



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

148th IPU Assembly

Geneva, 23–27 March 2024

Convocation

A/148/C.1
30 November 2023

Dear Madam President,
Dear Mr. President,

The 148th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and related meetings will be held at the International Conference Centre Geneva (CICG), Switzerland, from Saturday, 23 to Wednesday, 27 March 2024.

We are pleased to enclose detailed information on these meetings, including the agendas of the IPU statutory bodies. We very much hope that your Parliament will be represented at the 148th Assembly and that the delegation, under your leadership, will take an active part in the proceedings. We would like to draw your attention to the requirement that those members of your Parliament who hold office in the various bodies of the IPU be included in the delegation.

Yours sincerely,

Tulia Ackson
President

Martin Chungong
Secretary General

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#IPU148

INFORMATION ON THE ASSEMBLY

AGENDA

1. Election of the President of the 148th 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. *Addressing the social and humanitarian impact of autonomous weapon systems and artificial intelligence*
(Standing Committee on Peace and International Security)
6. *Partnerships for climate action: Promoting access to affordable green energy, and ensuring innovation, responsibility and equity*
(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 150th Assembly and appointment of the co-Rapporteurs

TIMETABLE

The Timetable of the Assembly and related meetings is set out in **Annex 1**.

The Governing Council will convene on 24 and 27 March 2024 and will consider and take decisions on a host of matters relating to the functioning and activities of the IPU. The agenda of the 213th session of the IPU Governing Council, and those of the other statutory bodies meeting during the 148th Assembly, are available in **Annex 2**.

The Assembly will start its General Debate on 24 March 2024 with the high-level segment reserved for Speakers of Parliament. A concept note on the overall theme of the General Debate will be posted in due course on the Assembly webpage.

At its sittings on 26 and 27 March 2024, the Assembly will adopt resolutions on the emergency item and on the subject items taken up by the Standing Committees. An accountability segment will take place during the Assembly plenary on 26 March 2024, when Member Parliaments will have an opportunity to report on their work in follow-up to IPU resolutions and other decisions. The Assembly is expected to conclude with the adoption of an outcome document on the theme of the General Debate and to complete its business by 18:00 on Wednesday, 27 March 2024.

EMERGENCY ITEM

According to Assembly Rule 11.1 and Article 14.2 of the Statutes, any Member of the IPU may request the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda. If the Assembly so decides, the emergency item will be debated by the Assembly in the morning of 25 March 2024. Provision has also been made for a drafting committee to meet in the afternoon that same day in order to prepare a draft resolution. The Assembly will then adopt a resolution on 26 March 2024.

All requests for inclusion of an emergency item must relate to a recent major situation of international concern, on which urgent action by the international community is required and on which it is appropriate for the IPU to express its opinion and mobilize a parliamentary response. In order to ensure translation and dissemination, all proposals for an emergency item should be submitted to the

IPU Secretariat by 17:00 on 23 March 2024. The proposals should contain a brief explanatory memorandum and a draft resolution, which clearly define the scope of the subject covered by the request.

GOVERNING COUNCIL

The Governing Council is composed of three members from each parliament represented in the IPU. Each parliament's representation on the Governing Council must include both men and women. Single-gender delegations will be limited to one member (Governing Council Rule 1.2).

In conformity with Governing Council Rule 13, members of the Council may request the inclusion of supplementary items in the agenda. Such items must fall within the mandate of the Council which, according to Article 20 of the Statutes, determines and guides the activities of the IPU and controls their implementation.

Any requests for the inclusion of supplementary items will immediately be transmitted by the Secretariat to all Governing Council members. After hearing the opinion of the Executive Committee, the Council shall decide on such a request by a majority of votes cast if the request is received by the Secretariat at least 15 days before the opening of the session; or otherwise by a two-thirds majority.

STANDING COMMITTEES

All four Standing Committees will meet during the Geneva Assembly. The Standing Committees, among other things, organize debates on issues within their mandate, adopt resolutions and motions that express the collective position of the IPU and set out actions for follow-up by Member Parliaments.

