



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

146th IPU Assembly and related meetings

Manama, Bahrain
11 – 15 March 2023

Results of the proceedings



Inter-Parliamentary Union

For democracy. For everyone.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page(s)</u>
Meetings and other activities	
146th Assembly	
1. Inaugural ceremony	4
2. Participation	5
3. Choice of an emergency item	6
4. Debates and decisions of the Assembly and its Standing Committees	7
5. Special accountability segment	12
6. Concluding sitting of the Assembly	13
211th session of the Governing Council	
1. Election of the President of the 146th Assembly	14
2. Report of the IPU President	14
3. Report of the Secretary General	14
4. Financial situation of the IPU	15
5. Regional offices of the IPU	15
6. Cooperation with the United Nations	15
7. Questions relating to IPU Membership and observer status	16
8. Future inter-parliamentary meetings	18
9. Report on the work of the IPU Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine	18
10. Reports of committees and other bodies	18
11. IPU anthem	19
12. IPU Cremer Passy Prize	19
289th session of the Executive Committee	
1. Debates and decisions	19
2. Sub-Committee on Finance	23
Subsidiary bodies of the Governing Council	
1. Forum and Bureau of Women Parliamentarians	23
2. Forum and Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians	24
3. Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians	25
4. Committee on Middle East Questions	25
5. Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law	26
6. Group of Facilitators for Cyprus	26
7. Gender Partnership Group	26
8. Advisory Group on Health	27
9. High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG)	28
10. Working Group on Science and Technology	28

Other activities and events

1. Joint Meeting with the Chairpersons of the Geopolitical Groups and the Presidents of the Standing Committees	29
2. Panel discussion on <i>Parliamentary action on biodiversity: Translating global commitments into national action</i>	30
3. Panel discussion on climate oversight action	31
4. Workshop in preparation for the United Nations Summit of the Future	32
5. Panel discussion on parliamentary solidarity with MPs at risk	33
6. Workshop on sexual and reproductive health	33
7. The Call of the Sahel: A global response – Meeting series on countering terrorism ..	34

Elections, appointments and membership of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Elections and appointments

1. Executive Committee	35
2. Sub-Committee on Finance	35
3. Bureau of Women Parliamentarians	35
4. Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians	36
5. Committee on Middle East Questions	36
6. Group of Facilitators for Cyprus	36
7. Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law	36
8. High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG)	36
9. Working Group on Science and Technology	37
10. Bureaux of the Standing Committees	37
11. Rapporteurs	39

Media and communications	39
--------------------------------	----

Membership of the Inter-Parliamentary Union	41
---	----

Agenda, resolutions and other texts of the 146th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Agenda	42
--------------	----

Manama Declaration: <i>Promoting peaceful coexistence and inclusive societies: Fighting intolerance</i>	43
---	----

Resolutions

- *Cybercrimes: The new risks to global security*
- *Parliamentary efforts in achieving negative carbon balances of forests*

Emergency item

- Results of the roll-call vote on the requests for the inclusion of an emergency item in the agenda of the Assembly
- Resolution: *Raising awareness and calling for action on the serious humanitarian crises affecting the peoples of Afghanistan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine, Yemen and other countries, and on the particular vulnerability of women and children*

Reports of the Standing Committees

- Report of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights
- Report of the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs

Reports, decisions and other texts of the Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Reports, decisions and other texts

• Amendments to the IPU Statutes and Rules	68
• Cremer-Passy Prize Rules	69
• New modalities and methods of work for the Standing Committee on UN Affairs	71
• Minimum legal requirements for establishing an IPU regional Office	72
• Report of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians	74
• Report of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians	76
• Report of the Committee on Middle East Questions	77
• Report of the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law	78
• Report on the work of the IPU Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine	79
• Report of the High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG)	80
• Report of the Advisory Group on Health	82
• Report of the Working Group on Science and Technology	82
• Statistics of the Gender Partnership Group	83

Other documents available online

- [Decisions of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians](#)

Future meetings

• Future meetings and other activities	86
• Agenda of the 147th Assembly	90

146th Assembly

1. Inaugural ceremony

The inaugural ceremony of the 146th IPU Assembly took place at Exhibition World Bahrain, Manama, Bahrain at 19:00 on Saturday, 11 March 2023.

The national anthem of Bahrain was played.

H.E. Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa, Deputy Prime Minister of Bahrain, speaking on behalf of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, welcomed delegates and wished them a pleasant stay in Bahrain, the country of love and tolerance. The theme of the Assembly, *Promoting peaceful coexistence and inclusive societies: Fighting intolerance*, had been chosen to reflect the history of Bahrain as a meeting place of cultures living together in harmony. The rejection of division and hatred and the embrace of human solidarity would make the world safer, more stable and more prosperous, and create the right conditions for sustainable development.

The world was facing multiple crises of hatred, enmity, war, terrorism, natural disasters, climate change, and threats to water and food security. For the sake of future generations, leaders and parliamentarians needed to work in partnership towards a more just, equitable and secure world. Parliamentary diplomacy was a cornerstone of that cooperation, allowing parliamentarians to exchange experiences and work together to find more effective solutions to shared challenges. Two fundamental considerations of parliamentary diplomacy were respect for human rights, freedom and dignity, alongside respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and the principle of non-intervention.

Bahrain was a vibrant democracy, with a voter turnout of 73% in its most recent parliamentary elections, and was fully committed to human rights and the freedom of its citizens and residents. He looked forward to the Assembly reaching a consensus on the many issues on its agenda and invited delegates to spend some time discovering the reality of Bahrain, a secure, peaceful, tolerant and prosperous country.

H.E. Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa declared the 146th IPU Assembly open.

Mr. Ahmed Bin Salman Almusalam, Speaker of the Council of Representatives of Bahrain, said that parliamentary diplomacy could be used to find innovative solutions to the issues the world was facing. Bahrain had been a democracy for over 100 years and was home to people of many different beliefs, cultures and ethnicities, who were nonetheless united in support of the ideals of tolerance, peace, love and coexistence. Bahrain was also a champion of interreligious dialogue and peace. The Assembly would offer the delegates present in Manama the opportunity to highlight best practices from their own parliaments, agree on collective commitments to human values, expand their horizons and join together to raise the voices of parliaments in favour of coexistence, tolerance and peace in the best interests of all humankind.

Ms. Haya Rashed Al-Khalifa, President of the 61st session of the United Nations General Assembly, welcomed delegates to the land of tolerance, peace and diversity. Bahrain was home to many migrants and had extensive legislation to ensure protection of their freedoms. Bahrain's commitment to peace, love, coexistence and tolerance had been evidenced by the visit of Pope Francis to the country in November 2022. The world was facing many intertwined conflicts and crises. The recent earthquakes in the Syrian Arab Republic and Türkiye were mirrored by man-made "earthquakes" stemming from coups d'état and conflict and, combined, had resulted in the displacement of millions of people.

Working together, parliaments could raise the voices of the people they represent, demonstrate tolerance and peaceful coexistence, and find workable solutions to conflict. Security was the main need of humanity, and the salvation of the world lay in working towards a new culture of tolerance, hope and justice. The Assembly could be a window to that new world if delegates first acknowledged that peace was cheaper than war, and tolerance was cheaper than hatred.

In a video message, **Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations**, said that the Assembly was taking place at a time of many interconnected challenges. Hate speech, persecution, xenophobia and racism were on the rise and feeding off one another. The international community could address them only by joining forces, recognizing diversity, investing in social inclusion and confronting mis- and disinformation online. Parliamentarians could play a pivotal role by translating people's hopes for a fairer and more equitable society into actions, both nationally and internationally.

Mr. Martin Chungong, Secretary General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, invited delegates to observe a minute's silence in memory of those who had lost their lives in recent disasters and ongoing conflict. He thanked the National Assembly of Bahrain for hosting the Assembly and acknowledged the instrumental role of His Majesty the King in bringing the Assembly to fruition. He noted that the 1200 delegates from 130 Member Parliaments attending the Assembly covered the diversity of the human race in terms of culture, religion, background and political affiliation. It was particularly noteworthy that a delegation from Israel was present, which would not have been possible until very recently.

Democracy should always be considered an aspiration, not a finite product. Bahrain had shown considerable progress towards becoming a fully democratic nation, especially in terms of inclusiveness and gender equality, but more could always be done. The theme of the Assembly closely echoed the IPU's vision for a world where every voice counted, and it was the responsibility of parliamentarians to respond to the expectations of all. He believed that parliamentary diplomacy, as espoused by the founders of the IPU, would be on proud display during the Assembly and that progress would be made on the many common goals of humanity.

Mr. Duarte Pacheco, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, thanked the National Assembly of Bahrain for its gracious and capable hosting of the Assembly and the Deputy Prime Minister for his presence, which was testimony to the importance that Bahrain placed on multilateralism and parliamentary diplomacy. Recalling the country's recent hosting of the Pope and the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar for the Bahrain Dialogue Forum, he said that Bahrain was an ideal location for an Assembly devoted to peaceful coexistence and inclusive societies. Numerous indicators showed that intolerance and discrimination were on the rise, and parliamentarians had an important role to play in addressing the issue. Women in particular were facing violations of their rights in many places, but most notably in Afghanistan, where they were being excluded from society in multiple ways.

The global situation was painfully familiar from previous Assemblies. War continued to rage in Ukraine, terrorism was still affecting many places, in particular the Sahel, and the conflict in Palestine was unresolved after many decades. The climate crisis remained an existential threat to humankind and extreme climate events had killed thousands around the world in recent months. The IPU would be launching its new *Parliaments for the Planet* campaign at the present Assembly to mobilize all parliaments to introduce green laws and reduce their own carbon footprints. Democracy was still under threat, with the proliferation of disinformation and fake news on the rise. Progress was being made towards greater representation of women and youth in parliament but at a slow pace. In response, parliaments needed to be made stronger: more effective, inclusive, resilient and accountable. He hoped that delegates would use the golden opportunity of the Assembly to learn from one another, combine their strengths and find concrete solutions to the world's problems.

2. Participation

Delegations from 136 Member Parliaments took part in the work of the Assembly*

Afghanistan**, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia (The), Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar**, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland,

* For the complete list of IPU Members, see [page 41](#).

** As per the decision of the Governing Council in Madrid in November 2021, the IPU continues to engage with the former, democratically elected parliamentarians from Afghanistan and with the Committee to Represent Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH) for Myanmar. The corresponding delegations attend Assemblies in a non-voting observer capacity.

Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The parliaments of the Bahamas and Kiribati also attended the Manama Assembly in an observer capacity, with a view to future affiliation.

The following seven Associate Members also took part in the Assembly: the Arab Parliament, the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), the Interparliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States (IPA-CIS), the Latin American and Caribbean Parliament (PARLATINO), the Pan-African Parliament, the Parliament of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and the Parliamentary Assembly of La Francophonie.

Observers included representatives of:

(i) the United Nations and related organizations: United Nations, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH), Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), World Health Organization (WHO), and the International Organization for Migration (IOM);

(ii) parliamentary assemblies and associations: League of Arab States, African Parliamentary Union (APU), Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union (AIPU), ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA), Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA), Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils in Africa and the Arab World (ASSECAA), Collective Security Treaty Organization Parliamentary Assembly (CSTOPA), Forum of Parliaments of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (FPICGLR), Global Organization of Parliamentarians against Corruption (GOPAC), Maghreb Consultative Council (MCC), Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (PNND), International Parliament on Tolerance and Peace (IPTP), Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM), Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic Speaking Countries (TURKPA), Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean (PA-UfM), Parliamentary Assembly of the Union of Belarus and Russia, Parliamentary Union of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation Member States (PUIC), Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum (SADC-PF);

(iii) Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria;

(iv) Centrist Democrat International (CDI).

Of the 1,205 delegates who attended the Assembly, 683 were members of parliament (661 from Member Parliaments and 22 from Associate Member delegations). Those parliamentarians included 58 Presiding Officers, 43 Deputy Presiding Officers, 233 women MPs (34.1%) and 150 young MPs (22%).

In continuation of practices established at recent Assemblies, the 146th Assembly was an in-person event with adaptations for hybrid participation. All of the session rooms were equipped for external engagement and remote interpretation and these technical capacities were well used throughout the Assembly.

The proceedings of the Inaugural Ceremony, Forum of Women Parliamentarians, Assembly General Debate and all sittings of the Governing Council were live streamed in English and the original language, with a total of 10,000 views. See the [Media and Communications](#) section for more details.

All official side events, as well as all sittings of the Executive Committee and the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians (CHRP), allowed remote participation.

3. Choice of an emergency item

On 12 March 2023, the President informed the Assembly that the following six requests for the inclusion of an emergency item had been received:

- *The urgent need to combat violence against women in politics, particularly in light of the proliferation of hate speech, fake news and violent incidents (Argentina)*
- *Criminalizing contempt for religions and the spreading of hatred, and promoting coexistence, tolerance, peace and international security (Qatar)*

- *Raising awareness and calling for action on the serious humanitarian crises affecting the peoples of Afghanistan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine, Yemen and other countries, and on the particular vulnerability of women and children* (Argentina, Chile, Germany, Netherlands and Ukraine, with the support of the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC) and the Twelve Plus Group)
- *Combating Islamophobia, fighting intolerance, eliminating racial discrimination, and promoting peaceful coexistence among peoples and religions* (Indonesia)
- *Creation of a global fund for countries vulnerable to natural disasters to address loss and damage from climate change* (African Group)
- *Call for urgent action to stop aggression, occupation and massive human rights violations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in order to preserve its sovereignty and territorial integrity* (Democratic Republic of the Congo)

Before the presentations by the authors of the emergency item proposals, Yemen raised a point of order, requesting clarification as to whether a Member Parliament could submit more than one proposal. The IPU Secretary General explained that the Assembly Rules were silent on that specific point and thus the two proposals submitted by Argentina were both admissible.

The Russian Federation also raised a point of order and expressed its opposition against the third proposal, noting that there were many other countries in crisis which had not been mentioned in the proposal.

During its presentation, the African Group stated that there were several emergency item proposals that required the urgent attention of the international community. It requested that the IPU Statutes be amended in order to allow two emergency items instead of one to be selected at each Assembly.

In response to the presentation by the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Rwanda exercised its right to reply and rejected the DRC's statement that Rwanda was behind the M23 rebels.

Indonesia withdrew its proposal in support of Qatar's proposal. The Assembly then proceeded with a roll-call vote on the five remaining proposals (see pages [55-59](#)). The proposal of Argentina, Chile, Germany, Netherlands and Ukraine, with the support of GRULAC and the Twelve Plus Group, which received the required two-thirds majority of the vote, was adopted and added to the agenda as Item 9.

After the roll-call vote, the Assembly observed a minute's silence in honour of three MPs who had recently passed away.

4. Debates and decisions of the Assembly and its Standing Committees

- (a) General Debate: *Promoting peaceful coexistence and inclusive societies: Fighting intolerance* (Item 3)

During the three days of deliberations, some 151 parliamentarians from 116 Member Parliaments, including 42 Presiding Officers and 24 young parliamentarians, as well as representatives of three Associate Members and eight permanent observers, contributed to the General Debate. The proceedings of the Debate were webcast, and many of the good practices and recommendations that emerged were reflected in the outcome document.

Mr. A. Bin Salman Almusalam, Speaker of the Council of Representatives of Bahrain, opened the General Debate on 12 March 2023, recalling that, in his video address during the inaugural ceremony the previous day, the Secretary-General of the United Nations had called upon parliamentarians to work towards peace, stability and inclusiveness and to fight against extremism, violence and terrorism. Parliamentarians had to work together to find a vision that took account of the difficult global context, stepped up multilateral cooperation and proposed innovative solutions in the interests of sustainable development.

With up to 200 million people set to be displaced by climate change by 2025, protection of the environment was a priority in safeguarding the future of humanity. The participation of women in politics and society at large was also essential, as already reflected in the IPU's work over many years. There were many opportunities to strengthen sustainable development through reforms of legislation in favour of greater prosperity for States and their people. Human rights were a pillar of social justice and particular attention was needed for vulnerable groups, such as children and the poor. Parliaments needed to reinforce their cooperation, uniting their efforts in favour of development and peace, and paving the way for dialogue to eliminate the many threats facing the world.

Mr. D. Pacheco, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, said that, alongside the crises of war, the climate emergency and a faltering global economy, humanity was also facing a crisis of solidarity. Xenophobia, racism and other forms of bigotry were rife and social media was facilitating their spread. Regulation of social media was needed in the same way that regulation of road traffic was needed, to keep everyone safe. Parliamentarians needed to set an example by showing respect for one another both within their parliaments and on the international stage.

The IPU had a long history of promoting peaceful coexistence and tolerance, and the concepts were evident in every area of its Strategy. The theme of the General Debate was of particular relevance in a country like Bahrain, where people of many different cultures and backgrounds lived together side by side. The COVID-19 pandemic had demonstrated that the world was small: on the one hand allowing the disease to spread rapidly but on the other allowing scientists from around the globe to come together to develop vaccines. The IPU was playing its part in fighting extremism and xenophobia by bringing people from all countries, religions and cultures together to work for a better world for all.

In a video message, **Ms. N. Ghanea, United Nations Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief** said that the 1981 Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief defined many of the concepts relevant to the theme of the General Debate. The Declaration states that every individual is worthy of rights and dignity by virtue of being human, and States and other actors have a responsibility to give access to those rights.

The 2012 Rabat Plan of Action on the prohibition of advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence was another reference document for the theme. In implementing that plan, parliamentarians had a unique and critical responsibility in ensuring that such acts were prohibited and that tolerance for all members of society was advanced in the interests of coexistence, human rights and peace.

Ms. F. Ma-Ih Sulem Yong, President of Afrogiveness Movement and Positive Youths Africa (PYA), expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to share her message of tolerance with delegates at the Assembly. She believed in the divine power of forgiveness and had dedicated her life to advancing tolerance, forgiveness, empathy and human fraternity. In an era where religion, culture, ethnicity, gender and race were triggers of conflict, peaceful coexistence was more complex than it needed to be. Many parliamentarians were complicit in cultures where greed, envy and discontent were left to linger. All forms of intolerance were based on the desire to view oneself as superior to others.

Her own country, Cameroon, had seen many years of instability and conflict, with divisions sometimes along linguistic lines, between the country's anglophone and francophone communities. Such conflicts made it clear that everyone's voice mattered and that everyone must have equal access to opportunity. She had founded the Afrogiveness organization to heal and defuse tensions to avoid vicious cycles of violence. The organization believed in the cathartic power of art and had pursued various projects to that end. She believed that peace education could change the world and that parliaments should not shy away from legislation based on the values of gratitude, integrity, kindness and love. Good mental health was also an important consideration, as conflicts were always conceived in the minds of human beings. Likewise, the defence of peace could only come from human minds and peaceful coexistence was a shared responsibility.

Ms. L. Vasylenko (Ukraine), President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, said that the theme of the General Debate was important and timely, as evidenced by rampant discrimination and violence around the world, not least in her own country. Intolerance was always a losing game, often leading to violence and threatening the foundations of democracy. Gender-based violence was an all-too-common manifestation of intolerance. The cure for intolerance was inclusion and empowerment, leaving no one behind.

Political inclusion remained elusive, with the majority of MPs, ministers and leaders around the world still being male. The world urgently needed women as role models for peaceful coexistence, inclusive societies and tolerance. The strength of parliamentarians lay in collective action and it was their responsibility to promote tolerance, inclusion and equality.

Ms. S. Albazar (Egypt), President of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians, said that the young generation saw many challenges in the future but knew that all generations must work together to address them. The exclusion of any sector of society led to inequality, alienation, intolerance and mistrust, and ultimately to violence and conflict. Young people remained largely excluded from the political sphere, with less than 3% of parliamentarians worldwide under the age of 30. Young people expected greater representation and wanted to work across the generations.

Two of the pledges in the IPU's *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign were of particular relevance to the theme of the General Debate: on implementing youth quotas to ensure that young people had a seat at the decision-making table, and on channelling youth perspectives into parliamentary work. The link between inclusive politics and peace was clear. Parliaments must lead by example and be models for inclusion, including for young people.

Mr. A. Vitorino, Director General of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), said that the focus of the 146th IPU Assembly could not have been more relevant, given the rise of conflicts and social unrest that were catalysts for racism and discrimination. Parliamentarians, as elected representatives, had a responsibility to create avenues to de-escalate conflict and build pathways to steer communities away from intolerance and towards peaceful coexistence. The IOM was committed to supporting social cohesion, particularly in conflict-affected areas, with a view to building peaceful, tolerant and inclusive societies. The IOM was working towards a holistic migrant integration approach that would go beyond migrants' access to services to ensure genuinely positive contact between migrants and local communities. Parliamentarians should foster a balanced and rights-based narrative about migration and set the standards for inclusive governance.

Ms. G. Triggs, Assistant High Commissioner for Protection, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), underscored that the world was currently responding to an unprecedented movement of refugees aggravated by the social and economic impacts of COVID-19, the ripple effects of the war in Ukraine, and the devastating earthquake in Türkiye and the Syrian Arab Republic. Parliamentarians had an essential role in responding to this phenomenon. As elected representatives, they could reach out to multiple stakeholders like NGOs, the private sector, faith groups and cities to advance refugee protection. MPs should hold their governments accountable and ensure that multi-year budget allocations for inclusive and responsive refugee programmes were approved so the international community could step up efforts to support refugees and host countries.

Ms. B. Mathieson, Deputy Chair of the King Hamad Global Centre for Peaceful Coexistence, recalled Bahrain's long-standing experience with the peaceful coexistence of diverse cultures and faiths and reaffirmed the commitment of Bahrain to religious freedom, especially in the context of present threats to peace, such as terrorism, extremism and hate crimes. Peaceful coexistence was impossible without freedom of religion or belief, not just from a human rights perspective but also from an economic perspective, as research had shown a correlation between the religious freedom index and the economic prosperity of a country. The Kingdom of Bahrain Declaration, originally adopted in 2017, had made a fundamental contribution to countering threats to peace by calling for religious freedom for all, and the work of the King Hamad Centre was based on this Declaration. She concluded her statement by calling on IPU Member Parliaments to endorse and accept the Kingdom of Bahrain Declaration in the framework of their collective action to promote inclusion and peaceful coexistence, and to extinguish the flames of intolerance.

(b) Standing Committee on Peace and International Security

The Standing Committee on Peace and International Security held three sittings from 12 to 14 March 2023, with its President, Mr. M. Al-Ahbabi (Qatar), in the chair. The Committee was entrusted with the task of debating the draft resolution on the theme *Cyberattacks and cybercrimes: The new risks to global security*. The draft resolution and an accompanying explanatory memorandum had been prepared by the two co-Rapporteurs, Mr. J. Cepeda (Spain) and Ms. S. Falaknaz (United Arab Emirates).

Following introductory remarks from Ms. B. Brenner, head of the Office of the Permanent Observer of the IPU to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Vienna, on the status of the UN negotiations on a comprehensive cybercrime convention, and the presentation of the draft resolution by the two co-Rapporteurs, 36 speakers took the floor to express their thoughts on the subject matter. During the drafting process, the Committee considered 320 amendments tabled by 27 Member Parliaments and the Forum of Women Parliamentarians. One quarter of the proposed amendments and sub-amendments were taken on board. This included an amendment that proposed to change the title of the resolution to *Cybercrimes: The new risks to global security*, as the issue of cyberattacks had been removed from the final text.

The Bureau of the Committee held a meeting on 13 March 2023, at which it agreed to continue consultations to establish a full programme of work for the 147th Assembly.

At the Committee's last sitting, on 14 March 2023, the consolidated draft resolution was adopted by consensus. The Committee decided that its President would present the draft resolution to the Assembly. The draft resolution was adopted by consensus at the plenary sitting of the Assembly in the afternoon of

15 March 2023. The delegation of the Russian Federation expressed reservations on preambular paragraph 11 and on operative paragraph 1, both of which relate to the Budapest Convention. The delegation of India expressed reservations on operative paragraph 25, which foresees the establishment of an IPU working group on cybercrimes.

The Committee approved the subject item entitled *Addressing the social and humanitarian impact of autonomous weapon systems and artificial intelligence*, presented by the delegations of Argentina and Belgium. The Committee endorsed the nomination of Ms. M. Stolbizer (Argentina) and Mr. C. Lacroix (Belgium) as the co-Rapporteurs for the next resolution.

The Committee elected new representatives of geopolitical groups to its Bureau, as well as endorsing the re-election of several existing members for a second two-year mandate.

(c) Standing Committee on Sustainable Development

The Standing Committee on Sustainable Development held its sittings on 12, 13 and 14 March 2023 with its President, Ms. A. Mulder (Netherlands), in the chair. The Committee was entrusted with the task of debating the draft resolution on the theme *Parliamentary efforts in achieving negative carbon balances of forests*. The draft resolution and an accompanying explanatory memorandum had been prepared by the two co-Rapporteurs, Mr. C. Hoffman (Germany) and Ms. H. Vijakumar Gaviti (India).

The presentation of the draft resolution was followed by a debate. The Committee considered 150 amendments submitted by 23 Member Parliaments. The consolidated draft resolution was adopted by acclamation. The Russian Federation expressed a reservation on one paragraph. India expressed reservations on 13 paragraphs.

At its final sitting and at the proposal of its Bureau, the Committee adopted its next subject item entitled *Partnerships for climate action: Promoting access to affordable green energy, and ensuring innovation, responsibility and equity*. The Committee approved the nomination of Mr. S. Patra (India), Ms. L. Vasylenko (Ukraine) and Ms. M. Al Suwaidi (United Arab Emirates) as co-Rapporteurs.

The Committee also approved a work plan for the next Assembly to be held in Angola. The work plan includes a debate on the theme of the next resolution, an expert hearing on food security, and a segment to discuss preparations for the Parliamentary Meeting at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in the United Arab Emirates (COP28).

The Committee held elections for vacant seats on the Bureau and endorsed the nominations received from the geopolitical groups.

(d) Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights

The Committee held two sittings.

At its first sitting, held on 13 March 2023 with Bureau member Ms. J. Mahmood (Maldives) in the chair, the Committee held a debate on the theme of its next resolution, *Orphanage trafficking: The role of parliamentarians in reducing harm*. The Committee approved the nomination of Ms. A. Reynolds (Australia) and Mr. E. Bustamante (Peru) as co-Rapporteurs. The debate on this new form of child trafficking and modern slavery included contributions from experts and input from more than 30 delegates.

At its second sitting, held on 14 March 2023 with the President of the Committee, Mr. A. Gajadien (Suriname), in the chair, the Committee held a debate on the theme *Parliamentary impetus in favour of the fight against disinformation and hateful and discriminatory content in cyberspace*. The debate opened with an overview of the issues from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) followed by an expert hearing, with numerous interventions from delegates throughout the session. Delegates underscored the need to protect the amazing opportunities offered by the internet, while also creating the means to prosecute perpetrators of online harms in accordance with international human rights standards.

For further information about the two debates, see [page 63](#).

The Committee held elections to fill a number of vacant positions on the Bureau. It also approved a recommendation by the Bureau to contribute to the IPU Strategy by focusing its efforts, during the Strategy period, on three areas that reflect current democracy and human rights concerns:

1. Improvements to the functioning of parliaments
2. Democracy and human rights in the digital era
3. A more inclusive, fairer world

IPU Member Parliaments will be encouraged to put forward subjects for resolutions or debates in the Committee that fall within one of these three areas.

(e) Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs

The Committee met on 14 March 2023, with its acting President, Mr. L. Wehrli (Switzerland), in the chair and unanimously adopted a new mandate and new working methods (see [page 65](#)).

The Committee also embarked on its first campaign, an initiative to advance gender equality in the UN General Assembly. Members reviewed data on the current number of male and female Permanent Representatives, addressed national appointment processes, and considered how they might advance the discussion in their own parliaments. Gender equality in the UN General Assembly will be a recurring item on the Committee's agenda. A virtual meeting of interested parliamentarians will be convened before the next IPU Assembly.

The Committee discussed parliamentary engagement in the Voluntary National Review (VNR) process of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. The findings of the IPU survey on this topic were presented, covering the results from the 42 countries that volunteered reports in 2022. Committee members expressed general concern about the weakness of parliamentary engagement in the VNR process and about very low participation in the survey by IPU Member Parliaments.

The acting President urged parliaments whose governments will submit reports in 2023 to complete the IPU survey thoroughly and before the deadline, and called on parliamentarians to ensure oversight of their governments' reports to the UN.

(f) Debate on the emergency item

Raising awareness and calling for action on the serious humanitarian crises affecting the peoples of Afghanistan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine, Yemen and other countries, and on the particular vulnerability of women and children

The debate on the emergency item was held in the morning of 13 March 2023, with Ms. N.N. Mapisa-Nqakula, Speaker of the National Assembly of South Africa, in the Chair.

In all, 13 delegations took the floor during the debate, namely Syrian Arab Republic, Armenia, Portugal, Peru, Ukraine, New Zealand, Russian Federation, Poland, Netherlands, France, South Africa, the World Health Organization (WHO) and Chile (one of the authors of the proposal).

While the draft resolution referred to the humanitarian crises in various countries, many delegates focused on the war in Ukraine. Two delegates referred to the situation of Nagorno-Karabakh. Another emphasized that the draft resolution was intended to have a larger scope and added that the IPU, which had already extensively discussed the war in Ukraine at the 144th and 145th Assemblies, should not focus solely on the situation in Ukraine, since other wars and conflicts currently in progress were also important. Another delegate underscored the importance of teaching human rights and humanitarian issues at school.

One delegate, referring to the situation of many refugees who had been forced to leave their home countries, reminded participants that they should not be indifferent to refugee issues since they could all easily find themselves in a similar situation.

Chile, one of the authors of the proposal, recapped the discussion, saying that all delegates wanted peace and urging his fellow parliamentarians to send a clear signal to the world through the emergency item resolution.

The Assembly referred the emergency item to a drafting committee made up of representatives of Belarus, Canada, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Mexico, Netherlands, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Senegal and Seychelles.

(g) Adoption of the resolution on the emergency item

In the afternoon of 14 March 2023, the Assembly adopted the resolution in plenary by consensus (see [page 60](#)).

After the adoption of the resolution, the delegation of Yemen expressed a reservation on the entire resolution. It stated that the resolution excluded Palestine, which had a huge number of refugees. The Secretary General clarified that the resolution referred to Palestine in preambular paragraph 27.

The delegation from India abstained from supporting the resolution in its entirety.

The delegations from Chad and Mali requested that their countries also be mentioned in the final resolution. The delegation from Niger requested that Niger itself, as well as all countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, also be added to the resolution.

The IPU Secretary General clarified that preambular paragraph 27 already mentioned Mali and suggested that Chad and Niger be added to that paragraph¹. He also clarified that the list of countries mentioned in the resolution was not exhaustive: the drafting committee had in fact used the expression "not limited to" in the same paragraph so as to make the list open-ended.

5. Special accountability segment

For the third consecutive Assembly, the General Debate included a special accountability segment, chaired by the IPU President. On this occasion, delegations were invited to contribute with interventions on their actions to advance the IPU's climate-related declarations, resolutions and outcome documents, in line with the IPU's strategic focus on climate change and accountability at all levels, as well as the launch of the *Parliaments for the Planet* campaign.

In this context, the IPU President emphasized that an important objective of the Organization was to nurture a culture of mutual accountability on all levels: within Member Parliaments, between Member Parliaments and their constituents, and between Member Parliaments at the international level. He reminded delegates that each year a selected number of parliaments from all geopolitical groups was scheduled to report on parliamentary follow-up to IPU resolutions and decisions and encouraged the Members scheduled for the 2023 exercise to do so.

A total of 22 delegations took the floor to report on their good practices and the activities they had undertaken in follow-up to recent climate-relevant IPU decisions, including the Nusa Dua Declaration *Getting to zero: Mobilizing parliaments to act on climate change* (144th IPU Assembly), the resolution *Addressing climate change* (141st IPU Assembly), and the outcome documents of the parliamentary meetings on the occasion of COP26 (November 2021) and COP27 (November 2022). Six delegations shared climate-relevant multimedia content that was screened during the segment.

Delegates from Belgium, Portugal and Ukraine prompted all Member Parliaments to follow up on the IPU resolutions *Condemnation of the invasion of Ukraine and of the subsequent annexation of territories, in defence of the territorial integrity of all States* (145th IPU Assembly), and *Peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine, respecting international law, the Charter of the United Nations and territorial integrity* (144th IPU Assembly).

