



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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CL/215/SR
21 July 2025

Summary records of the Governing Council

215th session

6 and 9 April 2025

Tashkent, Uzbekistan

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First sitting

Sunday, 6 April 2025
(Morning)

The sitting was called to order at 09:25, with Dr. T. Ackson (United Republic of Tanzania), President of the IPU, in the Chair.

OPENING OF THE SITTING

The President, welcoming participants to the 215th session of the Governing Council, thanked the Uzbek authorities, in particular the Chairperson of the Senate, Ms. Tanzila Narbaeva, and the Speaker of the Legislative Chamber, Mr. Nuriddin Ismoilov, for the warm welcome extended to all those attending the landmark 150th IPU Assembly in Tashkent and for their cooperation in making all the necessary arrangements. The organization of an IPU Assembly for the first time ever in Central Asia was integral to the IPU's mission to bring it closer to the people and involve each of its Member Parliaments in the endeavour to realize the shared objective of well-being for all. The Uzbek media were fully engaged in raising public awareness of the event, which was set to re-energize the involvement of Central Asian parliaments in the IPU's work.

IPU Member Parliaments had the august privilege of being entrusted with the noble expectations of their populations, implying an imperative duty on their part to spare no effort in that undertaking. At the current Assembly, the theme of the General Debate, *Parliamentary action for social development and justice*, provided a further opportunity for reflection on the strategic actions needed to achieve the IPU's objectives and affirm its major role in shaping the lives of people who aspired only for peace, with Member Parliaments as its architects.

The Secretary General, joining in the welcome to participants, said that he and his colleagues looked forward to being of assistance to delegates as they pursued their important deliberations, and to facilitating their decision-making, which was of momentous import for the global community that they represented. The IPU Secretariat, himself included, stood ready to work on resolving any issues that might be raised for their attention.

Item 1 of the agenda

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (CL/215/A.1-rev)

The agenda was adopted.

Item 2 of the agenda

APPROVAL OF THE SUMMARY RECORDS OF THE 214TH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL (CL/214/SR)

The summary records of the 214th session of the Governing Council were approved.

Item 3 of the agenda

ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE 150TH ASSEMBLY

At the proposal of Ms. A. Kuspan (Kazakhstan), seconded by Mr. A. Ozkaya (Türkiye), Ms. T. Narbaeva (Uzbekistan) was elected by acclamation as President of the 150th Assembly.

Ms. T. Narbaeva (Uzbekistan), expressing sincere gratitude for the trust placed in her to serve as President of the historic 150th IPU Assembly, said that she would do her utmost to ensure a successful event.

Item 4 of the agenda

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

(a) On her activities since the 214th session of the Governing Council

The President, accompanying her report with a digital slide presentation, said that, since the 214th session of the Governing Council, she had, with the usual support from the Secretary General and his team, attended numerous meetings, conferences and workshops, either in person or virtually, with the aim of strengthening the IPU's work. She had represented the IPU at high-level global meetings, including the 10th G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit (P20), held in November 2024 in Brasilia, where she and her colleagues had been graciously hosted and had discussed parliamentary action to combat hunger, poverty and inequality worldwide to ensure just and inclusive transitions towards sustainable development, and to help build more equitable and representative global governance. The IPU had gained considerable prominence at the event, including thanks to its instrumental role in crafting the final outcome document.

Also in November 2024, she had represented the IPU at the 18th Meeting of the Bureau of East African Community Speakers of National Legislatures and the East African Legislative Assembly in Nairobi, where she had again been graciously hosted and had raised the profile of the IPU and what it stood for. In that same month, she had attended the IPU Parliamentary Meeting at the 29th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations (UN) Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP29) in Baku, where she and all IPU colleagues had once more been very well received by their hosts. Participants in the meeting had, among other things, called on parliaments to support their governments, by way of appropriate legislation and oversight, in addressing climate adaptation and mitigation in line with their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and the key international climate instruments. As part of her continuing engagement with parliaments around the world, her final visit in November 2024 had been to Qatar, where she had met the Speaker of the Shura Council – another generous host – and discussed a range of issues, recognizing in the process the Qatari role in efforts to promote peace and international security.

She had furthermore chaired numerous IPU meetings on behalf of the membership, including, in February 2025 in New York, the third meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the upcoming Sixth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament in Geneva, an event that took place only once every five years and that all Speakers everywhere were urged to attend. The draft high-level declaration and other documentation for the Conference had already been shared with all Member Parliaments. During that same trip to New York, she had also chaired the annual IPU Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations, which had considered the status of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and explored ways of overcoming current challenges and championing development cooperation. In pledging to work harder for the implementation of all the SDGs, participants had focused on three key factors contributing to the disappointing performance to date, specifically: political distractions; dysfunctional institutional structures favouring the pursuit of certain SDGs at the expense of others; and the SDG financing gap.

In connection with the IPU's work to advance gender equality, she had attended the annual IPU-UN Women Parliamentary Meeting held in March 2025 on the occasion of the 69th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women in New York. Participants had discussed how to resist the backlash and shifting paradigm vis-à-vis gender equality and acknowledged the pivotal role of parliaments in the implementation of the historic Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, now in its 30th anniversary year. On the basis of information provided by Member Parliaments, the IPU had produced a map showing the progress achieved towards gender equality around the world and in its parliaments. The Secretary General and his team would periodically update the map, again on the basis of information received in response to a questionnaire, which she urged parliaments to continue completing.

Likewise in March 2025, she had attended the historic first IPU Global Conference of Women Parliamentarians held in Mexico City with the full support of the President of Mexico. The Conference had been a great success, thanks to the unstinting efforts of the President of the IPU Bureau of Women Parliamentarians to bring it to fruition and to the support of the IPU Secretariat, the Speaker of the Mexican Chamber of Deputies and the President of the Mexican Senate. Topical issues addressed during the Conference had included ways of keeping women in politics once they had joined and helping women overcome perceived challenges to entering politics.

She had in that same month participated in the European Conference of Presidents of Parliaments of the Council of Europe held in Strasbourg, France, where her hosts had been very kind and where she and her European peers had discussed matters around safeguarding democracy and guaranteeing freedom of expression in times of polarization and uncertainty. She had reiterated the IPU's appreciation for its cooperation with the European Parliament, especially in the context of the Parliamentary Conference on the World Trade Organization, which was an example of how parliamentary diplomacy could enhance transparency and promote inclusive global trade.

In terms of virtual participation, she had chaired an online meeting of the Executive Committee in March 2025.

In sum, the official invitations she had received to the described events in eight countries had enabled her to further promote the IPU's core principles in line with her mandate and to meet with leaderships that contributed to the Organization's esteemed work.

(b) On the activities of the Executive Committee

The Secretary General, reporting on behalf of the President on the activities of the Executive Committee since the 149th Assembly, said that the Executive Committee had held three sittings: two online, in December 2024 and March 2025, and one in Tashkent. In addition to matters that would be reported on under the corresponding agenda items, it had, as part of its strategy for strengthening the support provided to IPU bodies, engaged in discussion with the President of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians (CHRP) to gain a better understanding of how the CHRP functioned so that it could better promote its work.

In the discussion, the Executive Committee had encouraged the CHRP to take the steps needed to ensure that all IPU geopolitical groups were represented in its composition. In that context, the Executive Committee had endorsed a proposed amendment to the CHRP's Rules whereby its membership would be increased from 10 to 12, distributed among the geopolitical groups using the formula applied for the Executive Committee, namely: three members each from the African and Twelve Plus Groups; two members each from the Asia-Pacific Group and the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC); and one member each from the Arab and Eurasia Groups. The associated financial implication would amount to some CHF 10,000, which could be covered by the IPU's core budget. The Executive Committee had recommended that the CHRP should address both it and the geopolitical groups more frequently, including in the joint meetings of the leaders of the geopolitical groups and of IPU bodies held during IPU Assemblies. The Executive Committee had pleaded in favour of increased support from the IPU membership for parliamentary solidarity, an important tool for helping the CHRP to resolve the growing number of cases under its review.

In view of his retirement in June 2026, the Executive Committee had also met to launch the process of selecting a new Secretary General in line with the IPU Statutes and Rules, recognizing that his integrity, dedication and constant quest for results had set the bar high and that replacing him would be a challenge. It had taken note of the arrangements for that 15-month process, starting with the publication of a vacancy notice on the IPU website on 1 April 2025, with the deadline for applications set at 1 August 2025. In September 2025, the current Director of Support Services, acting as Registrar and the point of contact for all inquiries from candidates, would, together with the IPU President, examine the applications received to ensure that candidates fulfilled the mandatory requirements. In early October 2025, the IPU President and the IPU Vice-President would draw up a list of the 20 best candidates.

On the basis of that list, the members of the Executive Committee would vote to select their top five candidates. In December 2025, the Registrar would collate the votes cast to establish a final shortlist of five candidates, who would be interviewed by the Executive Committee immediately before the 152nd IPU Assembly to be held in March or April 2026. The Executive Committee would then submit a minimum of two candidates for election by the Governing Council at that Assembly, with the elected candidate taking office on 1 July 2026.

The mandatory requirements for the position included the possession of leadership, diplomatic and negotiating skills; full commitment to IPU values; a moral authority beyond reproach; and a high sense of responsibility and political neutrality. The Executive Committee had also noted that the vacancy notice would be published through numerous channels, including IPU Member Parliaments, UN agencies and social media. It had furthermore been assured that an outside agency would assist the Registrar during the selection process.

The Executive Committee had in addition taken note of the IPU communications strategy and congratulated the communications team on its good work while encouraging it to explore ways of engaging more with younger audiences through lighter social media content. As a further part of its strategy to strengthen cooperation with IPU subsidiary bodies, the Executive Committee had engaged in a constructive exchange with the Chairperson of the IPU Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine, the President of the Committee on Middle East Questions, and the Coordinator of the Group of Facilitators on Cyprus. It had received an update on other peacebuilding initiatives, including in relation to the IPU role in fostering dialogue between Armenia and Azerbaijan and between the two Koreas. In taking note of the useful information received, it had encouraged those bodies to further consider defining their expected deliverables and to engage in regular field visits. Such an approach, which should also encompass more regular reporting, would enable them to fulfil their mandate efficiently and give Member Parliaments a clearer picture of situations on the ground.

In that same vein, the Executive Committee had welcomed his suggestion to draft terms of reference for IPU subsidiary bodies with the aim of clearly defining their respective mandates and expected deliverables. It had furthermore examined and approved the proposal to revise the administrative arrangements for the Office of the IPU President, noting that they would remain subject to periodic review. The Executive Committee had also taken note of the preliminary draft UN General Assembly resolution on the interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the IPU, which it saw as an opportunity to encourage Member Parliaments to strengthen that interaction further. They were also strongly encouraged to coordinate with the authorities in their respective countries to ensure that the draft resolution was widely sponsored by their permanent representatives in New York.

