



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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Panel discussion

Fostering peaceful coexistence: the IPU Science for Peace Schools

Wednesday, 16 October 2024, 12:00-13:30
Room 4, level -1, CICG

Concept note

Overview

In the rapidly evolving modern global landscape, science and technology have emerged as powerful forces standing at the forefront of societal transformation. These advancements have the potential to propel societies forward and to address some of humanity's most pressing challenges, such as water scarcity and climate change. Yet, without robust ethical governance, these same innovations can exacerbate divisions and fuel new forms of conflict. Recognizing this duality, the IPU has developed key initiatives: the Science for Peace Schools programme and the Charter on the Ethics of Science and Technology, aimed at ensuring that science serves as a catalyst for peace and coexistence.

The IPU Science for Peace Schools, a joint programme between the IPU Committee on Middle East Questions and Working Group on Science and Technology, is the outcome of several official roundtables and dialogue between the parliamentary and scientific communities. It is a model of dialogue developed to focus on deciphering elements threatening peaceful coexistence and to collectively invest in turning those elements of conflict, into reasons for coexistence by using the neutral and cooperative umbrella of science and evidence-based approaches. The Schools institutional partners include the King Hamad Global Center for Peaceful Coexistence ([KHGC](#)), the Institute for Economics and Peace ([IEP](#)), the International Centre for Interdisciplinary Science and Education ([ICISE](#)) and the Synchrotron-light for Experimental Science and Applications in the Middle East ([SESAME](#)).

The IPU Charter on the Ethics of Science and Technology is an initiative led by the IPU Working Group on Science and Technology with the support of scientists and academics from various disciplines, to ensure that the development and deployment of science and technology were carried out in a responsible, ethical and sustainable manner. The Charter establishes a framework of principles, values and guidelines that serve to guide decision-making, research and development, ensuring that science and technology are used for the betterment of humanity, society and the environment. This framework helps bridge the gap that separates scientific innovation from legislative and parliamentary oversight and ensures that technological progress aligns with human values and principles, particularly those enshrined in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Objectives

The panel discussion aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. Explore the ethical governance of science and technology:

- Analyse the IPU Charter on the Ethics of Science and Technology as a global framework for guiding ethics and evidence-based decision-making in the development and application of scientific and technological advancements.
- Discuss how parliamentarians can embed ethical principles in their national and international policies to ensure that scientific and technological advancements are leveraged responsibly and do not contribute to new forms of division and conflict.

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2. Examine the role of science in conflict resolution:

- Explore how collaborative efforts in parliamentary and science diplomacy can establish ethics-centred and evidence-based frameworks for fostering peaceful coexistence;
- Showcase real-world examples where science has been a tool for fostering peace and resolving disputes.

3. Highlight the Science for Peace Schools:

- Introduce the Science for Peace Schools as a key initiative for building capacity among parliamentary staff and parliamentarians to embrace and promote science as a tool for advancing peace and development;
- Explore how the Schools equip parliamentarians to implement the principles of the IPU Charter and make informed decisions in legislating science and technology for peace.

4. Facilitate cross-sector collaboration: Identify ways to build stronger partnerships between policymakers and the scientific community to advance peace-building efforts.

5. Create a roadmap for the Science for Peace Schools: Announce the Second edition of the Science for Peace Schools on science, ethics and artificial intelligence, to be held in 2025 in two separate sessions for parliamentary staff and parliamentarians.

Modalities:

The official documents for the panel discussion include the concept note and programme, the IPU Charter on the Ethics of Science and Technology, the draft five-year plan of the Science for Peace Schools programme and its organigram and structure. The panel discussion will be moderated by Ambassador Mokhtar Omar, Senior Adviser to the IPU Secretary General.

Participants will include:

- IPU Secretary General;
- Heads of IPU bodies;
- Members of the IPU Committee on Middle East Questions;
- Members of the IPU Working Group on Science and Technology;
- Members of the IPU High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism;
- Members of the IPU Forum of Young Parliamentarians;
- Members of the Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments;
- Deputy-Chair of the KHGC Board of Trustees;
- Founder and Executive Chairman of the IEP;
- President of the SESAME Council;
- Director of ICISE;
- Eminent scientists and experts.

This event will include simultaneous interpretation in English and French. All participants are invited to a light lunch reception at 13:30 in front of room 4.