Concrete examples of parliamentary action on climate change included:

- Algeria: Following the Nusa Dua Declaration, the Algerian Parliament established a committee to promote national action to protect the environment and combat climate change.
- Canada: Parliament enacted the Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act, which sets the national greenhouse gas emissions target for 2050 to net-zero emissions. Canada is aiming to reduce its emissions by 40 to 45% from 2005 levels by 2030, in line with the Paris Agreement.
- Fiji: The Fijian Parliament passed the Climate Change Act in 2021 to institutionalize Fiji's obligations under the Paris Agreement. Moreover, it is in the process of strengthening the mandates and oversight functions of its committees, which will, for example, allow the Committee on Natural Resources to undertake inquiries on issues like the illegal destruction of coastal mangroves.
- Finland: The new Climate Change Act was enacted by Parliament and entered into force in 2022. It aims to achieve carbon neutrality by 2035, the most ambitious target in the world.
- Pakistan: Parliament now meets all its energy requirements through solar panels. Moreover, it has established parliamentary task forces that operate in national and provincial assemblies, closely overseeing progress on renewable energy targets and the SDGs.
- Suriname: Parliament established a committee on climate change and the environment, which has conducted various activities. These include capacity-building programmes and workshops on nationally determined contributions, inter-parliamentary meetings on climate change and disaster risk reduction, and partnerships with local environmental NGOs.

¹ Chad and Niger were added to preambular paragraph 27 in the final text of the resolution.

- Ukraine: Despite the war, the Ukrainian Parliament has established a sub-committee on climate change. It has also endeavoured to become greener by going paperless.
- United Arab Emirates: The UAE is seeking to reach carbon neutrality by 2050. The Federal National Council has enacted several laws to find the appropriate balance between economic growth and environmental responsibility. The UAE has invested over US\$140 billion in renewable energy projects in various countries.
- Uruguay: Multiple laws to address climate change have been enacted by Parliament. These include the Forest Act, which seeks to maintain 100% of the current area of native woodland; the Law on Integrated Waste Management, which promotes the circular economy; and the National Energy Policy, which has decarbonized the electricity grid, with 98% of Uruguayan electricity coming from renewable sources.

Other delegations that took the floor during this segment were from: Australia, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Cabo Verde, India, Madagascar, Mexico, Portugal, Seychelles, Thailand and Zambia.

In closing, the IPU President thanked the delegates who had participated in this segment and encouraged all Members to actively engage in the upcoming reporting exercise. A similar accountability segment will be convened in the context of the 147th Assembly.

6. Concluding sitting of the Assembly

At the concluding sitting on 15 March 2023, **Ms. H. Ramzy Fayeze (Bahrain)** and **Mr. M. Bouva (Suriname)** introduced the Manama Declaration on *Promoting peaceful coexistence and inclusive societies: Fighting intolerance* (see [page 43](#)). The Assembly unanimously endorsed the Manama Declaration.

Mr. M.B.M. Al-Ahbabi (Qatar), co-Rapporteur of the resolution of the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security, presented the resolution *Cybercrimes: The new risks to global security* (see [page 44](#)). The Assembly adopted the resolution by consensus with reservations expressed by India on one paragraph and by the Russian Federation on two paragraphs.

Ms. A. Mulder (Netherlands), co-Rapporteur of the resolution of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, presented the resolution *Parliamentary efforts in achieving negative carbon balances of forests* (see [page 48](#)). The Assembly adopted the resolution by consensus with reservations expressed by India on 13 paragraphs and by the Russian Federation on one paragraph.

The Assembly took note of the reports of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights, presented by its President, **Mr. A. Gajadien (Suriname)**, and of the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs presented by its acting President, **Mr. L. Wehrli (Switzerland)** (see [pages 63-65](#)). The delegation of Iraq took the floor to highlight the call it had made during a sitting of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights for increased protection of Muslims around the world.

The Assembly approved the subject items for the resolutions to be drafted by the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security and the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, for adoption at the 148th IPU Assembly, together with the rapporteurs that would be working on the draft resolutions (see [page 39](#)).

A short promotional video on the 147th IPU Assembly, to be held from 23 to 27 October 2023 in Luanda, Angola, was shown.

At the conclusion of the Assembly, the representatives of the geopolitical groups took the floor: **Ms. T. Ackson (United Republic of Tanzania)** on behalf of the African Group, **Mr. A.R. Al-Salihi (Iraq)** on behalf of the Arab Group, **Mr. M. Dick (Australia)** on behalf of the Asia-Pacific Group, **Mr. Y. Bolgert (Kazakhstan)** on behalf of the Eurasia Group, **Mr. B. Llano (Paraguay)** on behalf of the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean, and **Mr. A. Gryffroy (Belgium)** on behalf of the Twelve Plus Group. They conveyed their thanks to the King of Bahrain and the Speakers of the Shura Council and of the Council of Representatives for hosting the Assembly, as well as to the IPU President, Secretary General and Secretariat, and to all those who had contributed to the organization of Assembly, which had been held in a comfortable and warm atmosphere, conducive to producing successful outcomes. They urged delegates to convey those outcomes, all of which covered important and timely subjects, to their parliaments and to begin work to implement the recommendations therein. They wished delegates safe travel home and looked forward to meeting again in Angola in October 2023.

The African Group made two proposals for amendments to the Statutes, namely the introduction of an earlier deadline for the submission of emergency item proposals to allow the geopolitical groups further time for consultation, and of the possibility for each Assembly to adopt two emergency item resolutions if Members so decided. The Asia-Pacific Group emphasized its intended engagement with non-Member Parliaments in the region in the interests of reaching universal membership of the IPU. The Twelve Plus Group lamented the revocation of visas by the Bahrain authorities for two representatives of the IPU permanent observer Human Rights Watch, who had been due to attend the Assembly, and encouraged the IPU President to respond accordingly.

In his concluding remarks, the **IPU President** congratulated the Parliament of Bahrain on the warm reception it had given to delegates. The Assembly had been intense, with many highlights: the adoption of the Manama Declaration, good progress on establishing regional offices, the adoption of an IPU anthem, and the election of a new leadership for the IPU's women and youth bodies. Regarding the proposals from the African Group regarding potential changes to the Statutes, he announced that a process would be put in place to allow submission of potential amendments by Member Parliaments for consideration at the 147th Assembly and potential adoption soon thereafter.

He hoped that delegates had been able to witness first-hand the progress that Bahrain had made in recent years in the areas of democracy, tolerance, economic development and human rights. In reference to the many recent disasters and ongoing crises that the world was facing, he encouraged parliaments to follow three tenets in their work: to lead by example, creating healthy, tolerant and respectful democracies, to ensure that parliaments were inclusive and fully representative of all of society, and to create laws that would uphold the rights and dignity of all. He hoped that the spirit of the Manama Assembly would endure and that Member Parliaments would report on the many successes stemming from its outcomes in Angola in October 2023.

In his concluding remarks, **Mr. A.B.S. Almusalam, President of the 146th Assembly and Speaker of the Council of Representatives of Bahrain**, expressed his thanks to the Speakers and members of parliament in attendance for their effective contributions to and active participation in the Assembly and its related meetings. Many of the statements had shown delegates' determination to take parliamentary action to foster peaceful coexistence and dialogue. In the inaugural ceremony, His Majesty the King had urged delegates to work towards a new world economic and political order that would be more equitable and free of hate. The multilateral cooperation of IPU Member Parliaments would be vital in achieving this. The common future of humanity depended on joint action to shape a better future for all.

Noting that Bahrain had been honoured to host the Assembly, he thanked the organizing committee, the IPU Secretariat and the local staff. He further thanked delegates for their participation, looked forward to seeing them again at the 147th Assembly in Luanda and declared the 146th IPU Assembly closed.

211th session of the Governing Council

1. Election of the President of the 146th Assembly

At its first sitting on 12 March 2023, the Governing Council proposed that Mr. A.B.S. Almusalam, Speaker of the Council of Representatives of Bahrain, be elected President of the 146th IPU Assembly.

2. Report of the IPU President

The Governing Council took note of the report of the IPU President on his activities since the 145th Assembly in Kigali and expressed its gratitude for his initiatives, notably in favour of the promotion of the Sustainable Development Goals and in promoting a parliamentary contribution to the resolution of the war in Ukraine.

3. Report of the Secretary General

The Governing Council took note of the [IPU's Impact Report for 2022](#) presented by the IPU Secretary General. The report provides information on the activities carried out by the IPU in 2022 to implement the IPU Strategy and on their impact. The report includes case studies presenting evidence of change implemented by parliaments with IPU support across the four policy goals identified by the Organization. All in all, in 2022, the IPU had organized 69 national support activities to build capacity in 16 countries, held 73 regional and global events to mobilize and leverage parliamentary action and facilitate learning, and released 26 publications and tools in 11 languages.

4. Financial situation of the IPU

The Governing Council received a report on the financial situation of the IPU as at 31 January 2023 with an updated list of unpaid assessed contributions.

The President informed the Governing Council that due to the unusually early date of this first Assembly of 2023, the external audit process was still under way and could not be completed in time for audited financial statements to be presented to the Governing Council at its current session. The Executive Committee had therefore proposed that approval of the 2022 financial statements and of the Secretary General's financial administration be deferred until the second Assembly of 2023.

Reporting on behalf of the Executive Committee, the Chair of the Sub-Committee on Finance, Ms. J. Alm Ericson (Sweden), noted that the current financial situation of the IPU was healthy and stable and was monitored by the Sub-Committee on Finance during its regular meetings. While global investment markets had had a negative year in 2022, the IPU's investment strategy remained prudent and was providing positive returns for the Organization over the long term. The follow-up of arrears of Members' contributions was one area that needed careful focus and attention. The Executive Committee was grateful that most IPU Members were paying their contributions in full and on time, and that 2023 payments were continuing to arrive at a steady pace. However, the list of Members with arrears remained too long. Ms. Alm Ericson encouraged all Executive Committee members to supplement the constant efforts made by the Secretary General to follow up with those parliaments in arrears by working with the Members in question through their geopolitical groups. She also encouraged new members of IPU committees to help with the mobilization of voluntary funds for activities related to the mandate of their committees, to the best of their abilities.

The Secretary General supplemented the reports with additional details of the financial situation to date and the mobilization of voluntary funds towards implementation of the IPU Strategy. Voluntary funding remained at about one quarter of total revenue, providing a strong and important base for expanding the IPU's programmes while avoiding the risk of over-dependence on external support.

5. Regional offices of the IPU

The Secretary General gave an account of the progress made on the negotiations regarding the establishment of regional offices in Uruguay and Egypt. Exchanges of draft host agreements had taken place between the IPU Secretariat and the Host Governments. These would constitute the first step and once signed would be followed by operational agreements between the IPU Secretariat and the Host Parliaments.

The President of the African Group expressed concern that the African Group had not been consulted about the opening of a regional office in Egypt. This concern stemmed from the fact that the Egyptian Parliament was a member of both the Arab and African Groups and that Egypt was situated on the African continent. A delegate of Zimbabwe explained that while the office would serve the Arab Group, it would also be able to serve the African Group. A delegate of South Africa reminded the Council that the regional offices were only at the stage of pilot projects and that the omission of consultation with the African Group should be corrected. At the final sitting of the Governing Council, the President of the African Group reported that an agreement had been reached with the Parliament of Egypt clarifying that the regional office in Egypt would represent both the African Group and the Arab Group on an equal footing. This was confirmed by the Speaker of the Parliament of Egypt. The Governing Council gave the Secretary General the authority to proceed with further consultations and to conclude the relevant agreements when he was able to ascertain that all the requirements adopted at the Kigali Assembly (see [page 72](#)) had been met.

6. Cooperation with the United Nations

When the Governing Council adopted the work plan for the IPU's political project at the United Nations during the Kigali Assembly, it gave the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs some time to consult and report back on its mandate and working methods. Following discussions in Kigali and during a virtual meeting in January 2023, the Bureau of the Standing Committee agreed on a new mandate and new working methods. These were presented at and adopted by the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs during its session on 14 March 2023 and, on the Executive Committee's recommendation, subsequently approved by the Governing Council (see [page 71](#)).

7. Questions relating to IPU Membership and observer status

On the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the Governing Council approved the request of the Parliament of Liberia to rejoin the IPU. The Governing Council wished the Parliament of Liberia a warm welcome back, and encouraged it to fulfil the obligations that came with membership of the IPU.

The Governing Council also approved the amendments to the *Practical modalities of the rights and responsibilities of observers at IPU meetings*, aimed at aligning the conditions of this status with the growing number of requests received (see [page 68](#)).

The Governing Council endorsed the recommendation of the Executive Committee not to accept the request for observer status from the League of Parliamentarians for Al Quds and took note that the Executive Committee had upheld its decision of October 2022 not to accept the request of the Association of Secretaries General of Arab Parliaments for observer status.

The Governing Council was apprised of the situation of certain parliaments and adopted a number of recommendations from the Executive Committee. These were divided into the following three categories: (1) non-functioning parliaments; (2) transitional parliaments; and (3) political instability with the potential to impact the functioning of parliament.

The first category included **Afghanistan**, where the Governing Council noted that the situation had worsened since its last sitting. Many parliamentarians who had fled the country following the takeover by the Taliban were still in exile. The Governing Council noted with grave concern the deteriorating human rights situation and the denial of education to women in the country. The Governing Council made a strong appeal for urgent action, including by parliaments, to remedy the situation by keeping channels of dialogue open. In the meantime, the Governing Council decided to maintain its previous decision on the status of Afghanistan within the IPU, i.e. to allow members of the dissolved Parliament to participate in IPU Assemblies in a non-voting observer capacity.

In **Haiti**, the Governing Council learned that the mandate of the Senate, the only remnant of the Parliament of Haiti, had expired in January 2023. In the absence of elections to the House of Representatives, the country stood critically deprived of parliamentary representation. The Governing Council took note of the situation and, upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee, urged the authorities of Haiti to organize elections later in 2023 as foreseen.

No change had occurred to the situation of the parliamentarians of **Myanmar**, who had not been able to meet in person since the military coup. Several of them had been sentenced to death and executed. Most were still in exile and had constituted themselves as the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH), which held remote sittings. The Governing Council decided to maintain its previous decision and, in solidarity with those elected parliamentarians, to allow members of the CRPH to participate in IPU Assemblies in a non-voting observer capacity. The Governing Council also renewed its strong call to stop the ethnic cleansing of the Rohingyas and encouraged the strengthening of global efforts, including by parliamentarians, in support of that call.

The Governing Council was apprised of the status quo in **Sudan**, which had been suspended from the IPU since 2019 following the military coups that had resulted in suspension of the Parliament. The Governing Council expressed its concern as the elections promised had not taken place. The Governing Council decided to maintain the suspension of the Parliament of Sudan until such time as elections had taken place and a fully fledged Parliament could be welcomed back to the IPU.

Burkina Faso was first in the second category. The Governing Council was pleased to learn about the efforts made by the IPU to engage with the authorities of Burkina Faso in view of a return to constitutional order. Upon the invitation of the IPU Secretary General, a delegation led by the Speaker of the Transitional Legislative Assembly (TLA) had visited the IPU Headquarters in Geneva on 9 February 2023. During that visit, the Secretariat of the IPU and the TLA had agreed to work together closely to support the TLA in the execution of its mandate, by setting out a road map for implementing the recommendations of the IPU governing bodies. In addition, the TLA delegation had met with the Executive Committee on the occasion of the 146th IPU Assembly in Manama. The delegation had used that opportunity to express gratitude to the IPU governing bodies for keeping open channels of dialogue and cooperation during the difficult times the country was facing. The delegation had given assurances to the Executive Committee that it would comply with the recommendations of the IPU governing bodies and respect the timeframe for a return to normality by July 2024. In light of this commitment, the Governing Council endorsed the recommendation of the Executive Committee to maintain the membership of Burkina Faso and to urge the authorities to scale up efforts to implement the road map, with a view to its completion by July 2024.

The Governing Council was informed that, in **Chad**, the consultations undertaken by the Transitional National Council (CNT) with various stakeholders to draft a new constitution were still underway. New elections were to be held by October 2024. The Governing Council also heard an update on the technical assistance that the IPU was providing to the staff of the CNT as per the Governing Council's recommendations to support this transitional body. The Governing Council took note of this development and, upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee, agreed to maintain the previous position of the IPU governing bodies, expressing the strong wish that the process in place should be accelerated with a view to organizing elections as planned.

For **Guinea**, the Governing Council was informed that the transitional period established by the military authorities had been reduced to 24 months starting from January 2023. Since the beginning of the crisis, the IPU governing bodies had decided to maintain the membership of Guinea and to provide support to the transitional legislative body of the country to work towards a return to constitutional order. The IPU Secretary General had been engaged in discussions with the body and the Speaker was very keen to move ahead with this undertaking. A delegation was planning to come to Geneva to explore avenues to implement the initial recommendations of the governing bodies. In the meantime, the Governing Council endorsed the recommendation of the Executive Committee to maintain its previous position, i.e. to maintain the membership of Guinea and to continue to engage with the transitional legislative body with a view to speedy recovery and a return to constitutional order.

Regarding **Mali**, the Transitional National Council (CNT) was functioning as a legislative body and had adopted an electoral law that was promulgated in June 2022. However, the constitutional referendum foreseen for March 2023 had been postponed. Nonetheless, parliamentary elections were due to take place in October and November 2023 so it was hoped that by the end of 2023 a parliament would have been established in Mali. The Governing Council took note of this development and endorsed the recommendation of the Executive Committee to urge the Secretary General to continue engaging with the CNT, including through the provision of technical assistance.

Concerning **Libya**, the Governing Council learned with regret that there was still a multiplicity of governance institutions in the country, as well as a continuing reluctance to actually organize elections as foreseen by the political authorities. The Governing Council was informed that the Secretariat of the IPU was continuing to monitor the situation closely and took note that the parliament recognized by the IPU, based in Tobruk, had now moved to Benghazi. The Governing Council endorsed the recommendation of the Executive Committee to urge the Libyan authorities to organize elections as soon as possible and resolved to review the situation at the 147th IPU Assembly. The Governing Council also took note of the request of the Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives for increased assistance from the IPU.

In **South Sudan**, disagreements between the different political parties had been resolved and the opposition, which had boycotted the proceedings of the Transitional National Legislative Assembly (TNLA), had resumed their participation in the work of that Assembly. A constitutional drafting process was in place and was due to conclude in February 2024. Discussion on the support the IPU could bring to the TNLA was under way. The Governing Council took note of these positive developments and encouraged the authorities to continue to work along those lines with a view to bringing about a return to normality in the country.

In the third category, **Guinea-Bissau** had experienced a long crisis worsened by a recurrent conflict between the executive and legislative branches. Elections had been due to take place following the dissolution of the Parliament in May 2022, but had not yet materialized. The Governing Council took note of the situation and expressed the strong wish that elections be scheduled to take place soon so that it could welcome a new fully fledged Parliament to the IPU.

In **Palestine**, elections had been due to take place in 2022 but had not gone ahead because of several obstacles raised by a variety of stakeholders in the region. No new dates had been set for those elections. The Governing Council took note of the situation and, as in the past, called for elections to take place as soon as possible. The Governing Council also took note of the information shared by the Deputy Speaker of the Palestinian National Council (PNC) related to the contingencies for the organization of those elections. The Governing Council reiterated its call for both Israel and Palestine to engage in a strengthened dialogue to find appropriate solutions.

Concerning **Tunisia**, following the adoption of a new Constitution in July 2022, elections took place in December 2022 and January 2023, albeit with low turnout. On the recommendation of the governing bodies of the IPU, the Secretary General had engaged with the Tunisian authorities, including the Head of State, the Ambassador in Geneva and, most recently in a conversation in Geneva, with the Tunisian Minister of Foreign Affairs. Those stakeholders had confirmed that they welcomed the IPU's

support with a view to bringing about more stability in the country and more stringent parliamentary efforts to help the governance process in Tunisia. Taking note of those developments, the Governing Council asked the Secretariat to engage with the newly elected Parliament.

The Governing Council was apprised of the recent developments in the **Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela**, including agreements between the Maduro regime and the opposition. In recent municipal elections, the opposition had won several seats including in Maduro strongholds. Recently, a delegation of the National Assembly elected in 2020 had visited the IPU Headquarters and briefed the Secretary General on the current political developments, giving assurances that things were moving in the right direction. The Governing Council endorsed the dialogue and expressed its wish that the IPU continue to engage with both the National Assembly elected in 2015 and that elected in 2020, and that it accept a delegation from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela as observers to IPU Assemblies only if composed of members of both those Assemblies. The Governing Council also wished to express the IPU's availability to engage in dialogue with all parties to support progress towards open and transparent elections.

The last country of this third category was **Yemen**, where there were no developments to report. The Governing Council urged the international community to step up its efforts to resolve the ongoing crisis in Yemen.

8. Future inter-parliamentary meetings

The Governing Council approved the list of future meetings and other activities to be funded by the IPU's regular budget and by external sources (see [page 86](#)). It was confirmed that the 147th Assembly would take place in October 2023 in Luanda, Angola and the 148th Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland in March 2024.

9. Report on the work of the IPU Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine

On 13 March 2023, the IPU Task Force met for an eighth time. Task Force members acknowledged that the situation on the ground and current geopolitics did not provide the necessary circumstances for a ceasefire to be implemented, nor for both parties to be brought to the same table. However, the Task Force restated its commitment to pursue spaces of dialogue in a bilateral manner, to meet more often, and to identify with both delegations possible ways to ease the humanitarian consequences of the war (see [page 79](#)).

The Task Force proposed to engage both the Ukrainian and Russian delegations on the following points, identified as elements in which a level of convergence could be achieved: nuclear safety, i.e. refraining from military attacks in the proximity of nuclear power plants; food security, i.e. enhancing the current grain deal facilitated by the United Nations and Türkiye; protection of environmentally vulnerable sites; and access to and exchange of prisoners of war.

Attending the meeting in separate hearings, the delegations from both Ukraine and the Russian Federation welcomed the work of the Task Force. They reiterated its importance, noting that the IPU was one of the last forums in which both parliaments were still present. They also noted that the unique strengths of the IPU included good and long-standing relations with both delegations, access to influential decision-makers, and a strong network of partnerships within the global parliamentary community.

The two delegations accepted the Task Force's proposal to focus on specific points where small steps forward could be made, and expressed their interest in receiving a more detailed proposal from the Task Force. They agreed to examine such a document and to respond to the Task Force with their views.

10. Reports of committees and other bodies

The Governing Council approved the recommendations contained in the reports on the activities of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians, the Forum of Young Parliamentarians, the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians, the Committee on Middle East Questions, the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law, the Group of Facilitators on Cyprus, the Gender Partnership Group, the Advisory Group on Health, the High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG), and the Working Group on Science and Technology. The Council endorsed the new appointments to those bodies (see [page 35](#)).

The Governing Council adopted decisions concerning 193 parliamentarians in 10 countries submitted by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians (CHRP).

11. IPU Anthem

The Governing Council approved the proposal of the Executive Committee to adopt the piece written by Mr. Pedro Halffter as the IPU Anthem.

The Secretariat will commission a professional chamber orchestra to record the official version of the Anthem, which will then be played at the beginning of each IPU Assembly, starting with the 147th Assembly in Luanda, Angola.

12. IPU Cremer-Passy Prize

Based on lessons learned from the first edition of the Prize and on the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the Governing Council approved a series of amendments to the prize Rules (see [page 69](#)).

The changes included integrating an evaluation matrix into the Rules, implementing a more equitable system for the distribution of the Prize Selection Board's votes, and tasking the geopolitical groups with selecting a single candidate from their regions, with a second candidate as an alternate.

In line with the IPU's 2022–2026 Strategy and its focus on climate action, as well as the launch of the new IPU campaign [Parliaments for the Planet](#) during the Assembly, the Governing Council also approved the proposal by the Executive Committee to award the 2023 prize to an MP or a group of MPs who had made an outstanding contribution to climate action.

289th session of the Executive Committee

1. Debates and decisions

The Executive Committee held its 289th session across five sittings: the first online on 5 December 2022, and the remaining four in-person in Manama, Bahrain on 9, 10 and 14 March 2023.

The President of the IPU chaired the meetings and the following members took part in at least one sitting:

Mr. A. Kharchi (Algeria), Mr. J.M. Insulza/Ms. C. Mix (representing Mr. I. Flores, Chile), Mr. F. Marchand (France), Ms. O. Kefalogianni (Greece), Ms. A. Sarangi (India), Ms. A.D. Mergane Kanouté (Senegal), Mr. J.I. Echániz (Spain), Ms. J. Alm Ericson (Sweden), Ms. P. Krairiksh (Thailand), Ms. E. Anyakun (Uganda), Mr. A.R. Al Nuaimi (United Arab Emirates), Ms. B. Argimón (Uruguay)², Mr. A. Saidov (Uzbekistan), Mr. J.F.N. Mudenda (Zimbabwe), Ms. S. Albazar (President of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians), and Ms. L. Vasylenko (President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians)³

The Secretary General attended all sittings, assisted by staff members of the Secretariat.

Activities report by the President

The President presented his activities over the last six months since the 145th Assembly in Kigali. His activities had been aimed at reinforcing the visibility of the IPU, supporting the implementation of the IPU Strategy and strengthening good governance. In view of achieving those objectives, the President had given many media interviews, and had always prioritized opportunities for community outreach visits. The Executive Committee concurred with the President that such visits increased the visibility of the IPU, and thanked him for his initiatives and availability for the Organization.

Impact Report

The Executive Committee was apprised of the first impact report of the Secretary General since the adoption of the IPU Strategy for 2022–2026. The Executive Committee highlighted the impressive statistics in this report – 69 activities had been organized in 23 countries and some 73 regional or global events had been held. The Executive Committee congratulated the Secretary General and his team on their commendable dynamism and dedication to the IPU. The Executive Committee encouraged the Secretary General to maintain this high quality of deliverables and thanked those parliaments that had hosted IPU meetings and events.

² Represented by Mr. R. Lozano on 14 March 2023.

³ Represented by Ms. H. Ramzy Fayeze on 9 March 2023.

The Executive Committee expressed the view that this first impact report of the new Strategy was a promising start, setting the tone for the successful implementation of the Strategy. In order to build on those achievements, the Executive Committee recommended that the Secretary General put in place a database of good practices and initiatives that would enable parliamentarians to reinforce their skills and resilience, and to benchmark their efforts against other parliaments.

The Executive Committee also recommended that the Secretary General strengthen the monitoring and evaluation mechanism for the activities implemented so as to consolidate their sustainable impact.

The Executive Committee noted with satisfaction progress made in the implementation of the communications strategy with regard to the increasing presence of the IPU on social networks and the support provided to Members during Assemblies. The Executive Committee encouraged the Secretariat to maintain this momentum, which had proven to be a determining tool in the implementation of the IPU Strategy.

The Executive Committee renewed its appeal in favour of the participation of national parliamentary delegations in UN events as part of the IPU's commitment to encourage the mobilization of parliamentarians to address global challenges.

The Executive Committee called for awareness-raising efforts, particularly among Speakers of Parliament, on various issues in light of the authoritative contribution that high-level parliamentarians could make to the decision-making process. The Executive Committee also stressed the importance of the IPU's work to defend the human rights of parliamentarians and deplored the continuing prevalence of violence against women and the practice of female genital mutilation.

The Executive Committee expressed its great concern regarding the denial of education to women in Afghanistan. It condemned this violation of human rights and made a strong appeal for urgent action, including by parliaments, to remedy that situation.

Parliaments for the Planet

The Executive Committee reviewed progress with this campaign, which aims at raising awareness among parliamentarians of the growing threat that climate change poses to humanity. The campaign also highlights the need for urgent action to minimize the most devastating potential impacts of climate change and help the most vulnerable people and countries. Parliamentarians are in the driving seat of global efforts and the campaign emphasizes several ways in which they can make a defining contribution, including:

- Using their legislative and budgetary powers to ensure strong laws are put in place and that they are funded properly
- Holding governments to account on their commitments to the Paris Agreement to “allow all people to live on a healthier planet with warming limited to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels”
- Leading by example: parliamentarians also have a responsibility to reduce their own emissions, become greener, and become climate champions to inspire others

The Executive Committee endorsed the launch of the campaign, which subsequently took place during the Governing Council's sitting on 12 March 2023.

Questions relating to IPU membership and the situation of certain parliaments

The Executive Committee noted with satisfaction that efforts in favour of increased membership had started to pay off and endorsed the request for reaffiliation of the Parliament of Liberia, one of the founding Members of the Organization. It also welcomed the participation in Manama of high-level delegations from the Bahamas and Kiribati in an observer capacity in view of possible future IPU membership. Members of the Executive Committee encouraged Member Parliaments to redouble their efforts to encourage the small number of national parliaments that were still missing from the IPU to join as soon as possible in the interests of universal membership.

The Executive Committee was apprised of proposed amendments to the *Practical modalities of the rights and responsibilities of observers at IPU meetings* (see [page 68](#)), as requested by the governing bodies. Firstly, permanent observer status would henceforth be granted upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee following a careful examination of the structure, funding, mission statement, programme of work and track record of the organization concerned with a focus on impact and deliverables.

Secondly, permanent observer status would generally be reserved for parliamentary organizations in line with the IPU's commitment to foster inter-parliamentary dialogue and cooperation, as well as for organizations with which the IPU had established a close and mutually beneficial relationship.

Thirdly, observers would henceforth be expected to pay a token registration fee, to be determined by the Executive Committee, for participation in IPU Assemblies. However, the United Nations and related organizations, as well as observers contributing directly to the programme of the Assembly, would be exempt from such fees.

Finally, the categories of permanent observers would be restructured as follows: United Nations and related organizations, parliamentary assemblies or associations, international non-governmental organizations, international political party federations, and other partner organizations.

As part of the same process, it had been noted that two observers had not had any communication with the IPU Secretariat for several years and would thus be removed from the list of observers, namely the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Organization of American States (OAS).

The Executive Committee agreed to submit the amendments to the Governing Council for approval.

The Executive Committee also considered three requests for permanent observer status. Firstly, following consultations with the delegation of Palestine, the Executive Committee decided not to accept the request of the League of Parliamentarians for Al Quds for permanent observer status. Secondly, a new request had been received from the International Parliamentarians' Congress and the Executive Committee decided to defer its decision pending the collection of additional information about the organization. Finally, following further consultations with the President of the Association of Secretaries-General of Arab Parliaments, the Executive Committee upheld its decision of October 2022 not to accept the Association's request for observer status and propose that it continue to engage with the IPU via the global Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments (ASGP).

Preparations for the 146th IPU Assembly

The Executive Committee was briefed on preparations for the 146th Assembly and took note that preparations were proceeding normally. The Executive Committee also took note of information from the Secretary General that the Bahraini authorities had decided to revoke the visas that had been granted to two officials of Human Rights Watch, an IPU observer, for the purposes of attending the Assembly.

Future inter-parliamentary meetings

The Executive Committee reviewed the list of future inter-parliamentary meetings.

Regarding the 147th IPU Assembly, initially scheduled to take place in Geneva, the Executive Committee recommended holding it instead in Luanda at the invitation of the Parliament of Angola. The Executive Committee believed that holding the 147th Assembly in Angola would be a valuable opportunity for the country, following the various tragedies it had experienced during its recent history, and would support its efforts to rebuild democracy and the rule of law.

The Executive Committee met with the Angolan organizing committee and was apprised of preparations being made for the Assembly. The members of the Executive Committee took the opportunity to request that specific attention be paid to guaranteed issuance of visas, reliable and efficient transportation arrangements, provision of accommodation at preferential rates near to the Assembly venue, and the presence of qualified medical staff to provide required care to all participants.

IPU Anthem

Following the Governing Council's decision to introduce an IPU Anthem, the IPU Secretariat was tasked with drafting terms of reference and identifying a process. After consulting music experts, the Secretariat published a request for proposals and gave potential composers six months to submit their entries. By 31 December 2022, the IPU Secretariat had received 19 submissions.

The Secretariat enlisted the help of a music expert to narrow the selection down to a shortlist of two submissions, taking into account the musical properties of each piece and its suitability as an anthem.

The Executive Committee voted on those two proposals and recommended that the piece composed by Mr. Pedro Halffter become the IPU Anthem, to be played at the beginning of each IPU Assembly and other IPU events. The Executive Committee decided to submit the selected piece to the Governing Council for approval.

IPU regional offices

At its 210th session during the 145th IPU Assembly in Kigali, Rwanda, the Governing Council had endorsed the Executive Committee's conclusion relating to the establishment of IPU regional offices, based on the following modalities:

- (a) the principle of opening regional offices;
- (b) the requirements for opening those offices;
- (c) taking note of the offers from Uruguay and Egypt;
- (d) the request to the Secretary General to undertake consultations with those two countries and to report on the outcome at the next session of the Governing Council.

The Secretary General designated the IPU Director of Support Services to be the focal point for these consultations on his behalf. Several exchanges and virtual meetings had then taken place with the Parliaments of Uruguay and Egypt.

In the case of **Uruguay**, two meetings took place between the IPU focal point and representatives of the Parliament and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on 23 January 2023 and on 13 March 2023. During the January meeting, it was decided as follows:

- The first step would be for a host country agreement to be concluded between the IPU and the Government of Uruguay.
- This would then be followed by an agreement between the Host Parliament and the IPU.

On the basis of several template host country agreements between the Government of Uruguay and other similar international organizations, the IPU Secretariat has prepared a host country agreement that it has submitted to the government authorities for discussion. Once these discussions are concluded, the next steps will consist of drafting an agreement between the IPU and the Parliament that will address staffing, administrative and budgetary issues, as per the requirements for opening regional offices (see [page 72](#)).