The Executive Committee had received an update on the arrangements for the award of the 2025 Cremer-Passy Prize and encouraged the Member Parliaments to submit, through their geopolitical groups and by the deadline of 30 June 2025, their nominations for candidates, who should be parliamentarians with an unrivalled track record on gender equality, the IPU 2025 priority theme. The Executive Committee had also received an update on the activities of the Working Group on Transparency, Accountability and Openness, established in 2021 and chaired by Mr. Al Nuaimi of the United Arab Emirates. Guided by the recommendations contained in the transparency report prepared in 2020, those activities had culminated in such milestones as the IPU Personal Data Protection Policy and Procedures, the Code of Conduct for IPU Governance Officials, the *Policy to prevent and address harassment, including sexual harassment, at IPU Assemblies and other IPU events*, and the *IPU policy on whistleblowing and protection against retaliation*. As all those recommendations had now been implemented, the Working Group would henceforth meet only as and when new needs were identified. He thanked the Group for its hard work and achievements.

The President took it that the Governing Council wished to take note of her report and to agree to engage in action as required.

It was so decided.

Mr. M. Nader (Iraq) said that neither the President's report nor her earlier inaugural speech had made any reference to the ongoing destruction, war crimes and crimes against humanity being witnessed in Gaza, which amounted to genocide, not a "crisis". Instead of condemning those crimes and seeking ways to end them, the world stood silent, yet continued to champion human rights, democracy and non-discrimination.

The President said in response that her report was exclusively focused on her activities conducted in the preceding six months, during which time she had not revisited the Middle East region and therefore had nothing to report on it under the present item. Delegates would have the opportunity to comment on matters such as the situation in Gaza, which she had visited along with Israel in 2023, under the item on activities of committees and bodies.

Item 5 of the agenda

PRESENTATION BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE IPU IMPACT REPORT FOR 2024

The Secretary General, accompanying his presentation with a series of digital slides and recalling that the IPU Impact Report was focused not on activities but on impact and results, said that the report provided an update on accomplishments in relation to each of the five objectives in

the IPU 2022–2026 Strategy, with which the IPU President's intense activities as described in her report were fully consistent. In light of the proliferation of conflicts around the world, peace and security had been the agreed 2024 IPU priority theme, with a view to addressing the associated challenges, which the report showed had been achieved with some measure of success. The report also showed that Member Parliaments had contributed significantly towards the articulation of the vision of the Organization's founding fathers through parliamentary diplomacy. The upsurge in that diplomacy at a time when multilateralism was under attack demonstrated that parliaments could positively complement the traditional forms of diplomacy. In that context, the report cited the Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine and the Committee on Middle East Questions as vital platforms and underscored the breakthroughs achieved in fostering dialogue between Armenia and Azerbaijan through the Speakers of their respective parliaments.

Much had been done over the preceding year in response to the growing emphasis of Member Parliaments on security – meaning human security as opposed to State security – and their desire to keep abreast of technological developments, taking into consideration the potential of advances such as artificial intelligence (AI) to elevate humankind to a higher level, destroy its progress or annihilate it altogether. The global parliamentary community had been very robust in addressing that issue, the IPU having adopted at its 149th Assembly a resolution on the impact of artificial intelligence on democracy, human rights and the rule of law, along with the forward-looking IPU Charter on the Ethics of Science and Technology. In both instances, the aim was to drive the regulation and management of new technologies for human benefit and minimize the risks involved. Related IPU publications issued in 2024 had been the *Guidelines on AI for parliaments* and the eighth edition of the *World e-Parliament Report*, which revealed how parliaments were harnessing new technologies to improve their business practices.

The IPU had also robustly addressed the issue of climate change, including through its climate campaign *Parliaments for the Planet*, launched in 2023, the year in which climate action had been the main theme for the Organization. In 2024, the outcome document from the successful Parliamentary Meeting held at COP29 in Baku had explicitly called for a faster transition from fossil fuels towards clean energy with a view to reducing climate change effects. The IPU had also produced a guide entitled *10 actions for stronger national climate commitments* to help parliaments understand, and exercise effective oversight in respect of, the NDCs or national plans made by their respective governments for reducing greenhouse gas emissions to limit global warming.

Concerning the IPU's goal of universality, further inroads had been made in 2024 with the admission of Jamaica as the 181st Member Parliament of the Organization. Another proud step closer towards that goal would, moreover, be taken at the current Assembly if the request for IPU membership received from the Parliament of Belize was approved.

With regard to gender equality, now the 2025 IPU priority theme, the IPU was keen to move the needle against the ongoing backlash. In the 74 general elections held in 2024, women's representation had increased by just 0.3%, indicating stalled progress. An emergent anti-rights movement had also grown in 2024 and was intent on resisting all efforts to improve gender equality and to promote and protect women's rights. It was therefore time for the global parliamentary community to step up its game in pushing back against that pushback.

In 2024, the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians had had a record number of cases before it. On a proud note for the Committee and indeed the IPU, it had through its work with the Zimbabwean authorities secured the release of Zimbabwean opposition leader Job Sikhala, who had visited the IPU in Geneva to convey his thanks in person for that outcome. The Committee had also secured the physical integrity of Honorary IPU President Saber Chowdhury of Bangladesh, who had been arrested in Dhaka during the unrest and taken to court. Thanks to IPU pressure brought to bear on the Bangladeshi authorities, he was back safe in his own home, although the allegations against him remained pending.

Also in 2024, which marked the 10th anniversary of the Common Principles for Support to Parliaments, the IPU had continued to actively discharge its responsibility concerning that support, providing capacity-building in a range of areas to 18 parliaments in all, especially those in crisis situations in Africa. It had also robustly promoted gender-sensitive parliaments and worked with the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on developing the Committee's General Recommendation No. 40 on the equal and inclusive representation of women in decision-making. The IPU would firmly prosecute that recommendation in line with the plan of action for achieving gender parity in parliaments recently agreed at the first IPU Global Conference of Women Parliamentarians, which would inform the Organization's work.

In a prime example of impact in the area of protecting women's rights, the IPU's work with the Parliament of the Gambia had led to the rejection of a bill to reverse the country's ban on female genital mutilation. As to inclusive parliaments, thanks to impetus from the IPU Forum of Young Parliamentarians and as part of the bid to make the institutions of democracy more youthful, the age below which the IPU defined parliamentarians as young had been lowered from 45 to 40.

Lastly, the IPU could be proud of the progress achieved in 2024 towards greater transparency, accountability and openness by way of the new Code of Conduct for Governance Officials and the three new policy instruments identified as key milestones in the President's report on the activities of the Executive Committee. By those tokens, it could serve as a model for its Member Parliaments.

Mr. A.R. Al Nuaimi (United Arab Emirates), thanking the Secretary General for his outstanding report and stressing its focus on impact and not on activities per se, said that it was vital for parliamentarians to read that report and to disseminate it widely among their colleagues at home to increase awareness of the IPU's added value for its Member Parliaments, including in the realms of promoting democracy, strengthening parliamentary efficiency and performance, and enhancing parliamentary diplomacy.

Mr. K.K.P. Kouassi (Côte d'Ivoire) expressed the gratitude of the Parliament of Côte d'Ivoire to the Secretary General. Thanks to the valuable support of the IPU, the Parliament of Côte d'Ivoire had hosted a national workshop on trade which was very helpful to the Parliament. He seized the opportunity to request further support from the IPU to organize a capacity-building workshop on child rights.

Ms. I.K. Godalena (Democratic Republic of the Congo) congratulated the Secretary General for the consolidated report and promised that her delegation would ensure that that report would be disseminated within her Parliament as per the request of Dr. Al Nuaimi.

Ms. K. Slassi (Morocco), expressing appreciation to the Secretary General for his first-rate management of the IPU's activities with such professionalism, conviviality and skilled communication, said that a notable example of her Parliament's many collaborations with the IPU had been the Parliamentary Conference on Interfaith Dialogue held in Marrakech in 2023. Also worth highlighting was the Secretary General's deep attachment to human rights and to promoting women's rights in particular.

Ms. G. Mukabalisa (Rwanda) thanked the IPU for its impactful work, above all in connection with advancing the gender equality agenda.

Mr. H. Gebaly (Egypt), expressing gratitude and appreciation to the Secretary General for his tremendous work throughout his entire term, said that he had added considerable value to the IPU's activities. Alongside his professionalism and amenability, his efforts to develop personal relationships with all Member Parliaments were a further measure of his success as Secretary General.

Ms. F. Cham (Gambia) thanked the IPU for its support in helping her Parliament to ensure that the bill to reverse the ban on female genital mutilation did not pass.

The Secretary General, expressing gratitude for the appreciation voiced by delegates, said that their words were an encouragement for the IPU to serve its Member Parliaments to the best of its ability. It would indeed be beneficial, moreover, if they were to circulate the report among all their colleagues at home.

The President said that, in welcoming what was a convincing report, the Executive Committee had congratulated the Secretary General and the IPU Secretariat on their substantive achievements in 2024 and agreed that the report painted a reassuring picture as the Organization moved towards the end of its 2022–2026 Strategy and the expected fulfilment of the objectives contained therein. In that context, Member Parliaments were urged to provide feedback on the report as well as reassurance that due attention was being paid to all issues.

Members of the Executive Committee had shared positive feedback about the hosting of some of the activities mentioned in the report. The Executive Committee had encouraged the IPU Secretariat to continue the existing momentum and thus help towards meeting the 2026 deadline for implementation of the Strategy. It had also urged delegates to inform their parliaments of the IPU's achievements so as to encourage active participation in and support for the Organization's activities.

She took it that the Governing Council wished to take note of the Impact Report 2024 and approve its recommendations.

It was so decided.

Item 6 of the agenda

FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR 2024 AND FINANCIAL SITUATION OF THE IPU
(CL/215/6-R.1, R.2 and R.3)

Ms. D. O'Neill (Australia), reporting on the item on behalf of her fellow Australian, Mr. M. Dick, member of the Executive Committee and President of the Sub-Committee on Finance, said that the Executive Committee had carefully considered the financial statements for 2024 and the External Auditor's opinion, as set out in document CL/215/6-R.1. The IPU accounts for 2024 were financially sound, as confirmed by the audit, and expenditures were within budget for each of the IPU's strategic objectives. The income from IPU investments was positive, thanks to favourable market conditions in 2024, and the IPU Working Capital Fund currently stood at 92% of its target level.

In 2024, in response to the steadily increasing arrears in contributions since the COVID-19 years, the Executive Committee had taken corrective action by suspending the membership rights of several Member Parliaments, thus writing off their arrears, and by increasing the provision for potential credit losses. The IPU's net assets had consequently decreased by CHF 0.4 million. IPU governing bodies were encouraged to continue addressing the arrears situation, with Member Parliaments likewise encouraged to work through their geopolitical groups towards reducing the level of arrears. The political commitment to taking the positive actions needed to minimize arrears was essential to maintain.

The Executive Committee had welcomed the strong mobilization of voluntary funds, which showed that the IPU continued to be seen as a valued partner and that its work was worth the investment. It thanked the current External Auditor, the Audit Board of the Republic of Indonesia, for its excellent service. Its positive audit opinion confirmed the accuracy of the financial statements and its analysis had also found the IPU's key financial indicators to be sound. The Internal Auditors would report on the two recommendations made by the External Auditor, which, as with all previous recommendations, would be implemented by the Secretary General.

The Executive Committee had also reviewed the financial situation of the IPU at 31 January 2025, as detailed in document CL/215/6-R.2, and found it not yet much changed from the end of 2024. To date, the budget performance was on track and the IPU's finances remained healthy and stable. The number of Member Parliaments in arrears had fallen slightly but the issue would continue to require close attention in 2025.