In order to maximize their contribution to the implementation of the IPU 2022-2026 Strategy, the Standing Committees have decided to give priority to a specific set of "focus areas" (**Annex 3**). The focus areas will serve as guidance when setting the agenda and workplan for the Standing Committees.

The Standing Committee on Peace and International Security will discuss and adopt a resolution on the subject item *Addressing the social and humanitarian impact of autonomous weapon systems and artificial intelligence*.

The Standing Committee on Sustainable Development will discuss and adopt a resolution on the subject item *Partnerships for climate action: Promoting access to affordable green energy, and ensuring innovation, responsibility and equity*.

The other two Standing Committees will hold hearings and panel discussions as approved at the 147th IPU Assembly.

PARTICIPATION

IPU Member Parliaments may appoint a maximum of eight delegates, or 10 for parliaments of countries with a population of 100 million inhabitants or more (Article 10.2 of the Statutes). The number of additional MPs accompanying delegations as Advisers must not exceed two.

Member Parliaments are kindly reminded that IPU office-holders should be included in national delegations to the Assembly. The list of current office-holders is available on the IPU website at www.ipu.org/about-ipu/structure-and-governance. Confirmation of registration may be delayed for those delegations that fail to include office-holders.

In keeping with Article 10.3 of the Statutes, Members "...may register one additional delegate if **at least** one young parliamentarian (below 45 years of age) is part of the delegation on condition that the delegation is composed of both sexes and the Member is not in arrears in the payment of its assessed contributions". Needless to say, Member Parliaments are welcome to include more than one young parliamentarian in their delegation.

All Member Parliaments are also encouraged to strive for **gender parity** and **political balance** in the **composition of their delegations**. In accordance with Article 10.4 of the Statutes, any delegation which, for two consecutive sessions of the Assembly, is composed exclusively of parliamentarians of the same sex shall automatically be reduced by one person.

Geopolitical groups are kindly requested to schedule their meetings on 22 March 2024, or at any time on 23 March 2024 which does not conflict with the sittings of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians.

IPU Members whose arrears equal or exceed the amount of the contributions due from them for the preceding two full years shall not be represented by more than two delegates at meetings of the IPU (Article 5.2 of the Statutes), nor shall they be entitled to vote.

Associate Members may participate in the Assembly and its Standing Committees with the same rights as Members, with the exception of the right to vote and to present candidates for elective office.

International organizations and other bodies invited by the Governing Council to be represented at the Assembly as permanent observers shall be entitled to register a maximum of two delegates.

VACANCIES TO BE FILLED DURING THE 148th ASSEMBLY

A provisional list of vacancies for IPU bodies will be circulated to Members and posted on the IPU website prior to the opening of the Assembly.

Member Parliaments are invited to consider submitting candidatures for the committees and other bodies of the IPU (www.ipu.org/about-us/structure/assembly) bearing in mind the gender balance requirements of the bodies concerned, as provided for in the IPU Statutes and Rules. Candidates should have expertise, as far as possible, in the areas of work of the given bodies, and should be supported by their respective parliament in carrying out their functions as IPU office-holders. **Member Parliaments not currently holding IPU offices are particularly encouraged to submit candidatures.**

PREPARATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS AND SELECTION OF AGENDA ITEMS

The deadlines pertaining to the preparation of resolutions for the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security and the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development are as follows:

15 December 2023	Deadline for the co-Rapporteurs to submit the draft resolutions and explanatory memorandums to the IPU Secretariat.
8 March 2024	Deadline for IPU Members to submit proposals for amendments to the draft resolutions.
23-27 March 2024	148th IPU Assembly Finalization and adoption of the resolutions.

All Member Parliaments can contribute to the drafting of resolutions by submitting a brief written input (Standing Committee Rule 13.1). They are also encouraged to submit input for the draft resolution to be adopted at the 149th IPU Assembly (October 2024) by the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights on *The impact of artificial intelligence on democracy, human rights and the rule of law*. Written input on this draft resolution is welcome until 17 April 2024.