In the case of **Egypt**, the Parliament and the IPU Secretariat exchanged draft host country agreements. At a meeting between the IPU Secretariat and the Parliament of Egypt on 1 March 2023, the Secretary General of the Parliament committed to providing the IPU Secretariat with comments from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the template provided by the IPU.

When the question of timelines was raised, the IPU President suggested that agreements be signed at the earliest opportunity, if possible before the next meeting of the Executive Committee (to be held in Lisbon on 29 June 2023), if the hosts were ready. The Executive Committee agreed that it was important to get the administrative and legal aspects in order before signing these agreements.

The IPU political project at the United Nations

During its session in Kigali in October 2022, the Executive Committee had endorsed the roadmap for the IPU political project at the United Nations. In light of this roadmap, extensive consultations had taken place with the Bureau of the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs with a view to fine-tuning its mandate and working methods. In line with the same approach used during the roadmap process, the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs submitted to the Executive Committee a document outlining proposed new modalities and working methods (see [page 71](#)).

The Executive Committee endorsed the modalities and working methods set out in that document and recommended that the Standing Committee continue with its work on that basis.

Report on the work of the IPU Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine

The Executive Committee received an update on the work of the Task Force and took note of its recommendations and intended next steps (see [page 79](#)). The Executive Committee renewed its thanks to the Task Force members for their dedication to this noble cause. The Executive Committee decided to urge all IPU Member Parliaments to support the members of the Task Force in light of the importance of their work.

Working Group on Transparency, Accountability and Openness

The Executive Committee heard the report of Ms. J. Alm Ericson (Sweden), Chair of the Working Group, on current developments in accordance with its roadmap. The Working Group was provided with a draft Code of Conduct for Governance Officials. While near completion, this draft Code of Conduct needed to be further developed to include the creation of a new body which would assess and, if necessary, investigate complaints of misconduct and receive declarations of interests. As this body did not yet exist in the IPU governance structure, further discussions within the Working Group and the Executive Committee would need to take place. At a later stage, amendments to the IPU Statutes would be necessary to implement this Code of Conduct.

The Chair of the Working Group took note that as part of its digitalization strategy, the IPU Secretariat had prepared an IT User Policy which was shared with the Working Group. This policy would be shared within the Secretariat as an Administrative Instruction for all IPU personnel. It would contribute to enhancing accountability and transparency within the Secretariat and increase IT security.

The Secretary General also informed the members of the Executive Committee about the work on an anti-harassment policy for IPU meeting and events, which had been presented to the Gender Partnership Group for review.

The Executive Committee thanked the Working Group and the Secretariat for the work performed.

IPU Cremer-Passy Prize

Based on experience gained from the first edition of the Prize, the Executive Committee recommended that the Governing Council approve a series of proposed amendments to the Rules, including the integration of an evaluation matrix and the implementation of a more equitable system for the distribution of votes (see [page 69](#)).

2. Sub-Committee on Finance

The Executive Committee heard the report of Ms. J. Alm Ericson (Sweden), Chair of the Sub-Committee on Finance, on the financial situation of the IPU and the mobilization of voluntary funding. The Sub-Committee on Finance had met virtually on 6 March 2023 to prepare and facilitate the Executive Committee's consideration of financial and budgetary matters. It had carefully examined the current financial situation and an update on voluntary funding. The external audit process was still under way and could not be completed in time to present audited financial statements at the current Assembly. The Sub-Committee on Finance therefore proposed that approval of the 2022 financial statements and of the Secretary General's financial administration be deferred until the second Assembly of 2023.

The Chair of the Sub Committee noted that the current financial situation of the IPU was healthy and stable. She drew attention to the fact that the arrears of assessed contributions from Members remained a matter of concern and asked for support from the geopolitical groups in following up on arrears. The Sub-Committee had noted the success of the IPU in attracting voluntary contributions and encouraged new members of IPU bodies to help with soliciting voluntary funds to support activities related to the work of their committees. The Secretary General and his team provided further details to the Executive Committee on the financial documents presented.

The Executive Committee thanked the Sub-Committee and the Secretariat for the work performed and appointed the Chair of the Sub-Committee to report to the Governing Council on its behalf.

Subsidiary bodies of the Governing Council

1. Forum and Bureau of Women Parliamentarians

The 35th session of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians was held on 11 and 14 March 2023. It brought together 228 participants, including 186 parliamentarians (161 women and 25 men) from 66 countries and representatives from various international organizations.

The President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, Ms. L. Vasylenko (Ukraine), opened the session. The Forum elected Ms. H. Ramzy Fayez, member of the Shura Council of Bahrain and First Vice-President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, to the Presidency of its 35th session. The First Deputy Speaker of the Shura Council of Bahrain, Mr. J. Fakhro, and the IPU President, Mr. D. Pacheco, welcomed the participants to the Forum and to the 146th IPU Assembly. The IPU Secretary General was in attendance.

As their contribution to the Assembly, the participants examined, from a gender perspective, the draft resolution before the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security entitled *Cyberattacks and cybercrimes: The new risks to global security*. They highlighted how women and girls were targets of technology-facilitated gender-based violence, including online sexual harassment, threats, stalking, bullying and sexist hate speech. They agreed that it was urgent to prevent and address such cybercrimes with comprehensive, gender-sensitive and victim-centric legislation. It was also urgent to address the under-representation of women in the cybersecurity sector. The Forum subsequently proposed to the Standing Committee a series of amendments to the draft resolution. All the proposed amendments were included in the resolution.

The Forum also held a panel discussion on *Parliamentary leadership in addressing insecurity and crises: Putting gender equality at the centre of water security, climate resilience and peace sustainability*. Participants agreed that it was crucial to increase women's participation at all levels in these fields. Gender responsive strategies and measures were needed in water management, climate change mitigation and peace processes, as well as reconstruction and recovery efforts.

At its sitting on 14 March 2023, the Forum held elections to replace half of the regional representatives, whose terms had ended, and two further regional representatives, one for the African Group and one for the Twelve Plus Group, to fill seats that had also become vacant. Details of the newly elected members of the Bureau can be found on [page 35](#). Based on a proposal by the Bureau, the Forum elected Ms. C. López Castro (Mexico) to the post of President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, Ms. F. Ilimi (Algeria) to the post of First Vice-President of the Bureau, and Ms. A. Nassif Ayyoub (Egypt) to the post of Second Vice-President of the Bureau.

2. Forum and Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians

The Forum of Young Parliamentarians was held on 12 March 2023. It brought together 100 participants, including 60 parliamentarians (22 young women and 38 young men) from 58 countries, as well as representatives from various organizations. The meeting was presided over by Ms. S. Albazar (Egypt), President of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians.

In her opening remarks, Ms. Albazar reflected on the successes of the Board over the last two years. She emphasized the importance of sustaining the new initiatives created during the Board's tenure, such as the Empowerment Series of online briefings. The IPU President also attended the Forum and highlighted the importance of elevating the voice of youth in the IPU's work.

Taking stock of recent developments in youth participation in their respective countries, the young MPs shared good practices on the creation of youth caucuses, the election of young politicians to leadership positions, and increased efforts by political parties to empower young MPs. The members of the Forum highlighted their commitment to the *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign and showcased efforts undertaken in its implementation.

Youth overview reports to contribute youth perspectives on two draft resolutions were presented. The young MPs highlighted the importance of special measures to protect young people from harm online, including through education and awareness-raising. They also underlined the holistic relationship between the environment and health, and called for more sustainable models of consumption and production.

The Forum approved the nominations made by the geopolitical groups for membership of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians for the period 2023 to 2025. The new Board then held a meeting, at which it elected Mr. D. Carden (United Kingdom) as its President.

The Forum appointed Ms. O. Rudenko (Ukraine), member of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians, to prepare a youth overview report on the resolution *Orphanage trafficking: The role of parliamentarians in reducing harm*, which will be proposed for adoption at the 147th IPU Assembly.

The Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians, having taken stock of youth participation at the 146th Assembly at its meeting earlier that day, resolved that there remained more work to do to further advance youth participation at the IPU, including by amending the Statutes and Rules to promote participation by younger MPs in IPU Assemblies and to enhance the attendance of Board members. Lowering the age limit to be considered a young MP was also identified as a necessary way forward.

3. Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians

The Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians held its 171st session from 10 to 14 March 2023. Mr. S. Cogolati (Belgium), President, Ms. M. Odhiambo (Kenya), Vice-President, Mr. B. Mbuku Laka (Democratic Republic of the Congo), Ms. L. Quartapelle (Italy), Ms. A. Reynoso (Mexico), Ms. A. Gerkens (Netherlands), Mr. M. Hussain Sayed (Pakistan), Ms. C. Asiaín Pereira (Uruguay) and Mr. H. Kamboni (Zambia) participated in the session. Mr. E. Blanc (France) was unable to take part in the session.

During the session, the Committee examined the situation of 249 parliamentarians (30% of whom were women) in 14 countries. New cases concerning four parliamentarians were declared admissible in the following countries: the Democratic Republic of the Congo (two MPs) and Uganda (two MPs). One case, concerning 50 parliamentarians from South Africa, was declared inadmissible. The Committee also held 11 hearings (three of which took place online) with national delegations and complainants.

The Committee submitted decisions to the Governing Council for adoption on the situation of 193 parliamentarians in the following countries: Cambodia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eswatini, Iraq, Libya, Pakistan, Senegal, Somalia, Uganda and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

4. Committee on Middle East Questions

A sitting of the Committee on Middle East Questions was held on 12 March 2023, with 12 members in attendance. Members emphasized their commitment to working together based on mutual comprehension and constructive dialogue.

The Committee heard a briefing on the first IPU Science for Peace Schools session, held at the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) in Geneva, Switzerland, from 5 to 9 December 2022, on the theme *Dealing with water scarcity: An opportunity to rebuild peace with Science*. The session aimed to help foster a positive environment for cooperation by proposing alternative technologies to lessen tensions related to water scarcity, thus encouraging coexistence between nations. A follow-up conference for parliamentarians will be held in Viet Nam in June 2023. The second Science for Peace Schools session will be held in July 2023, focusing on the theme of climate change. This will be followed by a conference for parliamentarians on the sidelines of COP28, which will take place in the United Arab Emirates in November and December 2023. Members thanked the IPU and CERN for this unique and innovative initiative for peace.

Members heard a report from the IPU Secretariat on the Committee's activities since the 145th IPU Assembly. In November 2022, the Secretariat signed a technical cooperation agreement with the House of Representatives of Yemen, based in Seiyun. The IPU Secretariat has also engaged with the Parliament of Libya, based in Benghazi, regarding efforts to rebuild functioning institutions.

Mr. M. Lassouaoui, from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), briefed members on the Agency's crucial role in providing aid to Palestinian refugees in the region. Nonetheless, the situation and living conditions of Palestinian refugees is deteriorating rapidly owing to numerous crises in the region. This situation is further compounded by the financial crisis facing UNRWA due to a lack of funding, which is hindering its ability to fulfil its mandate. In the absence of a just and durable solution to the conflict, parliamentarians have a key role to play in providing UNRWA with the financial resources required.

The IPU Secretariat briefed members on the current situation in Israel and Palestine. The Committee expressed its alarm at the critical situation following a significant surge in violence, including attacks by settlers, since the beginning of 2023, including some of the deadliest incidents in nearly 20 years. Members stressed the centrality of the crisis in Israel and Palestine to the Committee's mandate and agreed to set up a focus group on Israel and Palestine. Other focus groups, including on the crises in Yemen and Libya, should also be established. Members also agreed to hold two Committee sittings at each Assembly to allow sufficient time to focus on the multiple crises occurring in the Middle East.

The Committee agreed to visit the region in 2023, including Israel, Jordan and Palestine. The visit, which will aim to establish real dialogue with stakeholders and gain an in-depth understanding of the situation, will provide an opportunity to promote rapprochement and to advance reconciliation in the region.

5. Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law

The Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL) met on 14 March 2023.

The Committee heard an update on recent developments with regard to specific IHL and refugee crisis situations, including in Afghanistan, Myanmar and Ukraine. In general, Committee members noted with concern the multiplication of situations of conflict and the growth in the numbers of men and women, boys and girls having to flee to escape from violence and persecution. In the three countries reviewed, the great majority (70%) of those fleeing conflict were women and girls. In the case of Ukraine, this number was as high as 90%. These situations are becoming more and more complex, and new dimensions, such as the impact of climate change, or economic and social challenges in host countries, also need to be factored in when providing assistance and support. The prevalence of gender-based violence was also emphasized. Impunity, including of non-State actors, and the question of war crimes were raised and will be discussed at the next session of the Committee.

The Committee called on parliaments to discuss support efforts, noting that there was a strong need to build multilateral cooperation to respond to the dramatic situations faced not only in Ukraine but also in other parts of the world. Refugees from Afghanistan and Myanmar, as well as populations affected by the earthquake in the Syrian Arab Republic and Türkiye, need urgent help and assistance. Committee members also highlighted the need to provide support to host countries.

The Committee made a special plea with regard to the situation of Afghanistan. Life-saving efforts have become a priority for support agencies involved in the country. The Committee stressed the importance of securing access to health care and education for women and girls.

The Committee discussed preparations for the Global Refugee Forum (GRF) that will be held in December 2023. The GRF will provide an opportunity to take stock of progress in the implementation of the *Global Compact on Refugees* (GCR). IPU Members are invited to follow up on their country's pledges in that regard (see: <https://globalcompactrefugees.org/index.php/>). The Committee also encouraged parliaments to further engage in the implementation of the GCR with new pledges.

The Committee discussed work towards the universalization and implementation of the *Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention*. It agreed to organize a global virtual webinar on the issue as a way to raise awareness and to support further engagement by parliaments. It also discussed the *Convention on Cluster Munitions* and agreed to begin work towards a similar objective of universalization and effective implementation.

Finally, the Committee noted that one of its members, Ms. E. Afanasieva (Russian Federation), had not attended the last three Committee sessions. In accordance with its Rules, the Committee therefore asked for the seat to be declared vacant.

6. Group of Facilitators for Cyprus

The Group of Facilitators for Cyprus met on 11 March 2023. The meeting was attended by all three Facilitators – Mr. S. Cogolati (Belgium), Ms. L. Quartapelle (Italy) and Mr. L. Wehrli (Switzerland) – as well as by three members of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Cyprus and four representatives of the Turkish-Cypriot political parties.

The parties reiterated their determination to end the current impasse and resume negotiations to reach a solution to the Cyprus problem, on the basis of a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation, as stipulated in relevant UN Security Council resolutions and the European Union values and principles.

They also acknowledged the need for closer cooperation in managing natural disasters, in view of the deadly earthquakes in the Syrian Arab Republic and Türkiye.

7. Gender Partnership Group

The Gender Partnership Group held its 47th session on 10 and 14 March 2023. In attendance were the Chair, Mr. A.R. Al Nuaimi (United Arab Emirates), and members Ms. A.D. Mergane Kanouté (Senegal) and Ms. L. Vasylenko (Ukraine). Mr. J.I. Echániz (Spain) joined the Group for the dialogue session with the delegation of Maldives.

The Group reviewed the composition of delegations at the 146th Assembly. As at 15 March 2023, 34.5% of the delegates at the Assembly were women (see [page 83](#)). In absolute terms, this is one of the highest numbers of women delegates attending any in-person IPU Assembly. In Manama, 37 delegations out of 136 (or 27.2%) were gender-balanced, namely composed of 40% to 60% women

or men. This is a slight decrease relative to the last Assembly, when 29.4% of delegations were gender-balanced (35 out of 119 delegations). The aforementioned 37 gender-balanced delegations attending the 146th Assembly are listed on [page 84](#).

Of the 136 delegations present, 131 were composed of at least 2 delegates, of which 21 were all-male (16%). In addition, three delegations of two or more delegates were composed entirely of women. These 24 single-sex delegations were from the parliaments of the following States: Argentina, Brazil, Cambodia, Chad, Comoros, Ethiopia, Finland, Gabon, Georgia, Italy, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Mongolia, Myanmar, Qatar, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovakia, Somalia, Tonga, Yemen and Zimbabwe. In addition, there were five single-member delegations attending the Assembly: Lithuania, Monaco, Paraguay, Sierra Leone and Turkmenistan. All in all, 14 delegations were subject to sanctions at the Assembly, versus 11 at the last Assembly.

During its session in Manama, the Group reviewed and commented upon a first draft of the IPU's Policy to prevent harassment, including sexual harassment, at IPU Assemblies and other IPU events. The aim is to have the policy ready for the next IPU Assembly.

As per its mandate, the Group held a dialogue session with the delegation of Maldives attending the 146th Assembly, in view of the country's forthcoming elections in 2024.

The delegation of Maldives highlighted the particular difficulties facing women in politics in the country, including cultural norms, sexist stereotypes, violence against women in politics (especially online violence), and the challenges of juggling the responsibilities of private and public life.

At the 2019 elections, women's representation in parliament fell from 5.9% to 4.6%. In Maldives, there are currently 4 women and 83 men MPs. Of these four women, one is Deputy Speaker and the other three are committee chairs. Women also hold 36% of ministerial portfolios. In 2019, an electoral quota was introduced, with 30% of local council seats allocated to women. As a result, women candidates found it easier to gain election to positions of responsibility in local government at the 2021 elections. Efforts are under way to introduce quotas or temporary special measures for the 2024 legislative elections, with a view to increasing women's representation in parliament to 33%. Bringing in such measures would require support from political parties and male parliamentarians.

The Gender Partnership Group welcomed the exchanges and said it was heartened to see the progress made in the past four years. With the elections on the horizon, now is a pivotal moment. The Group and the IPU stand ready to provide support in terms of raising awareness, building capacities and mobilizing political will.

8. Advisory Group on Health

The IPU Advisory Group on Health met on 11 March 2023, with 5 out of 12 members in attendance. It welcomed three new members, from Ireland, Pakistan and the United Republic of Tanzania, as well as technical partners from the World Health Organization (WHO), the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH), UNAIDS, and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

The Advisory Group discussed ways to strengthen the IPU's relevance in the global health arena and to implement the health component of the IPU Strategy. It agreed that the challenge of health was very broad and that it would not expand its priorities further, but instead retain and address certain key priorities.

The Advisory Group reflected together on the importance of human rights obligations in health-related work. Restrictive laws and policies are still limiting or blocking access to services. There is a lot that parliamentarians can and should do through public outreach.

The Advisory Group decided to act on its outreach mandate, agreeing to organize a field visit in 2023 to learn about and document practices related to equity in health, in particular for marginalized groups. Pakistan offered to host the Advisory Group.

The Advisory Group also reflected on its rules and practices and agreed to continue this discussion with a view to further strengthening the IPU's relevance and work in the global health arena.

During his report to the Governing Council, the Chair of the Advisory Group launched the joint IPU-WHO handbook [The path towards universal health coverage](#). The WHO Director-General sent a video message to mark the occasion.

9. High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG)

A meeting of the High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG) was held on 13 March 2023. During the meeting, the members of the HLAG discussed the results of the three thematic meetings on the *Call of the Sahel*, which were held in late 2022 and early 2023.

The HLAG agreed on the following four overarching principles for engaging with the Sahel countries:

1. Focus on immediate action, not just talking or holding meetings.
2. Harmonize all global activities regarding the Sahel countries with regional and international initiatives.
3. Take into account solutions emerging from the impacted communities: African-led solutions to problems affecting Africa.
4. Rebuild trust at the national and international level between all key stakeholders.

The second thematic meeting on the *Call of the Sahel* was held in Algiers, Algeria on 26 and 27 February 2023 as a joint initiative of the IPU and the National People's Assembly of Algeria. The theme was *Engaging communities in the prevention of violent extremism and addressing the conditions conducive to terrorism*. This meeting was the first of its kind as it brought together 190 participants from diverse backgrounds, with a focus on religious and tribal leaders from the Sahel. In addition to HLAG members, the meeting also included representatives of civil society, youth and parliamentarians from the G5 Sahel and neighbouring countries, as well as regional and international experts and parliamentary organizations. Notably, the meeting was presided over by the President of the IPU, Mr. D. Pacheco, and the Speaker of the National People's Assembly of Algeria, Mr. Ibrahim Boughali.

The third *Call of the Sahel* thematic meeting was held on 11 March 2023 during the 146th IPU Assembly in Manama, Bahrain. It was attended by members of the HLAG, and parliamentarians from the Sahel and the neighbouring countries, as well as subject-matter experts. The meeting focused on *Mitigating the impact of security threats by building resilience in the Sahel*.

During the HLAG meeting at the 146th IPU Assembly, the results of the three thematic meetings on the *Call of the Sahel* were evaluated and the following next steps were identified by members:

- *Internal coordination*: Having identified women and youth as vulnerable groups, coordination meetings should be set up with the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians and the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, to bring their attention to the situation of these vulnerable groups in the Sahel countries and to encourage these IPU bodies to put them on the agenda of future meetings of their respective Forums.
- *Inter-parliamentary coordination*: In order to harmonize and unify the support given to the people of the Sahel in each of the five thematic areas of the *Call of the Sahel*, a coordination mechanism should be established with all the parliamentary actors working on issues affecting the Sahel. In addition, parliaments of developed nations should be encouraged to invest efforts in rebuilding trust with the countries of the Sahel.
- *International coordination*: UN organizations active in the Sahel should be encouraged to establish an inter-agency coordination mechanism, which also includes parliamentary actors, based on the needs on the ground.
- *Communication and visibility*: Greater visibility of the work of the HLAG, and especially the *Call of the Sahel*, is needed in order for it to have the desired impact. The IPU Secretary General could play an important role in giving the *Call of the Sahel* greater prominence internationally.

10. Working Group on Science and Technology

A sitting of the Working Group was held on 13 March 2023, with 14 members in attendance.

The Working Group applauded the success of the first session of the Science for Peace Schools, which was held from 5 to 9 December 2022 at CERN in Geneva, Switzerland, with the theme *Dealing with water scarcity: An opportunity to rebuild peace with Science*. The session focused on water management and the exploration of new and renewable sources of water, with the aim of creating a positive environment for technical cooperation and negotiations by encouraging proposals for alternative technologies and modalities to lessen tensions related to water scarcity, and thus transform elements of conflict between parties into reasons for coexistence.

A total of 24 participants, including representatives of all six geopolitical groups, attended the first session: 21 parliamentary staff nominated by their national parliaments with a view to ensuring continuity across parliamentary mandates, as well as three parliamentarians, namely the Chair of the Working Group on Science and Technology, the President of the Committee on Middle East Questions, and a member of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians.

As the first joint activity of the IPU's Committee on Middle East Questions and the Working Group on Science and Technology, the aim of the Science for Peace Schools is to bridge the worlds of science and politics by initiating dialogue and creating a community of parliamentary experts to address challenges together under the neutral umbrella of science. The first session provided a space for participants to exchange experiences of evidence-based decision-making and to learn about methods of scientific collaboration. Notably, participants agreed on the importance of implementing two regional projects on water, in the Sahel region and in Palestine.

The Working Group agreed to hold a follow-up conference for parliamentarians, with a focus on water and food security, in June 2023 at the International Centre for Interdisciplinary Science and Education (ICISE) in Quy Nhon, Viet Nam. The Working Group also agreed to hold the second session of the Science for Peace Schools in July 2023 on the theme of climate change, in order to set the tone for a follow-up conference for parliamentarians on the sidelines of COP28, which will take place in the United Arab Emirates in December 2023.

With regard to the Working Group's work plan, members welcomed the proposed recruitment of a senior science consultant for three to six months, in order to finalize the work on the International Charter on the Ethics of Science and Technology. Members also agreed on their intention to participate as observers in the 26th session of the United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development, which will be held from 27 to 31 March 2023 in Geneva.

The Working Group was briefed by Mr. D. Kirrane, Chair of the 9th Science Summit in the context of the 78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, on the theme and activities of the Summit. The Working Group agreed to officially participate in the next Summit in New York, which will be held from 13 to 29 September 2023. Their participation would help them to identify ways in which science can contribute to global challenges, while developing and launching science collaborations to ensure a more policy-focused approach to the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Working Group also agreed to collaborate with the IPU Standing Committee on Sustainable Development to develop and present a key report at the Science Summit, reinforcing the role of parliamentarians in setting the global agenda. In addition, the Working Group agreed to organize an IPU Day as part of the Summit, with a focus on the contribution of the IPU in general, and parliamentarians in particular, to achieving the SDGs.

Finally, the Working Group agreed to pursue several pilot projects on the engagement of the scientific community with parliaments. Conclusions and recommendations from each parliament participating in these projects will be used to develop a practical parliamentary toolkit on the importance of scientific engagement in parliamentary decision-making. The Working Group will review and approve the toolkit at its meeting during the 147th IPU Assembly in Luanda, Angola, in October 2023

Other activities and events

1. Joint meeting with the Chairpersons of the Geopolitical Groups and the Presidents of the Standing Committees

On 11 March 2023, the IPU President and Secretary General met with the Chairs of the geopolitical groups and the Presidents of the Standing Committees. The meeting was attended by: Ms. T. Ackson (United Republic of Tanzania), Chair of the African Group; Mr. M. Alhalboosi (Iraq), Chair of the Arab Group; Mr. M. Dick (Australia), Chair of the Asia-Pacific Group; Mr. Y. Bolgert (Kazakhstan) and Ms. L. Rysbekova (Kazakhstan) on behalf of the Eurasia Group; Mr. B. Llano (Paraguay), Chair of the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC); and Mr. A. Gryffroy (Belgium), Chair of the Twelve Plus Group; as well as by Mr. M.B.M. Al-Ahbab (Qatar), President of the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security; Mr. W. William (Seychelles), Vice-President of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development; Mr. A. Gajadien (Suriname), President of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights; and Mr. L. Wehrli (Switzerland), acting President of the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs.

The IPU President provided an overview of his main activities and initiatives over the past six months since the previous Assembly, including in terms of raising the visibility of the Organization and advancing towards the goal of universal membership rooted in Strategic Objective 4 of the *IPU 2022-2026 Strategy*. The Chairs of GRULAC and the Asia-Pacific Group were encouraged to reach out to the parliaments of the Bahamas and Kiribati respectively, given their attendance at the 146th IPU Assembly in Manama as observers with a view to possible affiliation. The Chair of the African Group was also invited to promote close cooperation with Liberia, which became an IPU Member during the 146th Assembly.

The issue of Members' financial contributions to the IPU was raised. The Chairs of the geopolitical groups were prompted to remind their members in arrears within their groups of their financial obligations to the Organization. The IPU President provided an update on progress made towards the establishment of IPU regional offices. He stated that consultations on two independent pilot projects, in Egypt and Uruguay, were advancing, and that the results of these pilots would determine the viability of establishing additional regional offices.

The Presidents of the Standing Committees provided an overview of their planned activities in the context of the 146th Assembly. They gave an update on the follow-up to the concept note, prepared by the IPU Secretariat, on the contribution of the Standing Committees to the implementation of the IPU Strategy. The acting President of the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs indicated that the Bureau of his Committee had agreed on a proposal to improve the modalities, working methods and scope of the Committee, and that this proposal was expected to be approved. He explained that his Committee would work to support reforms aimed at making the UN Security Council more representative of the international community.

The Chairs of the geopolitical groups provided an overview of their recent activities. The African Group had held discussions on the need to review the IPU Statutes and Rules so as to ensure greater flexibility and effectiveness in the work of the Organization. In particular, it had examined the possibility of amending the Statutes and Rules to allow for the selection of more than one emergency item per Assembly, as well as to set a deadline for the submission of proposals. The Chair of GRULAC noted that talks on establishing an IPU regional office in Uruguay were progressing well and that, in light of the positive experience with the Regional Seminar on Climate Change for the Parliaments of Latin America and the Caribbean, held last year in Montevideo, plans were under way for such regional events to be held on an annual basis. The Chair of the Asia-Pacific Group explained that he would be visiting parliaments in the Pacific region to encourage and support participation in the IPU's work from those Small Island Developing States which were Members of the Organization. The Chair of the Twelve Plus Group proposed the creation of a working group on amending the IPU Statutes and Rules, which would ensure a transparent process and give all Chairs of geopolitical groups and Presidents of Standing Committees an opportunity to contribute their ideas. The IPU Secretary General welcomed the proposal, noting that would guarantee that IPU Members owned any changes to the Statutes and Rules.

2. Panel discussion on *Parliamentary action on biodiversity: Translating global commitments into national action*

This panel discussion on 13 March 2023 aimed to provide a platform for parliamentarians to share experiences and knowledge on biodiversity, including its linkages with climate change and sustainable development. It also served to familiarize parliamentarians with the outcomes of the latest United Nations Biodiversity Conference (COP15), held in Montreal, Canada.

The panel discussion was moderated by Ms. A. Blagojevic, IPU Programme Manager for International Development, who introduced the topic and provided a brief overview of *Parliaments for the Planet*, the recently launched IPU campaign which will mobilize parliaments and parliamentarians to act on the climate emergency.

The first panellist, presenting remotely, was Mr. B. Pisupati, Head, Environment Policy, Law Division of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). He introduced the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework adopted at COP15, outlining the framework's four goals, which encompass efforts to increase the area of natural ecosystems, reduce extinction rates, value nature's contribution to people, share the benefits from the utilization of genetic resources, and ensure all Parties have adequate means for implementation. Mr. Pisupati highlighted the important role parliamentarians can play in mobilizing women and youth to participate in biodiversity action, ensuring the integration of climate and biodiversity goals into policymaking at the national level, promoting whole-of-society and whole-of-government approaches, and supporting innovative financing for biodiversity.

The second panellist, Mr. Wang Yi (China), shared his remarks by video message, describing how biodiversity loss is threatening people's well-being, including in matters related to food, energy and safety, and undermining progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. He expressed how the presidency of China of COP15 had been backed by political will at the highest level and also highlighted efforts that China had made to promote biodiversity conservation, including the promulgation and revision of laws and regulations to provide solid legal safeguards for biodiversity conservation.

The third panellist, Mr. P. Julian (Canada), provided information on Canada's hosting of COP15 and emphasized the triple planetary crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution that the world is now facing. He described the challenges biodiversity loss creates, including for Indigenous people, and highlighted legislative efforts made in his country, including on addressing the risk of extinction of species. Mr. Julian stressed the need for the Parliament of Canada, as the federal institution, to work with provinces and territories on biodiversity conservation.

Interventions from the floor came from Canada, Ghana, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Liechtenstein, Mauritius and Seychelles. Participants highlighted various actions to protect biodiversity, including conserving biodiversity hotspots, promoting environmental education in schools, increasing the size of protected areas, passing legislation on single-use plastics, and allocating resources for disaster risk reduction. There were also calls to enhance community engagement and strengthen the role of women in biodiversity conservation, as well as to ensure that parliamentarians have access to data, knowledge and resources so they can effectively address biodiversity through their legislative, budgetary, oversight and representation functions.

3. Panel discussion on climate oversight action

This panel discussion, held on 13 March 2023, was organized by the IPU in collaboration with the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI) Development Initiative (IDI). The session focused on performance and expenditure oversight, and on how parliaments and Supreme Audit Institutions (SAIs) can better work together in this area. Owing to the nature and importance of the topic, the panel discussion was well-attended and led to an interesting and engaged debate.

The discussion was moderated by Ms. R. Garvey (Ireland). The panellists – parliamentarians and a representative of an SAI – each made opening remarks and provided insights into climate oversight action in their respective countries.

Mr. H. Aoyagi (Japan) shared details of how oversight is performed in his country, including by parliament, parliamentary committees, local government and the Board of Audit of Japan. He suggested that government action on climate change was insufficient and that an ecosystem for promoting such action needed to be developed.

Mr. H. Niyazy, Auditor General of Maldives, spoke about his country's unique vulnerability to climate change as an archipelago. He emphasized that a lot of spending was going towards climate resilience and mitigation, and explained that his office had undertaken several audits of climate-related performance and expenditure, remarking that parliamentarians had also requested expenditure audits. Mr. Niyazy added that, in the People's Majlis of Maldives, both the Public Accounts Committee and the Standing Committee on Climate Change and Environment were undertaking oversight and accountability work on climate change.

Mr. S. Simpson (New Zealand) spoke about legislation establishing a target of net zero emissions by 2050, mentioning that progress on this front was overseen by the independent Climate Change Commission. He added that New Zealand used statistics and data to prepare reports on the effectiveness of its climate legislation. Mr. Simpson noted, however, that it was a challenge to measure and determine the effectiveness of climate policies and actions, and indicated that oversight in this area would be a positive step.

In the first part of the ensuing discussion, participants considered how parliamentarians and SAIs could advocate for enhanced parliamentary oversight of climate-related performance and what mechanisms could be used for this purpose. Participants touched on the importance of parliamentary committees, and on the need for parliaments to make use of SAIs for oversight of climate action, of nationally determined contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement, and of existing legislative frameworks on climate mitigation. A number of smaller nations emphasized that they were experiencing the worst impacts of climate change despite their emissions being lower than those of other countries, and called for more direct funding for in-country mitigation and reduction projects.