The Executive Committee's recommendation was that the Governing Council should approve the Secretary General's financial administration of the IPU and the financial results for 2024.

Mr. A. Gryffroy (Belgium) and **Ms. P. Glover-Rolle** (Bahamas), Internal Auditors, read out their report as contained in document CL/215/6-R.3, which included details of their two recommendations for the IPU. Mr. Gryffroy added that their concluding recommendation fully mirrored that of the Executive Committee and that he and Ms. Glover-Rolle wished to thank the IPU management and the External Auditor for their work.

The Secretary General, extending thanks to all those who had helped with the day-to-day management of the IPU's financial resources, said that, as the IPU's chief financial operator, he had always been keen to ensure that IPU finances remained on a healthy keel. Having done his best to manage those finances in consistency with ongoing standards of probity and accountability, he was pleased that the overseers of the Organization were of the same opinion. He too wished to thank the External Auditor for its diligence in auditing the IPU's accounts. In the best interests of the Organization, the IPU would pursue its commitment to implementing recommendations made to ensure that its financial operations were unfailingly seen as above board.

In light of the new global dynamics being created through challenges to multilateralism and cuts in international aid, the IPU was closely monitoring the situation worldwide for signs that its daily operations might in future be affected. Such a scenario was, however, unlikely in the event of any massive cuts in voluntary funding insofar as it amounted to just under one quarter of the IPU's overall budget. The Member Parliaments were committed to the Organization, which, thanks to their contributions, could run itself independently without being beholden to any interest groups.

The arrears situation should not, however, be allowed to develop beyond control. To that end the IPU looked to the leaders of the geopolitical groups to urge their Members to pay their assessed contributions, which he and his team were working daily to collect and avoid the cash-flow problems experienced by other organizations. The IPU thanked those of its Member Parliaments that had paid their contributions and was grateful for the trust bestowed upon it as the custodian of their resources to be managed in the best interests of the Organization. His final thanks went to the President of the Sub-Committee on Finance and the Internal Auditors.

The President, noting that the External and Internal Auditors had each given the IPU a clean bill of financial health for 2024, said that the audited financial statements would be posted on the IPU website as usual following their approval. Having examined the report presented, the Executive Committee had concluded that the IPU financial situation was healthy and that the IPU finances were properly managed, as certified by all the auditors. The voluntary funding situation was similarly healthy and future prospects also looked promising in terms of the different forms of financial support enjoyed by the Organization. The Executive Committee had expressed its relief that the IPU was currently unaffected by the global financial difficulties that had caused many international organizations to introduce drastic budget cuts. The Executive Committee expressed its heartfelt thanks to Member Parliaments for their continued commitment to keeping their financial contributions up to date as well as to the donors whose continued belief in the IPU's missions and objectives underpinned their support for its activities.

She took it that the Governing Council wished to approve the Secretary General's financial administration of the IPU for 2024.

It was so decided.

Item 8 of the agenda

QUESTIONS RELATING TO IPU MEMBERSHIP AND OBSERVER STATUS

(a) Consideration of requests relating to IPU membership and observer status
(CL/215/8(a)-P.1 and P.2)

The President said that the IPU's efforts to expand its parliamentary community were paying off, the Belizean authorities now having successfully concluded the process for joining the Organization and officially submitted their related request, set out in document CL/215/8(a)-P.1, which the Executive Committee had unanimously endorsed. The Executive Committee's recommendation was for approval of the request.

She took it that the Governing Council wished to approve that recommendation to admit the Parliament of Belize as the 182nd IPU Member Parliament.

It was so decided.

The President, warmly welcoming Belize to the IPU, said that it was unrepresented at the Assembly owing to the country's recent parliamentary elections but had sent a pre-recorded video message delivered by the Clerk of the Belizean National Assembly on behalf of the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Ms. C. Pech (Belize) said in her pre-recorded video message that the Parliament of Belize deeply appreciated its welcome into the IPU fold, which marked an exciting new chapter in the country's parliamentary history and a momentous milestone in its journey towards becoming a stronger and more inclusive democracy. It likewise reaffirmed Belize's dedication to upholding the values of peace, justice, human rights and the rule of law that were the foundation of the IPU mission. The formal affiliation with the IPU was an opportunity to engage with a global community of parliaments dedicated to advancing the collective good, with small nations such as Belize well positioned to contribute significant perspectives, insights and innovations to the global dialogue while also learning about others' experiences and best practices.

A firm believer in building partnerships to promote shared prosperity, global peace and sustainable development, Belize looked forward, as an IPU Member Parliament, to forging new relationships, exchanging ideas and finding collaborative solutions to challenges common to all. Although not present at the 150th Assembly, it would keenly follow its important deliberations and anticipated participating in and fully contributing to the work of future Assemblies. Belize was confident that its engagement with the IPU would help to advance its goal of fostering an inclusive and representative democracy.

The President said that the IPU looked forward to welcoming the Belizean delegation to the 151st Assembly in Geneva and meanwhile encouraged all Member Parliaments to continue their outreach efforts aimed at helping the Organization to achieve universal membership. In that regard, the Executive Committee had taken note of the progress in the consultations under way with the Legislative Council of Brunei Darussalam, which was seeking to join the IPU at the 151st Assembly in October 2025, and with the Parliament of Kiribati, welcoming in that respect the support of Australia.

The Executive Committee had also examined two requests for observer status, as detailed in the annexes to document CL/215/8(a)-P.2, from the Global Greens and the World Water Council. Comprising green and ecological parties from around the world, the Global Greens was a global political party federation along the lines of certain other entities with existing permanent observer status at the IPU. The World Water Council comprised stakeholders sharing the IPU's objective vis-à-vis the achievement of the SDGs.

In the context of the five-yearly assessment of observers, the Executive Committee had resolved to continue its careful evaluation of the level of engagement of the 70 or more organizations currently holding permanent observer status to determine their added value to the IPU.

She took it that the Governing Council wished to endorse the Executive Committee's recommendation to approve the two requests for permanent observer status.

It was so decided.

(c) Consideration of the situation of Member Parliaments in arrears

The President said that, following its review of the situation of Member Parliaments in arrears pursuant to Articles 5.2 and 5.3 of the IPU Statutes and of the situation of those no longer active in the Organization, the Executive Committee had requested the assistance of the geopolitical groups in following up on the cases of, in respect of Article 5.2, the Parliaments of Argentina, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Guinea, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Lebanon, Liberia, the Marshall Islands and Tuvalu, and, in respect of Article 5.3, the Parliament of Togo, to encourage them to pay their arrears. It looked forward to the engagement of the geopolitical groups in that endeavour.

The Executive Committee had noted with regret that the three small island developing States of Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Vanuatu were also in arrears. In light of the IPU goal of universal membership, the Executive Committee favoured a proactive and innovative approach towards resolving that situation. It had therefore mandated the Secretary General to engage with the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), through a visit to the Caribbean to explore solutions with members of the parliaments concerned. He would subsequently report back to the Governing Council at its 216th session in October 2025. In the interim, the Executive Committee would welcome the continued commendable support of GRULAC.

After then discussing the situation of Member Parliaments absent from IPU Assemblies for four or more years, the Executive Committee had again requested the geopolitical groups to encourage their Members to participate in IPU activities by sharing with them the reports and outcomes of IPU meetings. In application of Article 5.3 of the IPU Statutes, its recommendation was that the associate membership rights of the Parliament of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC) should be suspended. The Executive Committee renewed its thanks to the Member Parliaments for their support towards the achievement of the Organization's objectives.

She took it that the Governing Council wished to approve the Executive Committee's recommendation to suspend the associate membership rights of CEMAC and wished also to take note of the feedback that she had shared from the Executive Committee.

It was so decided.

The sitting rose at 11:20.

Second sitting

Wednesday, 9 April 2025
(Morning)

The sitting was called to order at 09:30, with Dr. T. Ackson (United Republic of Tanzania), President of the IPU, in the Chair.

Item 9 of the agenda

IPU PRIORITY THEME FOR 2025 – ADVANCING GENDER EQUALITY

The President, highlighting the practice in recent years of focusing IPU efforts on an annual priority theme, recalled that advancing gender equality had been identified as the theme for 2025, which was a fitting choice for the 30th anniversary year of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

The Secretary General, providing a brief overview of the ongoing IPU initiatives in connection with the theme, said that, with the global community celebrating the 30th anniversary of a declaration that was its blueprint for promoting gender equality worldwide, 2025 was indeed a landmark year. It was in addition the 25th anniversary of UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security and the 10th anniversary of the SDGs, including SDG 5 on gender equality. Above all, 2025 was the 40th anniversary of the IPU's own gender equality movement, which served as a good opportunity for stepping up action to forge a world informed by women and men alike.

The IPU was keen to utilize the 2025 landmark year to strengthen its resolve to promote gender equality and women's rights, including by pushing back against the worrisome and disquieting trends exemplified in the slowdown in women's empowerment and the attempts to roll back progress in women's parliamentary representation. It had therefore done much over the preceding three months to set the stage for more robust action by the global parliamentary community. Shortly before International Women's Day, it had launched a report, entitled *Women in parliament 1995–2025*, which showed that women's parliamentary representation had increased during the period covered from 11% to 27%, which was progress but insufficient nonetheless. The 2025 edition of the *Women in politics* map containing data on that representation and on the presence of women in executive positions worldwide had also been launched, along with, at the present Assembly, a report on sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliaments across the Asia-Pacific region, which was a sequel to similar reports covering the European and African regions.

Two milestone gender-focused events had already taken place in 2025: the IPU-UN Women Parliamentary Meeting on the occasion of the 69th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women in New York; and the historic first Global Conference of Women Parliamentarians in Mexico. Both would be reported on under subsequent agenda items.

The IPU did not intend, however, to rest on its laurels, as there was clearly more to be done to enhance gender equality. With the year still young, a new campaign, *Achieving gender equality, action by action* had been launched at the current Assembly to promote 10 key actions structured to that end around three main thematic areas: promoting parity in parliament and politics; encouraging gender-sensitive institutions; and combating gender-based violence and discrimination. All Member Parliaments were requested to endorse that campaign and, more importantly, to help implement it globally to further the equitable management of societies as a whole.

As to its own progress in the sphere of gender equality, the IPU would present, for approval by the Governing Council at the present sitting and by the Assembly at its closing sitting later in the day, a number of proposed amendments to the IPU Statutes and Rules with the aim of increasing their gender-sensitivity and mainstreaming gender equality in IPU processes. The IPU hoped to build on the current momentum and move forward on gender equality.

Item 7 of the agenda

AMENDMENTS TO THE IPU STATUTES AND RULES
(CL/215/7-P.1-rev and P.1-am)

The President said that the Working Group on amendments to the IPU Statutes and Rules had regularly briefed the Executive Committee on progress in the work entrusted to it and had endorsed proposals relating to gender and geopolitical rotation in regard to the position of IPU Vice-President; the advancement of gender parity as a norm across all IPU activities; clarification of the emergency item selection process; inclusivity in the composition of delegations attending IPU Assemblies; strengthening of the youth perspective in IPU resolutions; and harmonization of deadlines for future amendments and for the production of the summary records of IPU meetings. All those proposals had been communicated to the Member Parliaments on 6 January 2025, in accordance with the IPU Statutes, and were available on the IPU website and in document CL/215/7-P.1-rev. The two sub-amendments received after that date were set out in document CL/215/7-P.1-am, along with other feedback from the membership demonstrating the overall support of the IPU membership for the amendments shared with it. The Executive Committee's suggestion of testing at the current Assembly the proposal to have resolutions on two emergency items had not, however, won favour at the Assembly sitting held two days previously.

