



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

T +41 22 919 41 50
F +41 22 919 41 60
E postbox@ipu.org
www.ipu.org

Chemin du Pommier 5
Case postale 330
1218 Le Grand-Saconnex
Geneva – Switzerland

Speech by Mr. Martin Chungong, IPU Secretary General

40th anniversary of the IPU membership of the National People's Congress of China

Beijing, 20 August 2024

Forty years ago, the National People's Congress of China joined the IPU, taking its rightful place in the global organization of national parliaments. Ever since then, as representatives of one of the largest populations on earth, members of the NPC have enriched the IPU's work with a view to fostering dialogue, cooperation and action among the parliaments of the world, in the interests of peace, democracy, human rights and sustainable development.

Just 12 years later, in 1996, China hosted the 96th Inter-Parliamentary Conference. This was early in my own career at the IPU, but I remember it well! Many of the items on the agenda on that occasion would be familiar to participants in our Assemblies today: peace and development, respect and protection of human rights, protecting the right to food in a time of globalization, and a supplementary item on the need to ban anti-personnel mines.

Members of the NPC have participated extensively in the governing bodies of the IPU, including three mandates on our Executive Committee, the latest held by Mr. Chen Guomin, a long-term supporter of the IPU, who presided over our historic online presidential election in 2020. We have also always welcomed the contribution of China to our specialized bodies – at present, for example, Ms. Tong Yi is serving on our Working Group for Science and Technology – and know that we can rely on the NPC to provide constructive and reflective input to all our debates and decisions.

Although we value and respect the contribution of all 180 of our Member Parliaments, the NPC sets a particularly high bar in terms of its voluntary financial contribution to our Organization. Already the largest contributor to our core budget, China has also made extensive voluntary contributions in recent years to support our work on sustainable development and counter-terrorism.

In terms of sustainable development, the Interregional Seminar which is about to get under way – the latest in a series of several – is just one activity among many made possible by China's generous support. Since 2015, the NPC has funded the IPU's work to raise awareness among parliamentarians of the importance of the Sustainable Development Goals and to share best practices and build capacity on their implementation. The NPC's contribution has also helped position the IPU as the leading organization for parliamentary engagement with the SDGs, in terms of its interaction with the United Nations and at other international forums. We look forward to continuing and enhancing this cooperation ahead of the 2030 deadline for the SDGs.

In parallel, the NPC has provided valuable financial support to the IPU's work on countering terrorism and violent extremism, guided by its High-Level Advisory Group comprising representatives of parliaments around the world. In recent years, this programme has held multiple conferences, workshops and thematic meetings, developed several information technology tools, and established a parliamentary network for counter-terrorism legislation. Two Global Parliamentary Summits on the subject have been held, notably giving rise to the Call of the Sahel initiative, which has identified five priority areas for global efforts to combat terrorism and violent extremism in this particularly susceptible region.

Two further important threads of the IPU's work are gender equality and youth participation. Next year we will celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, still to this day considered the most progressive blueprint for advancing women's rights, and which continues to inform our work to make our parliaments more gender-balanced and gender-sensitive institutions. Regrettably, young people continue to be dramatically under-represented in national parliaments, which is why we are

also continuing our *I Say Yes To Youth In Parliament!* campaign, which has identified six practical measures that parliamentarians can take to improve youth participation in parliament.

I extend my most heartfelt congratulations on 40 years of IPU membership. I look forward to many more years of the NPC's valuable involvement in our Organization.