In accordance with the Standing Committees' Rules, proposals for subject items should be submitted up to one day prior to the meeting of the respective Standing Committee Bureau. As such, Members wishing to do so should submit to the IPU Secretariat their proposals for the subject items to be taken up by the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security and the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development by 25 March 2024.

These will serve as the basis for consultations by the respective Standing Committee Bureaux before a final decision is taken by the above-mentioned Standing Committees.

GENERAL DEBATE (Item 3 of the agenda)

In keeping with the Assembly Rules (Rule 22.1), two representatives of each delegation may speak during the General Debate, and they shall share the speaking time as they deem fit. An additional MP from each delegation may address the General Debate, provided he/she is a young parliamentarian (below 45 years of age).

As per usual practice, in order to take the floor in the General Debate, Member Parliaments may register on the spot at the speakers' registration desk outside the Plenary Hall (Amphitheatre D, first floor, CICG). Member Parliaments may also register their speaker(s) in advance through the [online registration system](#), which will open on 8 January 2024.

Speaking time will be determined based on the number of registered speakers and the following general guidelines:

List A	High-level segment (Presiding Officers)	7 minutes
List B	First speakers from delegations	6 minutes
List C	Second speakers from delegations	Time remaining (up to a total of 7 minutes for two speakers)
List D	Young parliamentarians (below 45 years of age)	2 minutes
List E	Permanent observers	3 minutes

The order of speakers will be determined by a public drawing of lots at 17:00 on 23 March 2024. The Steering Committee may decide, in view of the number of registered speakers, to reduce the allotted speaking time.

VICE-PRESIDENTS OF THE ASSEMBLY

According to Assembly Rule 7.3, all delegations from Member Parliaments are entitled to designate one of their members as a Vice-President of the Assembly. Some of the Vice-Presidents may be called upon to replace the President of the Assembly during a sitting or part of a sitting.

Upon arrival at the IPU Registration Desk, delegations are invited to indicate the name of the parliamentarian nominated as a Vice-President of the Assembly. Alternatively, names may be communicated to the IPU Secretariat by 12:00 noon on 24 March 2024.

ALLOCATION OF VOTES

A provisional table showing the votes allocated to delegations to the 148th Assembly will be made available on the Assembly webpage.

Member Parliaments are kindly requested to check the figures against their country name and, if necessary, inform the IPU Secretariat in writing of any modifications required, preferably ahead of the Assembly. The final table showing the allocation of votes at the Assembly will be distributed at the opening of the session.

LANGUAGES, SPEECHES AND DOCUMENTATION

The IPU Secretariat will provide simultaneous interpretation in the IPU Assembly's working languages (Arabic, English, French and Spanish) at the meetings of all statutory bodies.

Four other interpretation booths have been reserved for Chinese, Japanese, Portuguese and Russian at sittings of the Assembly and the Governing Council. The number of additional booths available in the Plenary Hall is limited. The related costs incurred must be borne by the requesting party. All such requests will be handled on a first-come, first-served basis.

For all other meetings, interpretation will be provided remotely either via Zoom or Interprefy. Consequently, any parliament wishing to have a channel for meetings serviced by remote simultaneous interpretation (RSI) should ensure that their interpreters are fully trained on cloud-based platforms. The IPU conference services team (conf-services@ipu.org) will be pleased to provide more information, where needed.

Official statements delivered in the General Debate are published on the Assembly webpage and are part of the official records of the Assembly. All delegations are therefore encouraged to send their statements to speeches@ipu.org. Due to technical limitations, only speeches in English, French and Spanish will be posted.

In keeping with the decision by the IPU Governing Council to reduce the carbon footprint of the Organization and continue to curb paper waste, only a very limited number of documentation sets will be printed for the various sittings of the Assembly.

ASSEMBLY APP

The 148th Assembly App will be available for download free of charge in February 2024. The App is intended to allow the online consultation of official IPU documents as part of the IPU's paper smart policy and to facilitate delegates' participation in IPU Assemblies.