Congratulating the Working Group on its dedicated efforts, she took it that the Governing Council wished to approve the amendments submitted for its consideration.

It was so decided.

The President said that a second set of amendments to the IPU Statutes and the Rules of the Assembly would be submitted for approval by the Assembly that afternoon.

Item 8 of the agenda
(continued)

QUESTIONS RELATING TO IPU MEMBERSHIP AND OBSERVER STATUS

(b) Situation of certain parliaments

The Secretary General, accompanying with a digital slide presentation his overview of the situation of certain parliaments, said that the first category of such parliaments, namely those that were not functioning, included the Parliament of Afghanistan. The Executive Committee had noted that the country's political situation had seen no major progress and that the situation of the Parliament in place at the time of the Taliban takeover remained unchanged. Its recommendation therefore was that the status quo should be maintained in respect of the Afghan Parliament, meaning that it should continue to participate in the IPU's work in a non-voting observer capacity.

The President took it that the Governing Council wished to endorse that recommendation.

It was so decided.

The Secretary General said that the Parliament of Myanmar had been non-functioning since the military takeover of the country. The Governing Council had previously decided to recognize the body established to represent the people of Myanmar, known as the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, as the IPU's interlocutor and to grant it the same status as the Afghan Parliament whereby it was able to participate in the IPU's work in a non-voting observer capacity. The Executive Committee's recommendation was to maintain that previous decision.

The President took it that the Governing Council wished to endorse that recommendation.

It was so decided.

The Secretary General said that, in respect of those two Parliaments, the IPU Statutes would soon be amended so as to write off their arrears and pause the assessment of their contributions to the IPU's regular budget for as long as they remained non-functioning, as they had no access to their countries' resources for making payment.

Concerning the situation in Bangladesh, elections had not taken place as constitutionally required following the fall of the country's former Prime Minister. The Bangladeshi authorities had indicated to the IPU, however, that consultations were under way on the drafting of a new constitution and, in addition to other organic laws, a new electoral act. Elections would then follow in December 2025 at the earliest or in June 2026 at the latest, depending on the speed of the drafting process. The Executive Committee's recommendation was that the IPU should continue to monitor the situation and urge the country's authorities to engage in more robust consultations with a view to a return to constitutional rule.

The President took it that the Governing Council wished to endorse that recommendation.

It was so decided.

The Secretary General recalled that the Parliament of Guinea-Bissau had been unconstitutionally dissolved by the country's President and that the Governing Council had expressed its strong support for that Parliament and its Speaker. Presidential and parliamentary elections were now expected in 2025, although their timing was a matter of disagreement between the Government and the opposition. The Executive Committee's recommendation was that the IPU should continue to monitor the situation and encourage the authorities of Guinea-Bissau to hold free and fair elections as soon as possible, following which the IPU would be pleased to welcome a fully-fledged parliament into its membership.

The President took it that the Governing Council wished to endorse that recommendation.

It was so decided.

The Secretary General said that, with no functioning parliament, Haiti had had its IPU membership rights suspended. The country had seen no significant progress in the preceding months and no parliamentary elections had taken place. The Executive Committee's recommendation was that the decision to suspend Haitian membership rights should be maintained until such time as elections were held in Haiti and the IPU could welcome a newly elected Haitian parliament.

The President took it that the Governing Council wished to endorse that recommendation.

It was so decided.

The Secretary General said that the Parliament of Kuwait had been dissolved by the country's Emir, with legislative powers accruing to him and the Kuwaiti Government. There was no indication of any forthcoming elections but the IPU understood that the transition in that direction could last up to four years. The Executive Committee's recommendation was that the IPU should continue to monitor the situation and hope for elections to take place as soon as possible.

The President took it that the Governing Council wished to endorse that recommendation.

It was so decided.

The Secretary General said that, in Niger, where the parliament had been dissolved at the time of the military takeover in 2023, no significant progress had been made towards the establishment of a new parliament.

The President said that the Executive Committee had extensively discussed the affiliation of Niger to the IPU and decided to suspend its Parliament's affiliation on account of the lack of progress made in establishing a legislative body to support the transition process, as had happened elsewhere in the region. The IPU's doors would nonetheless be kept open for Niger should it establish a parliament and express a desire to rejoin the Organization. She took it that the Governing Council wished to agree with that decision.

It was so decided.

The Secretary General said that there had been no parliament in Sudan since the outbreak of hostilities in 2019 between the country's Government and a militia group. The conflict continued to escalate, with no political settlement or parliamentary elections in sight. The Executive Committee's recommendation was that the current suspension of Sudan's affiliation to the IPU should be maintained and that the IPU should continue to monitor the situation.

The President took it that the Governing Council wished to endorse that recommendation.

It was so decided.

The Secretary General said that, in the Syrian Arab Republic, there had been major developments with the overthrow of former President Al-Assad in December 2024 and the dissolution of the Syrian Parliament in January 2025 to pave the way for the establishment of a transitional legislative body. The Executive Committee had taken note of those developments and of the IPU efforts to establish contact with the new Syrian authorities with a view to helping them create structures for speeding up the country's return to normalcy. The Executive Committee's recommendation was that the planned establishment of a Syrian transitional legislative body should be welcomed and that the IPU Secretariat should continue its interaction with the country's new administration to identify ways of engagement, including the provision of technical support to such a body.

The President took it that the Governing Council wished to endorse that recommendation.

It was so decided.

The Secretary General, turning to the category of countries with transitional parliaments, recalled with reference to Burkina Faso that the Governing Council had previously taken note of its progress in establishing a new legal framework for promoting a return to constitutional rule and of the IPU assistance provided to the country's Transitional Legislative Assembly. The Executive Committee's recommendation was that the IPU should continue to monitor the situation and provide support as needed to the country's authorities while urging them to speed up the transitional process.

The President took it that the Governing Council wished to endorse that recommendation.

It was so decided.

The Secretary General said that Gabon, another country with a transitional parliament, had made significant progress towards its return to normalcy. The IPU had provided support to the Gabonese transitional authorities in establishing a new constitution and electoral framework, with the result that presidential elections were expected in April 2025, to be followed by parliamentary elections in August 2025. The IPU might therefore have the pleasure of welcoming a fully-fledged Gabonese parliament to the 151st Assembly in October 2025. The Executive Committee's recommendation was that the IPU should salute the progress achieved in Gabon, continue to monitor the situation and support the transitional process.

The President took it that the Governing Council wished to endorse that recommendation.

It was so decided.

The Secretary General said that, in Guinea, the IPU continued to engage with the new Transitional Legislative Council, providing it with technical support for the establishment of conditions conducive to the country's return to normalcy. The Executive Committee's recommendation was that the IPU should urge the country's authorities to speed up the transitional process with a view to organizing elections for a new parliament.

The President took it that the Governing Council wished to endorse that recommendation.

It was so decided.

The Secretary General said that, as with Burkina Faso and Guinea, the Executive Committee's recommendation concerning Mali was that the IPU should continue to support the country's authorities for a swift return to constitutional rule and urge them to speed up that process.

The President took it that the Governing Council wished to endorse that recommendation.

It was so decided.

The Secretary General said that, in Libya, there had been significant developments, including the holding of municipal elections and of discussions on the organization of parliamentary elections in the near future. The Executive Committee's recommendation was that the IPU should continue to monitor those developments and identify opportunities for providing support to the country's Benghazi-based Parliament, which was the one recognized by the IPU. The previous day, the IPU had signed a technical cooperation agreement with the authorities of that Parliament, with which it could continue to engage, subject to the decisions of the Governing Council.

The President took it that the Governing Council wished to endorse that recommendation.

It was so decided.

The Secretary General said with regard to South Sudan that recent developments in the form of squabbling between different factions in both Parliament and Government had apparently set back the process for a return to normalcy. Key partners in the coalition Government, including the First Vice-President and his wife, the Minister of Interior, had recently been arrested. The Executive Committee's recommendation was that the IPU should continue to monitor the situation while expressing deep concern over the current developments and encouraging the country's authorities to seek common ground among all parties concerned with a view to setting the process of a return to democracy back on track.

The President took it that the Governing Council wished to endorse that recommendation.

It was so decided.

The Secretary General said that there was positive news to report in Chad, where the transition process had ended. The IPU had engaged with the country's transitional parliament, providing it with technical assistance as decided by the Governing Council. A newly elected bicameral Parliament was now functioning, with none other than the winner of the IPU's 2024 Cremer-Passy Prize serving as President of the Senate. The Executive Committee's recommendation was that Chad should be removed from the list of countries subject to IPU monitoring and that the IPU Secretariat should continue to support the new Parliament in order to consolidate democracy within the country.

The President, congratulating Chad on its achievement and progress in general, took it that the Governing Council wished to approve that recommendation.

It was so decided.

The Secretary General, turning to the category of countries where the political or other situation affected the capacity of their parliaments to function, said that, in Palestine, there had been no elections since 2006 for a variety of reasons, most recently the ongoing war in Gaza, which did not augur well for the prospect of elections in the near future. Having taken note of that situation, the Executive Committee had requested the Committee on Middle East Questions to seize itself more robustly of the situation in Gaza and Palestine as a whole with a view to providing information on pathways for the IPU's contribution towards a resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The President took it that the Governing Council wished to take note of the developments in Palestine and await the findings of the Committee on Middle East Questions.

It was so decided.

The Secretary General said that the Executive Committee had extensively discussed the situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, where the functioning parliament was not recognized by the IPU, as it was the considered view of the Governing Council that it had not been elected in conformity with Venezuelan law. A rival Parliament, elected in 2020, had also continued to function in exile. The situation had now evolved, however, with parliamentary elections now confirmed for May 2025, in light of which the Executive Committee had decided to defer a full decision on the Parliament's IPU status until an assessment of the conduct of those elections had been made. Its recommendation therefore was for the IPU to maintain its current position vis-à-vis the situation in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and revisit the matter in October 2025.

The President took it that the Governing Council wished to endorse that recommendation.

It was so decided.

The Secretary General said that no significant progress had been recorded in Yemen, where the war had continued since 2014 and no elections had taken place. A fully-fledged IPU Member Parliament was, however, still functioning in Aden. The Executive Committee considered that efforts should be stepped up to support solutions for ending the conflict in Yemen, in which event elections could take place. Its recommendation therefore was that the IPU should continue to maintain the IPU membership of Yemen as represented by the Parliament in Aden.

The President took it that the Governing Council wished to endorse that recommendation.

It was so decided.

Mr. O.H. Yelkouny (Burkina Faso), thanking the IPU for its support to transitional parliaments such as his, said that the Secretary General had seen for himself during his visit to the country in May 2023 that its institutions, including the Transitional Legislative Assembly, were functioning normally, with work to further strengthen them continuing. Burkina Faso was firmly committed to the IPU and, with particular reference to its terrorism crisis suffered as a result of foreign interference, reaffirmed its attachment to solidarity, fraternity and cooperation for peace.