The second part of the session looked at expenditure, with delegates and panellists exploring how parliaments and SAIs could better incorporate scrutiny of climate-related expenditure (linked to the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement) into their oversight work. Among other topics, the discussion covered different reporting requirements for climate expenditure across parliaments, as well as ways to enhance reporting, to improve oversight of climate funding to the private sector, and to strengthen accountability for NDCs. A representative from the Legislative Assembly of Tonga stressed that clearly identifying funding for mitigation and adaptation was a challenge, and expressed an interest in a dedicated programme for identifying climate expenditure.

In their closing remarks, the panellists highlighted the need for parliaments to work with SAIs and to utilize their reports on climate action and policy. They also reiterated that all public expenditure, including on climate change, needed to be accountable and auditable.

4. Workshop in preparation for the United Nations Summit of the Future

The objective of this workshop, held on 13 March 2023 and attended by about 40 MPs, was to familiarize parliamentarians with the preparation process for the United Nations Summit of the Future, to be held in September 2024.

Ms. P. Torsney, Head of the Office of the Permanent Observer of the IPU to the United Nations in New York, welcomed participants and explained the basic rationale of the Summit of the Future: strengthening multilateralism as a way to respond to ever-growing global challenges, both old and new. Ms. Torsney then introduced the main presenter for the session, Ms. M.F. Espinosa, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ecuador, President of the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly, and a leading member of the Coalition for the UN We Need, a platform working to help civil society organizations contribute to UN reform.

Ms. Espinosa traced the genesis of the Summit of the Future back to September 2020 and the 12 commitments set out in the UN Secretary-General's report *Our Common Agenda*, which emerged from the High-level Meeting to Commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the United Nations. She explained that the Summit would provide a much-needed opportunity to strengthen the legitimacy of the multilateral system by enabling it to deliver on its many unfulfilled promises and by more effectively including the voices of non-governmental stakeholders.

Ms. Espinosa stressed the importance of civil society organizations, parliaments and other non-governmental bodies being more actively engaged with the UN. She explained that, among other things, parliaments had a special responsibility to ensure adequate funding for the UN. Ms. Espinosa's overarching recommendation with regard to UN reforms was that they needed to be system-wide, and that partial – "band-aid" – solutions should be avoided.

After a brief exchange with Ms. Espinosa, participants completed a live survey. A series of seven multiple-choice questions asked about the types of issues that participants wanted to see reflected in the Summit's agenda. The responses indicated that, in the view of participants, the agenda should cast a wide net, capturing both current issues (such as UN Security Council reform) and new areas of focus (such as global commons). It was also clear that the emphasis should be on peace and security threats, and in particular those posed by nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, as well as those coming from the cyber world. Participants demonstrated broad support for the Summit to include a discussion on alternative measures of sustainable development, and on a new Global Digital Compact, with a particular emphasis on digital inclusion and data protection. They also supported the idea of the Summit's agenda including issues that are currently off the table at the UN, such as the role of multinationals and of the military industrial complex, as well as the phenomenon of land-grabbing.

As the workshop drew to a close, Ms. S. Nane (Uruguay) explained that many parliaments are establishing parliamentary Committees of the Future, whose work may well dovetail with IPU efforts to contribute to the UN Summit. She announced that the second World Summit of the Committees of the Future would be held in Uruguay in October 2023.

In her concluding remarks, Ms. Torsney urged all participants to stay tuned to this issue and to demand regular briefings from ministers or their countries' Permanent Representatives in New York.

5. Panel discussion on parliamentary solidarity with MPs at risk

This panel discussion, held on 14 March 2023, was attended by 39 participants (13 women and 26 men) from 23 countries. The meeting aimed to give participants a better understanding of what parliamentary solidarity entailed, as well as an opportunity to exchange good practices with their peers on putting this concept into practice.

The event was moderated by Mr. S. Cogolati (Belgium), President of the IPU Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians (CHRP). In his opening remarks, he elaborated on the work of the CHRP, as well as on the principle of parliamentary solidarity on which it relies to protect and promote the rights of parliamentarians. Participants saw three video testimonies from MPs who had been victims of human rights violations, or from members of their families. These testimonies related to cases in Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Eritrea and Iraq.

Ms. C.L. Crexell (Argentina) talked about her parliament's engagement in the evacuation and resettlement of Afghan parliamentarians, with a special focus on women MPs. She explained that this action had followed the joint statement issued on 30 August 2021 by the CHRP and the IPU Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law, expressing concern over the situation in Afghanistan and calling on MPs around the world to support their colleagues in the country. Ms. Crexell described ongoing joint efforts with specialized organizations and United Nations agencies to build support for a resettlement programme across party lines.

Ms. L. Quartapelle (Italy) explained how her parliament had engaged in defending the rights of parliamentarians in Uganda featuring in cases before the CHRP by raising awareness about their cases and pressuring the authorities. She invited other parliaments to do the same with other cases before the CHRP.

Dr. W. Myat Aye (Myanmar) thanked the CHRP for its ongoing support. He elaborated on the plight of his colleagues following the coup d'état of 1 February 2021 in Myanmar and called on the participants and the global parliamentary community to recognize and assist the National Unity Government established by the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, to apply pressure on the military authorities, and to prosecute those responsible for crimes against humanity and war crimes abroad.

In the ensuing discussion, participants took the floor to share their comments and experience. They emphasized the importance of providing tangible support to victims of human rights violations, and stressed that, in dealings with national authorities, engaging in dialogue was just as important as applying pressure. Participants also raised the issue of reprisals and the harassment of women parliamentarians, noted the importance of concerted action by the international community to withhold support from belligerents responsible for violations of the rights of parliamentarians, and touched on practical measures to address to human rights concerns, including at the regional level.

In his concluding remarks, Mr. Cogolati thanked all those who dedicated their energy to supporting MPs in danger. He stressed that, when parliamentarians are at risk, democracy itself is in peril, which is why the work of the CHRP and the principle of parliamentary solidarity are so important.

6. Workshop on sexual and reproductive health - *Preparing young people for a safe, healthy, fulfilling life: Parliamentarians advancing comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) with and for their communities*

The workshop, held on 14 March 2023, was organized by the IPU and the World Health Organization (WHO). It aimed to inform parliamentarians about comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) and its importance, and to provide a safe space for them to share perspectives on challenges and opportunities for engaging with CSE in their countries.

Mr. I. Ćelić (Croatia), a member of the IPU Advisory Group on Health, opened the workshop. The panel discussion was moderated by Ms. L. Clifford-Lee (Ireland), a new member of the Advisory Group.

Dr. V. Chandra-Mouli, a scientist at WHO and the technical lead for the session, opened the discussion with a short presentation explaining what CSE was, why it was needed, and the state of CSE globally in terms of goals, evidence and trends. He also addressed misunderstandings, concerns and the importance of national adaptation. The panellists were then asked to share details of CSE-related efforts in their own countries, including one strength and one lesson learned.

The first panellist, Ms. Clifford-Lee, briefly presented the situation on CSE for children in Ireland. An updated sexual education programme for the age group 12–15 will shortly be rolled out because current provision does not equip children to navigate the modern world.

The second panellist, Mr. F. Ndugulile, (United Republic of Tanzania), a member of the IPU Advisory Group on Health, presented the situation in his country, where 60% of the population is under age 24 and teen pregnancies are a challenge. Current sexual education provision in schools focuses mainly on abstinence or delaying first sexual intercourse. Gaining acceptance for CSE is challenging, especially amid resistance from parents, and from traditional and religious leaders. In the absence of information, young people turn to the digital space, where content is neither regulated nor age-specific.

The third panellist, Ms. M. Brawer (Argentina), spoke about the process behind the CSE law in her country, which was the result of a strong political decision. She emphasized that the State had an obligation to provide scientifically validated information, including on contraception and sexually transmitted diseases. In Argentina, sexual education is a right for all children from kindergarten onwards. It is not a standalone subject, but instead cuts across the curriculum. Schools organize workshops for parents on CSE. Ten million copies of a guide to help young people talk about sex with family members have been produced, and adults are using it too. Ms. Brawer emphasized that sexual education is not just about reproductive health but also links to diversity.

The fourth panellist, Ms. G. Katuta Mwelwa (Zambia), a member of the IPU Advisory Group on Health, stressed the need for parliamentarians to better understand sexual education. There should be more campaigns emphasizing that sexual education is not about teaching children how to start their sexual life, but rather how to protect themselves. Ms. Katuta Mwelwa called for more support to help raise awareness in her country and stressed the need to reach out to rural areas.

The fifth panellist, Ms. P. Stienen (Netherlands), raised concerns about children accessing pornography. She explained that, as Rapporteur for the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, she had recently produced a report entitled *Innovative approaches to sexual and reproductive health and rights*. She stressed that all parliamentarians should be more aware of innovative approaches and new technological developments. She spoke of the need to create an open, safe space for discussion on sexual and reproductive health and rights, and how parliamentarians can use their law-making function to create an enabling environment for CSE.

The IPU Secretary General made an intervention, raising the issue of vulnerable and marginalized groups. He mentioned his role on the Board of the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH). He also touched on his work as a member of the High-Level Commission on the Nairobi Summit on ICPD25 Follow-up which, in its second report published in early March 2023, emphasized the importance of promoting CSE for access to sexual and reproductive health services, as a question of justice and human rights. The Secretary General added that this subject would remain a priority for the IPU, which would follow up on the discussions in this workshop.

Interventions from the floor, from delegates from Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, India, Morocco and Norway, highlighted the overwhelming interest in this topic among parliamentarians. The MPs talked about the importance of educating not just youth, but also people at all stages of life. Much more needs to be done, and more discussions need to be held. The IPU and WHO will continue working in this area, together with PMNCH, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and other partners.

7. The Call of the Sahel: A global response - Meeting series on counter-terrorism Mitigating the impact of security threats by building resilience in the Sahel

The third meeting in the *Call of the Sahel* series was held on 11 March 2023. The meeting was well-attended, with over 60 confirmed participants from more than a dozen delegations, including from parliaments of the Sahel countries and the surrounding States. The meeting followed a panel format, with four sessions and six panellists.

The IPU Secretary General highlighted the importance of the *Call of the Sahel* for the IPU and reaffirmed his ongoing support for the initiative.

Mr. S. Stroobants, Director, Europe and MENA at the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), gave an overview of the security situation in the Sahel, making reference to the Global Terrorism Index and the Index of Positive Peace, both developed by his organization. He explained that deaths caused by terrorism had increased exponentially in recent years, and that the resulting political instability was reflected in the number and scale of coups d'état in the region. Mr. Stroobants stressed that including women and youth in strategies to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism was essential, not least because women's inclusion helped communities to remain united. He added that, in the Sahel, including women and youth in interventions had a proven multiplicative effect in peace efforts.

Participants emphasized that meetings were no longer enough and that immediate action was needed. They also stressed to the panellists that the international community should not overpromise and underdeliver. The Sahel countries need funding for their programmes to counter terrorism. Any further meetings must be attended by funders and key stakeholders in the Sahel. Participants also addressed the issue of porous borders, which are difficult to control. They asked for technical and financial support to contain the situation so that terrorism would not spread to other countries in the region.

Mr. N. Tankoano, Executive Secretary of the Interparliamentary Committee of the G5 Sahel, presented a report that delved into the causes of terrorism, including the failure of the international community to take notice of the dire situation in the Sahel. Mr. Tankoano also cited weak social and economic investment in the Sahel, stressing that such investment was crucial to stemming the tide of terrorism, as well as to building the resilience of local populations to radicalization, extremism and recruitment.

Participants recommended that Sahelian States enhance regional cooperation, on the basis of sincerity and transparency, and that parliaments strengthen oversight of armed forces action and execution of the defence budget. They also called for further efforts to build trust at the national and international levels, noting that regional institutions should be supported and reformed accordingly.

Elections and appointments

1. Executive Committee

The Governing Council elected the following two members to the Executive Committee:

African Group

- Ms. I.K. Nasserwa Sabangu (Democratic Republic of Congo) for a four-year term ending in March 2027.

Twelve Plus Group

- Ms. J. Alm Ericson (Sweden) to replace Ms. C. Widegren who is no longer a member of parliament. She will complete the latter's term which expires in October 2023.

2. Sub-Committee on Finance

The Sub-Committee on Finance elected Ms. J. Alm Ericson (Sweden) to replace Ms. C. Widegren (Sweden) as its Chair. She will complete the latter's term which expires in October 2023.

3. Bureau of Women Parliamentarians

The Forum of Women Parliamentarians elected the following regional representatives to the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians:

African Group

- Ms. F. Ilimi (Algeria)
- Ms. J. Kavira Maperera (Democratic Republic of Congo)
- Ms. J.A.A. Taban (South Sudan) to replace Ms. M. Baba Moussa Soumanou (Benin) who is no longer a member of parliament. She will complete the latter's term which expires in March 2025.

Arab Group

- Ms. S. Mosa Hammood (Iraq)
- Ms. J. Mohsen Ramadan (Kuwait)

Asia-Pacific Group

- Ms. L. Reynolds (Australia)
- Ms. S. Sirivejchapun (Thailand)

Group of Latin America and the Caribbean

- Ms. V. Persaud (Guyana)
- Ms. C. López Castro (Mexico)

Twelve Plus Group

- Ms. M. Rempel (Canada)
- Ms. D. Bergamini (Italy)
- Ms. S. Paunovic (Serbia) to replace Ms. M. Grande (Italy) who is no longer a member of parliament. She will complete the latter's term which expires in March 2025.

The Forum elected Ms. C. López Castro (Mexico) to the post of President, Ms. F. Ilimi (Algeria) to the post of First Vice-President, and Ms. A. Nassif Ayyoub (Egypt) to the post of Second Vice-President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians.

4. Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians

The Forum elected the following members to its Board for a two-year term ending in March 2025.

African Group

- Mr. M.A. Bouchouit (Algeria)
- Ms. E.T. Muteka (Namibia)

Arab Group

- Mr. K. Ait Mik (Morocco)
- Ms. S. Falaknaz (United Arab Emirates)

Asia-Pacific Group

- Ms. D.R. Esti (Indonesia)
- Mr. F. Fakafanua (Tonga)

Eurasia Group

- Ms. H. Hakobyan (Armenia)
- *Vacancy*

Group of Latin America and the Caribbean

- Ms. P. Aguirre (Ecuador)
- Mr. W. Soto (Peru)

Twelve Plus Group

- Mr. D. Carden (United Kingdom)
- Ms. O. Rudenko (Ukraine)

Mr. D. Carden (United Kingdom) was elected President of the Board.

5. Committee on Middle East Questions

The Governing Council elected the following two members for a four-year term ending March 2027:

- Mr. H.-J. Talsma (Netherlands)
- Mr. O. Mumbuna Amutike (Zambia)

Mr. H. Julien-Laferrière (France) was elected as President of the Committee.

6. Group of Facilitators for Cyprus

The Governing Council elected Ms. Á. Vadai (Hungary) as Facilitator for a four-year term ending in March 2027.

7. Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law

The Governing Council elected the following member for a four-year term ending in March 2027:

Arab Group

- Ms. D. Alzayed (Bahrain)

8. High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG)

The Governing Council elected the following members for a four-year term ending in March 2027:

Arab Group

- Ms. L. Mohsin Haider Al Zaabi (Oman)
- Mr. A. Alharbi (Saudi Arabia)

Asia-Pacific Group

- Ms. S. Ambareesch (India)
- Mr. A. Golroo (Islamic Republic of Iran)

Group of Latin America and the Caribbean

- Ms. M. Guerra Castillo (Mexico)

Twelve Plus Group

- Mr. D. Danon (Israel)
- Mr. M. Karlsson (Sweden)

A vacancy remains for one member from the *Eurasia Group*.

The HLAG elected Mr. M. Bouden (Algeria) as Chairperson of the Group and Ms. Á. Vadai (Hungary) as Vice-Chairperson of the Group.

9. Working Group on Science and Technology

The Governing Council elected the following two members for a four-year term ending March 2027:

Arab Group

- Mr. A.H. Saleh (Iraq)

Asia-Pacific Group

- Mr. K. Tontisirin (Thailand)

A vacancy remains for one member from the African Group.

Ms. S. Attia (Egypt) was re-elected as Vice-Chair of the Working Group.

10. Bureaux of the Standing Committees

The Standing Committees also elected the following members to their respective Bureaux for terms ending in March 2025:

Standing Committee on Peace and International Security

African Group

- Mr. A.M. Bouchouit (Algeria) for a second term
- Mr. V. Musowa (Malawi) for a first term
- Ms. S. Amero (Uganda) for a first term

Arab Group

- Ms. W. Fahad (Iraq) for a first term
- Mr. A. Touizi (Morocco) for a second term

Asia-Pacific Group

- Mr. B. Mahtab (India) for a second term
- Ms. R.M. Singkaru (Indonesia) to replace Ms. Y. Paris (Indonesia) to complete the second term for Indonesia
- Mr. M. Rezakhah (Islamic Republic of Iran) to replace Mr. A. Naderi (Islamic Republic of Iran) to complete the second term for the Islamic Republic of Iran

Eurasia Group

- Mr. A. Albu (Republic of Moldova) for a first term
- *Two vacancies*

Group of Latin America and the Caribbean

- *Vacancy* (Argentina)
- *Vacancy* (Chile)

Twelve Plus Group

- Ms. D. Bergamini (Italy) for a first term
- Mr. L. Wehrli (Switzerland) for a first term

Standing Committee on Sustainable Development

*Arab Group**

- Ms. M. Al Suwaidi (United Arab Emirates) for a first term

Asia-Pacific Group

- Mr. P.S. Rudana (Indonesia) for a first term
- Ms. M.R.J. Arenas (Philippines) for a first term

Group of Latin America and the Caribbean

- Ms. E. Cuesta Santana (Ecuador) for a second term

Twelve Plus Group

- Ms. G. Burokiene (Lithuania) for a first term

Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights

African Group

- Ms. F. Ilimi (Algeria) for a first term

Arab Group

- Ms. T. Alriyati (Jordan) for a first term
- Mr. S. Al Doosari (Qatar) for a second term
- Mr. H.A. Al-Ahmar (Yemen) for a first term

Asia-Pacific Group

- Mr. F.H. Naek (Pakistan) for a first term

Eurasia Group

- *Vacancy*

Group of Latin America and the Caribbean

- Ms. M.d.C. Alva Prieto (Peru) for a first term

Twelve Plus Group

- Mr. V. Sanchez Del Real (Spain) for a first term
- Mr. C. Lohr (Switzerland) for a first term
- Ms. L. Vasylenko (Ukraine) for a first term

Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs

African Group

- Mr. A. Talbi (Algeria) for a first term
- Mr. D. Laouhingamaye (Chad) for a first term

*Arab Group**

- Mr. A. Almutairi (Kuwait) for a second term

Asia Pacific Group

- Mr. H. Aoyagi (Japan) for a first term
- Ms. P. Cayetano (Philippines) for a first term

Twelve Plus Group

- Mr. D. McGuinty (Canada) for a first term
- Ms. A. Shkrum (Ukraine) for a first term

* On 26 March 2023, the IPU received a formal communication from the Parliament of Kuwait specifying that the constitutional court had annulled the elections that had taken place in the country in 2022 and that the Bureau member from Kuwait appointed during the Assembly was no longer an MP. As such, the previous Standing Committee on Sustainable Development Bureau member from Kuwait retains his position on the Bureau and the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs Bureau member has been reappointed for a second term.

11. Rapporteurs

The Standing Committee on Peace and International Security appointed Ms. M. Stolbizer (Argentina) and Mr. C. Lacroix (Belgium) as co-Rapporteurs for the subject item *Addressing the social and humanitarian impact of autonomous weapon systems and artificial intelligence*.

The Standing Committee on Sustainable Development appointed Mr. S. Patra (India), Ms. L. Vasylenko (Ukraine) and Ms. M. Al Suwaidi (United Arab Emirates) as co-Rapporteurs for the subject item *Partnerships for climate action: Promoting access to affordable green energy, and ensuring innovation, responsibility and equity*.

In addition, the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights appointed Mr. E. Bustamante (Peru) as co-Rapporteur for the subject item *Orphanage trafficking: The role of parliaments in reducing harm* (due for adoption at the 147th Assembly) alongside Ms. L. Reynolds (Australia), who had been appointed during the previous Assembly in Kigali.

Media and communications

The 146th IPU Assembly in Manama, Bahrain set a number of communications records, especially in terms of Member engagement and amplification of key messages, which is one of the main objectives of the refreshed IPU Communications Strategy.

During the Assembly, the IPU promoted several key publications and initiatives, such as the [Impact Report 2022](#), gender products for International Women’s Day, the new climate change campaign, and materials relating to various events in the preceding weeks. All previous communications records had been broken at the 145th IPU Assembly in Kigali, Rwanda, so the bar was especially high, but the 146th IPU Assembly remained broadly successful for the IPU’s visibility and outreach.

Media

A media advisory and two press releases were sent to the IPU database of thousands of journalists, as well as to some 200 journalists who had registered to cover the Assembly.

The Assembly made headline news and was covered extensively in the national media in Bahrain, as well as across the wider region. The Assembly also received international coverage, especially in countries that had sent high-level parliamentary delegations such as Angola, Australia, Egypt, India, Israel, Liberia, Tonga, Ukraine, United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe.

The IPU communications team organized a joint press conference with the Host Parliament, attended by about 30 national media representatives. Questions from the media were fielded by Mr. D. Pacheco (IPU President), Mr. M. Chungong (IPU Secretary General), Mr. J. Fakhro (First Deputy Chairperson of the Shura Council of Bahrain) and Mr. A. Salman (First Deputy Speaker of the Council of Representatives of Bahrain).

Livestreaming and web

Livestreaming of the Assembly, the Governing Council and the Forum of Women Parliamentarians, as well as IPU editorial coverage of the Assembly, generated about 20,000 visitors to the IPU website. Although traffic was 40% lower than during the 145th Assembly in Kigali, when the website received 33,000 visitors, users spent 8% longer on the website this time around. More than two thirds of traffic was from new users, suggesting that the IPU is reaching new audiences. The top visiting countries were Bahrain, France, India, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

Some 10,000 views of the livestreams were recorded, on a par with views received at the 144th Assembly in Nusa Dua, Indonesia, but down compared with the 145th Assembly in Kigali, when 16,700 views were recorded, an all-time high. However, viewers stayed longer in Manama (an average of 12 minutes) compared with Kigali (7 minutes).

The audience was relatively youthful, with the majority of viewers under age 34. The gender breakdown of viewers watching the stream was 67% male, 33% female. Women made up a smaller proportion of the audience than in Kigali (40%), but the share of female viewers was higher than in Nusa Dua (31%).

Video on demand

Video extracts of plenary speeches during the General Debate broke all previous records, with huge demand from Member Parliaments. By the end of the Assembly, the team had prepared clips of 92 speeches, which were sent to delegations (compared with 62 in Kigali and 25 in Nusa Dua).

This service is proving increasingly popular. It is a key component of the IPU's Communications Strategy, which encourages Members to engage more and to multiply the IPU's efforts to reach a wider audience, especially at the national level.

Social media

The social media wall continued to be a popular feature, with many parliamentarians joining the digital conversation using the hashtags #IPU146 and #Parliaments4thePlanet. Twitter was the overwhelming source of content, followed by Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn.

For the first time, the number of posts from third-party sources surpassed those published directly by the IPU, showing a real uptick in Member engagement with our platforms.

On Twitter, the IPU published 171 tweets, which generated a total of 358,000 impressions (25,000 impressions per day), double the number recorded in Nusa Dua but lower than in Kigali.

Across Meta platforms, the IPU trialled a new strategy, with more visually interesting posts, stories and reels to cater to this particular audience. On Instagram, the team posted 27 items, including numerous videos and reels, and a record 127 stories. The strategy paid off, with engagement up by 5.8% and an additional 217 quality followers, most of whom are MPs. On Facebook, the IPU published 51 posts and acquired 116 new followers.

The IPU LinkedIn account performed strongly, with a 33% increase in the number of followers sharing the Organization's content compared with the Kigali Assembly, providing evidence of increased engagement and amplification. The launch of the *Women in Politics: 2023* map and the *Parliaments for the Planet* campaign generated the most interest.

Parliaments for the Planet campaign launch

The IPU's new climate change campaign, *Parliaments for the Planet*, was launched during the first sitting of the Governing Council on 12 March 2023 and repeatedly mentioned throughout the Assembly. The focal point for the campaign was an eco-stand where IPU and local staff engaged with parliamentarians on climate action.

At the stand, some 100 MPs used a dedicated tool to calculate their carbon footprint, and 40 of them were interviewed for the new *My parliament, my planet!* video series. These new interviews will be added to the 12 already produced to create a rich library of videos in which MPs from around the world talk about how climate change has affected their country and what their parliament is doing about it.

All 2,000 copies of the IPU's new publication *10 actions for greener parliaments (and those who work in them)* were distributed in the Organization's four working languages. Hard copies of the IPU's other publications were also distributed, including three recent flagship products: *Impact Report 2022*, *Women in parliament in 2022* and the *Women in Politics: 2023* map.

Photography

Some 55 meetings were covered by the team of photographers supplied by the host parliament for the Assembly. The communications team collated 430,000 photos, with a peak of 114,000 on 13 March 2023. Hundreds of pictures were downloaded every day by Member Parliaments.

Membership of the Inter-Parliamentary Union¹

Members (179)

Afghanistan**, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia (The), Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras*, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar**, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Palestine, Panama, Papua New Guinea*, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Associate Members (14)

Andean Parliament, Arab Parliament, Central American Parliament (PARLACEN), East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), European Parliament, Interparliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States (IPA CIS), Inter-Parliamentary Committee of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), Latin American and Caribbean Parliament (PARLATINO), Pan-African Parliament, Parliament of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Parliament of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC), Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC), Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) and Parliamentary Assembly of La Francophonie (APF).

¹ At the closing of the 146th Assembly

* Non-participating Members (all rights suspended)

** Members participating in the work of the IPU in a non-voting observer capacity

Agenda, resolutions and other texts of the 146th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

1. Election of the President of the 146th Assembly
2. Consideration of requests for the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda
3. General Debate on the theme *Promoting peaceful coexistence and inclusive societies: Fighting intolerance*
4. Special accountability segment on the implementation of IPU resolutions and other decisions
5. *Cybercrimes: The new risks to global security*
(Standing Committee on Peace and International Security)
6. *Parliamentary efforts in achieving negative carbon balances of forests*
(Standing Committee on Sustainable Development)
7. Reports of the Standing Committees
8. Approval of the subject items for the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security and for the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development for the 148th Assembly and appointment of the co-Rapporteurs
9. Emergency item: *Raising awareness and calling for action on the serious humanitarian crises affecting the peoples of Afghanistan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine, Yemen and other countries, and on the particular vulnerability of women and children*

Manama Declaration

Promoting peaceful coexistence and inclusive societies: Fighting intolerance

*Endorsed by the 146th IPU Assembly
(Manama, 15 March 2023)*

We, Members of Parliament from around the world, gathered at the 146th IPU Assembly in Manama, Bahrain, are deeply aware of the dangers that hate, intolerance, exclusion and violence in all their forms pose to the very foundations of democracy and to the social contract that holds our societies together.

Consumed by greed and competition, our world is facing social and economic inequalities on an unprecedented scale. Heightened economic insecurity is breaking communities apart and leaving growing numbers of people socially isolated, fending for themselves and often with inadequate access to public service delivery and social safety nets.

Inequality and economic insecurity can give rise to anger and frustration in communities everywhere. The dignity intrinsic to every human being can be undermined by factors such as poverty, the denial of inalienable economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights, violations of the rule of law, discrimination against women, lack of inclusion of youth, and the de facto exclusion from politics of the most vulnerable and marginalized.

Xenophobia, racism, intolerance, negative stereotyping, stigmatization, discrimination and extremist narratives are all expressions of this deep malaise in our societies. They manifest themselves in hate speech or outright violence in various forms against migrants, people with disabilities, and national, ethnic, religious, linguistic or other marginalized groups perceived as a threat to the established order. They can also be expressed in the desecration of religious sites and symbols, actions which are deeply offensive to people of faith. We, however, recognize the diversity within our communities as a source of enrichment, and we reaffirm the fundamental rights and freedoms of all people, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Regrettably, some in positions of influence in society seek to exploit the vulnerabilities of others, sowing hatred and division as a way to advance their own interests. Digital platforms designed to facilitate social interaction and communication are being misused to micro-target, amplify and spread disinformation and ill intent against others. The ease with which some of these voices speak in total disregard of the truth carries profound dangers for democracy. Most worryingly, their words can be a direct cause of violence and intolerance within communities and between nations.

We can respond to these challenges by encouraging collaborative networks promoting dialogue and joint projects in service to the community, by creating channels for conflict prevention and mediation, by promoting moderation, by advancing education and awareness building, and by encouraging community and religious leaders to contribute to these objectives. We commit to speaking out against intolerance and especially any advocacy of hatred that constitutes discrimination, hostility or violence. We will also assist in the resolution of conflict through the exercise of parliamentary diplomacy.

With all this in mind, we consider it our unique responsibility, as parliamentarians, to speak and act responsibly towards all people, particularly those who disagree with us, and in ways that bring people together peacefully in pursuit of the common good. We affirm that societies that are inclusive and just, and in which rights are upheld, are more likely to be cohesive, peaceful and democratic. We pledge to fight inequality through rights-based economic and social policies that put people before profit and the weak before the strong, and that uphold the equality and dignity of every person. We reaffirm the urgent need to implement the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 – leaving no one behind – as our best hope for peace, democracy and sustainable development for all.

More concretely, we are committed to utilizing our law-making, representative and oversight functions towards the following objectives:

- Make hate-motivated acts and all forms of violence linked to religion, belief, xenophobia, racism, or intolerance of marginalized groups an offence under the law.
- Invest in education for all and at all levels, including peace education and “education for democracy”, pursuant to the United Nations General Assembly resolutions by this name.
- Make parliamentary proceedings consistently open to the input of relevant civil society organizations and community groups representative of the diversity of society.

- Engage in constructive, respectful dialogue with parliamentarians of all political persuasions, both nationally and internationally.
- Ensure that national statistical institutes and research bodies produce up-to-date disaggregated data to assist with the formulation of inclusive economic and social policies.
- Perform self-assessments of the inclusivity of our parliaments and take active measures to increase the representation in our parliaments of women and youth, as well as of underrepresented national, ethnic, religious, linguistic, and other marginalized and vulnerable communities.
- Uphold the rights of migrants, refugees and stateless people, as particularly vulnerable groups, consistent with international conventions.
- Regulate digital platforms and other media to diminish the risk of hate speech and various forms of disinformation while protecting the fundamental right of free speech as a bulwark of democracy.
- Protect cultural sites as expressions of our common heritage, as well as holy sites, places of worship and religious symbols as expressions of different religions and beliefs.
- Promote interaction with relevant UN organizations working for interfaith and intercultural dialogue, and support UN peacekeeping and mediation efforts.

We pledge to take this Declaration forward through concrete actions and in accordance with the core values of the IPU as outlined in its current Strategy.

