



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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Concept Note

You are invited to take part in a meeting of parliamentary stakeholders and practitioners on

Strengthening democracy: Toward coherent and stronger support for resilient parliaments

Geneva – 24 October 2025

Why

Recent years have witnessed a troubled societal environment, in particular for democratic governance. With the increased polarization of politics and societies, growing inequalities, ongoing conflicts, growing insecurity, the enhanced impact of climate change and emergence of new threats albeit also new potentials such as artificial intelligence (AI), parliaments are at the centre of increased expectations from citizens while facing multiple challenges to their own mandate and capacity to impact change.

Parliaments are key to sustaining democratic resilience. Being the space where diverse political interests converge and public mandates are translated into policy, they are uniquely positioned to uphold democratic norms in times of uncertainty. They connect citizens to the State, hold the executive to account and give institutional form to democratic pluralism. At a moment when democratic institutions are under growing pressure from declining trust to the erosion of civic space, parliaments must act as stabilizing forces while rebuilding public trust in the institution. Their capacity to adapt, mediate tensions and reflect the voices of society is central to preserving democratic legitimacy and preventing further democratic backsliding.

In parallel, the current international and development landscape is undergoing significant changes, resulting in development actors being faced with greater challenges linked to growing scepticism toward existing systems, a questioning of efficiency and purpose, and reduced financial support. It has become essential to redouble efforts to sustain support and make the case for strengthening parliaments as a key element in the defence of democratic governance and resilience.

With this in mind, there is growing interest and a need to rethink how support to parliaments to more effectively reinforce their role within a broader evolving democratic ecosystem.

When and where

To address this topic, it is proposed to organize a one-day gathering on **24 October 2025 in Geneva**. The meeting will immediately follow the 151st IPU Assembly (19-23 October). Bringing together a wide range of stakeholders involved in the strengthening of and support to parliaments, the meeting will provide a timely and focused opportunity to reflect on the changing role of parliaments in fostering democratic resilience, share respective priorities, and investigate how support strategies can align and adapt to today's rapidly changing realities.

What

The meeting (Friday, 24 October) will be held at the International Conference Centre Geneva (CICG) and will bring together select MPs, parliamentary staff and parliamentary practitioners to discuss what has changed for parliaments today and how they can adapt to new realities. This includes looking at the evolving foundational roles and responsibilities of parliaments, and the links between parliaments and the wider governance ecosystem; exploring how parliaments engage with the public in ways that are not only representative but also deliberative and participatory, helping to close the gap between institutions and their constituents; and reflecting on how parliaments can contribute to greater integrity in public life by cultivating cultures of accountability and transparency, preventing political capture, and strengthening public confidence in democracy's ability to deliver.

For

The discussions will aim to uncover practical insights, facilitate coordination and collaboration, contribute to shaping a more coherent and responsive approach to parliamentary strengthening and its continued relevance, while promoting collaboration and exchange among all stakeholders.

The meeting's strategic objectives include:

- To reflect on the evolving role of parliaments in sustaining democratic resilience and navigating complex governance and development challenges, and to identify the institutional practices that enable them to do so effectively.
- To generate practical insights into what constitutes effective, adaptive and context-informed support to parliaments, particularly in contexts of uncertainty, democratic backsliding, or institutional fragility; and into how this support can respond to local realities while remaining grounded in democratic principles.
- To promote greater collaboration and systematic exchange among actors supporting parliaments, including implementers, networks, multilateral partners and donors.

Register [here](#)