Item 10 of the agenda

REGIONAL OFFICES

The Secretary General, providing an update on developments in connection with the establishment of a pilot regional office in Egypt for the benefit of members of the African and Arab Groups and another in Uruguay for the benefit of GRULAC members, said that the IPU was continuing to monitor the situation and to engage with the authorities in both countries. A host country agreement had been signed with the Government of Uruguay in June 2023 and, although slightly behind schedule owing to the inauguration of new parliamentary authorities following recent elections in Uruguay, discussions on logistical matters and the budgetary responsibilities of each party were ongoing. The IPU anticipated that those responsibilities and the operational aspects of the regional office would be finalized in the near future.

Progress had also been achieved towards the conclusion of a host country agreement with the Egyptian authorities. In that connection, the IPU had recently presented proposals setting out the respective roles and responsibilities of the parties under such an agreement and was hopeful that the related discussions would soon be completed to allow further progress.

The President took it that the Governing Council wished to take note of the update concerning the two IPU regional offices.

It was so decided.

Item 11 of the agenda

FUTURE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY MEETINGS

(CL/215/11-P.1)

The Secretary General, noting that the list of future inter-parliamentary meetings set out in document CL/215/11-P.1 was a work in progress provided for planning purposes, said that some of the meetings listed had already been approved whereas others were pending approval. The necessary resources had already been secured for all the meetings, whether online or in person, but consultations were still ongoing in some cases to identify hosts or venues and dates.

Since the date of the list, the Parliament of Serbia had offered to host the second IPU Global Conference of Women Parliamentarians in March 2026 and the Parliament of Peru had confirmed its readiness to host the Eleventh IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians in September 2025. In cases where an IPU meeting was scheduled to take place in the context of other broader events, the list also included the dates of the events concerned so that, where relevant to their work, Member Parliaments could plan to participate in them in addition to the IPU meeting.

Concerning statutory Assemblies, the Executive Committee had confirmed that the 151st Assembly would take place in Geneva from 19 to 23 October 2025 and was seeking approval for the 152nd Assembly, tentatively scheduled to take place in Geneva from 22 to 26 March 2026. As to the 153rd Assembly to be held in October 2026, the outcome of consultations under way with potential hosts would be shared as and when they became available.

Mr. S. Søndergaard (Denmark) said that the organizers of the Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations in February 2025 were to be congratulated. Having involved more interactive discussion than on previous occasions, the event had been especially productive. He was keen for planning purposes to know the dates of the next hearing in 2026.

The President, welcoming the positive feedback, said that the IPU was continually striving to make improvements and that the 2026 hearing would take place at around the same time as in 2025. The exact dates would be determined once the next President of the UN General Assembly had been elected.

Ms. H.B.H. Al-Sulaiti (Qatar), thanking the President and the Secretary General in particular for the immense efforts made in carrying out IPU activities, said that the Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations on the important topic of the SDGs had indeed been an enriching experience. Concerning the 152nd Assembly in Geneva, she wondered whether it could instead run from 24 to 28 March 2026 to avoid coinciding with the Muslim feast of Eid al-Fitr.

The President, taking note of that request, said that efforts would be made to find a solution and thereby help to make the Assembly as successful as possible. That apart, the IPU remained eager to continue its tradition of taking the Organization closer to the people and was always open to considering offers from its Member Parliaments to host IPU Assemblies.

The Secretary General, observing that the Twelfth Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians due to take place in 2026 was missing from the list, said that it should be included for approval, with the venue as Samarkand in Uzbekistan.

The President took it that the Governing Council wished to approve the list of inter-parliamentary meetings.

It was so decided.

Item 12 of the agenda

SIXTH WORLD CONFERENCE OF SPEAKERS OF PARLIAMENT

The Secretary General, providing an update on the preparations for the Sixth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament to be held in Geneva from 29 to 31 July 2025 and noting that it would be preceded on 28 July 2025 by the 15th Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament, said that the related Preparatory Committee composed of Speakers nominated by the geopolitical groups had convened on two occasions since the previous session of the Governing Council – once in Geneva after the 149th Assembly in October 2024 and once in New York prior to the Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations in February 2025.

The Committee had discussed and agreed on the Conference's structural programme, main themes and expected outcomes and had also approved its rules in light of the fact that it was being organized in close collaboration with the United Nations. The Committee had been extensively briefed at both meetings by the UN Secretary-General's Chef de Cabinet and engaged in fruitful discussions on such topics as the newly adopted Pact for the Future and potential UN reform. It had agreed on the theme of the Conference, namely *A world in turmoil, parliamentary*

cooperation and multilateralism for peace, justice and prosperity for all, and had approved a first draft of the anticipated high-level declaration. Member Parliaments were encouraged to peruse the draft declaration circulated to them on 6 March 2025 and to submit any proposed amendments or feedback by the deadline of 4 May 2025.

Taking place only once every five years, the Conference was a rare opportunity for the presiding officers of all national parliaments to assemble with the aim of bringing a parliamentary dimension to the efforts to support and strengthen the multilateral system, with the United Nations at its core. To facilitate plans for welcoming them in Geneva, Speakers who had not already done so were invited to confirm their participation in the Conference at their earliest convenience. He looked forward to seeing as many of them as possible in attendance at what would be an important gathering.

The President, after echoing that sentiment, took it that the Governing Council wished to take note of the update on the preparations for the Conference.

It was so decided.

Item 13 of the agenda

ELECTIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

(cf. Article 21(k) of the Statutes and Rules 36, 37 and 38 of the Governing Council)
(CL/215/13-P.1)

The President said that two vacancies had arisen on the Executive Committee, one to be filled by a woman to replace Mr. A.R. Al Nuaimi of the United Arab Emirates, whose mandate would end at the current Assembly, and one to be filled by a man or a woman to replace Mr. F. Zon of Indonesia, who was no longer a parliamentarian. The candidatures received from the Arab and Asia-Pacific Groups for the two vacancies were, respectively, that of Ms. H.B.H. Al-Sulaiti of Qatar for a full mandate ending in April 2029 and that of Mr. M. Ali Sera of Indonesia, who was seeking to continue Mr. Zon's mandate until its expiration in October 2027.

She took it that the Governing Council wished to elect those two candidates as members of the Executive Committee.

It was so decided.

The President, congratulating the two new members on their election, said that the Executive Committee looked forward to their participation in its work and that it had paid warm tribute to Mr. Al Nuaimi for his commendable and substantive contribution to the Organization as a member of the Executive Committee and numerous other IPU bodies, as well as to Mr. Zon for his meaningful contribution to IPU activities through his membership of the Executive Committee and his engagement in the work of other IPU bodies.

The Executive Committee had elected from among its members six Vice-Presidents representing the geopolitical groups. In addition to Ms. Al-Sulaiti, who had automatically become a Vice-President as the only member of the Executive Committee for the Arab Group, they were Ms. N.B.K. Mutti (Zambia) for the African Group; Ms. A. Sarangi (India) for the Asia-Pacific Group; Ms. S. Mikayilova (Azerbaijan) for the Eurasia Group; Ms. M.d.C. Alva Prieto (Peru) for GRULAC; and Ms. G. Morawska-Stanecka (Poland) for the Twelve Plus Group, who had also been elected from among those six as Vice-President of the IPU.

She took it that the Governing Council wished to approve the results of those elections.

It was so decided.

Item 14 of the agenda

ACTIVITIES OF COMMITTEES AND OTHER BODIES

(CL/215/14-P.1)

(b) Forum of Women Parliamentarians

(CL/215/14(b)-R.1)

Ms. T. Narbaeva (Uzbekistan), President of the 39th session of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians, presenting the report of the Forum's two meetings held on 5 and 8 April 2025, as contained in document CL/215/14(b)-P.1, said that the session had marked the Forum's 40th anniversary, with speakers sharing valuable thoughts on its history and remarkable achievements

in championing gender equality. In contributing towards the work of the Assembly, participants had reviewed from a gender perspective two draft resolutions on, respectively, a two-State solution in Palestine and the impact of conflicts on sustainable development, with a breakout group conducting in each case the debates described in the report. In addition, participants had heard two keynote addresses from Uzbek ministers on the financial support and vocational education available to women in Uzbekistan. The report also outlined the panel discussion held on strengthening the role of women's networks in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in political leadership, which had been followed by elections to the Bureau. Future work topics considered by the Bureau included the mobilization of Member Parliaments to lead action on gender equality.

The President took it that the Governing Council wished to take note of the report.

It was so decided.

(a) Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians
(CL/215/14(a)-R.1)

Mr. E. Blanc (President of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians), accompanying with a series of slides his presentation of the draft decisions prepared by the Committee at its recent session in Tashkent, as contained in document CL/215/14(a)-R.1, said that the Committee had during that session held eight hearings with national delegations and complainants. It was grateful to all those who had responded to its invitation and who, through their participation, had contributed to constructive dialogue.

In all, the Committee had examined the situation of 288 parliamentarians, 31% of them women, in 17 countries. The Committee had also declared admissible 48 new cases concerning parliamentarians that had been submitted to it: 9 in Myanmar and 39 in Türkiye. The Committee had further decided to close two cases concerning parliamentarians in Senegal and three in Myanmar.

The draft decisions to be submitted for adoption by the Governing Council concerned the situation of 266 parliamentarians in 12 countries. He would present the cases in alphabetical order.

Brazil

Mr. Marcos do Val, a member of the Senate of Brazil, was facing mounting sanctions in reprisal for critical statements he had made regarding a member of the Federal Supreme Court. Those sanctions included the confiscation of Mr. do Val's passports, the suspension of his salary, heavy fines and the blocking of his social media accounts. The complainant submitted that those excessive and unlawful sanctions were obstructing Mr. do Val's ability to exercise his mandate. The Committee was deeply grateful to the Brazilian delegation, with which it had held a hearing during the current Assembly, and hoped that the Brazilian parliamentary authorities would cooperate in arranging a visit by members of the Committee to Brazil in order to explore avenues for the resolution of all cases concerning parliamentarians in the country, irrespective of their position on the political spectrum.

The Governing Council adopted unanimously the draft decision relating to the case of Mr. Marcos do Val.

Chile/Argentina

The Committee had examined the case of Mr. Jaime Guzmán Errázuriz, a former member of the Senate of Chile who had been assassinated in the country in April 1991. The Committee wished to express its gratitude to Mr. Juan Antonio Coloma, member of the Senate of Chile, for the information provided at the hearing held during the current Assembly. The Committee noted with satisfaction that significant progress had been made to ensure accountability for that political crime, made possible in part through the action taken by the Brazilian and Mexican authorities in support of the Chilean authorities.

The Committee nevertheless remained concerned that one of the alleged masterminds of Mr. Guzmán's assassination currently resided in Argentina, despite the fact that the Argentine Supreme Court had authorized the extradition of the individual in question to Chile several years

previously. The Committee regretted the lack of response from the Argentine parliamentary authorities to its repeated requests for information, and urged the Parliament of Argentina to renew its dialogue with the Committee with a view to exploring possible avenues for a resolution of what was an emblematic case of impunity.