Cybercrimes: The new risks to global security

Resolution adopted by consensus by the 146th IPU Assembly
(Manama, 15 March 2023)*

The 146th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Condemning all forms of cybercrime and *reaffirming* the need to combat such acts through international cooperation,

Reaffirming the existing United Nations framework for responsible State behaviour in the use of information and communications technologies (ICTs) and the need to implement this framework,

Recognizing the need to build trust and mutual understanding between countries in response to the malicious use of ICTs by State as well as non-State actors, who recognize neither boundaries nor borders,

Observing the growing use of and dependence on ICTs worldwide,

Cognizant of the increase in cybercrime activities due to increasing digitalization, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic,

Noting the responsibility of parliaments to build a regulatory framework that protects citizens in cyberspace with new infrastructure and resources, in the same way as in the physical world,

Recalling United Nations General Assembly resolution 31/72 of 10 December 1976 on the *Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques*, resolutions 55/63 of 4 December 2000 and 56/121 of 19 December 2001 on *Combating the criminal misuse of information technologies*, and resolution 57/239 of 31 January 2003 on the *Creation of a global culture of cybersecurity*,

Recalling also the annual resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly on *Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security*, and in particular resolution 69/28 of 2 December 2014, resolution 73/266 of 22 December 2018 establishing the Group of Governmental Experts on advancing responsible State behaviour in the context of international security, and resolution 75/240 of 31 December 2020 establishing the Open-ended Working Group on security of and in the use of information and communications technologies 2021–2025, and *highlighting* the voluntary and non-binding norms of responsible State behaviour in the

* The delegation of India expressed reservations on operative paragraph 25.
The delegation of the Russian Federation expressed reservations on preambular paragraph 11 and operative paragraph 1

use of ICTs in the context of international security, developed by the Group of Governmental Experts and endorsed by United Nations General Assembly resolution 70/237 of 23 December 2015, which calls on United Nations Member States to be guided by these norms, as well as the establishment, through United Nations General Assembly resolution 77/37 of 7 December 2022, of a United Nations programme of action to discuss existing and potential threats and to support States' capacities and efforts to implement and advance commitments,

Recalling further the United Nations *Convention against Transnational Organized Crime* of 15 November 2000 and the United Nations *Convention against Corruption* of 31 October 2003,

Stressing the importance of regional conventions on cybercrime, transnational organized crime, exchange of information and administrative assistance, including the Council of Europe *Convention on Cybercrime* of 23 November 2001 and its *Additional Protocol concerning the criminalisation of acts of a racist and xenophobic nature committed through computer systems* of 28 January 2003, the *Agreement on Cooperation in Ensuring International Information Security between the Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization* of 16 June 2009, the *Arab Convention on Combating Information Technology Offences* of 21 December 2010, the Latin American and Caribbean Parliament (Parlatino) *Model Law on Cybercrime* of November 2013 and its updates, the *Parlatino Model Law on Social Prevention of Violence and Crime* of November 2015, the *Parlatino Model Law on Computer Crimes* of February 2021, and the *Parlatino Model Law on Combating Illicit Trade and Transnational Crime* of February 2021, the *Agreement on Cooperation among the Member States of the Commonwealth of Independent States in the Field of Ensuring Information Security* of 20 November 2013, the *Agreement on Cooperation among the Member States of the Commonwealth of Independent States in the Fight Against Crimes in the Field of Information Technology* of 28 September 2018, and the *African Union Convention on Cyber Security and Personal Data Protection* of 27 June 2014,

Stressing also that the Council of Europe *Convention on Cybercrime*, which is open for accession by any country, has become an instrument of global significance, with States Parties from, and impact in, all regions of the world,

Recalling the IPU's work on the various new risks faced by our increasingly digitized societies, including the IPU resolutions *Cyber warfare: A serious threat to peace and global security* (adopted at the 132nd Assembly, Hanoi, 1 April 2015), and *Legislation worldwide to combat online child sexual exploitation and abuse* (adopted at the 143rd Assembly, Madrid, 30 November 2021), which also recalls the Council of Europe *Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse* (the "Lanzarote Convention") of 25 October 2007,

Commending the work of the United Nations on advancing responsible State behaviour in cyberspace,

Commending also the efforts of the United Nations to enact, through General Assembly resolution 74/247 of 27 December 2019, an international cybercrime convention, and *welcoming* the creation of an ad hoc committee charged with drafting this convention,

Welcoming the participation of the IPU in the multi-stakeholder consultation process of that ad hoc committee in order to ensure that the voice of parliaments is heard,

Noting the need for a global approach to the issue of cybercrime and its serious consequences for citizens, as well as the need to protect global peace, security and economic stability while upholding the basic tenets of human rights including freedom of speech,

Recognizing the urgent need for legislators, governments and all stakeholders to take more proactive national steps to combat cybercrime, given its renewed intensity and rapidly evolving nature,

Recognizing also that all actions in this field need to have respect for human rights and fundamental rights at their centre,

Noting the uneven development in countries' ICT application capacity and ability to protect ICT infrastructure, and *emphasizing* the need for increased technical assistance and collaboration, especially for developing countries,

Noting also that States shall act in accordance with their obligations under international human rights law, including but not limited to the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, the *Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment*, the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*, and additional protocols and other relevant international human rights instruments,

Recognizing the need for common, international parliamentary action to advance awareness and implementation of voluntary and non-binding norms regarding responsible State behaviour in the use of ICTs,

Noting that cybercrime may constitute a serious threat to democratic processes, especially interference in elections through cybersecurity breaches or false social media accounts,

Acknowledging that women, young people, children, elderly people, people with disabilities, and racialized communities are particularly vulnerable to cybercrimes,

Acknowledging also the need for efforts to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in all their diversity, including through gender mainstreaming, in the development, implementation and application of policies, programmes and legislation in this field,

Noting the nature of the threats and risks of transnational cybercrime to international peace and security, and the tremendous developments in cyberspace, as a result of which the methods used by cybercriminals are becoming increasingly sophisticated,

Noting also that cybercrime includes but is not limited to attacks on computer systems, breaches of privacy, the creation and deployment of malware, and, increasingly, the facilitation of attacks on critical civilian infrastructure, as well as other acts that can occur offline and be facilitated by computer systems, including online fraud, drug trade, money-laundering, hate crimes, human trafficking, and technology-facilitated gender-based violence such as sexual harassment, threats, stalking, bullying, sexist hate speech, and the sexual exploitation of women and children via the internet – all of which negatively affect global security and economic stability,

Considering that most national laws were enacted before cybercrime arose and therefore do not always adequately address these threats,

1. *Encourages* parliaments to consider taking the necessary steps for their country to accede, if it has not yet done so, to existing international instruments that address the use of ICTs for criminal purposes, including the Council of Europe *Convention on Cybercrime*, which is the most comprehensive multilateral cybercrime treaty in force and is open for accession by all States;
2. *Calls upon* parliaments to make sure their legislation on cybercrime is up to date and relevant, in accordance with international law, including international human rights instruments, to allocate the necessary resources to this end and to engage all stakeholders, including the private sector, academia, civil society and the technical community, considering the ongoing increase in the scale, scope, speed, complexity and frequency of such acts and their implications for national security, international peace and security, and global economic stability, as well as to include in such legislation extraterritorial jurisdiction to enable the prosecution of criminal acts, irrespective of where those acts were committed and whether they constitute offences in the foreign jurisdiction in question;
3. *Urges* parliaments to ensure that human rights impact assessments are embedded in all legislative processes on cybercrime;
4. *Calls upon* parliaments to enhance the capacity of law enforcement officers, including investigative authorities, prosecutors and judges, in the field of cybercrime, and to equip them to effectively investigate, prosecute and adjudicate cases of cybercrime offences;
5. *Encourages* parliaments to make full use of their oversight function to ensure that governments have the tools, including appropriate resources and capacity, to prevent and combat the rapid increase in cybercrimes and to protect the cybersecurity, identity, privacy and data of citizens while safeguarding human rights and freedoms;
6. *Strongly recommends* that parliaments ensure that their national legislative frameworks on the protection of critical national infrastructure, including the infrastructure that supports the internet, are up to date, or that they establish such frameworks where necessary;
7. *Encourages* parliaments to promote an open, free and secure cyberspace by calling on their governments to abide by the United Nations norms of responsible State behaviour in cyberspace, to cooperate in fighting cybercrime as well as cybercriminals and malicious actors, to respond to requests for assistance and capacity-building, if possible in real time,

in accordance with the rule of law and fully respecting international human rights law and fundamental freedoms, to secure the supply chain of companies in their countries, to report voluntarily on potential vulnerabilities to third parties to assist them in preventing future incidents, and in particular to support and protect all cyber incident response teams within and beyond their borders;

8. *Also encourages* parliaments to draft gender-responsive legislation promoting cross-cutting cybersecurity services that prioritize prevention (awareness-raising, auditing and training), incident detection (24 hours a day, 7 days a week), and an instant and efficient response to cyber threats, through a victim-centric approach
9. *Recommends* that parliaments promote the establishment of relevant institutions and bodies – such as national cybersecurity centres, computer emergency response teams, computer security incident response teams and security operations centres – where these do not already exist in their country;
10. *Also recommends* that all parliaments ensure that such institutions and bodies have adequate budgetary resources and specialized personnel, including women cybersecurity experts, to allow for an agile, timely and effective response to cybercrime and to protect critical civilian infrastructure, public institutions, companies and citizens without breaching privacy, while taking into account that the increasing digitalization of public services and utilities could imply major exposure to digital risks;
11. *Urges* parliaments to promote international coordination between such institutions and bodies in order to monitor, prevent, detect, investigate and respond to cyber threats;
12. *Invites* parliaments to encourage their governments to provide specific cybersecurity training in order to help increase the number of cybersecurity professionals and to strengthen their performance;
13. *Reaffirms* that an open, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful ICT environment is essential for all and requires effective cooperation among States to reduce risks to international peace and security, and *calls upon* the international community to promote full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms;
14. *Calls upon* parliaments to encourage investment in research and development, incorporating into the design of each project specific cybersecurity provisions, with appropriate budget allocation, in order to anticipate and protect against possible emerging cyber threats;
15. *Encourages* parliaments to partner with industry, academia and all other stakeholders, including civil society, with their respective governments as key facilitators, in order to foster a strong and collaborative cybersecurity ecosystem that fully respects human rights principles and international human rights obligations;
16. *Calls upon* parliaments and parliamentarians to actively engage in promoting a shared, up-to-date national understanding of the nature of cybercrime as experienced by citizens, organizations and institutions;
17. *Urges* parliaments to help foster a true “culture of cybersecurity” by developing educational curricula focused on training future generations, from childhood onwards, in digital literacy and technological know-how, covering both the great opportunities presented and the serious risks posed by technology;
18. *Recommends* that parliaments broaden protections for women, young people, children, elderly people, people with disabilities, and racialized communities in cyberspace, taking respect for human rights and the prevention of gender-based violence into account in the development of educational policies on the use of social media;
19. *Urges* parliaments to take the necessary action to protect critical moments in democracy, and especially those periods when citizens exercise their right to vote, in order to avoid attacks and interferences that seek to influence, change or violate the free formation of public opinion during the electoral process;
20. *Calls upon* the international community to take action to protect democracy by ensuring that all parliaments worldwide, as institutions representing the will of the people, are afforded special protection through their inclusion in lists of critical civilian infrastructure and essential services;

21. *Stresses* the need to further enhance international cooperation and assistance in the area of ICT security and capacity-building, as a means to bridge digital divides and strengthen the response to cyber threats globally;
22. *Calls upon* parliaments to deepen their understanding of the complex and rapidly evolving nature of cybercrime by enabling the open sharing of knowledge, experience and expertise, and by holding specialized seminars, workshops and conferences on this subject;
23. *Invites* the IPU Secretariat, in partnership with other relevant organizations, to promote this new vision of cybersecurity by supporting parliaments in their capacity-building endeavours;
24. *Recommends* that the IPU, as the global organization of parliaments, play a leading role in preventing and combating cybercrime, and in stimulating cyber-resilience, by participating in all relevant international forums, including those led by the United Nations, with a view to ensuring that the voice of parliaments is heard;
25. *Promotes* the creation of a working group on cybercrime, subsidiary to the Governing Council of the IPU, whose specific mission shall be to comply with the mandates and objectives established in this resolution, and whose powers shall include both supporting the process for the promotion of an international convention on cybercrime within the framework of the United Nations, and strengthening the capacities of IPU Member Parliaments in terms of law-making, oversight and budgeting;
26. *Recommends* that the IPU raise awareness among parliaments on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals through, above all else, their universal commitments to digital security.

Parliamentary efforts in achieving negative carbon balances of forests

Resolution adopted by consensus by the 146th IPU Assembly
(Manama, 15 March 2023)*

The 146th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Recalling the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the 2015 Paris Agreement, including its goal to hold the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, and in particular its Article 5, which calls on the Parties to the Agreement to take action to conserve and enhance sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases, including forests, and encourages them to develop policy approaches to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, to set positive incentives for sustainable management of forests, and to enhance carbon sequestration and reduce emissions in forests,

Mindful of the outcomes of the United Nations Climate Change Conferences in Glasgow (COP26) and Sharm el-Sheikh (COP27) and *taking note* of the forest-relevant contribution of the *Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use*, in which more than 140 countries committed to working collectively to halt and reverse forest loss and land degradation by 2030 while delivering sustainable development and promoting inclusive rural transformation and value chains, and in which they reaffirmed international financial commitments, private finance and investment support to enable forest conservation and restoration, and support for indigenous peoples and local communities, as well as the findings of the IPCC Working Group III on mitigation and its recommendations on reducing deforestation and increasing reforestation,

* The delegation of India expressed reservations on preambular paragraphs 2, 5 and 8, and on operative paragraphs 1, 3, 5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 17 and 21.

The delegation of the Russian Federation expressed reservations on preambular paragraph 19.

Welcoming the *Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework* adopted in December 2022 and its 4 goals and 23 targets, including target 2, which seeks to “ensure that by 2030 at least 30% of areas of degraded terrestrial, inland water, and coastal and marine ecosystems are under effective restoration, in order to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, ecological integrity and connectivity”,

Looking forward to the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Dubai (COP28), which will follow up on the COP26 and COP27 climate conferences’ outcomes regarding forest protection,

Recalling the IPU resolutions *Climate change, sustainable development models, and renewable energies* (120th IPU Assembly, Addis Ababa, April 2009), *Addressing climate change* (141st IPU Assembly, Belgrade, October 2019), *Parliamentary strategies to strengthen peace and security against threats and conflicts resulting from climate-related disasters and their consequences* (142nd IPU Assembly, virtual session, May 2021), the Nusa Dua Declaration *Getting to zero: Mobilizing parliaments to act on climate change* (144th IPU Assembly, Nusa Dua, March 2022), and the Declaration of the President of the Assembly on climate change (116th IPU Assembly, Nusa Dua, May 2007),

Guided by the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which emphasize that climate policy, poverty reduction and universal peace are all inextricably linked in achieving sustainable development, in particular SDG 15 to “protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss” and SDG 13 to “take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts”, as well as SDG 17 to “strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development”,

Committed to the implementation of the *Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework* adopted by the 15th Conference of Parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity in December 2022, in particular of target 2 to restore at least 30% of areas of degraded ecosystems by 2030 and of target 3 to ensure that by 2030 at least 30% of terrestrial, inland water, coastal and marine areas are effectively conserved and managed through ecologically representative, well-connected and equitably governed systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures,

Reaffirming United Nations General Assembly resolution 76/300 recognizing the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as a human right, resolution 71/285, in which the *United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017–2030* was adopted, and resolution 73/284 on the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030),

Committed to the realization of the shared vision set out in the *United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017–2030* “of a world in which all types of forests and trees outside forests are sustainably managed, contribute to sustainable development and provide economic, social, environmental and cultural benefits for present and future generations”,

Reaffirming the importance of the six goals defined in the *United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017–2030*, and especially goal 1 to “reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through sustainable forest management, including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, and increase efforts to prevent forest degradation and contribute to the global effort of addressing climate change”, which would, among other benefits, serve the achievement of SDG targets 6.6 to “protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including [...] forests”, 12.2 to “achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources”, 15.1 to “ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests”, and especially 15.2 to “promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally”,

Emphasizing target 1.2 of goal 1 of the *United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030*, which calls for “the world’s forest carbon stocks [to be] maintained or enhanced”,

Endorsing goal 2 of the *United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017–2030*, to “enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest-dependent people”, especially its target 2.2 to “increase the access of small-scale forest

enterprises, in particular in developing countries, to financial services, including affordable credit, and their integration into value chains and markets” and target 2.3, which calls for “the contribution of forests and trees to food security [to be] significantly increased”,

Welcoming the international community’s continuing engagement in numerous global initiatives to address the contribution of forests to climate protection, including the Forests and Climate Leaders’ Partnership; the Congo Basin Forest Partnership; the 15th World Forestry Congress held in Seoul in May 2022; the ASEAN Green Initiative to ramp up restoration efforts and plant at least 10 million native trees in the next 10 years across the 10 ASEAN Member States starting from 2021, and to set standards for the recognition of tree planting activities and programmes across the region that not only regrow forests in the region but also contribute to people’s well-being, livelihood improvement, and resilience-building; the Bonn Challenge, a global goal to bring 150 million hectares of degraded and deforested landscapes into restoration by 2020 and 350 million hectares by 2030; the World Economic Forum’s global initiative to conserve, restore and grow 1 trillion trees by 2030; the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative; and the *Strategic Plan of Action for ASEAN Cooperation on Forestry*; and *recognizing* that all of these initiatives have contributed to States’ affirmation of forest protection and emission reduction targets, and have showcased the many opportunities for prevention, mitigation, resilience-building and adaptation through the contributions of national governments, provinces, cities and villages, private corporations, financial institutions and civil society,

Recognizing the crucial role that women and youth play in forest ecosystem conservation and restoration, and stressing the need for the full participation of women and youth at all levels of policymaking and implementation in forest ecosystem conservation and restoration,

Noting that forests are resources of global significance, covering 31% of the Earth’s land surface, but storing almost half of terrestrial carbon; that forests help to regulate regional climate by influencing rainfall patterns and cooling urban areas; that trees and forests regulate the water balance, serve as drinking-water reservoirs and protect against erosion, landslide, rockfalls, avalanches, floods, desertification, land degradation and food insecurity; that sustainably managed forests deliver natural, climate-neutral resources for various value chains; and that well-managed forests provide subsistence, medicines, recreational and cultural purpose, livelihoods, employment and income to forest-dwelling communities, forest-dependent people and Indigenous people, and act as a natural buffer against the transmission of zoonoses,

Gravely concerned about the loss, through deforestation, of 420 million hectares of forests between 1990 and 2020, equivalent to approximately 10.34% of the world’s total forest area in the last 30 years, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations report *The State of the World’s Forests 2022*, with associated damage as manifested in droughts, desertification, and changes to weather patterns, as well as about the severe impact of forest loss on aspects of human life and on human development, and the fact that deforestation has a multiplying effect on existing crises in many respects and aspects,

Noting with great concern that deforestation and forest degradation are having an accelerating severe impact on climate change, with destruction and degradation of forests, including their soils, accounting for around 15% of global human-induced carbon release on Earth,

Cognizant of the detrimental impact of armed conflicts on forest ecosystems and the contribution of such conflicts to greenhouse gas emissions,

Regretting that the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, the largest conflict currently in existence, accompanied by massive forest fires and resulting in at least 33 million tonnes of CO₂ equivalent emissions, has significantly undermined global efforts to achieve negative carbon emission balances of forests and to combat climate change,

Aware that the progression of deforestation and forest degradation is one of the main root causes of increasing biodiversity loss and loss of genetic resources, as forests provide habitat for 80% of amphibian species, 75% of bird species and 68% of mammal species; and that tropical forests are particularly important as they contain about 50% of all animal and plant species,

Underlining the concrete and existential threat to food security and agriculture caused by deforestation and forest degradation, with forest destruction having massive regional impacts on rainfall and consequently on rainfed agriculture, particularly in the Amazon and the African tropics,

Recalling paragraphs 47 and 48 of the *Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan* adopted at COP27 in November 2022 pertaining to the provision of adequate and predictable support to developing-country Parties, in the context of which Parties should collectively aim to slow, halt and reverse forest cover and carbon loss, in accordance with national circumstances, consistently with the ultimate objective of the UNFCCC, while ensuring relevant social and environmental safeguards,

Expressing deep concern about the severe damage caused by forest loss to societies and economies, with an estimated 1.6 billion people, or 20% of the global population, depending on forests for subsistence, livelihoods, employment and income generation, according to the *United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017–2030*,

1. *Urges* IPU Member Parliaments to provide, in line with their parliamentary tasks, national regulations and laws that commit to the objective of net zero deforestation, meaning that when forests or trees are cleared in one area, reforestation or afforestation is ensured in another area as appropriate, seeking to maintain the same CO₂ storage balance and taking account of the time that different varieties of tree take to grow;
2. *Calls on* IPU Member Parliaments and their governments to intensify urgent actions to prevent and halt deforestation and forest degradation, increase forest areas and enhance the resilience of forest ecosystems, which are among the most cost-effective actions for mitigating and adapting to climate change, while stressing that reducing deforestation to a minimum and encouraging climate-focused afforestation avoid the direct emissions from lost biomass and enable conservation and enhancement of the greenhouse gas absorbing and capturing capacity of forests;
3. *Urges* IPU Member Parliaments and their governments to: expand existing protected areas and create new ones to protect forest ecosystems in line with the relevant international commitments; guarantee demilitarization of protected areas, especially in times of war; establish an appropriate legislative framework for the management of protected areas and take effective measures to enforce it; and cooperate, where appropriate, with neighbouring States to ensure better management and functioning of protected areas;
4. *Urges* IPU Member Parliaments to ramp up efforts to reforest and even restore degraded forests in the light of national circumstances, keeping in mind: that forest restoration is an active attempt to return an area to its previous naturally forested state using native trees; that non-native trees provide timber that can boost local economies and reduce logging pressure in native forests; that reforestation, afforestation and agroforestry using native and/or non-native trees help diversify livelihoods and landscapes to increase land productivity; that afforestation and restoration of forests can provide significant environmental, climatic, sociocultural and economic benefits; and that trees provide shade on agricultural land, prevent extreme sun exposure for the soil and cultivated plants, cool down temperatures on the ground, influence precipitation and lead to improved harvest results;
5. *Calls on* IPU Member Parliaments to promote more productive, efficient and sustainable agrifood systems by continuing to use existing arable land to reduce the demand for new agricultural land, maintain forests and secure the multiple benefits that forests provide to farming systems, keeping in mind that agricultural expansion is driving almost 90% of global deforestation, that many areas of arable land are not being utilized as efficiently and productively as possible, and that sustainably increasing productivity will reduce the pressure on forestland caused by a 35–56% increase in food demand by 2050 due to the projected growth in the global population to 9.7 billion people;
6. *Encourages* IPU Member Parliaments to take immediate action to ensure that sustainable forest management is more beneficial to generating income than deforestation and that such incomes are regular and high enough for people to sustain a living and compete with income derived from other land uses, while emphasizing that sustainable forest management and green value chains prevent the conversion of forest into agricultural land and support the transition to carbon-neutral economies, and that responsible forest management can counteract the underlying drivers of deforestation including poverty,

unsustainable production practices and consumption patterns, and can enhance the adaptability and resilience of forests to the impact of climate change while creating green jobs, especially in developing countries;

7. *Recommends* that IPU Member Parliaments create shared value from collective efforts through experience-sharing and technological transfer to promote the following: application of the principles of the circular economy in the use of wood; reforestation to expand the use of sustainable wood; substituting non-renewable or emissions-intensive materials, such as cement and concrete, in construction with sustainably grown wood products; increasing the lifespan of wood products to address growing demand; reducing waste through more efficient processing and the cascading use of forest products; advancing green technology; changing consumption patterns; and facilitating a transition to more circular and green economies;
8. *Invites* IPU Member Parliaments to review and improve forest-related legislation, strengthen forest law enforcement, and promote good governance at all levels in order to support sustainable forest management, and to combat and eradicate illegal practices in forest-related sectors;
9. *Calls on* IPU Member Parliaments to: adopt strategies and a systematic review and self-monitoring system that will allow governments to increase the value of the conservation and restoration of forests, especially of rainforests and boreal forests; emphasize the global value of the ecosystem services and natural resources of forests; and highlight that national, regional or international emissions trading schemes, such as the European Union Emissions Trading System or the Kyoto Protocol emissions trading scheme, are beneficial instruments for mobilizing private capital to finance forest protection and afforestation, including the use of removal units on the basis of land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF) activities such as reforestation, with an emphasis on maintaining the highest environmental and climate integrity of such schemes;
10. *Invites* IPU Member Parliaments to call on their governments to consider ecological fiscal reforms, to introduce policy initiatives to promote responsible consumption and production of forest-related goods, and to repurpose agricultural subsidies to include agroforestry and sustainable forestry, keeping in mind that policy instruments can be used strategically to create market incentives for responsible and sustainable forest management and to reorient incentives to boost green markets and financing;
11. *Encourages* IPU Member Parliaments to ensure that the objective of net zero emissions is incorporated in national economic, environmental and climate strategies, reaffirming the goals agreed upon in the Paris Agreement to hold the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, largely through ambitious efforts to: reduce greenhouse gas emissions to a minimum, and remove residual emissions from the atmosphere by, inter alia, protecting and restoring natural sinks like forests, soil and peatlands or through negative emission technologies such as direct air capture, and bioenergy with carbon capture and storage;
12. *Recommends* that IPU Member Parliaments: scale up action to phase down unabated coal power and phase out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies, especially for lignite and coal, which often require extensive logging; bear in mind the principle defined within the UNFCCC, and reconfirmed in the Paris Agreement, of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities in the light of different national circumstances; and direct global development policy in supporting developing countries that plan to construct coal-fired power plants to instead consider renewable energy power plants allowing the same energy production while also protecting energy, job security, climate and forests;
13. *Calls on* IPU Member Parliaments to intensify efforts to reduce the use of charcoal as an energy source and to promote sustainable, cost-effective, viable, renewable and carbon-neutral alternatives such as solar, hydro, geothermal, wind and nuclear power, bearing in mind the considerable forest loss and CO₂ emissions resulting from charcoal being the major source of energy in many developing countries with limited access to energy;

14. *Urges* IPU Member Parliaments to: take into account the needs and knowledge of local communities, including forest dwellers, forest-dependent people and Indigenous people, as per national norms in sustainable forest management, which are integral to the fight against climate change; acknowledge that indigenous peoples and local communities have been sustainably managing forests for millennia, using practices based on indigenous knowledge systems, enabling them to fulfil their needs without undermining the capacity of the ecosystems and forests in which they live; reaffirm that land-tenure rights for Indigenous peoples and local communities should be protected and enforced as appropriate; and emphasize that forest restoration preserves the territories and resources of indigenous people and lowers the pressure on declining forests in terms of firewood extraction, illegal logging and charcoal production;
15. *Also urges* IPU Member Parliaments to ensure that forest conservation practices and other nature-based climate solutions promote and respect the inherent rights of Indigenous people related to their traditional territories, including their right to be consulted and accommodated when measures and actions might adversely impact them, their lands or their resources;
16. *Invites* IPU Member Parliaments to: take action to strengthen their common understanding of forests, their sustainable management and climate protection, taking into account national and regional conditions, including as a matter of intergenerational equity and solidarity; engage the educational sector and local communities in reforestation, through a multi-level strategy and multi-stakeholder approach, as a key to sustainable and inclusive economic growth; make sure that appropriate educational programmes on forests are implemented and included in school curricula; promote educational efforts with young people and include future generations in climate protection measures so that they are aware of the need to protect forests and the environment and the ways in which it can be done, keeping in mind that it is the children and young people of today and tomorrow who will bear the consequences as climate change intensifies and who thus wish to actively engage in efforts to address climate change; and ensure that gender-sensitive approaches and tools are mainstreamed to provide men and women with an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from sustainable forest management while also ensuring the engagement of young people in forest-related decision-making;
17. *Urges* IPU Member Parliaments to set up mechanisms for agricultural extension services as intermediaries between researchers and farmers to explain the devastating effects of deforestation, train local populations in good agricultural practices, encourage farmers to adopt new, improved methods of farming, help farmers in their decision-making, and ensure that appropriate knowledge is implemented to obtain the best results with regard to sustainable production and rural development, while stressing the need for further investment in agronomy in tropical areas so that inputs like seeds and nutrients as well as training and access to markets can be provided;
18. *Recommends* that IPU Member Parliaments use their legislative powers to support incentives for local people and entrepreneurs in green economic employment and investment, as well as to enhance the balance of economic development at all levels, namely for individuals, families, communities and societies, and to pursue green growth strategies and the benefits of the sharing economy by taking into consideration social, cultural and environmental contexts for life-long learning, resilience and inclusive growth;
19. *Requests* that IPU Member Parliaments allocate a sufficient national budget in terms of investing in research and development for leveraging technology like cross-breeding of trees that are high-performing, have fast-growing roots and possibly promote forest rejuvenation and regeneration, and hence CO₂ storage capacity and climate resilience or the diversification and combination of tree varieties in forest plantations, in order to take advantage of the existing complementary characteristics of different species;
20. *Encourages* IPU Member Parliaments to provide an appropriate national budget to ramp up efforts to mobilize and invest in digital technologies and broadband services that provide access for households in rural and remote areas to online information about sustainable land use and forestry income opportunities, bearing in mind the importance of creating awareness about the need for sustainable forest management;

21. *Strongly urges* IPU Member Parliaments to maintain peaceful relations among themselves, to respect State sovereignty and State territory, and to take concerted and united action, despite political, economic and social differences, to bring a rapid end to wars of aggression around the world, bearing in mind that violent conflicts and wars, as well as mines, may lead to the destruction and contamination of ecosystems such as forests that are important not only for the people living in them but also for humankind as a whole;
22. *Urges* IPU Member Parliaments to foster enhanced coherence, collaboration and synergies among themselves and with national and international bodies and partners in working towards the common goals set out in this resolution, and to facilitate enhanced support and partnerships, including in terms of financial resources, technology transfer and capacity-building, in order to assist developing countries in promoting forest ecosystems, sustainable afforestation and agroforestry, as well as people's well-being;
23. *Requests* that the IPU Secretary General transmit the present resolution to IPU Member Parliaments, the United Nations Secretary-General and all relevant institutions;
24. *Encourages* IPU Member Parliaments to take suitable measures as per national circumstances to achieve the implementation of this resolution.

The urgent need to combat violence against women in politics, particularly in light of the proliferation of hate speech, fake news and violent incidents

Results of roll-call vote on the request of the delegation of Argentina for the inclusion of an emergency item

Results

Affirmative votes.....	393	Total of affirmative and negative votes ..	1,120
Negative votes	727	Two-thirds majority.....	747
Abstentions	373		

Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.
Albania		<i>Absent</i>		Guinea	7		6	Peru	4	11	
Algeria		16		Guyana	<i>Absent</i>			Philippines	20		
Angola		7	8	Hungary		12		Poland		15	
Argentina	7		7	Iceland			10	Portugal		13	
Armenia	<i>Absent</i>			India	23			Qatar		11	
Australia		14		Indonesia		22		Republic of Korea	17		
Austria		12		Iran (Islamic Republic of)		19		Romania		13	
Azerbaijan			13	Iraq		16		Russian Federation		20	
Bahrain		11		Ireland			12	Rwanda			13
Bangladesh	<i>Absent</i>			Israel		12		San Marino		10	
Belarus		12		Italy		17		Saudi Arabia		15	
Belgium		13		Japan	20			Senegal	<i>Absent</i>		
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	13			Jordan		13		Serbia	12		
Botswana			11	Kazakhstan			13	Seychelles			8
Brazil	20			Kenya	17			Sierra Leone	<i>Absent</i>		
Burkina Faso	7		7	Kuwait		11		Singapore	<i>Absent</i>		
Burundi			13	Lao People's Dem. Republic	12			Slovakia	<i>Absent</i>		
Cabo Verde	<i>Absent</i>			Latvia		11		Slovenia		11	
Cambodia	5		5	Liberia	<i>Absent</i>			Somalia	<i>Absent</i>		
Cameroon	<i>Absent</i>			Libya		12		South Africa			17
Canada		15		Liechtenstein			10	South Sudan	13		
Chad			13	Lithuania		10		Spain		16	
Chile		6	7	Madagascar	<i>Absent</i>			Sri Lanka	<i>Absent</i>		
Comoros			10	Malawi	13			Suriname	5		5
Côte d'Ivoire			14	Malaysia	10			Sweden		13	
Croatia	<i>Absent</i>			Maldives	10			Switzerland		6	6
Cyprus			11	Mali			14	Syrian Arab Rep.		14	
Czech Republic		13		Malta		8		Thailand	18		
DR of the Congo			19	Mauritius	11			Timor-Leste			11
Denmark		12		Mexico	10		10	Tonga	8		
Ecuador	13			Monaco	<i>Absent</i>			Türkiye	19		
Egypt		20		Mongolia	<i>Absent</i>			Turkmenistan	<i>Absent</i>		
Equatorial Guinea	3		8	Morocco		15		Uganda	16		
Estonia			11	Mozambique	5		10	Ukraine		16	
Eswatini	<i>Absent</i>			Namibia			11	United Arab Emirates		12	
Ethiopia	20			Nepal	<i>Absent</i>			United Kingdom		18	
Fiji	10			Netherlands		13		United Republic of Tanzania		18	
Finland		10		New Zealand		12		Uruguay		11	
France		18		Niger		14		Uzbekistan	<i>Absent</i>		
Gabon	<i>Absent</i>			Nigeria	<i>Absent</i>			Viet Nam	<i>Absent</i>		
Gambia (The)			11	Norway		12		Yemen		13	
Georgia			11	Oman		11		Zambia		13	
Germany		19		Pakistan	12		10	Zimbabwe			13
Ghana			15	Palestine		12					
Greece	13			Paraguay		8					

N.B. This list does not include delegations present at the session which were not entitled to vote pursuant to the provisions of Articles 5.2 and 5.3 of the Statutes. Parliaments participating in the IPU in a non-voting observer capacity in accordance with the decision of the 209th session of the Governing Council in Nusa Dua do not appear on this list.

