



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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Speech by Mr. Martin Chungong Secretary General of the IPU

High-level meeting on the 30th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women

Recommitting to, resourcing and accelerating the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls

New York, 22 September 2025

It is a great honour to address you today as Secretary General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the global organization of parliaments.

Thirty years after Beijing, we recognize that progress has been made but it has been uneven, and too often, fragile.

Since Beijing, women's participation in parliaments has more than doubled, with a global average of 27.2%. Yet, we are still far from our goal of reaching parity. In recent years, progress has plateaued, and in some cases, we are seeing reversal.

This should come as no surprise, in a context of resurgence of anti-rights narratives, particularly targeting women and girls, including women MPs and women rights defenders.

The IPU is on the frontlines of this reality. Our member parliaments have the power and duty to safeguard hard-won gains in women's human rights. They pass the laws and budgets that can dismantle inequality. And they oversee the institutions tasked with delivering change.

The fight for women's rights is not new. Some old challenges remain, and new ones have emerged. While we cannot overcome them alone, we have a responsibility to lead and to act. The world may be changing, but so must our resolve.

That is why, at the IPU, we launched in 2025 our campaign *Achieving Gender Equality Action-by-Action*. Through this campaign, we are mobilizing parliaments to advance gender equality in governance, in laws and in practice, and ensuring accountability.

We also work closely with the UN CEDAW Committee in implementing its General Recommendation 40, which affirms that gender parity in decision-making is not a goal for the distant future but a legal obligation for today.

Our goal is to build parity in numbers, parity in influence and a parity culture across all decision-making spaces, and at all levels. Only then can we deliver for women and girls, in all their diversity.

Global partnerships, as crystalized through the Generation Equality Forum, have shown us what is possible when actors across sectors, generations, and regions come together with urgency and ambition.

Dear delegates,

Let us build on the momentum of this year's milestones to keep gender equality front and center in our global agenda. Together, we can bring to life the vision Beijing set forth—a future defined by full equality, shared power, and enduring justice for women and girls everywhere. The time to act is now, and the world is watching.

Thank you.