



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 Dr. Tulia Ackson, IPU President

Opening of the 10th G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit

Brasilia, 7 November 2024

Honourable Speakers of Parliament,
Distinguished Colleagues,

It is a real pleasure for me to be with you today at this 10th Summit of the Speakers of Parliament of the G20 member countries. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Brazilian parliamentary authorities for the wonderful hospitality extended to us, as well as for all the preparations made for our meeting under the overall theme of *Building a just world and sustainable planet*.

We convene here in Brasilia to address the pressing challenges of our time and to advance collective action on sustainable, equitable and inclusive growth. This summit is a powerful forum, bringing together the legislative leaders of the world's largest economies to contribute to global cooperation and explore how parliaments can help tackle the structural issues we face, such as hunger, poverty, inequality and the urgent need for a just ecological transition.

As representatives of the people, we know that strong, coordinated political will and cross-national engagement are essential to achieving sustainable development for all. The challenges we discuss today, from food insecurity and the climate crisis to inequality and a fragmented global governance, are interconnected and transnational. The IPU is committed to supporting parliaments in navigating these complexities, fostering collaborative actions and promoting sustainable solutions that serve both our people and our planet.

We stand at a crossroads. According to the United Nations, our ability to achieve the SDGs by 2030 is in jeopardy. The COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent economic, social and environmental crises have pushed 23 million more people into extreme poverty and left 123 million more facing hunger in 2022 compared to 2019. This harsh reality is exacerbated by a climate crisis that reached unprecedented levels in 2023, intensifying the vulnerabilities of over a billion people who lack necessities like adequate sanitation, housing and nutrition. Conflicts, inadequate socio-economic policies and inaction compound these dire circumstances.

We cannot let these trends persist. As parliamentarians, we are uniquely positioned to serve as champions of prevention, mitigation and action. We can translate international commitments into national realities, hold our governments accountable and ensure that budgets, policies and programs reflect the needs of both our citizens and our planet. Parliaments bridge the global and the local, creating a critical link between people and government. Our role is not limited to national boundaries; parliamentary diplomacy and international cooperation are more important now than ever.

Colleagues,

The IPU has been at the forefront of advocating for parliamentary engagement on global issues, especially sustainable development. Drawing on that experience, I propose a consolidated set of priorities to guide parliamentary action.

Firstly, we need to prioritize the SDGs as a guiding framework. They are our collective blueprint for a fairer, more sustainable future. Parliaments should embed SDG-aligned principles in legislation, policies and budgets to tackle poverty, promote health and education, and advance environmental sustainability.

By working within this cohesive framework, we address the interconnected nature of these challenges, ensuring inclusive progress that benefits all.

Secondly, we need to advance gender equality for inclusive growth. Women's empowerment is central to sustainable development. Parliaments can enact policies that guarantee women equal access to education, employment and leadership roles, strengthening economies and communities alike. Addressing gender disparities unlocks the full potential of our societies, creating pathways to resilience and prosperity.

Thirdly, parliaments must lead in driving climate action and resilience, recognizing that climate change demands immediate, coordinated efforts. By supporting national commitments to climate adaptation, resilience and emissions reduction, parliaments can ensure alignment with global climate targets and the SDGs. The IPU's guide, *10 Actions for Stronger National Climate Commitments*, offers practical guidance for effective oversight of these commitments, empowering parliaments to hold governments accountable and ensure transparency. Through rigorous oversight, we can scrutinize budgets, monitor policy impacts and prioritize protection for those most vulnerable to being left behind.

Finally, in everything we do we much promote peace and social stability. Peace is foundational to sustainable development. Parliaments must advocate for policies that foster social cohesion and prevent conflict, creating a stable environment where communities can thrive. I call on you all take forward our Geneva Declaration from earlier this year on *Parliamentary diplomacy: building bridges for peace and understanding*.

Before concluding my remarks, I would also like to touch on the topical theme of governance. Like all human endeavours, our current governance - at both national and international levels - needs to be revisited in order to better meet the complex challenges we are facing. In addition to the 2030 Development Agenda and its accompanying SDGs, we now have a comprehensive Pact of the Future that should serve as our shared roadmap towards making this a better and more peaceful world. As a parliamentary community, we are also called upon to bring a robust parliamentary contribution to the G20 process and to make sure that our words are matched by action and results.

Honourable Speakers, these actions require our steadfast commitment. Let us leverage this Summit to forge partnerships and inspire progress. Together, we can lead our nations toward a future that upholds human dignity, preserves our planet and leaves no one behind.

Thank you.