Criminalizing contempt for religions and the spreading of hatred, and promoting coexistence, tolerance, peace and international security

Results of roll-call vote on the request of the delegation of Qatar for the inclusion of an emergency item

Results

Affirmative votes756 Total of affirmative and negative votes .. 1,200
 Negative votes444 Two-thirds majority 800
 Abstentions293

Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.
Albania		Absent		Guinea	13			Peru		15	
Algeria	16			Guyana		Absent		Philippines	20		
Angola	8		7	Hungary		12		Poland		15	
Argentina	7		7	Iceland		10		Portugal		13	
Armenia		Absent		India			23	Qatar	11		
Australia		14		Indonesia	22			Republic of Korea			17
Austria		12		Iran (Islamic Republic of)	19			Romania		13	
Azerbaijan	13			Iraq	16			Russian Federation	20		
Bahrain	11			Ireland		12		Rwanda	13		
Bangladesh		Absent		Israel		12		San Marino		10	
Belarus	12			Italy		17		Saudi Arabia	15		
Belgium		13		Japan			20	Senegal		Absent	
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	10		3	Jordan	13			Serbia	12		
Botswana			11	Kazakhstan	13			Seychelles			8
Brazil			20	Kenya	17			Sierra Leone		Absent	
Burkina Faso	14			Kuwait	11			Singapore		Absent	
Burundi	13			Lao People's Dem. Republic	12			Slovakia		Absent	
Cabo Verde		Absent		Latvia		11		Slovenia		11	
Cambodia	5		5	Liberia		Absent		Somalia		Absent	
Cameroon		Absent		Libya	12			South Africa			17
Canada		15		Liechtenstein		10		South Sudan			13
Chad	13			Lithuania		10		Spain		16	
Chile		13		Madagascar		Absent		Sri Lanka		Absent	
Comoros	10			Malawi			13	Suriname	5		5
Côte d'Ivoire	14			Malaysia	10			Sweden		13	
Croatia		Absent		Maldives	10			Switzerland		12	
Cyprus			11	Mali	14			Syrian Arab Rep.	14		
Czech Republic		13		Malta		8		Thailand	18		
DR of the Congo			19	Mauritius	11			Timor-Leste	11		
Denmark		12		Mexico	20			Tonga	8		
Ecuador	4		9	Monaco		Absent		Türkiye	19		
Egypt	20			Mongolia		Absent		Turkmenistan		Absent	
Equatorial Guinea	8		3	Morocco	15			Uganda	16		
Estonia		11		Mozambique	7		8	Ukraine	3		13
Eswatini		Absent		Namibia			11	United Arab Emirates	12		
Ethiopia	20			Nepal		Absent		United Kingdom		18	
Fiji	10			Netherlands		13		United Republic of Tanzania	18		
Finland		10		New Zealand		12		Uruguay		11	
France		18		Niger	14			Uzbekistan		Absent	
Gabon		Absent		Nigeria		Absent		Viet Nam		Absent	
Gambia (The)			11	Norway		12		Yemen	13		
Georgia			11	Oman	11			Zambia	13		
Germany		19		Pakistan	22			Zimbabwe	13		
Ghana			15	Palestine	12						
Greece			13	Paraguay		8					

N.B. This list does not include delegations present at the session which were not entitled to vote pursuant to the provisions of Articles 5.2 and 5.3 of the Statutes. Parliaments participating in the IPU in a non-voting observer capacity in accordance with the decision of the 209th session of the Governing Council in Nusa Dua do not appear on this list.

Raising awareness and calling for action on the serious humanitarian crises affecting the peoples of Afghanistan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine, Yemen and other countries, and on the particular vulnerability of women and children

Results of roll-call vote on the request of the delegations of Argentina, Chile, Germany, Netherlands and Ukraine, with the support of the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC) and the Twelve Plus Group for the inclusion of an emergency item

Results

Affirmative votes..... 817 Total of affirmative and negative votes ..1,134
 Negative votes 317 Two-thirds majority..... 756
 Abstentions 358

Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.
Albania		Absent		Guinea	10		3	Peru	15		
Algeria		16		Guyana	Absent			Philippines	20		
Angola			14	Hungary	12			Poland	15		
Argentina	7		7	Iceland	10			Portugal	13		
Armenia	Absent			India			23	Qatar		11	
Australia	14			Indonesia		22		Republic of Korea	17		
Austria	12			Iran (Islamic Republic of)		19		Romania	13		
Azerbaijan			13	Iraq		16		Russian Federation		20	
Bahrain		11		Ireland	12			Rwanda	13		
Bangladesh	Absent			Israel	12			San Marino	10		
Belarus		12		Italy	17			Saudi Arabia		15	
Belgium	13			Japan	20			Senegal	Absent		
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	5	8		Jordan		13		Serbia			12
Botswana			11	Kazakhstan			13	Seychelles	8		
Brazil	20			Kenya	17			Sierra Leone	Absent		
Burkina Faso			14	Kuwait		11		Singapore	Absent		
Burundi			13	Lao People's Dem. Republic		12		Slovakia	Absent		
Cabo Verde	Absent			Latvia	11			Slovenia	11		
Cambodia	7		3	Liberia	Absent			Somalia	Absent		
Cameroon	Absent			Libya		12		South Africa			17
Canada	15			Liechtenstein	10			South Sudan			13
Chad			13	Lithuania	10			Spain	16		
Chile	13			Madagascar	Absent			Sri Lanka	Absent		
Comoros			10	Malawi	13			Suriname	10		
Côte d'Ivoire			14	Malawi	13			Sweden	13		
Croatia	Absent			Malaysia	10			Switzerland	12		
Cyprus	8		3	Maldives	10			Syrian Arab Rep.		14	
Czech Republic	13			Mali	6		8	Thailand	18		
DR of the Congo			19	Malta	8			Timor-Leste	11		
Denmark	12			Mauritius	11			Tonga	5		3
Ecuador	6		7	Mexico	20			Türkiye			19
Egypt		20		Monaco	Absent			Turkmenistan	Absent		
Equatorial Guinea	3	8		Mongolia	Absent			Uganda	16		
Estonia	11			Morocco		15		Ukraine	16		
Eswatini	Absent			Mozambique			15	United Arab Emirates		12	
Ethiopia			20	Namibia			11	United Kingdom	18		
Fiji			10	Nepal	Absent			United Republic of Tanzania	18		
Finland	10			Netherlands	13			Uruguay	11		
France	18			New Zealand	12			Uzbekistan	Absent		
Gabon	Absent			Niger		14		Viet Nam	Absent		
Gambia (The)	11			Nigeria	Absent			Yemen		13	
Georgia	11			Norway	12			Zambia	13		
Germany	19			Oman		11		Zimbabwe			13
Ghana			15	Pakistan			22				
Greece	13			Palestine		12					
				Paraguay	8						

N.B. This list does not include delegations present at the session which were not entitled to vote pursuant to the provisions of Articles 5.2 and 5.3 of the Statutes. Parliaments participating in the IPU in a non-voting observer capacity in accordance with the decision of the 209th session of the Governing Council in Nusa Dua do not appear on this list.

Creation of a global fund for countries vulnerable to natural disasters to address loss and damage from climate change

Results of roll-call vote on the request of the African Group for the inclusion of an emergency item

Results

Affirmative votes535 Total of affirmative and negative votes .. 1,175
 Negative votes640 Two-thirds majority 783
 Abstentions318

Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.
Albania	<i>Absent</i>			Guinea	12		1	Peru		15	
Algeria	16			Guyana	<i>Absent</i>			Philippines	20		
Angola	10		5	Hungary		12		Poland		15	
Argentina	7		7	Iceland		10		Portugal		13	
Armenia	<i>Absent</i>			India	23			Qatar		11	
Australia		14		Indonesia		22		Republic of Korea	17		
Austria		12		Iran (Islamic Republic of)		19		Romania		13	
Azerbaijan			13	Iraq		16		Russian Federation			20
Bahrain		11		Ireland		12		Rwanda	13		
Bangladesh	<i>Absent</i>			Israel		12		San Marino		10	
Belarus		12		Italy			17	Saudi Arabia		15	
Belgium		13		Japan			20	Senegal	<i>Absent</i>		
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	13			Jordan		13		Serbia			12
Botswana	11			Kazakhstan			13	Seychelles	8		
Brazil			20	Kenya	17			Sierra Leone	<i>Absent</i>		
Burkina Faso	14			Kuwait		11		Singapore	<i>Absent</i>		
Burundi			13	Lao People's Dem. Republic	12			Slovakia	<i>Absent</i>		
Cabo Verde	<i>Absent</i>			Latvia		11		Slovenia		11	
Cambodia	10			Liberia	<i>Absent</i>			Somalia	<i>Absent</i>		
Cameroon	<i>Absent</i>			Libya			12	South Africa	17		
Canada		15		Liechtenstein			10	South Sudan	13		
Chad			13	Lithuania		10		Spain		16	
Chile		7	6	Madagascar	<i>Absent</i>			Sri Lanka	<i>Absent</i>		
Comoros	8		2	Malawi	13			Suriname	10		
Côte d'Ivoire			14	Malaysia	10			Sweden		13	
Croatia	<i>Absent</i>			Maldives	10			Switzerland		6	6
Cyprus	6		5	Mali	14			Syrian Arab Rep.		14	
Czech Republic		13		Malta		8		Thailand	18		
DR of the Congo			19	Mauritius	11			Timor-Leste	2		9
Denmark		12		Mexico	5		15	Tonga			8
Ecuador	13			Monaco	<i>Absent</i>			Türkiye		19	
Egypt		20		Mongolia	<i>Absent</i>			Turkmenistan	<i>Absent</i>		
Equatorial Guinea	11			Morocco		15		Uganda	16		
Estonia		11		Mozambique	15			Ukraine	11		5
Eswatini	<i>Absent</i>			Namibia	11			United Arab Emirates		12	
Ethiopia	20			Nepal	<i>Absent</i>			United Kingdom		18	
Fiji	10			Netherlands		13		United Republic of Tanzania	18		
Finland		10		New Zealand		12		Uruguay			11
France			18	Niger		14		Uzbekistan	<i>Absent</i>		
Gabon	<i>Absent</i>			Nigeria	<i>Absent</i>			Viet Nam	<i>Absent</i>		
Gambia (The)	11			Norway		12		Yemen		13	
Georgia			11	Oman		11		Zambia	13		
Germany		19		Pakistan	22			Zimbabwe			13
Ghana	15			Palestine		12					
Greece	9	4		Paraguay		8					

N.B. This list does not include delegations present at the session which were not entitled to vote pursuant to the provisions of Articles 5.2 and 5.3 of the Statutes. Parliaments participating in the IPU in a non-voting observer capacity in accordance with the decision of the 209th session of the Governing Council in Nusa Dua do not appear on this list.

Call for urgent action to stop aggression, occupation and massive human rights violations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in order to preserve its sovereignty and territorial integrity

Results of roll-call vote on the request of the delegation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for the inclusion of an emergency item

Results

Affirmative votes..... 88 Total of affirmative and negative votes ..793
 Negative votes 705 Two-thirds majority.....529
 Abstentions 700

Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.
Albania		<i>Absent</i>		Guinea			13	Peru		15	
Algeria			16	Guyana	<i>Absent</i>			Philippines		20	
Angola	15			Hungary		12		Poland		15	
Argentina			14	Iceland		10		Portugal		13	
Armenia	<i>Absent</i>			India			23	Qatar		11	
Australia		14		Indonesia		22		Republic of Korea			17
Austria		12		Iran (Islamic Republic of)		19		Romania		13	
Azerbaijan			13	Iraq		16		Russian Federation		20	
Bahrain		11		Ireland		12		Rwanda		13	
Bangladesh	<i>Absent</i>			Israel		12		San Marino		10	
Belarus		12		Italy			17	Saudi Arabia		15	
Belgium			13	Japan			20	Senegal	<i>Absent</i>		
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	5		8	Jordan		13		Serbia		12	
Botswana			11	Kazakhstan			13	Seychelles			8
Brazil			20	Kenya			17	Sierra Leone	<i>Absent</i>		
Burkina Faso			14	Kuwait		11		Singapore	<i>Absent</i>		
Burundi	13			Lao People's Dem. Republic			12	Slovakia	<i>Absent</i>		
Cabo Verde	<i>Absent</i>			Latvia		11		Slovenia		11	
Cambodia			10	Liberia	<i>Absent</i>			Somalia	<i>Absent</i>		
Cameroon	<i>Absent</i>			Libya			12	South Africa			17
Canada		15		Liechtenstein		10		South Sudan			13
Chad			13	Lithuania		10		Spain		16	
Chile			13	Madagascar	<i>Absent</i>			Sri Lanka	<i>Absent</i>		
Comoros	7		3	Malawi			13	Suriname			10
Côte d'Ivoire			14	Malaysia			10	Sweden		13	
Croatia	<i>Absent</i>			Maldives			10	Switzerland		12	
Cyprus		11		Mali	14			Syrian Arab Rep.		14	
Czech Republic		13		Malta		8		Thailand			18
DR of the Congo	19			Mauritius			11	Timor-Leste	5		6
Denmark		12		Mexico			20	Tonga			8
Ecuador			13	Monaco	<i>Absent</i>			Türkiye			19
Egypt		20		Mongolia	<i>Absent</i>			Turkmenistan	<i>Absent</i>		
Equatorial Guinea			11	Morocco		15		Uganda			16
Estonia		11		Mozambique			15	Ukraine		16	
Eswatini	<i>Absent</i>			Namibia			11	United Arab Emirates		12	
Ethiopia			20	Nepal	<i>Absent</i>			United Kingdom		18	
Fiji			10	Netherlands		13		United Republic of Tanzania			18
Finland		10		New Zealand		12		Uruguay			11
France			18	Niger		14		Uzbekistan	<i>Absent</i>		
Gabon	<i>Absent</i>			Nigeria	<i>Absent</i>			Viet Nam	<i>Absent</i>		
Gambia (The)			11	Norway		12		Yemen		13	
Georgia			11	Oman		11		Zambia			13
Germany		19		Pakistan			22	Zimbabwe			13
Ghana	10		5	Palestine		12					
Greece			13	Paraguay		8					

N.B. This list does not include delegations present at the session which were not entitled to vote pursuant to the provisions of Articles 5.2 and 5.3 of the Statutes. Parliaments participating in the IPU in a non-voting observer capacity in accordance with the decision of the 209th session of the Governing Council in Nusa Dua do not appear on this list.

Raising awareness and calling for action on the serious humanitarian crises affecting the peoples of Afghanistan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine, Yemen and other countries, and on the particular vulnerability of women and children

***Resolution adopted by consensus* by the 146th IPU Assembly
(Manama, 14 March 2023)***

The 146th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Considering that low- and middle-income countries host 74% of the world's refugees and other people in need of international protection, that the least developed countries provide asylum to 22% of these people, and that 90% of the world's humanitarian needs are concentrated in 20 countries that, together, represent no more than 13% of the world's population and 1.6% of global GDP,

Cognizant that the affected countries cannot meet the needs of the at-risk population, making it essential for the international community to guarantee humanitarian assistance including food distribution, health care and, in many cases, infrastructure reconstruction, and that, in 2023, an estimated 340 million people will need humanitarian assistance,

Recalling that such international humanitarian assistance is protected by the "right to life, liberty and security" of all persons, an inalienable and universal principle enshrined in Article 3 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* of 1948, and that these rights have been endorsed in the *International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights* and the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* of 1966, the *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide* of 1948, and the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocols, among others, which together constitute the international legal framework that, pursuant to Article 2 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, promotes and protects the human rights of all "without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status",

Underlining that the United Nations General Assembly has made achieving gender equality by 2030 a target of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular through Goal 5, including but not limited to Target 5.2: "Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation",

Recalling United Nations General Assembly resolution 2816 of 14 December 1971, which established the post of Disaster Relief Co-ordinator (DRC) to provide humanitarian assistance to victims of natural disasters and other emergencies, and resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991, through which the DRC was renamed the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and given expanded powers to coordinate humanitarian assistance, to facilitate access to emergency areas, to conduct the organization's needs assessment missions, to prepare joint appeals and to mobilize resources,

Welcoming the creation of the Central Emergency Response Fund, managed by OCHA, which, based on voluntary donations, makes it possible to finance humanitarian response actions worldwide,

Recalling the *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees* of 1951, which defines a refugee as any person who, "owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country",

Recalling also United Nations General Assembly resolution 73/195 of 29 December 2018 on the *Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration*,

Noting with deep concern that women and girls are still exposed to sexual violence, in particular committed by combatants,

* The delegation of Yemen expressed a reservation on the entire resolution.
The delegation of India abstained from supporting the resolution.

Emphasizing that rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization and all other forms of sexual violence of comparable gravity constitute crimes against humanity,

Noting with deep concern the especially dramatic situation in Afghanistan, where about 24 million Afghans are experiencing misery, hunger and freezing temperatures, including many children at severe risk of violence and family separation,

Noting that decades of uninterrupted war, coupled with years of drought and low temperatures, have led to total social and economic collapse, causing the displacement of 3.5 million people and making Afghans one of the largest refugee populations in the world,

Recalling that the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) works in favour of peace and cooperation among peoples, promoting the defence of universal human rights, and *stressing* that absolute respect for such rights is an essential factor for democracy and the development of all nations,

Recalling also the joint statement on Afghanistan issued on 30 August 2021 by the IPU Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law and the IPU Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians,

Alarmed by the situation of Afghan women and girls, and *noting* that the Taliban takeover caused the immediate repression of women, excluding them from secondary and university education, while the absence of a male “guardian” prevents many of them from leaving their homes or even accessing essential services, causing them to lose jobs and the corresponding economic support,

Deeply disturbed by attacks on women parliamentarians, including the assassination of Ms. Mursal Nabizada on 15 January 2023 and the attempt on the life of Ms. Fawzia Koofi on 14 August 2020, and *recalling* that the looming risk to women parliamentarians in Afghanistan prompted a decision by the IPU Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians on 2 February 2023,

Acknowledging the disastrous humanitarian crisis in Ukraine, caused by a war of aggression, where civilian casualties and the destruction of critical infrastructure have forced millions of people to cross borders into neighbouring countries, in addition to the internally displaced,

Noting that, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), as of February 2023, an estimated 17.6 million people in Ukraine require urgent humanitarian assistance and an estimated 8 million refugees from Ukraine are scattered throughout Europe, 90% of them women and children, and that, according to the International Organization for Migration, there are 5.3 million internally displaced persons within Ukraine,

Recalling the emergency item resolutions adopted at the 144th and 145th IPU Assemblies, held in Nusa Dua and Kigali respectively, which recognized the magnitude of the humanitarian situation in Ukraine and were aligned with the resolutions adopted on this subject by the United Nations in 2022,

Recalling also the situation in Yemen, where a bloody civil war, in one of the countries with the most vulnerable populations in the Middle East, has resulted in violence that has affected millions of people, caused hundreds of thousands of deaths and led to mass displacement,

Noting that over 20 million Yemenis require humanitarian assistance, including 4 million internally displaced persons,

Recognizing the catastrophic and unsustainable situation faced by people in the Syrian Arab Republic, where the recent earthquake that affected the north of the country, and the south of Türkiye, has created a humanitarian crisis, compounding the effects of the civil war in the Syrian Arab Republic,

Noting that some 6.6 million Syrians have been forced to flee to other countries, and that there are 6.7 million internally displaced persons within the Syrian Arab Republic,

Considering the current situation in South Sudan, a country ravaged since its birth by an ongoing civil war, where 4.3 million people are currently in need of humanitarian assistance, including refugees (of which 63% are children), internally displaced persons and asylum-seekers,

Recognizing the crisis in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, where violence, insecurity, and lack of food, medicine and essential services have triggered the largest migration in the history of Latin America, with 7 million Venezuelan refugees and migrants, and *noting* that these refugees and migrants are frequently forced to take unauthorized routes, falling victim to traffickers and irregular armed groups,

Cognizant that humanitarian crises are caused not only by conflicts, corrupt governments, wars of aggression, invasions and civil wars, but also by climate change, such as the massive floods that hit Pakistan in 2022, which claimed 1,800 lives, left more than 2.1 million people homeless and affected 33 million people in total,

Acknowledging that the above-mentioned crises are only those with the highest numbers of displaced persons, and *emphasizing* that other humanitarian crises are also taking place in many other regions of the world, including but not limited to Burkina Faso, Burundi, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Haiti, Iraq, Mali, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Palestine, Somalia and the Sudan,

1. *Considers* that humanitarian crises are the leading cause of human rights violations in the world;
2. *Recognizes* that it is up to the international community to collaborate to protect human lives, to alleviate suffering, to safeguard dignity, and to guarantee access to basic services such as food, medical care, water and shelter for all persons, regardless of their origins, through legal and policy measures at the national level, and *encourages* governments to pursue the SDGs, and Goal 5 in particular, through such measures;
3. *Expresses its sympathy* for the populations of Afghanistan, South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and Yemen, as well as for the millions of people who, on every continent, suffer deprivation and persecution as a result of war, oppressive regimes, terrorism, violence and natural disasters;
4. *Calls upon* the parliaments of the world to speak out against, and to exert political and diplomatic pressure on, those who bear responsibility for humanitarian crises, and to offer support to affected populations;
5. *Calls for* awareness-raising for national authorities and civil society in countries around the world, so that they are able to contribute, to the greatest extent possible, to the creation of specialized assistance programmes for people affected by humanitarian crises;
6. *Calls upon* all nations to strengthen the United Nations Secretary-General's High-Level Task Force on Preventing Famine, adopting simplified protocols to increase the access of children and young people to treatment for malnutrition;
7. *Appeals* for the strengthening of regional and interregional cooperation in order to facilitate the opening of humanitarian corridors that guarantee safe transit for vulnerable people, especially women and children from crisis-affected areas, while managing or negotiating agreements that allow the safe passage of humanitarian assistance;
8. *Strongly condemns* any attack on the lives, integrity and well-being of civilians, and *calls upon* parliaments and governments to take action against impunity for international crimes that cause humanitarian crises and persecution, in particular through support for the International Criminal Court, through national prosecution efforts and through appropriate legal mechanisms for the punishment of aggression and other international crimes;
9. *Calls for* an increase in international support and assistance for refugees and internally displaced persons, be they men, women or children, who lack access to basic rights and reasonable living conditions, as well as for other people who do not have refugee status;
10. *Notes* that women, together with children, are the main victims of humanitarian crises;
11. *Calls for* support for the efforts of the United Nations and other organizations working for the defence and promotion of women's rights;
12. *Demands* that governments refrain from the use of sexual and gender-based violence as a systematic tactic of warfare;
13. *Urges* governments to meet the needs of survivors of sexual and gender-based violence;
14. *Strongly supports* the empowerment of women and youth, and *affirms* its defence of the rights and interests of women, especially in Afghanistan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine and Yemen, and of all those living through humanitarian crises;

15. *Calls for* global support for vulnerable host countries which have capacity constraints in order to enable them to provide sufficient education and health care for refugees and asylum-seekers, and *urges* host countries to develop and implement frameworks that guarantee refugees and asylum-seekers, particularly women and girls, access to these vital services,
16. *Calls upon* governments to consistently enforce the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of gender in all respects;
17. *Deplores* the practice of forced deportation, which is a crime under international criminal law, international humanitarian law and international human rights law, and the forced deportation of children in particular, and *calls for* urgent action by United Nations Member States to stop this practice and to return children to their families;
18. *Expresses particular concern* about the persecution experienced by women and girls in Afghanistan, and *calls upon* the current de facto authorities to respect the *Charter of the United Nations*, international treaties and conventions, and the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*;
19. *Calls upon* all governments and parliaments to ensure that there are no obstacles, including under immunity provisions or procedural law, that prevent the award of compensation to victims of international crimes, either through their governments or directly;
20. *Calls for* closer coordination between United Nations agencies and the international community in order to guarantee the implementation of the provisions of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* and its Optional Protocols, especially in countries such as Afghanistan;
21. *Endorses* the decision of the IPU Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians to condemn, in the strongest possible terms, the atrocious murder of Afghan citizen and parliamentarian Ms. Mursal Nabizada, and *affirms* that this brutal crime is an affront to the rights, values and principles promoted by the IPU;
22. *Calls upon* the IPU Executive Committee to follow up on parliamentary work on the humanitarian crises in Afghanistan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine, Yemen and other countries to support the efforts of the international community, and its parliaments in particular, aimed at providing assistance to populations, and at promoting order, stability and the long-term restoration of institutions in order to achieve human and sustainable development in democracy;
23. *Calls upon* the international community to address the urgent need for robust financial support by strengthening its institutional support and cooperative financing mechanisms, including the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, the Central Emergency Response Fund managed by OCHA, and UNHCR, and *recommends* that the above financial support be allocated not only to immediate and individual humanitarian assistance such as food and medicine, but also to the design of reconstruction plans for essential infrastructure in order to maintain the basic functions of society in Afghanistan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine and Yemen;
24. *Calls for* the strengthening of humanitarian assistance mechanisms to respond to these humanitarian crises.

Report of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights

*Noted by the 146th IPU Assembly
(Manama, 15 March 2023)*

The Committee held two sittings on 13 and 14 March.

The debate held on 13 March was chaired by Ms. J. Mahmood (Maldives), member of the Bureau of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights, substituting for Committee President Mr. A. Gajadien (Suriname). Around 80 participants attended, from 44 countries. The objective of the meeting was to debate the next resolution on *Orphanage trafficking: The role of parliaments in reducing harm*.

Ms. L. Reynolds (Australia) and Mr. C. E. Bustamante Donayre (Peru) served as co-Rapporteurs. Ms. Reynolds provided opening remarks and described how that new kind of child trafficking and slavery had developed. It was an issue of supply and demand whereby well-intentioned countries, tourists and volunteers donated money to orphanages without any due diligence as to whether or not they were supporting an ethical charity (creating a demand) and very skilled criminals and traffickers deliver the “perfect” and “tailor-made” orphanage experience for donors (the supply). Those illicit schemes were achieved by creating “paper orphans”: an orphan by virtue of their false documentation only, while a very large proportion of children in such orphanages actually had at least one living parent.

Ms. K. Van Doore (Deputy Head of Griffith Law School, Australia) and Ms. R. Nhep, Senior Technical Advisor of the Better Care Network joined as expert panelists. Ms. Van Doore noted that the sheer number of children involved made it incumbent on governments to address the issue and that the recruitment or transfer of children into orphanages for the purpose of profit was exacerbated in times of crisis.

Ms. Nhep spoke about the three PPPs: Prevention, Prosecution and Protection, and added a fourth P, “Partnership,” given the transboundary nature of the issue. Key challenges included a lack of requirements for documentation (e.g. registration of facilities) and lack of monitoring of orphanages.

Both experts touched on some gatekeeping measures that could support the three PPPs and mentioned Australia’s “Smart Volunteer” campaign as a good practice example. An integral gatekeeping measure was to educate donors on how to do due diligence and understand the potential harm of their good intentions and generosity; and also to enforce appropriate visa requirements for volunteering and adopt standards for working with vulnerable children. As poverty was a driver of that form of child trafficking, they recommended that instead of sending volunteers, tourists and money to orphanages, funding should be made available to help keep children in their families.

In the ensuing discussion, 31 delegations took the floor to contribute their countries’ experiences. Some practical actions suggested were to regulate donations of both individuals and countries (Kuwait), to consider the linkage between orphanage trafficking and forced labour (Malawi), to enable cash transfers for children/orphans (Kenya), to conduct a comparative analysis of all existing rules/legislation and outline best practices (Kenya), and to utilize parliamentary inquiries and legislation on modern slavery as tools for prevention, prosecution and protection (New Zealand).

There was general acknowledgement that a number of good practices existed and that orphanage trafficking was a problem that could be addressed together. A consensus was reached to prepare a comprehensive resolution on the subject and for countries to work together and capitalize on parliamentary action via the IPU, the United Nations and other relevant international/regional bodies.

The co-Rapporteurs would draft a resolution including practical recommendations that could work across parliaments in tandem with existing UN recommendations and resolutions that recognize the link between tourism and orphanage trafficking.

Members have until 3 April 2023 to submit written contributions for consideration and the co-Rapporteurs would circulate a draft resolution for review in July. Proposals for amendments to the draft would be considered when the Committee met to finalize the resolution at the 147th IPU Assembly in October 2023.

On 14 March the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights held a debate entitled *Parliamentary impetus in favour of the fight against disinformation and hateful and discriminatory content in cyberspace*. The purpose of the debate was to discuss the issues of disinformation, misinformation and hate speech on the internet, share information regarding how parliaments and parliamentarians were combatting those issues and what parliaments could do to better curb harmful content online.

The debate was held in two parts – an overview followed by interventions and questions from delegates, and an expert hearing with questions from delegates. In part one the Committee was joined by Mr. G. Canela, Chief, Freedom of Expression and Safety of Journalists Section, UNESCO. Mr. Canela provided an expert overview of issues related to disinformation and hate speech online and UNESCO’s work in that area.¹ The internet represented a significant development in freedom of expression and policies needed to be developed to protect that benefit while mitigating risks of online harms in

¹ Key UNESCO resources: the Internet for Trust conference (<https://www.unesco.org/en/internet-conference>); and Countering hate speech (<https://www.unesco.org/en/countering-hate-speech>).

accordance with international human rights standards. The phenomena under discussion were not new, but were growing in volume, velocity and virality and while parliaments were trying to regulate and test legislation. UNESCO's research suggested that in most cases such legislation was not fully aligned with human rights standards. He further noted that disinformation and hate speech were related but distinct phenomena and needed to be addressed separately.

The discussion touched on a number of common areas including the threat of disinformation to the legitimacy of public institutions, the role of social media platforms, content moderation policies and the importance of education and media literacy to counter disinformation. Many delegates provided the view that legislation should be developed to regulate or criminalize some forms of speech online and some delegates gave examples of legislation that had already been developed in their countries. A number of references were made to the COVID-19 pandemic and disinformation related to health measures. Delegates also referred to the hate speech addressed at parliamentarians online, as well as towards women and religious communities.

In response, Mr. Canela reiterated the view that when regulating or legislating, parliaments should do so carefully and with necessary safeguards to protect freedom of expression. He suggested legislation that limited speech online be accompanied by an independent regulator who followed the logic of international human rights law and conventions. He added that parliamentarians should look first to existing human rights standards, which provided strong avenues to deal with the issues under discussion.

In part two of the debate the Committee was joined by experts from three organizations. Ms. R. Vazquez Llorente, Head of Law and Policy, WITNESS, outlined issues related to the responsibilities of social media platforms and the importance of protection of human rights defenders and journalists who challenge disinformation. Mr. Z. Amanullah, Resident Senior Fellow, Networks & Outreach, Institute for Strategic Dialogue, spoke to the issue of content moderation in languages other than English and the need for more research on disinformation in countries outside North America and Europe.

Ms. L. Zommer, Factchequeado co-founder, Director & Editor-in-Chief at Chequeado, and creator of LatamChequea, gave delegates an overview of the fact checking work of her organization with Spanish-speaking communities in the United States, especially regarding the COVID-19 pandemic.

An expert hearing followed, during which delegates were encouraged to ask questions to the experts present. Delegates also took the floor to share their respective countries' experiences. Additional points raised included the need for a global response to disinformation and hate speech, the challenge of hate speech based on religion and the use of social media to intimidate women, including women MPs.

In their responses the expert panel spoke to other processes that could break the cycle of social media algorithms promoting and spreading disinformation and hate speech, and the need for further independent research to ensure effective legislating, especially in languages other than English. In total 27 delegations contributed during the debate.

Report of the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs

*Noted by the 146th IPU Assembly
(Manama, 15 March 2023)*

The Chair, Mr. L. Wehrli (Switzerland), welcomed everyone in his capacity as Acting President of the Committee, and introduced the items on the agenda which was adopted along with the summary record of the Committee session held during the 145th IPU Assembly in October 2022.

Debate on the proposed new modalities and methods of work for the Committee

The Chair recapped the debate in the Committee's Bureau meeting the previous day regarding the new mandate and working methods for the Committee, which the Bureau had adopted unanimously.

The Chair invited delegates to provide feedback on the paper that had been circulated in the room.

Expressing overall approval of the proposed new mandate and working methods for the Committee, delegates noted the following points:

- Reform of the UN Security Council ought to be a distinct area of work for the Committee going forward.
- The Committee should help strengthen parliamentary oversight of the United Nations, possibly positioning the IPU as an advisory council of the United Nations.
- The Committee should promote practical modalities of interaction between the IPU and the United Nations, as well as between national parliaments and UN agencies in the field.
- The Committee needs to emphasize the parliamentary role in the implementation of UN conventions.

The Committee's mandate and working methods were unanimously adopted by a show of hands.

Debate on the participation of women Permanent Representatives in the UN General Assembly

The session began with a video message from Ms. S. Malcorra, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Argentina and former Chief of Staff to United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. Ms. Malcorra leads a global campaign to make the United Nations more inclusive of women. Among other things, Ms. Malcorra noted that the question of gender equality at the United Nations must apply to both the Secretariat and the decision-making bodies of the United Nations, such as the General Assembly.

Ms. P. Torsney (Head of the Office of the Permanent Observer of the IPU to the United Nations in New York and Committee Secretary) introduced the debate by referring to IPU's work to make national parliaments gender equal and how that needed to be extended to the General Assembly where a solid majority of the Permanent Observers were men. She presented data showing the current gender gap in the General Assembly as well as the results of an IPU survey enquiring about the parliamentary oversight processes for the appointment of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations in New York.