The Governing Council adopted unanimously the draft decision relating to the case of Mr. Jaime Guzmán Errázuriz.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Committee had examined two cases concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo, relating to the situations of Mr. Jean-Marc Kabund and Mr. Chérubin Okende.

The Committee noted that Mr. Kabund had been released in February 2025 after serving three years in prison for criticizing the Head of State. While it welcomed his acquittal, the Committee regretted that Mr. Kabund had been sentenced to seven years' imprisonment – a heavy penalty for merely exercising his freedom of expression. The Committee wished to receive information about the review procedure that had led to Mr. Kabund's release, and reiterated its call on the authorities to strengthen the protection of that fundamental right.

The Governing Council adopted unanimously the draft decision relating to the case of Mr. Jean-Marc Kabund.

The Committee had also examined the case of Mr. Okende, an opposition parliamentarian who had been found dead in his car after being shot in the head. The Committee deplored the absence of specific measures to establish the truth in the case, and in particular the lack of transparency on the part of the authorities, who to date had forwarded neither the judicial investigation report nor the findings of international teams.

In view of the lack of information received from the Congolese authorities, the Committee wished to approach the authorities of Belgium, South Africa and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) in order to obtain a copy of their findings regarding Mr. Okende's murder.

The Governing Council adopted unanimously the draft decision relating to the case of Mr. Chérubin Okende Sanga.

Israel

The Committee had examined the situation of Mr. Ofer Cassif, a member of the Knesset, who had initially been subjected to an arbitrary expulsion procedure for having publicly supported the case brought by South Africa against the State of Israel at the International Court of Justice.

The motion to expel Mr. Cassif had failed to gain the necessary support in the plenary and, as a result, Mr. Cassif had been able to retain his seat in the Knesset. However, shortly afterwards, in November 2024, the Knesset Ethics Committee had decided to significantly restrict Mr. Cassif's ability to participate in Knesset debates for six months, in response to his outspoken views on the policies and actions of the State of Israel in Gaza.

The Committee considered that the Knesset Ethics Committee's decision against Mr. Cassif was arbitrary because it punished him for rightfully exercising his freedom of expression. The Committee called on the Israeli authorities to fully restore Mr. Cassif's parliamentary rights and to grant him the necessary security measures.

The Governing Council adopted unanimously the draft decision relating to the case of Mr. Ofer Cassif.

Kyrgyzstan

One year previously, the Governing Council had expressed concern over the arbitrary detention of Mr. Adakhan Madumarov, an opposition parliamentarian who had been arrested on charges dating back to 2009. In its decision, the Governing Council had noted its deep worry over serious allegations that Mr. Madumarov's right to a fair trial had been denied, and had called on the authorities to release him without delay and to make every effort to protect his rights and his parliamentary mandate. Mr. Madumarov had been released on 26 April 2024. That same day, he had been stripped of his mandate because he had been found guilty by a court, but had received no prison sentence as the statute of limitations had expired.

The Committee deeply regretted the fact that Mr. Madumarov had been deprived of his mandate when he should never have been prosecuted in the first place, let alone subjected to sanctions. It was imperative that the Kyrgyz authorities undertook the necessary reforms to ensure that such cases did not recur in the future and to preserve the independence of parliament.

The Governing Council adopted unanimously the draft decision relating to the case of Mr. Adakhan Madumarov.

Libya

The Committee submitted for consideration a new decision concerning the case of Ms. Seham Sergiwa, a Libyan parliamentarian who had been brutally abducted from her home six years earlier.

The Committee deplored the continued lack of progress of the investigation into Ms. Sergiwa's abduction, which was due to the formidable challenges to law and order in the country. The Committee urged the Libyan authorities, and in particular the Attorney General, to make all possible efforts to provide information on what had happened to her and to ensure that those responsible were identified.

The Committee, for its part, would continue making every effort to establish the truth in Ms. Sergiwa's case, cooperating with the United Nations mechanisms and other third parties in a position to help move the case forward.

The Governing Council adopted unanimously the draft decision relating to the case of Ms. Seham Sergiwa.

Myanmar

The Committee had once again examined a case in Myanmar concerning 82 parliamentarians who had faced reprisals on account of their parliamentary activities following the coup d'état in 2021. Ten of them had died while trying to avoid arrest, and 18 were being held incommunicado in worrying conditions, as evidenced by allegations of torture made by witnesses to those crimes, as well as reports by the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar. The Committee once again joined the Special Rapporteur's call for solidarity with the people of Myanmar, who were enduring terrible suffering on account of a civil war that had been raging for four years, not to mention the after-effects of the earthquake that had struck the country on 26 March 2025. Not enough had been done to resolve that crisis: more could and should be done to ensure that fellow parliamentarians were released, as required under UN Security Council resolution 2669 (2022).

Mr. W.M. Aye (Myanmar), speaking at the invitation of the IPU President to bear witness concerning the case and expressing appreciation to the Committee for the related draft decision and recommendations, said that the international community should do more to stop the crimes committed by the military in Myanmar and end the current conflict as soon as possible. He appealed for calls to secure the immediate release of all political prisoners in Myanmar, including Aung Sang Suu Kyi and U Win Myint, and thanked the IPU for its unwavering support in standing united with the people of Myanmar.

The Governing Council adopted unanimously the draft decision relating to the case of 82 parliamentarians from Myanmar.

Senegal

The Committee had examined two cases concerning Senegal, relating to the situations of Mr. Khalifa Sall, which dated back to 2017, and Mr. Ousmane Sonko, which dated back to 2021. In both cases, the concerns related to alleged violations of the right to a fair trial in the context of politically motivated legal proceedings. Also in both cases, the parliamentarians in question had been deprived of their mandates, been imprisoned and had their political rights restricted.

The situation in Senegal had changed considerably and the Committee was pleased to note that both former parliamentarians had been released, were no longer the subject of any criminal proceedings, and had had their full political rights restored. Mr. Sall had been able to stand as a candidate and campaign in the most recent presidential election, while Mr. Sonko currently served as the Prime Minister of Senegal.

The Committee warmly welcomed the positive outcomes reached in both cases, thanked the parliamentary authorities for their ongoing cooperation and congratulated them on their decisive contribution to the process that had led to those results.

Mr. S.A.A. Ndiaye (Senegal), conveying a message from Prime Minister Sonko himself, said that the Prime Minister was profoundly grateful to the Committee, as were his family, lawyers, colleagues and all believers in justice, for its constant attention to his case, above all during the difficult time of his detention and court case. Its support had demonstrated that parliamentary solidarity extended beyond borders and politics. The Committee had consistently fought for his rights, thanks to which justice and the principles upheld by the IPU family had prevailed with his release, enabling the Committee to close his case. The Prime Minister thanked all members of that splendid family and the Committee in particular for their solidarity and unwavering support for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The Governing Council adopted unanimously the draft decisions relating to, respectively, the case of Mr. Khalifa Ababacar Sall and the case of Mr. Ousmane Sonko.

The President said that the touching message from Prime Minister Sonko testified to the importance of the Committee's work and showed that, with perseverance and hard work, genuine progress could be made in helping parliamentary colleagues who were imprisoned or under threat.

Somalia

In Somalia, Mr. Abdullahi Hashi Abib had recently been stripped of his mandate by the Speaker of the House of the People. The complainant alleged that the unilateral decision was improper since the power to exclude parliamentarians rested not with the Speaker but with the full parliament. The Committee thanked the members of the Somali delegation for sharing their views during a hearing. The Committee nevertheless regretted the fact that Mr. Abib had been stripped of his mandate for having missed multiple parliamentary sittings, even though the authorities were aware that his absences were justified on account of the threats he faced. It was essential that the Somali authorities undertook the necessary reforms to prevent the recurrence of such cases in the future, as well as to preserve the independence of parliament and to ensure the future of democracy in the country.

The Governing Council adopted unanimously the draft decision relating to the case of Mr. Abdullahi Hashi Abib.

Tunisia

The Committee had also examined the case of Ms. Abir Moussi and a collective case concerning several other former members of the Assembly of People's Representatives of Tunisia.

The Committee deeply regretted that the Tunisian authorities had failed to provide concrete information on the cases of the former parliamentarians, on the grounds of the separation of powers.

Regarding the case of Ms. Moussi, the Committee took note of the conviction of the perpetrators of the violence against her, while considering that their sentences fell short of the penalties provided for under the Tunisian Criminal Code for similar cases. The Committee was also concerned about the detention of Ms. Moussi, who had been sentenced to 16 months' imprisonment for exercising her right to freedom of expression and faced other charges potentially carrying even harsher sentences.

The Governing Council adopted unanimously the draft decision relating to the case of Ms. Abir Moussi.

With respect to the collective case, the Committee deplored the continued detention of 12 former Tunisian parliamentarians on vague and unclear charges, as well as the fact that the cases of several former Tunisian parliamentarians continued to be examined by military courts.

The Committee therefore called upon the Tunisian authorities to urgently release Ms. Moussi and any other former parliamentarians detained for simply exercising their right to freedom of expression by speaking out against the exceptional measures adopted by the President of the Republic. The Committee also wished to appoint a judicial observer and reiterated its request to visit Tunisia to help resolve the cases once and for all.

The Governing Council adopted unanimously the draft decision relating to the collective case of 63 Tunisian parliamentarians.

Türkiye

The Committee was continuing to examine a collective case concerning 68 former and current parliamentarians, all representing the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP). Those individuals were victims of a series of grave violations of their fundamental rights. Several of them, including former HDP co-chairs Mr. Selahattin Demirtaş and Ms. Figen Yüksekdağ, had been handed heavy sentences during the so-called Kobani trial, the modalities and substance of which raised serious concerns.

The Committee remained deeply concerned that six former parliamentarians remained in prison and that many others continued to be prosecuted, often in connection with legitimate political activities carried out as part of their mandate. It once again called upon the Turkish authorities to ensure their immediate release where appropriate and to provide detailed information on the concrete evidence underpinning their convictions.

The Committee had also received a new complaint concerning 39 other individuals, all current or former opposition parliamentarians. The Committee had declared the complaint admissible and intended to enter into constructive dialogue with the authorities in order to obtain their official observations regarding the allegations. At the present stage, the decision remained a matter for the Committee and was therefore not submitted to the Governing Council for adoption.

Lastly, the Committee thanked the Turkish parliamentary delegations for the discussions that had taken place during its session in Tashkent and took note of the invitation extended by the delegation to host a Committee mission to Türkiye. The Committee hoped that the mission could be arranged quickly with a view to enhancing mutual understanding and, ultimately, achieving a fair outcome in the cases.

The Governing Council adopted unanimously the draft decision relating to the case of 68 Turkish parliamentarians.

Uganda

The Committee had examined the three cases concerning Uganda that had been referred to it and decided to submit new decisions to the Governing Council in two of those cases.

The first decision concerned the cases of Mr. Muhammad Ssegirinya and Mr. Allan Aloysius Ssewanyana, two opposition parliamentarians who had initially been imprisoned and later released on bail. According to the complainant, the prosecutions were politically motivated and the two parliamentarians had been subjected to acts of torture while in detention. The Committee noted with satisfaction the assertion made by the Ugandan delegation that, despite the ongoing proceedings against him, Mr. Ssewanyana was currently able to fully exercise his duties as a parliamentarian. It also welcomed the efforts made by the Parliament of Uganda to visit the parliamentarians in detention and to investigate the allegations of torture.