RESULTS OF THE ASSEMBLY

All delegations will receive one printed copy of the *Results* of the 148th Assembly. In addition, the document will be published on the IPU website after the close of the Assembly, when a complete electronic version can be downloaded in PDF format.

REGISTRATION

All delegations are requested to respect the registration deadline of 15 March 2024 and should use the IPU online registration system. An information note on how to use the registration system will be made available on the Assembly webpage.

HOTEL ACCOMMODATION

March is a busy month for hotels in Geneva. Delegates are therefore advised to make their hotel reservations as soon as possible. Those delegations from countries with a Permanent Mission in Geneva are invited to contact their respective Mission, as they are accustomed to receiving delegations to UN meetings and handling hotel reservations. Many of them have agreements for preferential rates with hotels close to the Palais des Nations area and the CICG.

For those Members without diplomatic representation in Geneva, as well as Associate Members and official observers, the IPU Secretariat has pre-booked a limited number of rooms. More information will be provided in the Practical Information Note to be distributed mid-December 2023.

VISAS

Switzerland is an Associate Member of the Schengen Agreement and part of the Schengen area. All Swiss embassies and consulates are connected to the Visa Information System (VIS) which was introduced in October 2011. This system registers the biometric data (fingerprints and facial image) of Schengen visa applicants and is valid for five years.

All Schengen visa applicants are kindly asked to:

- Respect visa application deadlines and processing requirements.

- Make appointments and lodge Schengen visa applications well in advance (preferably beginning of January 2024) with the Swiss Embassy or Consulate responsible for the delegate's country of legal residence (not nationality). For details, please refer to <https://www.swiss-visa.ch/ivis2/#/i210-select-country> and consult the appropriate Embassy or Consulate website to check the current appointment and visa application procedure.
- Depending on where delegates legally reside, some may have to travel to a different country to lodge their visa application and register their biometric data.
- Switzerland has signed agreements with certain Schengen member States where it is not represented by a diplomatic or consular entity. It is therefore highly recommended that applicants enquire directly with the Swiss embassy or consulate responsible for their country of legal residence or consult the appropriate website.
- Make an appointment with the appropriate Swiss embassy or consulate or, if applicable, with an external visa service provider in order to submit their visa application and register their biometric data in person. The date of the appointment request registered online ([swiss-visa.ch](https://www.swiss-visa.ch)) should not be confused with the date of submission of the visa application.
- Make sure their visa application is lodged well in advance:
 - **At the earliest, 6 months before departure date** to Switzerland
 - **At the latest, 20 days before departure date** to Switzerland
- Make sure all required documents are included in their visa application. The list of documents required by the Swiss Embassy or Consulate varies and depends on their country of residence. Check the appropriate Swiss Embassy or Consulate website and, if necessary, contact them for detailed visa application and document requirements such as the application form for a type C Schengen visa (short stay) available at: www.sem.admin.ch/sem/en/home/themen/einreise/visumantragsformular.html.
- If the IPU is requested to provide a nominative invitation linked to a participant's visa application, please ensure that a copy of the delegate's passport is sent to IPU Headquarters (postbox@ipu.org).
- Please note that the registration and processing of a visa application can only begin once all required documents have been submitted. Some nationalities are subject to a Schengen consultation which lasts 8 -10 days. The time needed to obtain a visa depends greatly on local circumstances and can sometimes take several weeks.
- Under exceptional and urgent circumstances, Swiss Embassies or Consulates may issue visas with limited territorial validity (LTV) in accordance with Schengen regulations. This only applies to individual cases that are duly justified. A holder of an LTV visa which is only valid for Switzerland, cannot visit nor transit through another Schengen State (enter and exit the Schengen area via Switzerland only). If the holder of an LTV visa plans to transit through another country, she/he is entirely responsible for checking the visa and travel document requirements with its relevant authorities.
- Visas are no longer issued upon arrival at Geneva International Airport.
- As for current sanitary measures and entry requirements, please note that entry restrictions (Covid-19) to Switzerland were lifted on 2nd May 2022.