Committee members showed strong interest in the issue and overall support for further Committee engagement. In particular, delegates noted the following points:

- There is a strong correlation between gender parity in parliaments and other decision-making bodies on the one hand, and the implementation of policies to empower women and girls on the other hand.
- Achieving gender equality in the UN General Assembly will assist the global effort for the empowerment of women and girls as well as, by extension, the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- The inclusion of women at the United Nations must include the peace and security apparatus in the field, where a lot of the United Nations peacebuilding and conflict resolution work takes place.
- It was high time for the United Nations to appoint a woman to the post of Secretary-General.

At the conclusion of the debate, Ms. Torsney announced that the question of gender equality in the UN General Assembly would be a recurring item on the Committee's agenda which would be pursued in campaign mode not just at formal Committee sessions but also between sessions. As a first step, a virtual meeting of interested parliamentarians would be convened before the next IPU Assembly in Angola, in October 2023.

Debate on parliamentary engagement in the Voluntary National Reviews for the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

Mr. A. Motter (Senior Advisor for Economic and Social Affairs, Office of the Permanent Observer of the IPU to the United Nations) explained how national reports that governments volunteer to the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) each year constituted the United Nations main accountability process to incentivize the implementation of the SDGs at the country level. The voluntary national review (VNR) process was designed to include all national stakeholders, including parliaments. The IPU survey of parliamentary engagement in the 42 countries that volunteered reports in 2022 showed very weak parliamentary engagement in the VNR process. Mr. Motter also noted a very low participation rate in the IPU Member survey on the issue.

In their comments from the floor, delegates highlighted the following points:

- Parliamentary engagement in the VNRs is indeed a very good thing and needs further strengthening particularly now as the SDGs are badly off track.
- Integrating a complex framework such as the SDGs into national plans and policies is very difficult and requires a sophisticated machinery and capacities that many governments still lack. The United Nations expectations in this regard are not entirely realistic.

- To facilitate greater participation in the IPU survey, there needs to be greater coordination between the IPU focal points who receive the IPU survey and the relevant parliamentary bodies responsible for the SDGs.

In bringing the session to a close, the Chair urged the parliaments whose governments would be submitting reports in 2023 to respond to the IPU questionnaire thoroughly and in time.

Elections to the Bureau of the Standing Committee

The Chair announced the following nominations to the Committee Bureau: Mr. A. Talbi (Algeria), Mr. D. McGuinty (Canada), Mr. M. Alajmi (Kuwait), Mr. H. Aoyagi (Japan), Ms. P. Cayetano (Philippines), Ms. A. Shkrum (Ukraine). All nominations were accepted by acclamation.

The Chair thanked the outgoing members of the Bureau and informed that his own term on the Bureau was ending at this Committee session. It was agreed that Mr. A. Gryffroy (Belgium) would serve as president ad interim until a new Committee president was elected at the next session in Angola, in October 2023.

Thanking delegates for their contributions, the Chair brought the meeting to a close.

Amendments to the IPU Statutes and Rules

*Adopted by the IPU Governing Council at its 211th session
(Manama, 12 March 2023)*

Practical modalities of the rights and responsibilities of observers at IPU meetings¹

1. International organizations that can be invited as observers to IPU meetings are understood to include: (a) organizations of the United Nations system **and related organizations and organizations holding permanent observer status with the UN General Assembly**; (b) regional intergovernmental organizations; ~~(cb)~~ regional, subregional and geopolitical parliamentary assemblies or associations; ~~(dc)~~ worldwide non-governmental organizations; ~~(ed)~~ international political party federations; and ~~(fe)~~ organizations with which the IPU shares general objectives and has established a close and mutually beneficial working relationship **(other partner organizations, including organizations holding permanent observer status with the UN General Assembly)**.
2. ~~For inter-parliamentary organizations and international political party federations,~~ Observer status may be granted only to those ~~that have an official status and~~ **organizations** whose general objectives, **principles** and ~~working methods~~ **values** are shared by the IPU. **Permanent observer status may only be granted at the recommendation of the IPU Executive Committee, upon a careful examination of the structure, funding, mission statement, programme of work and track record of the organization concerned.**
3. ~~The current practice will be maintained whereby~~ **There shall be** a distinction ~~is made~~ between those observers invited on a regular basis **(permanent observers)** and others **invited** on a "one-off" basis in the light of the items placed on the agenda of an Assembly. **Permanent observer status will be reserved for parliamentary organizations, in line with IPU's commitment to foster inter-parliamentary dialogue and cooperation, as well as for those partner organizations with which the IPU works closely and on a regular basis.**
- 3bis. Observers will be expected to pay a modest registration fee, to be determined by the Executive Committee, for participation in IPU Assemblies. The United Nations and related organizations, as well as observers contributing directly to the programme of the Assembly, will be exempt from such fees.**
4. Observers will be entitled to register a maximum of two delegates to Assemblies of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. However, each programme and organ of the United Nations will normally be allowed to send one delegate. Seating arrangements at Assemblies will be made accordingly.
5. Observers will be entitled to register one speaker in plenary debates of the IPU Assembly and its Standing Committees. However, each programme and organ of the United Nations will be allowed to register one speaker each.
6. Observers will not enjoy the right of reply or the right to raise points of order.
7. In the General Debate of the Assembly, the speaking time of observers will be limited to three minutes. Some flexibility will be shown to executive heads of organizations within the United Nations system who wish to address the IPU.
8. Observers will not enjoy voting rights and the right to submit candidatures.
9. Representatives of international organizations having particular expertise in a subject considered by the Assembly may be invited by the Presidents of Standing Committees, with the authorization of the Committee, to be present in an advisory capacity to provide technical advice, if need be, during the work of a drafting committee.
10. Observers cannot present draft resolutions or amendments. They may, however, make information available ~~on a table specially set aside for this purpose~~ **according to modalities established by the Secretary General.**
11. International organizations having special competence in an item placed on the Assembly agenda may be invited by the Secretary General to provide an information document on the item.

¹ In these Modalities, whenever the words "delegate" and "representative" are used, they should be construed as referring to both women and men.

12. Observers may be invited by the IPU President to address the Governing Council in exceptional circumstances only.

13. An evaluation of the situation of observers shall be made every four years. Such a periodic review shall be undertaken by the Executive Committee on a dual basis: (i) a factual note by the IPU Secretariat on the actual participation of each observer in the period under review, and (ii) the views of the observers themselves regarding their interest in being represented at IPU meeting.

Cremer-Passy Prize Rules

*Amended version approved by the IPU Governing Council at its 211th session
(Manama, 15 March 2023)*

PREAMBLE

The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) is the global organization of national parliaments. We promote democratic governance, institutions and values, working with parliaments and parliamentarians to articulate and respond to the needs and aspirations of the people. We work for [peace](#), [democracy](#), [human rights](#), [gender equality](#), [youth empowerment](#), [climate action](#) and [sustainable development](#) through political dialogue, cooperation and parliamentary action.

With a view to encouraging parliamentary diplomacy and fostering concrete action by parliamentarians in the pursuit and promotion of more lasting peace and effective democratic societies, the IPU Governing Council, on the proposal of the Executive Committee, adopted the present Rules establishing the “Cremer-Passy Prize”, to be awarded annually to a parliamentarian or group of parliamentarians who make an outstanding contribution to the defence and promotion of the IPU’s objectives as well as those who contribute to a more united, peaceful, sustainable and equitable world.

The Cremer-Passy Prize Rules and criteria are hereby approved as follows:

Article 1

The Inter-Parliamentary Union hereby establishes a parliamentarians’ award for excellence entitled the “Cremer-Passy Prize”.

Article 2

1. The Cremer-Passy Prize is awarded by the IPU and is intended to reward a parliamentarian or group of parliamentarians who make an outstanding contribution to the defence and promotion of the objectives of this organization and to a more united, peaceful, sustainable and equitable world.
2. The Cremer-Passy Prize shall be awarded annually, at the second IPU Assembly of each year.
3. The winner(s) of the prize shall be invited to attend the IPU Assembly referred to in Article 2.2 and to address the Assembly in recognition of their achievement and to serve as an inspiration to the work of other Members of Parliament.
4. The Cremer-Passy Prize shall not be awarded posthumously. The nominee(s) should be alive at the time of their nomination.

Article 3

All parliamentarians from IPU Member Parliaments, who at some point in the year to which the prize relates were sitting Members of Parliament, shall be eligible for the award.

Article 4

1. Geopolitical groups shall accept nominations for the Cremer-Passy Prize only from their own geopolitical group, and submit them by 18:00 (CET) on 30 April of each year to the IPU Secretariat by filling in a specific form available at www.ipu.org. Groups who submit nominations that belong to more than one geopolitical group should specify which geopolitical group the nominations represent according to Article 27(2) of the IPU Statutes and Rules.
2. Each geopolitical group should submit only one nomination, with a second nomination as an alternate.
3. The nominations shall be accompanied by a cover letter setting out the reasons why it is considered that the parliamentarian or group of parliamentarians deserve to be awarded the Cremer-Passy Prize.
4. Failure to comply with the time limit laid down in Article 4.1 cannot be remedied.

Article 5

1. The IPU Secretariat shall check the content of the nominations submitted by the geopolitical groups within 30 days after the deadline for submitting nominations in order to assess whether the nominees have met the criteria.
2. The IPU Secretariat shall gather all the nominations deemed valid and submit them to the Prize Selection Board, together with a report on the nominations that have been rejected, setting out the reasons for their exclusion.
3. In the event of failure to comply with any of the criteria for the nominations, the IPU Secretariat shall inform the nominee(s) accordingly.
4. Where the geopolitical group does not remedy the non-compliance within 10 days of notification from the Secretariat, the nomination in question shall be rejected by the IPU Secretariat.

Article 6

1. The Prize Selection Board shall be composed of seven members, including the current IPU President, who shall chair the Board without voting rights except for the purposes of paragraph 6.8, and the most recent Honorary President from each geopolitical group.
2. Geopolitical groups that cannot be represented by an Honorary President shall nominate, in accordance with their rules of procedure, a retired Speaker or prominent MP.
3. The Secretary General of the IPU shall attend the Prize Selection Board as a non-voting observer in order to ensure that the proposals are assessed based on up-to-date knowledge of the current Members of the IPU.
4. The members of the Prize Selection Board shall have 30 working days from the date of receipt of the nominations from the Secretariat to consider them using the evaluation matrix appended to these rules.
5. The Prize Selection Board shall meet as soon as possible from the expiry of the period referred to in paragraph 6.4 in order to discuss and decide on the prize winner or winners.
6. The Cremer-Passy Prize winner(s) will be decided through a majority vote of the Prize Selection Board members using the evaluation matrix referred to above.
7. In the event of a tie, the Prize Selection Board shall hold a second vote between the two groups of nominees with the most votes.
8. Where the tie remains after the second vote count, the Prize Selection Board Chairman shall have a casting vote to determine the winner(s).
9. The Prize Selection Board may unanimously decide not to award the Cremer-Passy Prize in a given year whenever unforeseen circumstances emerge (*force majeure*).
10. Members of the Prize Selection Board shall not score nominees from their own geopolitical Group.
11. If Members of the Prize Selection Board are unable to score the nominees within the given deadlines, their votes will be distributed equally among all nominees (except those from their own geopolitical group).
12. The IPU Secretariat shall make all the necessary arrangements to hold the meeting stipulated in paragraph 6.5 above.

Article 7

The prize to be awarded consists of a trophy with an appropriate inscription.

Article 8

All persons involved in the award procedure shall keep all nominations confidential.

Article 9

1. The periods referred to in these Rules shall be counted in working days.
2. In the event that the country of any IPU Member has a public holiday on 30 April, that day, for the purposes of the submission of nominations laid down in Article 4.1, shall be considered a working day.

Article 10

To ensure the implementation of the present Rules, which govern the Cremer-Passy Prize, it shall be mandatory that the annual IPU Budget has a specific allocation for the Cremer-Passy Prize.

Article 11

Any amendments to the present Rules shall be adopted at the first IPU Assembly in any given year prior to award of the prize at the second IPU Assembly of that year.

Article 12

The above rules shall constitute the whole Rules of Procedure for the Cremer-Passy Prize.

Cooperation with the United Nations

New modalities and methods of work for the Standing Committee on UN Affairs

*Approved by the IPU Governing Council at its 211th session
(Manama, 15 March 2023)*

At its 210th session in Kigali in October 2022, the Governing Council considered and endorsed a roadmap for the implementation of the report on the IPU political project at the United Nations. The report recommends, among other things, a review of the mandate and working methods of the Standing Committee on UN Affairs. The Governing Council encouraged the Bureau of the Standing Committee on UN Affairs to contribute to the reflection on the strategies to make the Committee's work more effective.

Consultations took place between the Bureau and the Secretariat in January 2023. This note reflects the outcome of those deliberations and proposes improvements to the modalities and working methods of the Standing Committee on UN Affairs. The Bureau pursued consideration of these proposals at its meeting during the 146th IPU Assembly in Manama, Bahrain. The new modalities and methods of work for the Committee were approved by the Governing Council on 15 March 2023.

The Committee is an important component of the IPU's political project at the UN. It complements the IPU's mission of engaging parliaments in the work of the United Nations at national and global levels, seeking to strengthen the UN as the primary multilateral institution of global governance. The Committee's primary objective is to help ensure the United Nations is more inclusive of parliaments and parliamentarians as key actors in global processes, and to help the United Nations be more effective in responding to a growing set of global challenges.

Mandate

The Committee helps parliamentarians oversee their governments at the UN by understanding better the way the UN works at political and operational levels and engaging parliaments in relevant UN reform processes.

This mandate shall be exercised through five distinct areas of work.

First, the Committee mobilizes parliamentarians around select UN reform issues of greatest impact to global governance, such as: improving the gender balance of the General Assembly, supporting the reform of the Security Council to be more representative of the international community, and making the UN budget more transparent and effective.

Second, the Committee promotes parliamentary oversight of the UN and its system agencies with regard to their substantive subject areas (e.g., climate change, human trafficking, counter-terrorism, education, etc.).

Third, the Committee promotes parliamentary engagement in key accountability processes of the UN, such as those for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (Voluntary National Reviews), human rights treaties (such as the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child), the Universal Periodic Review and human rights commitments, and national military expenditures (UN Office of Disarmament Affairs).

Fourth, the Committee promotes stronger relations between UN Country Teams (led by Resident Coordinators) and national parliaments with regard to key government-led processes for development and peace building.

Fifth, the Committee tracks the state of parliamentary ratification and entry into force of select UN treaties, protocols and conventions.

Working methods

The Committee shall pursue its mandate through regular sessions held at IPU Assemblies.

In particular, the Committee shall:

- Hold panel discussions and hearings with UN officials
- Promote parliamentary campaigns around selected UN issues, directing parliamentarians to take certain actions and to report on results as needed
- Conduct site visits to explore how the UN system operates within countries and in relation to national parliaments
- Organize a special meeting on “the role of parliament in multilateralism”, at the level of Speakers or head of delegations, at the mid-point between consecutive World Conferences of Speakers of Parliament

During Assemblies, the Bureau of the Committee can propose motions related to its mandate for discussion by the Committee in plenary. The final amended text is adopted by a majority vote of those present at the Committee session. A motion directed to parliaments or the United Nations, shall include a brief introduction followed by a brief action-oriented operational part (not to exceed 600 words in total). Once adopted, the motion would be presented to the Assembly for its consideration.

Further, the Committee shall complement the work of the other three Standing Committees of the IPU by mobilizing its Bureau and other parliamentarians to raise awareness of UN processes relevant to the substantive resolutions before those Committees and where appropriate, propose amendments.

The Bureau of the Committee shall decide on the select list of UN reform issues to be dealt with on a recurring basis. No more than five issues should be on the Committee’s docket at a time.

Bureau members are expected to attend all Committee sessions as well as relevant UN meetings in New York, Geneva or Vienna, including the annual Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations. The Secretariat shall provide the Bureau with a list of suggested events at least three months in advance.

The Bureau of the Committee shall review the Committee’s mandate and working methods every two years taking into account the Committee’s performance as well as other institutional changes within the IPU committee structure.

Minimum legal requirements for establishing an IPU regional Office

*Approved by the IPU Governing Council at its 210th session
(Kigali, 15 October 2022)*

In order to establish an IPU regional Office, where the Host Parliament is providing means and facilities for the office premises, the Host Parliament as well as the Host Government will have to execute agreements to allow proper functioning of the Office. The key elements of these agreements are listed below:

1) Agreement between the Host Parliament and the IPU

- a) The Host Parliament will provide the Office with its premises, equipment and operating costs (furniture, computers, stationery, other office supplies and communications) free of charge for a minimum period of 10 years.
- b) The Parliament through this agreement will ensure the safety and protection of the Office premises and ensure that the tranquility of the premises is not disturbed by the unauthorized entry of persons or groups from outside or by disturbance in its immediate vicinity.
- c) The Parliament through this agreement shall commit to respect the functional independence of the IPU in carrying out its activities and in assigning to the Office such IPU officials or other IPU personnel as it deems necessary for carrying out the particular functions assigned to the Office.

2) Agreement between the Host Government and the IPU

Art. 1. Jurisdictional Personality

- a) The Government, through the Host Status Agreement, shall recognize the IPU as an international organization, according to the rules of international law. The IPU cannot be sued before the Host Country courts.

Art. 2. Property, Funds and Assets

- a) The premises of the IPU regional office shall be inviolable. The property and assets of the IPU shall be immune from search, requisition, confiscation and any other form of interference, whether by executive, administrative, judicial or legislative action.
- b) The archives of the IPU regional office, and in general all documents belonging to it or held by it in Host Country, shall be inviolable.
- c) Without being restricted by financial controls, regulations or moratoria of any kind,
 - i. the IPU may hold funds or currency of any kind and
 - ii. operate accounts in any currency;
 - iii. the IPU shall be free to transfer its funds or currency to or from the Host Country or within the Host Country and to convert any currency held by it into any other currency.
- d) The IPU regional office, its assets, income, expenditure and other property shall be:
 - i. exempt from all direct and indirect taxes whether federal, cantonal or communal;
 - ii. exempt from all customs duties in respect of articles imported or exported by the IPU for its official use;
 - iii. exempt from all prohibitions and restrictions on imports and exports in respect of articles intended for the official use of the IPU;
 - iv. exempt from all customs duties, prohibitions and restrictions on imports and exports in respect of its publications.

Art. 3. Facilities in respect of Communications

- a) The IPU regional office shall enjoy in respect of its official communications, treatment not less favorable than that accorded by the Host Country to any other Government including its diplomatic missions or to other intergovernmental, international organizations, in the matter of priorities, tariffs and charges on mail, internet services, telephone and all other communications including electronic forms of communications, as well as rates for information to the press and radio. The Government shall secure the inviolability of the official communications and correspondence to and from IPU and shall not apply any censorship to its official communications, correspondence, IPU publications and information materials.

Art. 4. Functional Independence

- a) The Government, through the Host Parliament, shall ensure that the functional independence of the IPU is respected to allow it to carry out its activities and assign to the Regional Office such IPU officials or other IPU personnel as it deems necessary for carrying out the functions assigned to the Office.
- b) The Government, in case of incidents or events resulting in a complete or partial disruption of the Office's telecommunications or utilities services, shall give the Office, for the performance of its functions, the same priority given to essential agencies and organs of the Government.

Art. 5. Social security and pension

IPU officials shall be exempt from mandatory coverage and all compulsory contribution payments to the Social Security system of the Host Country.

Art. 6. Officials of the IPU

- a) Officials of the IPU shall :
 - i. be immune from legal process in respect of words spoken or written and all acts performed by them in their official capacity;
 - ii. be exempt from taxation on the salaries and emoluments paid to them by the IPU;

- iii. be immune from national service obligations;
 - iv. be immune, together with their spouses and relatives dependent on them, from immigration restriction and alien registration;
 - v. be accorded the same privileges in respect of exchange facilities as are accorded to the officials of comparable ranks forming part of diplomatic missions to the government of the Host Country;
 - vi. be given, together with their spouses and relatives dependent on them, the same repatriation facilities in time of international crisis as diplomatic envoys;
 - vii. have the right to import free of duty their furniture and effects at the time of first taking up their post in Host Country.
- b) The IPU shall co-operate at all times with the appropriate Host Country authorities to facilitate the proper administration of justice, secure the observance of police regulations, and prevent the occurrence of any abuse in connection with the privileges, immunities and facilities mentioned in this Article.

Art. 7. Settlement Of Disputes

- a) Any dispute between the IPU and the Host Government arising of or relating to this agreement shall be settled amicably by negotiation or other agreed mode of settlement, failing which such dispute shall be submitted to arbitration at the request of either party.

* The Host Parliament and Government may opt to execute a single agreement on the above to be signed by an agreed competent authority.

Report of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 211th session
(Manama, 15 March 2023)*

1. The 35th session of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians was held on 11 and 14 March 2023. It brought together 228 participants, including 186 parliamentarians (161 women and 25 men) from 66 countries and representatives from various international organizations.

Election of the President and delivery of welcome addresses

2. The President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, Ms. L. Vasylenko (Ukraine), opened the session. The Forum elected Ms. H. Ramzy Fayez, member of the Shura Council of Bahrain and First Vice-President of the IPU Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, to the Presidency of its 35th session. The First Deputy Speaker of the Shura Council of Bahrain, Mr. J. Fakhro, and the IPU President, Mr. D. Pacheco, welcomed the participants to the Forum and to the 146th IPU Assembly.

Initiatives taken to promote gender equality

3. Ms. C. Muyeka Mumma (Kenya) summarized the work of the 48th session of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, which had taken place in October 2022 in Kigali, and of its 49th session, held immediately prior to the Forum meeting. On behalf of the Bureau, she thanked the President of the Bureau, whose mandate was ending at the 146th Assembly, and acknowledged her strong leadership and dedication despite the difficult times her country, Ukraine, was facing.

4. The Vice-President of the IPU Executive Committee and member of the Gender Partnership Group, Ms. A.D. Mergane Kanouté (Senegal), informed participants about the gender balance in delegations to the 146th Assembly. In Bahrain, while women's participation was high in absolute numbers (230), women accounted for only 34% of delegates, which was below the average of recent Assemblies. A record 23 delegations of two or more members were single-sex. Efforts needed to be pursued and further enhanced to ensure gender diversity in all delegations.

5. The participants were informed about the IPU's recent and future activities to promote gender equality. Ms. V. Riotton (France) reported on the parliamentary meeting organized by the IPU and UN Women on 7 March 2023, at the 67th session of the Commission on the Status of Women. Ms. C. Mix (Chile) reported on advancements in implementation of the Kigali Declaration on gender-sensitive parliaments. The Secretary of the Forum, Ms. Z. Hilal, briefed participants on the state of women's participation in parliament and politics based on the recently released IPU report *Women in Parliament in 2022* and the *Women in Politics: 2023* map published by IPU and UN Women.

Contributions to the work of the 146th Assembly from a gender perspective

6. In order to contribute to the work of the Assembly, the participants examined, from a gender perspective, the draft resolution before the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security entitled *Cyberattacks and cybercrimes: The new risks to global security*. The discussion opened with an introductory presentation by Ms. S. Falaknaz (United Arab Emirates) and Mr. J. Cepeda (Spain), co-Rapporteurs of the resolution. The debate continued in plenary, presided by Ms. R. Kavakci Kan (Türkiye) and with Ms. S. Al Suwaidi (United Arab Emirates) as Rapporteur.

7. The discussions highlighted how women and girls were likely to be targeted by, and fall victims to, certain types of cybercrimes such as human trafficking and sexual exploitation via the internet, as well as technology-facilitated gender-based violence, including sexual harassment, threats, stalking, bullying and sexist hate speech. The Forum agreed that such cybercrimes should be prevented and addressed with gender-sensitive, comprehensive and victim-centric legislation covering prevention, legal protection, and adequate support and remedies for victims, as well as sanctions for perpetrators. The underrepresentation of women in the cybersecurity sector needed to be eliminated as a priority through education that encouraged girls to study science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), and women to pursue careers in the STEM and information and communications technology sectors.

8. The debate resulted in the formulation of three amendments to the draft resolution of the Standing Committee. The proposed amendments were included in the draft resolution and reinforced it from a gender perspective.

Panel discussion: *Parliamentary leadership in addressing insecurity and crises: Putting gender equality at the centre of water security, climate resilience and peace sustainability*

9. In this panel discussion, participants identified the actions required in water resource management, climate protection and peacebuilding to meet the rights and the needs of women and girls, and to ensure their participation and leadership.

10. The discussions were introduced by presentations from Ms. Nahla Haidar, member of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee); Ms. Gillian Triggs, United Nations Assistant Secretary-General and UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Protection; Ms. Jemma Nunu Kumba, Speaker of the Transitional National Legislative Assembly of South Sudan; Mr. Putu Supadma Rudana, member of the House of Representatives of Indonesia; and Ms. Margret Kiener Nellen, former member of the National Council of Switzerland, and member of the International Board of PeaceWomen Across the Globe.

11. Women are more likely to suffer the negative effects of water insecurity, which is being exacerbated by climate change, and of conflict situations. Yet they continue to be excluded from decision-making processes in these and too many other areas. Participants emphasized that the vulnerabilities of many women and girls resulted from the fact that power, wealth and resources were distributed in a way that leaves them behind. It was crucial to increase women's participation at all levels. Participants called for the development of adapted strategies and gender-responsive measures and actions, at the national and local levels, related to water management, climate-change mitigation and adaptation, peacebuilding, and reconstruction and recovery. Recommendations included conducting research into the needs of women and girls in order to inform policies and laws; designing national action plans, whether on climate change or peace, in order to reduce the negative impacts of crises on women; and ensuring that women have access to various financial mechanisms, including funding, to implement their solutions.

Elections to the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians

16. The Forum elected representatives to fill half of the seats for regional representatives, and two regional representatives, one for the African Group and one for the Twelve Plus Group, to fill seats left vacant.

17. Based on a proposal by the Bureau, the Forum also elected Ms. C. López Castro (Mexico) to the post of President, Ms. F. Ilimi (Algeria) to the post of First Vice-President, and Ms. A. Nassif Ayyoub (Egypt) to the post of Second Vice-President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians.

Report of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 211th session
(Manama, 15 March 2023)*

The Forum of Young Parliamentarians was held on 12 March 2023. It brought together 100 participants, including 60 parliamentarians (22 young women and 38 young men) from 58 countries, as well as representatives from various organizations. The meeting was presided over by Ms. S. Albazar (Egypt), President of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians.

In the opening remarks, Ms. Albazar reflected on the successes of the Board over the last two years as its mandate was coming to an end at the 146th Assembly. She emphasized the importance of sustaining the new initiatives created during Board's tenure, such as the Empowerment Series of online briefings on areas of importance identified by young MPs themselves.

The IPU President also attended the Forum. He reiterated his strong support for youth participation, both globally and within the IPU. He highlighted the importance of elevating the youth voice in the IPU's work and urged young MPs to continue working hard to promote youth participation in parliament and at the IPU.

Taking stock of recent developments in youth participation in their respective countries, the young MPs shared good practices in the creation of youth caucuses, the election of young politicians to leadership positions in both parliament and government, increased support to empower young MPs through political parties, and advances in health and education for youth. The importance of continued financial investment to empower youth was also stressed. The members of the Forum highlighted their commitment to the *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign and showcased efforts undertaken in its implementation, including the creation of a youth caucus in South Africa and a promotional launch of the campaign in Uruguay, which galvanized MPs and political leaders to support youth participation.

Participants examined the theme of the General Debate of the Assembly, *Promoting peaceful coexistence and inclusive societies: Fighting intolerance*, from a youth perspective. They discussed the key leadership role that youth and young MPs must play, including in decision-making and peace negotiations. They emphasized the importance of accessible education, which promotes peace, inclusion and tolerance as a cornerstone of more peaceful coexistence. The power of legislation was also highlighted by many as an effective tool for parliaments to combat hate and discrimination.

Youth overview reports, aimed at contributing youth perspectives, were presented on the two draft resolutions considered at the Assembly: *Cyberattacks and cybercrimes: The new risks to global security*, and *Parliamentary efforts in achieving negative carbon balances of forests*. In their discussions, the young MPs highlighted the importance of special measures to protect young people from harm online, including in education and awareness-raising. The efforts of some countries to adopt laws protecting MPs from harassment on social media were also raised. Participants underlined the holistic relationship between the environment and health, and called for more sustainable models of consumption and production. They also called for greater financial investment to help protect and strengthen the environment.

The Forum approved the nominations made by the geopolitical groups for membership of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians for the period 2023–2025. The new Board then held a meeting, at which it elected Mr. D. Carden (United Kingdom) as its President. The subsequent discussion focused on future activities, including the forthcoming Ninth Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians, which will take place in Hanoi, Viet Nam, from 14 to 18 September 2023.

In preparation for the 147th IPU Assembly, to be held in October 2023 in Luanda, Angola, the Forum appointed Ms. O. Rudenko (Ukraine), member of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians, to prepare a youth overview report on the proposed resolution *Orphanage trafficking: The role of parliamentarians in reducing harm*.

The Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians, having taken stock of youth participation at the 146th Assembly at its meeting earlier that day, resolved that there remained more work to do to further advance youth participation at the IPU, including by amending the Statutes and Rules to promote participation by younger MPs in IPU Assemblies and to enhance the attendance of Board members. Lowering the age limit to be considered a young MP was also identified as a necessary way forward.

Report of the Committee on Middle East Questions

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 211th session
(Manama, 15 March 2023)*

One sitting of the Committee on Middle East Questions was held, on 12 March 2023, with 12 members in attendance. The Committee members elected Mr. H. Julien-Laferrière (France) as the President of the Committee. Members emphasized their commitment to working together based on mutual comprehension and constructive dialogue, stressing that the mandate they had been entrusted with was critical in building bridges between countries in the region, which could contribute to establishing lasting peace.

The Committee heard a briefing on the IPU Science for Peace Schools session, held at the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) in Geneva, Switzerland, from 5 to 9 December 2022. Some 24 participants from all six IPU geopolitical groups attended for five days of lectures, workshops and visits on the theme *Dealing with water scarcity: An opportunity to rebuild peace with Science*. The training aimed to help foster a positive environment for cooperation between nations by proposing alternative technologies and modalities to lessen tensions related to water scarcity, thus encouraging coexistence between nations. A follow-up conference for parliamentarians focusing on water and food security will be held at the International Centre for Interdisciplinary Science and Education (ICISE), in Viet Nam, in June 2023. The second Science for Peace Schools session will be held in July 2023, focusing on the theme of climate change. This will be followed by a conference for parliamentarians on the side-lines of COP28, which will take place in the United Arab Emirates in November and December 2023. Members applauded the initiative and its positive outcomes, thanking the IPU and CERN for this unique and innovative initiative for peace.

Members heard a report from the IPU Secretariat on the Committee's activities since the 145th IPU Assembly. In November 2022, the Secretariat signed a technical cooperation agreement with the House of Representatives of Yemen, based in Seiyun. The agreement aims to support the parliament in strengthening its oversight functions and parliamentary capacity. Members deplored the situation in Yemen, which has been deemed the worst humanitarian crisis in the world. It is essential that the Committee has a role in bridging divides in this conflict, which involves nations from the region, through interparliamentary dialogue. The IPU Secretariat has also engaged with the Parliament of Libya, based in Benghazi, regarding the rebuilding of functioning institutions. The Libyan delegation emphasized that IPU Member Parliaments should support this institution as the country's legitimate legislature.

Mr. M. Lassouaoui, from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), briefed members on the agency's crucial role in providing aid, including basic education, health care, poverty alleviation, protection and emergency services, to Palestinian refugees in the region. Nonetheless, the situation and living conditions of Palestinian refugees is deteriorating rapidly owing to numerous crises in the region. This situation is further compounded by the financial crisis facing UNRWA as a result of a lack of funding, which is hindering its ability to fulfil its mandate. Mr. Lassouaoui stressed that UNRWA's continued existence today was due to the inability of parties and the international community to find a just and durable solution to the Palestine refugee question. In the absence of such a solution, parliamentarians have a key role to play in supporting UNRWA and providing the financial resources needed to allow it to fulfil its mandate. The Committee thanked UNRWA for the important support it continued to provide to Palestinian refugees and for its contribution to peace and security in the region.

The Committee discussed the nine communications received by the IPU on the situation in the Middle East since its last meeting in October 2022. The communications referred to the escalation of violence in Israel and Palestine, forced displacement, discrimination, settlement construction and expansion in the occupied Palestinian territory, the blockade of the Gaza Strip, the addition of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the European Union list of terrorist organizations, and the impact of unilateral sanctions on the provision of humanitarian aid to the Syrian Arab Republic. Members expressed their sorrow at the extensive loss of life and destruction caused by the earthquakes in the Syrian Arab Republic and Türkiye and conveyed their deepest condolences to the families of the victims.

The IPU Secretariat briefed members on the current situation in Israel and Palestine. The Committee expressed its alarm at the critical situation following a significant surge in violence since the beginning of 2023, including some of the deadliest incidents in nearly 20 years. Members also expressed alarm at

a video shown by the Palestinian delegation concerning attacks by settlers. The Committee was concerned about the increase in instances of discrimination, intolerance and hate speech. Members stressed the centrality of the crisis in Israel and Palestine to the Committee's mandate and agreed to set up a focus group on Israel and Palestine in order to establish concrete initiatives for reconciliation. The Committee stressed the urgent need to act quickly given the lives that were being lost, agreeing that each and every death was a tragedy. Other focus groups, including on the crises in Yemen and Libya, should also be established. Members also agreed to hold two Committee sittings to enable sufficient time to focus on the multiple crises occurring in the Middle East.