However, the Committee profoundly regretted the death of colleague Mr. Ssegirinya in January 2025. The Committee was deeply concerned by allegations that his death may have resulted from the ill-treatment to which he was reported to have been subjected. The Committee invited the Parliament of Uganda to provide it with copies of all reports in its possession, both those resulting from its own work and those produced by other State institutions, so that it could gain a better understanding of efforts being made at the national level to shed light on these accusations.

The Committee thanked the Ugandan delegation for its constructive spirit of dialogue and its willingness to discuss matters with it at the current Assembly. It welcomed the repeated assurances concerning the hosting of a Committee mission to Uganda in the near future. Such a visit would serve as an important opportunity to deepen cooperation in finding solutions to ongoing cases, including the case concerning impunity surrounding acts of torture suffered by four former parliamentarians and one parliamentarian still in office during their detention in 2018.

The Governing Council adopted unanimously the draft decision relating to the case of two Ugandan parliamentarians.

The second decision concerned the situation of colleague Ms. Betty Nambooze, who had been violently assaulted and ill-treated by State security operatives while attending a parliamentary sitting in September 2017. She had been subsequently arrested and subjected to inhumane

treatment in detention. She was still suffering from the after-effects of that violence to the present day. According to the information available to the Committee, those responsible for the acts concerned had not been brought to justice. The Committee called upon the Ugandan authorities to do their utmost to ensure that justice was done in the case.

The Governing Council adopted unanimously the draft decision relating to the case of Ms. Betty Nambooze.

In conclusion, the cases to which he had referred were only some of the many before the Committee. While it was not submitting decisions on those other cases at the present time, the Committee was continuing to examine them, closely monitoring the situation of 880 parliamentarians in 52 countries, including 57 who were currently in detention. He wished to mention in particular the case of a colleague from Nicaragua, Mr. Brooklyn Rivera, an opposition parliamentarian and Indigenous leader, who had been kidnapped from his home by State operatives in September 2023 and whose whereabouts were currently unknown. The Committee called on all national parliaments, IPU permanent observers, specialized human rights organizations and the international community as a whole to take urgent and concrete steps, within their respective mandates, to engage in constructive dialogue with the Government of Nicaragua with a view to bringing the case to a swift resolution. He also wished to mention the cases under consideration concerning Pakistan, where several parliamentarians continued to be subjected to repeated arbitrary detention despite calls from the Governing Council for their immediate release.

Given the unprecedented number of cases referred to the Committee, one thing was certain: the institution of parliament and democracy itself were in danger, and it was a collective responsibility to defend them with strength and determination. Now more than ever, he called on each and every parliamentarian, on returning to their parliaments, to rally their colleagues behind the cause of parliamentary solidarity. Together, parliamentarians must speak out on behalf of their colleagues who could no longer make their voices heard – because they were imprisoned, threatened or missing. They must not be forgotten. Inaction should never be an option.

The President, describing the Committee's work as central to the IPU ethos, said that its President and members were doing an excellent job, especially given the limited time at their disposal, achieving positive outcomes despite the challenges encountered. She thanked them for all their efforts to ensure that parliamentary colleagues around the world were protected.

Concerning the Committee's membership, the Governing Council was called upon to elect one member for a five-year term ending in April 2030 to replace Ms. C. Asiaín Pereira of Uruguay, who was no longer a parliamentarian. The candidature of Mr. F. Chahuán of Chile had been received for the position. She took it that the Governing Council wished to elect Mr. Chahuán as a member of the Committee.

It was so decided.

(g) Gender Partnership Group
(CL/215/14(g)-R.1)

Mr. A.R. Al Nuaimi (United Arab Emirates), Chairperson of the Gender Partnership Group, presenting the report of the Group's 51st session held on 4 and 8 April 2025, as contained in document CL/215/14(g)-R.1, and citing figures set out in the report and its annexes, said that women's participation in the current Assembly was higher than in the preceding five, whereas, compared with the 149th Assembly, more of the delegations comprising at least two delegates were all male. The number of gender-balanced delegations was, however, at a record high, with the IPU's 2025 focus on gender equality providing impetus for further efforts to achieve gender parity, including through amendment of the IPU Statutes and Rules. The Group had welcomed the awareness and training activities relating to the IPU's anti-harassment policy and had furthermore fruitfully engaged with the delegations of Algeria and Maldives to offer support for their plans to address women's low participation in their respective parliaments. In addition to urging all Speakers to lead in working towards gender parity within their respective parliaments, the Group called on all Member Parliaments to participate in the Organization's new gender campaign *Achieving gender equality, action by action*.

The President, noting that the current Assembly was the last time that Mr. Al Nuaimi would chair the Gender Partnership Group, thanked him for his excellent work in that capacity and for his passion in fostering gender parity at the IPU and indeed within his own Parliament.

She took it that the Governing Council wished to take note of his report.

It was so decided.

(c) Forum of Young Parliamentarians
(CL/215/14(c)-R.1)

Mr. D. Carden (United Kingdom), President of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians, presenting the report of the Forum's meeting of 6 April 2025, as contained in document CL/215/14(c)-R.1, said that the 150th Assembly was the first since the reduction of the upper age limit for young parliamentarians from 45 to 40 years of age. All Member Parliaments were urged to include young parliamentarians in their delegations to increase the proportion participating in IPU Assemblies from the current 15% to 25%. In its meeting, the Forum had reflected on the achievements of the outgoing Bureau; taken stock of youth participation worldwide; learned of efforts to promote the involvement of youth parliaments and councils in the work of national legislatures; brought the youth perspectives described in the report to the Assembly's General Debate and the two draft resolutions, on a two-State solution in Palestine and the impact of armed conflicts on sustainable development; and elected a new President. As outgoing President, he thanked all young parliamentarians and the IPU leadership for their support and collaboration throughout his term and wished his successor the best.

Ms. N. Abu Ghosh (Jordan), incoming President of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians, said that she was deeply honoured to have been elected to her new position and looked forward to advancing the IPU's work, including through a youth overview to be prepared by the Forum on the topic of illegal adoption, to be discussed at the 151st Assembly. The unbreakable power, solidarity and determination of youth would carry it far in its next chapter.

The President, congratulating Ms. Abu Ghosh on her election, said that she would in her important new position undoubtedly inspire more young people to join politics and that Mr. Carden, whom she thanked for his service to the IPU and to the cause of young parliamentarians, would hopefully work with his successor by offering advice as needed on the basis of his own experience of the position.

Mr. W. Soto Palacios (Peru) said that his Parliament looked forward to hosting the Eleventh Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians in September 2025 and to welcoming young parliamentarians from around the world to the country, which offered wonderful food, a fascinating culture and multiple sightseeing opportunities.

The President took it that the Governing Council wished to take note of the report.

It was so decided.

The President said that the Governing Council was invited to endorse the election of members of the Bureau of Young Parliamentarians for a two-year term ending in April 2027, in accordance with Rule 5.3 of the Forum's Rules stating that the Bureau should be composed of two representatives, one a man and the other a woman, from each IPU geopolitical group. The candidatures received for the vacancies were: for the African Group, Mr. A. Abderahmane Koko (Chad) and none for the female position; for the Arab Group, Mr. H. Ebrahim (Bahrain), and Ms. N. Abu Ghosh (Jordan), already elected as President; for the Asia-Pacific Group, Ms. H. Singh (India) and Mr. S. Durrani (Pakistan); for the Eurasia Group, Ms. H. Hakobyan (Armenia) and Mr. S. Ismayilov (Azerbaijan); for GRULAC, Mr. W. Soto Palacios (Peru) and Ms. J. Sierra (Uruguay); and for the Twelve Plus Group, Ms. I. Stamatović (Ukraine). and Mr. D. Carden (United Kingdom).

She took it that the Governing Council wished to endorse those elections.

It was so decided.

(d) Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine
(CL/215/14(d)-R.1)

Mr. A. Farrugia (Malta), member of the Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine, read out the report on the activities of the Task Force since October 2024, as contained in document CL/215/14(d)-R.1. During its meetings, the Task Force had held discussions with both the Ukrainian and Russian delegations about cases involving children relocated to the Russian Federation. Both sides had agreed on the importance of reuniting separated children with their families and expressed their willingness to support this process. The Task Force had consulted the International Committee of the Red Cross to better understand the legal and humanitarian aspects involved. The Task Force had also acknowledged the recent increase in global diplomatic efforts and discussed the potential role of the IPU in complementing those efforts.

The President took it that the Governing Council wished to take note of the report.

It was so decided.

The President thanked the Task Force for its dedication to ensuring that efforts were made to build on small gains and to push for further gains not yet achieved.

(e) Committee on Middle East Questions
(CL/215/14(e)-R.1)

Mr. H.-J. Talsma (Netherlands), President of the Committee on Middle East Questions, presenting the report of the Committee's virtual informal meeting in March 2025 and its two formal sittings at the current Assembly, as contained in document CL/215/14(e)-R.1, said that the Committee had informally discussed proposed structural amendments to its composition and working modalities and explored ways of becoming more representative, effective and responsive to the current complex realities. In its formal sittings, it had considered the structural reform outlined in the report, with members offering valuable suggestions to inform further discussions on shaping its work, to which the Israeli-Palestinian conflict would always remain central, its responses to other regional crises notwithstanding. The Committee had also heard a compelling report from a representative of the UN Works and Relief Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East on the situation in Gaza and the West Bank and a presentation on initiatives of the King Hamad Global Center for Coexistence and Tolerance. Lastly, it had reaffirmed its support for the two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its readiness to adapt for the sake of a future in which peace was achievable.

The President took it that the Governing Council wished to take note of the report.

It was so decided.

The President said that the Governing Council was called upon to elect two members, one a man and the other a woman, to the Committee for a term ending in April 2029. While the Committee's composition should reflect a diverse political representation, its members were elected in an individual capacity and not as representatives of any parliament or geopolitical group. The only candidature received was that of Mr. J. Juwaini of Indonesia.

She took it that the Governing Council wished to elect Mr. Juwaini as a member of the Committee.

It was so decided.

(f) Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law
(CL/215/14(f)-R.1)

Mr. A. Farrugia (Malta), President of the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law, presenting the report of the Committee's meeting of 7 April 2025, as contained in document CL/215/14(f)-R.1, said that the Committee's discussions had included the situation in Myanmar, especially in respect of the many Rohingya refugees, asylum seekers and stateless persons and those internally displaced by conflict or affected by the recent earthquake.

Humanitarian response plans in Myanmar were the world's most underfunded and access to humanitarian assistance was impeded, with foreign aid cuts set only to create more suffering. All Member Parliaments should work to end that human tragedy by supporting all efforts to assist conflict-affected civilians and marginalized Rohingya communities in Myanmar. Another main topic discussed was the Global Initiative of the International Committee of the Red Cross to galvanize political commitment to international humanitarian law, which all Member Parliaments should treat as a political priority. Concerning statelessness, the Committee looked forward in Malaysia to the implementation of recent constitutional amendments granting Malaysian women the equal right to confer automatic citizenship on their children born overseas.

The President took it that the Governing Council wished to take note of the report.

It was so decided.

