



Inter-Parliamentary Union

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Speech by Mr. Martin Chungong, IPU Secretary General

77th World Health Assembly

Geneva, 29 May 2024

Dear Mr. Director-General,
Distinguished delegates,

I am delighted to represent the Inter-Parliamentary Union and its 180 Member Parliaments. The IPU and WHO have a long-standing collaboration. Our cooperation so far allowed us to reach more than 1000 parliamentarians from 116 countries to secure political commitment, share technical expertise, and provide a platform to exchange good practices on universal health coverage, health security, and women's, children's and adolescents' health. I am delighted that we will continue bridging the scientific and parliamentary communities under a new Memorandum of Understanding signed last March.

Our collaboration puts people at the centre. We should not forget that individuals and communities may face different factors of discrimination and marginalization, combining to create unique situations. The oversight function of parliaments is instrumental in assessing the impact of laws and policies and identifying barriers to access to health. Public engagement also needs to be strengthened to give a voice to those who are being left behind and see who are the people behind the numbers of official statistics.

The IPU will continue working closely with WHO to promote parliamentary engagement on health and ensure that important decisions taken at the WHA are translated into the national level. I am delighted that on 29 May a first WHA parliamentary dialogue took place, and I am looking forward for it to become a regular feature. The event discussed, among others, the Pandemic Accord. I hope that negotiations will accelerate to ensure we are collectively better prepared to future pandemics.