Optional Protocols. In turn, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the global organization of national parliaments, considers that the Convention and the work of its Committee constitute essential pillars on which parliaments should base their actions to promote respect for the rights of the child and to help safeguard the interests of children around the world.

2. The purpose of this statement is to highlight the important role of parliaments in promoting a child rights-based approach in legislative processes; drawing on their constitutional powers to engage in the implementation of the Convention; promoting the participation of children in decisions affecting them; and raising awareness of the general public, including children, States parties, civil society organizations and other stakeholders on the importance, instruments and potential of parliaments in promoting and protecting children's rights.

3. The Committee and the IPU emphasize that it is at the discretion of each country to decide how to involve the different state branches and to identify the best means to implement the Convention.

4. However, the Committee and the IPU recognize the urgent need for stronger involvement of parliaments and their members in the implementation of the Convention as well as in the State party reporting process under the Convention. The Committee and the IPU intend to engage States parties to help ensure, within their legal frameworks, that parliaments can realize their full potential in promoting and protecting children's rights, and call on parliaments directly to make effective use of their constitutional prerogatives for this purpose.

5. In this regard, parliaments can establish a legal basis for the realization of children's rights. They can develop a holistic approach to the realization of children's rights through the adoption of comprehensive legislation offering protection to children's rights in all spheres. Parliaments can also play a crucial role by enacting specific legislative amendments in certain areas of children's rights.

6. The effective oversight of the implementation of legislation and policies is another powerful parliamentary instrument for ensuring the rights of the child. By monitoring the executive branch at the national and local levels, parliaments can help to increase transparency and accountability and to identify challenges which should be addressed through new legislation or policies.

7. The realization of the rights of the child depends on the allocation of appropriate resources in the State budget. The budgetary power of parliaments can have a crucial role in ensuring the sufficient, fair and rational distribution of budget resources for children.

8. Parliamentarians are able to use their platforms, including their connection to constituents and to the media, to promote and enhance children's rights; combat practices that adversely impact on or damage children's rights; and garner their constituencies' support for children's rights.

9. Parliaments can actively engage in the State party reporting process under the Convention, which can help the Committee in better identifying challenges facing the State party and exploring and supporting the contribution that parliaments can make to address them in the implementation of the Committee's recommendations. The Committee and the IPU can support parliaments to strengthen their contribution to the protection of children's rights by promoting stronger synergies and interaction between parliaments, the IPU and the Committee.

10. Taking into account the aforementioned legal and practical potential of parliaments to promote and protect children's rights, parliaments should:

- Develop holistic approaches for the implementation of children's rights;
- Create parliamentary committees that are primarily or exclusively dedicated to children's rights who also coordinate their mainstreaming throughout the work of the legislative body and support children's parliaments;
- Actively participate in the State party reporting process under the Convention, including by contributing to the implementation of the Committee's recommendations;
- Identify and take the necessary measures for ensuring the full realization of children's rights, including in the area of legislation, the ratification of the three Optional Protocols to the Convention and the withdrawal of any reservations; the utilization of a child rights-based approach in the elaboration of the State budget; the oversight of the executive branch, including by visiting facilities where children are held and supporting the overall administration of justice with regard to the judiciary; and undertaking all appropriate measures to address gaps in the realization of the rights guaranteed in the Convention;
- Enhance their interaction with the executive branch to coordinate national efforts to scale up the promotion and protection of children's rights;
- Develop tools and mechanisms to facilitate the participation of children in parliamentary work, especially in decisions directly affecting children;
- Engage with constituents, media and social networks to promote children's rights and to raise awareness of children and the general public on the Convention and on children's rights;
- Provide information in State party reports, such as through a dedicated section on the subject, on their involvement in the implementation of the Convention and the specific challenges and opportunities they have encountered.

11. International and regional inter-governmental organizations can use their platforms for the promotion and protection of child rights amongst parliamentarians.

12. The Committee and the IPU commit to working together to support the implementation of the present statement, including by offering, where possible and useful, assistance to parliaments for this purpose.

13. The IPU has the experience and the capacity to support parliaments in fulfilling their obligation as a legislative power to monitor the implementation of the Convention and its Optional Protocols and to set up a framework to facilitate their interaction with the Committee.

14. The Committee has strengthened its partnership with the IPU by designating a focal point within the Committee to facilitate its exchanges and meetings with the IPU, and to keep the Committee informed on related activities undertaken by IPU.