



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

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Speech by Mr. Martin Chungong, IPU Secretary General

Meeting of Speakers of Parliaments of the south of the European Union and of the
North of Africa on occasion of the Spanish presidency of the Parliamentary Assembly
Union for the Mediterranean

Lanzarote, 27 January 2025

Dear Madam President of the Congress of Deputies of Spain,
Dear Mr. President of the Senate of Spain,
Dear Speakers and Deputy Speakers, members of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the
Mediterranean,
Dear Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to thank you, Madam President of the Congress of Deputies and Mr. President of the Senate, for
inviting me to this important meeting. I take this opportunity to extend my best wishes to the Spanish
Presidency of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean for every success.

I would also like to commend the sustained interest you have shown in the theme of this conference.
This interest reflects the priorities of the Parliaments of the Southern European Union, as well as the
broader international community. It is especially commendable given the urgency of addressing key
global challenges, such as insecurity in the Sahel and the climate crisis, both of which are becoming
increasingly acute.

Over the past decade, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) has prioritized enhancing parliamentary
involvement in migration management. In October 2015, our organization adopted the Declaration on the
Imperative for Fairer, Smarter, and More Humane Migration. This declaration outlined concrete actions
parliamentarians can take to address migration issues.

Since then, the IPU has intensified its efforts in this area, including by:

1. Publishing a handbook for parliamentarians on Migration, Human Rights, and Governance in 2015;
2. Adopting a resolution at the 139th IPU Assembly in October 2018 on strengthening inter-parliamentary cooperation on migration and governance. This resolution urged parliaments to develop action plans supporting the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration, adopted later that year;
3. Organizing a parliamentary meeting in Rabat in December 2018. During this meeting, parliamentarians committed to designing and implementing action plans for migration and contributing to the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) at both national and regional levels;
4. Providing a parliamentary dimension to the first IMRF held at the United Nations Headquarters in May 2022. Parliamentary actions were instrumental in drafting laws and allocating resources to support migration policies.
5. Cooperating with the UN Committee on the Rights of Migrant Workers and their Families to enhance parliamentary involvement in protecting these rights. This collaboration aims to strengthen global frameworks for safeguarding migrants and ensuring their inclusion in national and international policymaking.

We believe all these initiatives provide a strong foundation for countries to develop effective migration policies. However, there is still much work to be done.

Parliaments must advocate for robust migration policies while involving citizens and migrants in their formulation. They also need stronger capacities to oversee policy implementation. Many parliaments lack such capacities, necessitating support from the IPU and the international community.

Effective migration governance requires adopting national policies with an international perspective, fostering dialogue, and integrating migration into development strategies. A holistic approach—as outlined in the Global Compact—is essential.

The era of isolated national migration policies is over. We need coordinated and harmonized strategies to address migration challenges effectively. International cooperation is vital, and we encourage parliamentarians to:

- Establish North-North, North-South, and South-South inter-parliamentary cooperation to harmonize strategies and exchange best practices;
- Collaborate with civil society and international organizations for broader, more impactful interventions; and
- Strengthen partnerships to support multilateral provisions and regional initiatives, such as those of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean with countries like Morocco, Egypt, Tunisia, and Mauritania.

To address the root causes of migration, we must focus on:

1. Providing material and financial support for development, increasing investment, promoting functioning democratic states, and fostering regional economic integration. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a critical opportunity in this regard.
2. Promoting sociopolitical and economic stability through positive discourse on migration. Parliamentarians, governments, business leaders, and the media must focus on the benefits of migration and combat racism, xenophobia, and discrimination through legislative and policy measures.
3. Ensuring migrants have the legal status needed to contribute to their host societies.
4. Enhancing pathways for regular migration, enabling migrants to seek better opportunities while benefiting both destination and origin countries.
5. Improving access to education and training to address global skill shortages.
6. Prioritizing the protection of vulnerable groups, including women, children, and unaccompanied minors, to safeguard them from violence, trafficking, forced labor, and modern slavery.
7. Safeguarding the international refugee protection system, as defined under the UN Refugee Convention and its Optional Protocol. Those whose lives may be in danger should always be allowed to find a safe haven.
8. Advocating for stronger ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Migrant Workers and their Families, the least ratified UN human rights treaty. Enhanced ratification is essential to protecting the rights of migrant workers globally.

The IPU stands ready to support your future initiatives to address these critical issues.

Thank you for your attention.