The Committee agreed to visit the region in 2023, including Israel, Jordan and Palestine, after having postponed a previous trip because of the dissolution of the Knesset of Israel. The visit, which aims to find common ground, establish real dialogue with stakeholders and gain an in-depth understanding of the situation, will provide an opportunity to promote rapprochement in the region and to advance reconciliation. Members emphasized that the current moments of critical tension were also generating opportunities to establish peace. It is essential to seize these opportunities and act immediately, identifying short-term steps to generate a will for dialogue and peace, and to find solutions for reconciliation. The Committee implored parties to build on the peace that had been established between Israel and other countries in the region, and to apply the same approach to relations with Palestine.

Report of the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 211th session
(Manama, 15 March 2023)*

The Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL) met on 14 March 2023.

The Committee heard a brief update on recent developments with regard to specific IHL and refugee crisis situations which it has been monitoring over the past few years. These include recent developments with regard to refugees or displaced populations in/from Afghanistan, Myanmar and Ukraine. Information on recent developments can be downloaded from the website of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

In general, Committee members noted with concern the multiplication of situations of conflict and the growth in the numbers of men and women, boys and girls having to flee to escape from violence and persecution. In the three countries reviewed, the great majority (70%) of those fleeing conflict were women and girls. In the case of Ukraine, this number was as high as 90%. These situations are becoming more and more complex, and new dimensions such as the impact of climate change, or economic and social challenges in host countries, also need to be factored in when providing assistance and support. The prevalence of gender-based violence was also emphasized and needs to be addressed as a priority. Impunity, including of non-State actors, and the question of war crimes were raised and will be discussed at the next session of the Committee.

The Committee strongly expressed a call for wars to stop, for IHL to be respected, and for humanitarian assistance to be provided in support of refugees and internally displaced populations. It called on parliaments to discuss support for such efforts, noting that there was a strong need to build multilateral cooperation to respond to the dramatic situations faced not only in Ukraine but also in other parts of the world. Refugees from Afghanistan and Myanmar, as well as populations affected by the earthquake in the Syrian Arab Republic and Türkiye, need urgent help and assistance. Committee members also highlighted the need to provide support to host countries. It emphasized the importance of passing legislation to facilitate the inclusion of refugees in host countries (as had been the case in Poland). When refugees are empowered and able to access work and health care, they are less in need of assistance and also contribute to the development of the host country.

The Committee made a special plea with regard to the situation of Afghanistan. Life-saving efforts have become a priority for support agencies involved in the country. The Committee stressed the importance of securing access to health care and education for women and girls.

The Committee discussed preparations for the Global Refugee Forum (GRF) that will be held in December 2023. The GRF will provide an opportunity to take stock of progress in the implementation of the *Global Compact on Refugees* (GCR). IPU Members are invited to follow up on their country's pledges in that regard (see: <https://globalcompactrefugees.org/index.php/>). The Committee also encouraged parliaments to further engage in the implementation of the GCR with new pledges. The GCR is a perfect example of how to facilitate burden-sharing.

The Committee discussed work towards the universalization and implementation of the *Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention*. It agreed to organize a global virtual webinar on the issue as a way to raise awareness and to support further engagement by parliaments. It also discussed the *Convention on Cluster Munitions* and agreed to begin work towards a similar objective of universalization and effective implementation.

Finally, the Committee noted that one of its members, Ms. E. Afanasieva (Russian Federation), had not attended the last three Committee sessions. In accordance with its Rules, the Committee therefore asked for the seat to be declared vacant.

Report on the work of the IPU Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 211th session
(Manama, 15 March 2023)*

As background: The IPU Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine was formed in March 2022 further to an emergency item resolution adopted at the 144th IPU Assembly in Nusa Dua. Its primary objective is to promote political dialogue in support of peacebuilding efforts, in strict observance of the UN Charter and the principles of international law – including national sovereignty, territorial integrity, and refraining from the threat and use of force.

In the course of 2022, the Task Force held six online sessions. In July 2022, it undertook a first mission to Kyiv and Moscow to meet with the respective parliamentary leaderships, better understand the situation on the ground, and identify modalities favourable to the cessation of hostilities and a return to diplomatic dialogue.

In October 2022, the Task Force met in Kigali in the context of the 145th IPU Assembly, held hearings with the delegations from both Ukraine and the Russian Federation, and reported to the Governing Council on its work. The Task Force deplored the global ramifications of the conflict, which have hindered countries' response to the SDGs, the global health crisis and the climate emergency. The war has also triggered a severe food and energy crisis with a negative impact on the economy and on political and social stability in several countries around the world. The Task Force underscored the responsibility of parliaments to defend the lives of the people and provide humanitarian relief. In turn, both parliaments welcomed the efforts of the Task Force in opening channels of communication and promoting parliamentary diplomacy, and underscored their willingness to engage in consultations.

In December 2022, the Task Force issued a call urging the parliaments of both the Russian Federation and Ukraine to do everything within their powers to bring their respective governments to declare and implement a ceasefire, particularly during the brutal winter months, and prevent a humanitarian catastrophe. The Task Force also invited the parliaments to continue discussions in-person at IPU Headquarters in Geneva, in early February 2023. In the meantime, it decided to engage with other organizations – including the European Union, the Council of Europe and the OSCE – in order to gain a broader perspective of the situation.

Neither the ceasefire for which the Task Force had called nor a visit by both sides to IPU Headquarters to continue consultations materialized. The Head of the Ukrainian delegation responded that war-related financial restrictions impeded their ability to travel to Geneva, while the Deputy Speaker of the Russian Council of the Federation responded that political sanctions imposed by the Swiss authorities prevented the delegation from coming to Geneva. The IPU Secretariat reiterated that, in keeping with the IPU's Host Country Agreement, the Swiss authorities would provide visas for Russian MPs coming to Geneva on official IPU business.

On 13 March 2023, the IPU Task Force met for an eighth time, during the 146th IPU Assembly in Manama. Task Force members acknowledged that the situation on the ground and current geopolitics did not grant the necessary circumstances for a ceasefire to be implemented, nor for both parties to be brought to the same table. However, the Task Force reinstated its commitment to pursue spaces of dialogue in a bilateral manner, to meet more often, and to identify with both delegations possible ways to ease the humanitarian consequences of the war.

The Task Force has proposed to engage both the Ukrainian and Russian delegations on the following points, identified as elements in which a level of convergence could be achieved:

1. Nuclear safety – refraining from military attacks in the proximity of nuclear power plants
2. Food security – enhancing the current grain deal facilitated by the United Nations and Türkiye
3. Protection of environmentally vulnerable sites
4. Access to and exchange of prisoners of war

The delegations from both Ukraine and the Russian Federation welcomed the work of the Task Force. They reiterated its importance, noting that the IPU is one of the last forums in which both parliaments are still present. They also noted that the unique strengths of the IPU included good and long-standing relations with both delegations, access to influential decision-makers, and a strong network of partnerships within the global parliamentary community.

The two delegations welcomed the Task Force's idea to focus on specific points where small steps forward can be made, and expressed their interest in receiving a more detailed proposal from the Task Force. They agreed to examine such a document and to respond to the Task Force with their views.

Next steps:

1. The Task Force will send to the parliaments of Ukraine and the Russian Federation a letter detailing avenues to mitigate the humanitarian consequences of the war in the abovementioned four areas.
2. The Task Force will seek to engage with other parties that may help bring about positive change in the context of ongoing escalation of the conflict
3. Once responses are received, the Task Force will endeavour to find possible avenues of convergence and invite both delegations to convene in a suitable venue for continued discussions. The United Arab Emirates and South Africa stand ready to host such meetings.

Report of the High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG)

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 211th session
(Manama, 15 March 2023)*

A meeting of the High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism was held on 13 March 2023. Elections for the post of Chair and Vice-Chair were held. Mr. Monder Bouden (Algeria) was elected as Chair and Ms. Ágnes Vadai (Hungary) was elected as Vice-Chair. During the meeting, the members of the HLAG discussed the results of the three thematic meetings of the *Call of the Sahel*, which were held in late 2022 and early 2023.

The HLAG agreed on the following four overarching principles for engaging with the Sahel countries:

5. Focus on immediate action, not just talking or holding meetings.
6. Harmonize all global activities regarding the Sahel countries with regional and international initiatives.
7. Take into account solutions emerging from the impacted communities: African-led solutions to problems affecting Africa.
8. Rebuild trust at the national and international level between all key stakeholders.

The first thematic meeting was held during the 145th IPU Assembly in Kigali, Rwanda on 14 October 2022, and focused on environmental concerns.

Building on this, the second thematic meeting was held in Algiers, Algeria on 26 and 27 February 2023 as a joint initiative of the IPU and the National People's Assembly of Algeria. The theme was *Engaging communities in the prevention of violent extremism and addressing the conditions conducive to terrorism*. This meeting was the first of its kind as it brought together 190 participants from diverse backgrounds, with a focus on religious and tribal leaders from the Sahel. In addition to HLAG members, the meeting also included representatives of civil society, youth and parliamentarians from the G5 Sahel and neighbouring countries, as well as regional and international experts and parliamentary organizations. Notably, the meeting was presided over by the President of the IPU, Mr. Duarte Pacheco, and the Speaker of the National People's Assembly of Algeria, Mr. Ibrahim Boughali.

The meeting resulted in 19 recommendations, which can be summarized as follows:

- Strengthen the resilience of tribal leaders and civil society actors in the face of violent extremism and terrorism by improving living conditions in Sahelian countries through humanitarian and development projects, with a particular focus on addressing environmental challenges and improving the livelihoods of people living in rural areas.
- Strengthen those who are most vulnerable and whose circumstances, defined by poverty, put them at risk of recruitment by terrorist organizations, acknowledging that development is the foundation of sustainable counter-terrorism efforts.
- Promote coordination between religious leaders to improve their capacity to counter extremist rhetoric and to spread the values of peace and moderation.
- Ensure that women, youth and victims of terrorism are meaningfully included in all peace and stability processes.
- Establish education programmes for children and youth to raise awareness about violent extremism.

The third *Call of the Sahel* meeting was held on 11 March 2023 during the 146th IPU Assembly in Manama, Bahrain. It was attended by members of the HLAG and parliamentarians from the Sahel and the neighbouring countries, as well as subject-matter experts. The meeting focused on *Mitigating the impact of security threats by building resilience in the Sahel*.

The meeting resulted in the following recommendations:

- Prioritize immediate action over ineffective meetings. In addition, the international community should not over-promise and under-deliver.
- Secure technical and financial support to contain the security situation and counter the spread of terrorism to other countries in the region.
- Acknowledge the failure of the international community to take notice of the dire situation in the Sahel and the lack of accountability of the West for the destabilization of Libya, which has had a severe impact on the Sahel.
- Strengthen the regional cooperation of the Sahelian States, which must be based on sincerity and transparency.
- Increase efforts to build trust at national and international levels, and support or reform regional institutions to this end.
- Highlight the importance of social and economic investments to stem the tide of terrorism and build the resilience of local populations to radicalization, extremism and recruitment by terrorist organizations.

All three thematic meetings on the *Call of the Sahel* were attended by senior representatives from the Institute for Economics and Peace, which produces the Global Terrorism Index and the Global Peace Index, the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and the Inter-Parliamentary Committee of the G5 Sahel.

During the HLAG meeting at the 146th IPU Assembly in Manama, the results of the three thematic meetings on the *Call of the Sahel* were evaluated and the following next steps were identified by members:

- *Internal coordination:* Having identified women and youth as vulnerable groups, coordination meetings should be set up with the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians of the IPU and the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians of the IPU, to bring their attention to the situation of these vulnerable groups in the Sahel Countries and to encourage these IPU bodies to put them on the agenda of future meetings of their respective Forums.
- *Inter-Parliamentary coordination:* In order to harmonize and unify the support given to the people of the Sahel in each of the five thematic areas of the *Call of the Sahel*, a coordination mechanism should be established with all the parliamentary actors working on issues affecting the Sahel. In addition, parliaments of developed nations should be encouraged to invest efforts in rebuilding trust with the countries of the Sahel.
- *International coordination:* UN organizations active in the Sahel should be encouraged to establish an inter-agency coordination mechanism, which also includes parliamentary actors, based on needs on the ground.
- *Communication and visibility:* Greater visibility of the work of the HLAG, and especially the *Call of the Sahel*, is needed in order for it to have the desired impact. The IPU Secretary General could play an important role in giving the *Call of the Sahel* greater prominence internationally.

Report of the Advisory Group on Health

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 211th session
(Manama, 15 March 2023)*

The IPU Advisory Group on Health met on 11 March 2023, with 5 out of 12 members in attendance. It welcomed the three new members from Ireland, Pakistan and the United Republic of Tanzania, as well as technical partners from the World Health Organization (WHO), the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health, UNAIDS, and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

The Advisory Group discussed ways to strengthen the IPU's relevance in the global health arena and to implement the health component of the IPU Strategy. It agreed that the challenge of health was very broad and that it would not expand its priorities further, but instead retain and address certain key priorities.

The Advisory Group reflected together on the importance of human rights obligations in health-related work. Restrictive laws and policies are still limiting or blocking access to services. Challenges exist and more must be done to protect vulnerable populations, especially young women and socially marginalized groups. There is a lot that parliamentarians can and should do through public outreach.

The Advisory Group decided to act on its outreach mandate, agreeing to organize a field visit in 2023 to learn about and document practices related to equity in health, in particular for marginalized groups. The Advisory Group welcomes proposals from interested host countries.

The Advisory Group also reflected on its rules and practices and agreed to continue this discussion with a view to further strengthening the IPU's relevance and work in the global health arena.

The Advisory Group discussed IPU cooperation with its technical partners and was pleased to learn about the related achievements and impact. Members were appraised of upcoming joint activities, including the *First African Parliamentary High-Level Conference on Strengthening Health Security Preparedness*, organized by the IPU and WHO, to be held in Cape Town, South Africa, in May 2023. Preparing for future emergencies should be central to post-COVID-19 efforts and the Advisory Group is glad to support parliamentary mobilization around the issue.

Equity in health should be the starting point for efforts to prevent and fight diseases. Ensuring universal health coverage is a key step in this regard. The IPU and WHO have produced a handbook for parliamentarians on the issue, entitled *The path towards universal health coverage*. The publication was officially launched on 12 March 2023 with a video address from Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General. The handbook is a practical tool to enhance parliamentarians' understanding of the complex issues related to health coverage, and to support capacity-building to enable parliamentarians to take concrete action to deliver on health and well-being for their citizens. Parliamentarians were encouraged to take a copy of the handbook and to discuss how to use it in their parliament.

Report of the Working Group on Science and Technology

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 211th session
(Manama, 15 March 2023)*

A sitting of the Working Group was held in Manama, Bahrain on 13 March 2023, with 14 members in attendance.

The Working Group applauded the success of the first session of the Science for Peace Schools, which was held between 5 and 9 December 2022 at CERN in Geneva, Switzerland, with the theme *Dealing with water scarcity: An opportunity to rebuild peace with Science*. The session focused on water management and the exploration of new and renewable sources of water, with the aim of creating a positive environment for technical cooperation and negotiations by encouraging proposals for alternative technologies and modalities to lessen tensions related to water scarcity, and thus transform elements of conflict between parties into reasons for coexistence.

Twenty-four participants, including representatives of all six geopolitical groups, attended the first session: 21 parliamentary staff nominated by their national parliaments with a view to ensuring continuity across parliamentary mandates, as well as three parliamentarians, namely the Chair of the Working Group on Science and Technology, the President of the Committee on Middle East Questions, and a member of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians.

As the first joint activity of the IPU's Committee on Middle East Questions and the Working Group on Science and Technology, the aim of the Science for Peace Schools is to bridge the worlds of science and politics by initiating dialogue and creating a community of parliamentary experts to address challenges together under the neutral umbrella of science. The first session provided a space for participants to exchange experiences of evidence-based decision-making and to learn about methods of scientific collaboration. Notably, participants agreed on the importance of implementing two regional projects on water, in the Sahel region and in Palestine.

The Working Group agreed to hold a follow-up conference for parliamentarians with a focus on water and food security in June 2023 at the International Centre for Interdisciplinary Science and Education (ICISE) in Quy Nhon, Viet Nam. The Working Group also agreed to hold the second session of the Science for Peace Schools in July 2023 on the theme of climate change, in order to set the tone for a follow-up conference for parliamentarians on the sidelines of COP28, which will take place in the United Arab Emirates in December 2023.

With regard to the Working Group's work plan, members agreed on their intention to participate as observers in the 26th session of the United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development, which will be held from 27 to 31 March 2023 in Geneva. Despite the observer status of the Working Group members, their active contribution to the discussions will be welcomed when the floor is opened for interaction among panelists and participants.

The Working Group was briefed by Mr. Declan Korrane, Chair of the 9th Science Summit in the context of the 78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, on the theme and activities of the Summit. The Working Group agreed to officially participate in the next Summit in New York, which will be held from 13 to 29 September 2023. Their participation will help them to identify ways in which science can contribute to global challenges and to ensure a continuous dialogue between parliamentarians and the scientific community, while developing and launching science collaborations to support the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Working Group also agreed to collaborate with the IPU Standing Committee on Sustainable Development to develop and present a key report at the Science Summit, reinforcing the role of parliamentarians in setting the global agenda. In addition, the Working Group agreed to organize an IPU Day as part of the Summit, with a focus on the contribution of the IPU in general, and parliamentarians in particular, to achieving the SDGs. The goal of this event would be to facilitate direct parliamentary engagement with scientists to ensure a more policy-focused approach to the delivery of the SDGs.

Finally, the Working Group agreed to pursue several pilot projects on the engagement of the scientific community with parliaments. Members discussed a proposed process aimed at improving awareness of the need for scientific engagement in the legislative process. Conclusions and recommendations from each parliament participating in the process will be used to develop a practical parliamentary toolkit on the importance of scientific engagement in parliamentary decision-making. The Working Group will review and approve the toolkit at its meeting during the 147th IPU Assembly in Angola in October 2023.

Statistics of the Gender Partnership Group

Status of participation of women delegates at the 146th Assembly of the IPU (as at 15 March 2023)

Composition of delegations of IPU Members attending the last eight IPU statutory meetings (October 2018 - present)

Meeting	Total delegates	Total/percentage of women delegates		Total delegations	Total/percentage of all-male delegations (2 or more)		Total all-female delegations (2 or more)	Total single-sex delegations (2 or more)	Total single-member delegations (male and female)
		Total	Percentage		Total	Percentage			
Manama (03/2023)	661	228	34.5	136	21	16	3	24	5
Kigali (10/2022)	553	196	35.4	120	14	12.6	4	18	9
Nusa Dua (03/2022)	393	153	38.9	101	13	14.4	3	16	11
Madrid (11/2021)	509	198	38.9	117	10	9.3	3	13	10
Virtual (05/2021)	755	287	38	133	8	6.2	2	10	4
Belgrade (10/2019)	719	221	30.7	149	15	11.4	0	15	17
Doha (04/2019)	721	219	30.3	147	16	11.8	0	16	12
Geneva (10/2018)	751	247	32.9	149	17	12.1	4	21	9

Single-sex, multi-member delegations of IPU Members present in Manama (as at 15 March 2023)

N°	Country	Manama Mar23			Kigali Oct22			Nusa Dua Mar22			Madrid Nov21			Virtual May21			Belgrade Oct19			Doha Apr19			Geneva Oct18		
		Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total
1	Argentina*	4	0	4	2	0	2	absent			absent			4	5	9	1	3	4	1	3	4	1	6	7
2	Brazil*	0	6	6	0	1	1	absent			3	5	8	2	2	4	1	10	11	1	9	10	1	10	11
3	Cambodia	0	4	4	1	3	4	0	5	5	0	2	2	2	5	7	2	4	6	1	4	5	3	3	6
4	Chad	0	5	5	2	2	4	absent			absent			absent			absent			absent			1	5	6
5	Comoros	0	2	2	absent			absent			absent			1	1	2	absent			absent			1	2	3
6	Ethiopia	0	3	3	absent			absent			absent			absent			1	3	4	3	4	7	3	5	8
7	Finland	2	0	2	4	1	5	2	2	4	3	3	6	6	2	8	3	1	4	1	1	2	2	2	4
8	Gabon*	0	2	2	0	2	2	absent			1	5	6	absent			1	4	5	2	5	7	absent		
9	Georgia	0	2	2	1	4	5	absent			1	3	4	absent			0	1	1	0	6	6	1	2	3
10	Italy	2	0	2	0	1	1	0	1	1	2	3	5	3	3	6	1	3	4	1	4	5	2	4	6
11	Madagascar*	0	2	2	0	3	3	0	2	2	0	4	4	3	6	9	2	3	5	absent			absent		
12	Malaysia*	0	2	2	0	4	4	0	1	1	absent			1	2	3	2	3	5	1	3	4	2	4	6
13	Mali	0	2	2	1	3	4	absent			absent			1	1	2	1	2	3	1	4	5	1	4	3
14	Malta*	0	3	3	0	2	2	0	1	1	0	3	3	0	2	2	0	1	1	0	3	3	1	1	2
15	Mongolia*	0	3	3	absent			absent			0	4	4	2	7	9	2	3	5	3	3	6	1	2	3
16	Myanmar	0	2	2	special status			absent			absent			absent			1	2	3	2	1	3	0	3	3
17	Qatar	0	7	7	1	4	5	1	2	3	1	5	6	1	4	5	1	5	6	1	11	12	2	4	6
18	Seychelles*	0	3	3	0	2	2	1	1	2	0	1	1	1	3	4	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
19	Singapore	0	3	3	absent			absent			absent			1	3	4	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
20	Slovakia*	0	2	2	absent			absent			absent			absent			0	1	1	absent			absent		
21	Somalia*	0	6	6	0	5	5	absent			absent			1	4	5	1	4	5	1	8	9	0	4	4
22	Tonga*	0	2	2	absent			absent			absent			absent			0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1
23	Yemen*	0	4	4	0	6	6	0	5	5	0	5	5	0	8	8	0	8	8	absent			0	5	5
24	Zimbabwe	0	2	2	3	4	7	1	3	4	3	3	6	1	1	2	2	5	7	1	6	7	1	6	7

Single-member delegations of IPU Members present in Manama (as at 15 March 2023)

N°	Country	Manama Mar23			Kigali Oct22			Nusa Dua Mar22			Madrid Nov21			Virtual May21			Belgrade Oct19			Doha Apr19			Geneva Oct18		
		Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total
1	Lithuania	1	0	1	absent			absent			1	1	2	2	2	4	1	1	2	absent			1	1	2
2	Monaco	0	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	3	1	1	2	2	1	3	2	1	3
3	Paraguay*	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	2	2	1	2	3	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	2	2
4	Sierra Leone	0	1	1	1	2	3	1	4	5	2	4	6	absent			1	3	4	0	3	3	1	2	3
5	Turkmenistan*	0	1	1	absent			absent			absent			0	2	2	0	2	2	2	1	3	1	1	2

* Delegations subjected to sanctions at the 146th Assembly, pursuant to Art. 10.4 and 15.2.c of the IPU Statutes, for being composed exclusively of representatives of the same sex for two consecutive Assemblies.

* * * * *

47th session of the Gender Partnership Group

Manama (Bahrain), 15 March 2023

Delegations with 40% to 60% women parliamentarians

The Gender Partnership Group promotes gender parity within the delegations of IPU Member Parliaments to the Assemblies and has decided to give visibility to those that are composed of a minimum of 40% and maximum of 60% of each gender.

The countries below are ordered according to the percentage of women parliamentarians in their delegations at the 146th IPU Assembly.

There are a total of 37 gender-balanced delegations out of 136 delegations (27.2%) of IPU Members attending the 146th IPU Assembly (as at 15 March 2023).

Delegations with 40% to 49.9% women parliamentarians (14):

Australia 40%
France 40%
Ireland 40%
Niger 40%
Nigeria 40%
Portugal 40%
Republic of Korea 40%
Senegal 40%
Switzerland 40%
Kenya 42%
Oman 43%
Philippines 43%
United Republic of Tanzania 43%
Uzbekistan 43%

Delegations with 50% women parliamentarians (18):

Azerbaijan	Greece	Republic of Namibia
Bangladesh	Guyana	Norway
Burundi	Indonesia	Lao People's Democratic
Croatia	Kazakhstan	Rwanda
Cyprus	Liberia	Timor-Leste
Egypt	Liechtenstein	Türkiye

Delegations with 50.1% to 60% women parliamentarians (5):

South Africa 56%
Cameroon 57%
Mexico 57%
Sweden 57%
Netherlands 60%

Calendar of future meetings and other activities

*Approved by the Governing Council at its 211th session
(Manama, 15 March 2023)*

Series of workshops on human security and common security with partners including the International Peace Bureau and the World Academy on Art and Sciences	Virtual/Hybrid January – December 2023
Workshops on comprehensive disarmament: Focus on the Arms Trade Treaty	Virtual/Hybrid January – December 2023
Series of webinars on disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation as well as military expenditures, co-organized with Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (PNND) and other partners	Virtual January – December 2023
“Public engagement” webinar series on public engagement in the work of parliament, in follow-up to the 2022 Global Parliamentary Report	Virtual Regular webinars throughout 2023
“Transforming parliaments” webinar series on digital transformation in parliaments, organized by IPU’s Centre for Innovation in Parliament	Virtual Regular webinars throughout 2023
Webinar on the revised edition of the IPU-IFLA Guidelines for Parliamentary Libraries	Virtual 30 March 2023
51st Session of the Steering Committee of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO	BRUSSELS (Belgium) 27 April 2023
First African Parliamentary High-level Conference on Strengthening Health Security Preparedness	CAPE TOWN (South Africa) 2 – 5 May 2023 (Dates to be confirmed)
Information seminar on the structure and functioning of the Inter-Parliamentary Union for English-speaking participants	IPU Headquarters GENEVA (Switzerland) 9 – 12 May 2023
Parliamentary side event during the World Health Assembly	GENEVA (Switzerland) May 2023 (Dates to be confirmed)
Regional workshop on promoting the rights of the child for the parliaments of West Africa	ABUJA (Nigeria) May 2023 (Dates to be confirmed)
Conference for parliamentarians on water and food security	QUY NHON (Viet Nam) May 2023 (Dates to be confirmed)
Parliamentary Conference on Interfaith Dialogue: <i>Working Together for our common future</i>	MARRAKECH (Morocco) 13 – 15 June 2023
Extraordinary meeting of the IPU Executive Committee	LISBON (Portugal) 28 – 30 June 2023
Second Science for Peace School on Climate Change	GENEVA (Switzerland) June 2023 (Dates to be confirmed)
Parliamentary Forum at the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development	NEW YORK (USA) 18 July 2023

Regional seminar on climate change for the parliaments of Latin America and the Caribbean	Costa Rica August 2023 (Dates to be confirmed)
Ninth Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians	Viet Nam September 2023 (Dates to be confirmed)
Parliamentary Meeting at the UN SDG Summit	NEW YORK (USA) September 2023 (Dates to be confirmed)
Parliamentary Track at the Internet Governance Forum 2023	KYOTO (Japan) 8 – 12 October 2023
Second World Summit of the Committees of the Future	MONTEVIDEO (Uruguay) 11 – 14 October 2023
Tripartite dialogue between parliamentarians, ministers and business leaders at the 2023 World Investment Forum	ABU DHABI (United Arab Emirates) 17 October 2023
147th Assembly and related meetings	LUANDA (Angola) 23 – 27 October 2023
Parliamentary Meeting at COP28	DUBAI (United Arab Emirates) 30 November – 12 December 2023
Climate change webinar organized with Adaptation at Altitude	Virtual December 2023 (Dates to be confirmed)
Global Conference on the Call of the Sahel	End of 2023 (Venue and dates to be confirmed)
Third regional seminar for the Twelve Plus Group on achieving the SDGs	PARIS (France) 2023 (Dates to be confirmed)
Interregional seminar on the SDGs	China 2023 (Dates to be confirmed)
Workshop for members of Parliamentary Human Rights Committees from French-speaking countries that have recently or will soon be reviewed by the Human Rights Council	GENEVA (Switzerland) 2023 (Dates to be confirmed)
Regional Conference for African parliaments on preventing and responding to violence against women in politics and in parliaments, co-organized with the African Parliamentary Union and the National Assembly of Togo	LOMÉ (Togo) 2023 (Dates to be confirmed)
Capacity-building regional workshop for the G5 Sahel on countering terrorism and violent extremism	NIAMEY (Niger) 2023 (Dates to be confirmed)
Regional workshop for parliamentarians and their staff from Latin America and the Caribbean, co-organized with the World Trade Organization (WTO)	GEORGETOWN (Guyana) 2023 (Dates to be confirmed)
Speakers' Summit (P20) on the occasion of the G20	India 2023 (Dates to be confirmed)

Regional workshop for parliaments and State Audit Institutes co-organized with INTOSAI Development Initiative (IDI)	Caribbean 2023 (Venue and dates to be confirmed)
52nd Session of the Steering Committee of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO (in the context of the WTO Public Forum)	GENEVA (Switzerland) 2023 (Dates to be confirmed)
Information Seminar on the structure and functioning of the Inter-Parliamentary Union for Spanish-speaking participants	Virtual 2023 (Dates to be confirmed)
Global virtual parliamentary briefings in lead up to COP28	Virtual 2023 (Dates to be confirmed)
Series of webinars on climate change and health	Virtual 2023 (Dates to be confirmed)
Global empowerment series: Briefings and training courses for young parliamentarians	Virtual 2023 (Quarterly)
Series of regional and global virtual workshops on gender equality and women's empowerment	Virtual 2023 (Dates to be confirmed)
Series of regional and sub-regional webinars on statelessness	Virtual 2023 (Dates to be confirmed)
Series of briefings for parliaments of countries that will be reviewed in 2023 and early 2024 by the UN Human Rights Council under its Universal Periodic Review; by the UN Committee on the Rights of Child; by the UN Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families and by the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women	Virtual 2023 (Dates to be confirmed)
Global webinar co-organized with UNHCR on education and refugees	Virtual 2023 (Dates to be confirmed)
Joint online event on the SDGs with the United Nations Economic Commissions for Europe (ECE), and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)	Virtual 2023 (Date to be confirmed)
Regional meeting on Health Security for Asia	2023 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Regional workshop on promoting the rights of the child for the parliaments of the East and South Asia region	2023 Venue and dates to be confirmed
16th Workshop of Parliamentary Scholars and Parliamentarians, co-sponsored by the IPU and the Centre for Legislative Studies, University of Hull, United Kingdom	2023 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Parliamentary meeting in the context of the WTO Public Forum	2023 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Annual Parliamentary Conference on the occasion of the WTO Ministerial Meeting	2023 Venue and dates to be confirmed

Meeting for the Call of the Sahel: on development issues relating to countering terrorism	2023 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Meeting for the Call of the Sahel: on education issues relating to countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism	2023 Venue and dates to be confirmed
World e-Parliament Conference 2024	MANAMA (Bahrain) February 2024 (Dates to be confirmed)
Annual Parliamentary Hearing at the UN	NEW YORK (USA) February 2024 (Dates to be confirmed)
Annual parliamentary meeting at the Commission on the Status of Women	NEW YORK (USA) March 2024 (Dates to be confirmed)
148th Assembly and related meetings	GENEVA (Switzerland) 23 – 27 March 2024
17th Workshop of Parliamentary Scholars and Parliamentarians, co-sponsored by the IPU and the Centre for Legislative Studies, University of Hull, United Kingdom	WROXTON (United Kingdom) July 2024 (Dates to be confirmed)
10th Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians	Armenia 2024 (Venue and dates to be confirmed)
Side event at the 6th Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA 6)	NAIROBI (Kenya) 2024 (Dates to be confirmed)
Global empowerment series: Briefings and training courses for young parliamentarians	Virtual 2024 (Quarterly)
Series of regional and global virtual workshops on gender equality and women's empowerment	Virtual 2024 (Dates to be confirmed)
Capacity-building regional workshop on countering terrorism and violent extremism for the African Group	2024 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Capacity-building regional workshop on countering terrorism and violent extremism for the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC)	2024 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Capacity-building regional workshop on countering terrorism and violent extremism for the Eurasia Group	2024 Venue and dates to be confirmed

Agenda of the 147th Assembly

(Luanda, Angola, 23-27 October 2023)

1. Election of the President of the 147th Assembly
2. Consideration of requests for the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda
3. General Debate
4. Special accountability segment on the implementation of IPU resolutions and other decisions
5. *Orphanage trafficking: The role of parliaments in reducing harm*
(Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights)
6. Reports of the Standing Committees
7. Approval of the subject item for the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights at the 149th IPU Assembly and appointment of the Rapporteurs