The President said that, with the mandates of three Committee members due to expire at the current Assembly and the seat of one other unfilled, the Governing Council was called upon to elect four members to fill, for the African Group, one vacancy for a man; for the Arab Group, one vacancy for a man; for the Asia-Pacific Group, one vacancy for a woman; and for the Eurasia Group, one vacancy for a man. The candidatures received were, for the African Group, Mr. A. Guenchouba (Algeria); for the Arab Group, Mr. M. Nader (Iraq); for the Asia-Pacific Group, Ms. K. Sehrawat (India); and for the Eurasia Group, none, leaving the position vacant.

She took it that the Governing Council wished to elect those three candidates.

It was so decided.

Item 15 of the agenda

REPORTS ON RECENT IPU SPECIALIZED MEETINGS

(CL/215/15-R.1)

Ms. C. López Castro (Mexico), President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, reporting on the first IPU Global Conference of Women Parliamentarians held from 13 to 16 March 2025 in Mexico City and profusely thanking the Mexican authorities, the IPU, her parliamentary colleagues and all participants for their support in ensuring a successful conference, said that the Conference, entitled *From Mexico to the world: Let's mobilize for gender parity!*, had culminated in a proposed action plan for the achievement of gender parity in parliaments, as set out in the outcome document available via the link provided in document CL/215/15-R.1. The three action areas identified in the plan were designed to: achieve parity in numbers through electing equal numbers of women and men in parliament and ensuring diversity among them; reach parity in leadership and influence in parliament; and foster a parity culture in parliament through creating a gender-sensitive parliamentary culture and infrastructure and adopting zero tolerance for sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliament. All Member Parliaments were called upon to implement the plan of action to promote progress towards gender parity.

The President, expressing congratulations and appreciation to the Mexican hosts and to Ms. López Castro in particular for having made the inaugural IPU Global Conference of Women Parliamentarians a success, took it that the Governing Council wished to take note of the report.

It was so decided.

Item 14 of the agenda

(continued)

ACTIVITIES OF COMMITTEES AND OTHER BODIES

(CL/215/14-P.1)

(h) Advisory Group on Health (new Committee on Health)

(CL/215/14(h)-R.1)

Ms. O. Ataniyazova (Uzbekistan), member of the Advisory Group on Health, after reading out the report of the Group's meeting of 7 April 2025, as contained in document CL/215/14(h)-P.1, and recalling that the Group would transform after the current Assembly into the new Committee on

Health, said that the Group had participated the day after its meeting in a field visit to a family polyclinic in Tashkent to see how the primary healthcare system functioned in Uzbekistan and how the IPU resolution on achieving universal health coverage was being implemented. Thanks to its close collaboration in that regard with its Parliament and healthcare system, as well as with international partners and local communities, Uzbekistan had achieved a substantial reduction in its maternal and child mortality rates in the years since the adoption of that resolution in 2019.

The President took it that the Governing Council wished to take note of the report.

It was so decided.

Dr. T.A. Ghebreyesus (Director-General of the World Health Organization [WHO]), speaking in a pre-recorded video message, said that parliaments played a vital role in the face of current geopolitical challenges, with multilateralism also under assault and dramatic cuts in official development assistance severely disrupting health-related programmes and emergency responses to events such as the recent earthquake in Myanmar. The WHO was committed to working with the IPU to inform and support the work of parliaments relating to global health priorities, including the new pandemic agreement and sustainable financing, which would be discussed at a global parliamentary event to be hosted by the IPU on the occasion of the World Health Assembly in May 2025. The WHO encouraged all parliamentarians to join their national delegations participating in that Assembly to make their voices heard and ensure that global health decisions were translated into national action. He was grateful to the IPU for its leadership and partnership in working together with the WHO for a healthier, safer and fairer world.

The President, thanking Dr. Ghebreyesus for his invitation and adding that the IPU counted on his participation in the IPU parliamentary event mentioned, said that the Governing Council was called upon to elect 15 members of the new Committee on Health for a four-year term ending in April 2029. The nominated candidates were: Ms. F. Ilimi Haddouche (Algeria); Ms. V. Riotton (France); Mr. S. Jaiswal (India); Ms. L. Clifford-Lee (Ireland); Ms. C. Muyeka Mumma (Kenya); Ms. S. Avila (Mexico); Ms. E.T. Muteka (Namibia); Ms. S. Gautam (Nepal); Ms. J. Tielen (Netherlands); Mr. C. Lohr (Switzerland); Ms. S.R. Al Mansoori (United Arab Emirates); Ms. O. Ataniyazova (Uzbekistan); and Ms. S. Tshabangu (Zimbabwe).

She took it that the Governing Council wished to elect those candidates.

It was so decided.

(i) High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism
(CL/215/14(i)-R.1)

Ms. M. Guerra Castillo (Mexico), Chairperson of the High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG), presenting the report of the HLAG meeting held on 5 April 2025, as contained in document CL/215/14(i)-R.1, said that the HLAG's discussion of important issues relating to global and regional security had covered the ongoing efforts to formulate a universally agreed definition of terrorism, including in the context of its future workplan. Members had been briefed on a recent expert roundtable on the definition and benefited from an expert hearing on AI, terrorism and organized crime, a theme that they had agreed to explore further with the aim of identifying the best course of action for parliaments in that domain. An invitation had come from the Libyan House of Representatives for an HLAG delegation to visit Benghazi to learn from the country's experience in countering terrorism and violent extremism. Members had furthermore been updated on the status of the ad hoc committee established to implement the *Call of the Sahel* initiative with welcome support from the IPU and international organizations and a focus on five priority areas.

The President took it that the Governing Council wished to take note of the report.

It was so decided.

The President said that the Governing Council was called upon to elect six members to fill HLAG vacancies for a four-year term ending in April 2029. Four candidatures had been received, namely: for the African Group, Mr. J. Okwisia Makali (Kenya) and Ms. S. Amero (Uganda); for the Asia-Pacific Group, Mr. A. Malik (Pakistan); and for the Twelve Plus Group, Ms. R. Miliute (Lithuania). The vacancies for the Eurasia Group and GRULAC remained open.

The President took it that the Governing Council wished to elect those four candidates.

It was so decided.

(j) Group of Facilitators for Cyprus
(CL/215/14(j)-R.1)

Mr. L. Wehrli (Switzerland), member of the Group of Facilitators for Cyprus, after reading out the report of the Group's meeting held on 5 April 2025, as contained in document CL/215/14(j)-R.1, said that the Group would continue working in the same vein towards its goal of a lasting solution to the Cyprus problem and counted on its Cypriot colleagues to collaborate with it closely to that end.

Mr. J.F.N. Mudenda (Zimbabwe), making a general observation, said that the IPU bodies established to address conflicts in one region or another were doing an excellent job but that Africa was excluded from the equation, despite the catastrophic loss of life and huge displacement resulting from serious conflicts taking place in the continent, as in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sudan. His plea therefore was for the IPU to consider establishing a working group or task force to address persistent conflicts in Africa, where any life lost was surely equal to any lost in Palestine, the Russian-Ukrainian conflict or Cyprus. The IPU must be especially alert to the application of international humanitarian law and ensure that Africa was not left out when it came to assistance with ending its situations of conflict.

The President said that the IPU bodies tasked with addressing specific challenges or conflicts were established either by recommendation of an IPU committee or by way of an IPU resolution on a particular issue. Currently, the IPU had over 40 conflicts on its radar. While every life was indeed equal, the IPU was obligated to address conflicts through the channels at its disposal. As she had previously reported, the Executive Committee had directed the Secretary General to look into the multiplicity and proliferation of IPU bodies dedicated to certain issues with the aim of enhancing effectiveness by enabling discussions on more than just a few specific issues that did not necessarily hold the same priority for all Member Parliaments. One proposal to that end had been to trial two emergency items but the proposal had not been endorsed. The point raised by the delegate from Zimbabwe was, however, well taken and, in his consideration of the matter, the Secretary General would be exploring how to utilize existing IPU mechanisms to their best advantage while remaining in compliance with the relevant IPU Rules.

She took it that the Governing Council wished to take note of the report.

It was so decided.

(k) Working Group on Science and Technology
(CL/215/14(k)-R.1)

Ms. M. Cederfelt (Sweden), Vice-Chairperson of the Working Group on Science and Technology, presenting the report of the Group's recent meeting, as contained in document CL/215/14(k)-R.1, said that the Working Group had been briefed on the Parliamentarians' Roundtable held at the 12th UN World Urban Forum in Cairo in November 2024, and on an invitation, to be revisited at its next session, to join the Earth-Humanity Coalition, a UNESCO-led initiative aligned with the UN Decade for Sustainable Development. As likewise detailed in the report, members had been encouraged to participate in upcoming key events of similar relevance to their work; discussed the sobering findings of a survey on parliamentarians' use of scientific research; considered proposals for bridging the science policy divide; heard a presentation on ethical principles in that connection; been updated on preparations for the impending second Science for Peace School, with sessions in Jordan and Viet Nam; and reflected on recent global events in Davos and Paris that had significantly influenced the AI landscape, with a focus on the ethical, social and political implications.

The President took it that the Governing Council wished to take note of the report.

It was so decided.

The President said that the Governing Council was called upon to elect 12 members to fill the current vacancies in the Working Group for a four-year term ending in April 2029. The candidatures received were: for the African Group, Mr. K. Kamel (Algeria) and Ms. M. Kademaunga (Zimbabwe); for the Arab Group, Mr. A. Hashim Khoori (United Arab Emirates); for the Asia-Pacific Group, Mr. M. Ali (Maldives); for GRULAC, Mr. S. Monreal Ávila (Mexico) and Ms. S. Nane Vinçón (Uruguay); and for the Twelve Plus Group, Mr. V. Blondel (Belgium), Mr. D. Illouz (Israel) and Ms. I. Chassot (Switzerland). One vacancy each remained for the Arab Group, the Asia-Pacific Group and the Eurasia Group.

She took it that the Governing Council wished to elect those nine candidates.

It was so decided.

Item 15 of the agenda
(continued)

REPORTS ON RECENT IPU SPECIALIZED MEETINGS
(CL/215/15-R.1)

The President said that consideration of the item would continue with video reports on the remaining six recent specialized meetings listed in document CL/215/15-R.1, which also contained links to more detailed information on each meeting via the IPU website.

A video showing highlights from the 10th G20 Parliamentary Meeting Speakers' Summit (P20), held in Brasilia from 6 to 8 November 2024, was screened.

A video showing highlights from the IPU Parliamentary Meeting at COP29, held in Baku from 16 to 17 November 2024, was screened.

A video showing highlights from the Regional Conference for parliaments of the Asia-Pacific Region on global health security, held in Bangkok from 2 to 3 December 2024, was screened.

A video showing highlights from the opening remarks made at the Third World Summit of the Committees of the Future, held in Santiago de Chile from 13 to 14 January 2025, was screened.

A video showing highlights from the 2025 IPU Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations, held in New York from 13 to 14 February 2025, was screened.

A video showing highlights from the Parliamentary Meeting in the context of the annual session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, held in New York on 11 March 2025, was screened.

The President took it that the Governing Council wished to approve those reports.

It was so decided.

Item 16 of the agenda

OTHER BUSINESS

The President said that there was no other business.

Following the customary exchange of courtesies, she declared the 215th session of the Governing Council closed.

The sitting rose at 13:20.