



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

149th IPU Assembly

Geneva
13–17 October 2024



Panel discussion

Common Principles: Parliamentary development as a defence to democratic backsliding

Monday, 14 October 2024, 11:30 – 13:00
Salle Genève (CCV, annex to the CICG)

Concept note

According to a variety of indicators, democracy is in decline around the world, and this has been a continuing trend for several years.¹ In a recent survey, only 34% of citizens worldwide expressed confidence in their parliaments.² This democratic backsliding and lack of trust coincides with a period where the world is facing incredible challenges, including climate change, conflict and the rise of new technologies, which risk further destabilizing societies.

Parliaments, as institutions that represent the people and translate their perspectives and interests into political action, are vitally important for democracy. They are designed to be the expression of the people's will. They must be continuously renewed and improved to meet the new challenges of the day and to respond to the evolving needs of citizens. Parliamentary development is therefore critical to ensure the continued relevance and impact of parliament as an institution that defends democracy and delivers to the people.

[The Common Principles for Support to Parliaments](#) were adopted by the IPU's governing bodies in October 2014 as a guide to more effective support for parliamentary development, for both parliaments and the partners that assist them. Their overarching principle is that effective parliaments are essential to democracy, the rule of law, human rights, gender equality, and economic and social development, and that parliaments require access to excellent technical support to fully contribute to these areas. In the face of recurrent democratic backsliding, the relevance of this principle – and the need for parliamentary development and greater cooperation more generally – is perhaps more important today than at any other time in decades.

Objective

Through the prism of the Common Principles, this panel discussion will explore the challenges parliaments face on the institutional level at a time of democratic backsliding and share concrete proposals of how to strengthen parliamentary development to bolster the protection and strengthening of democracy.



Ten years:
Common principles,
common progress

¹ freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2024/mounting-damage-flawed-elections-and-armed-conflict, www.idea.int/publications/catalogue/global-state-democracy-2023-new-checks-and-balances, www.eiu.com/n/campaigns/democracy-index-2023/
² www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSONline.jsp

This discussion coincides with the celebrations for the tenth anniversary of the Common Principles taking place at the 149th IPU Assembly and throughout 2024. Since their launch, the Common Principles have been endorsed by 149 national parliaments, 77% of the total, and 32 partner organizations.

Organization of the meeting

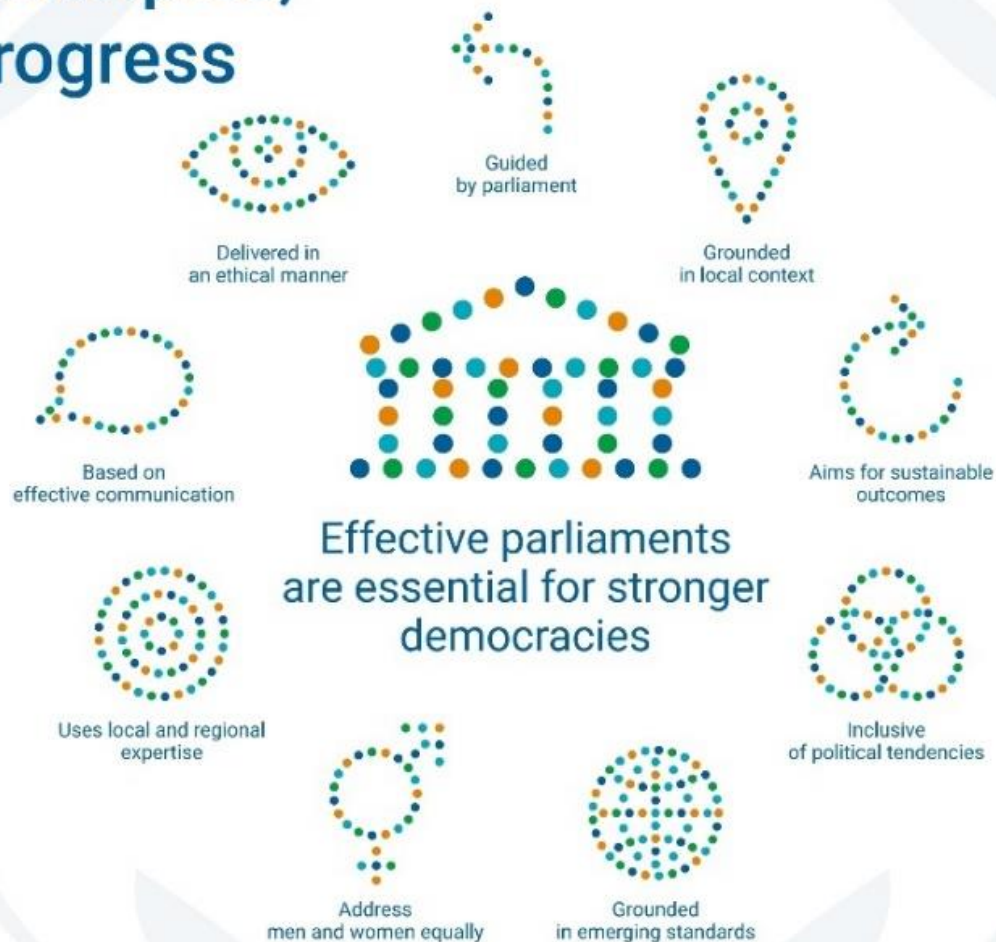
Active participation in this meeting is encouraged among parliamentarians, parliamentary staff and partners. Participants will engage with the following guiding questions:

1. Which area of parliamentary development needs increased focus to prevent democratic backsliding, and why? For example, legislative or oversight processes, public engagement, research and library services, information and communications technology, etc.
2. How can parliaments better use evidence-based data and information from parliamentary administrations and other national entities in political discourse, especially in times of increased polarization?

Common Principles for Support to Parliaments

Common principles, common progress

10
years



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