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Speech by Mr. Martin Chungong, IPU Secretary General

3rd Annual General Assembly of the Conference of Speakers and Presidents of African Legislatures (CoSPAL)

12 December 2025

Honourable Speaker Bagbin,
Honourable Speaker El Alami,
Your Excellency, Ambassador Oyewole,
Honourable Presidents and Speakers of African Parliaments,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour to address the 3rd Annual General Assembly of the Conference of Speakers and Presidents of African Legislatures (CoSPAL) here in the Kingdom of Morocco. I thank you for inviting me to this important meeting, which I regret not being able to attend in person.

The founding of CoSPAL in 2022 was an important milestone, and I am pleased to see its growing membership. I look forward to developing an impactful partnership between our organizations, aiming to strengthen institutions and support peace and prosperity on the African continent.

The theme of the General Assembly, *Leadership and Parliamentary Diplomacy in a Changing Global Order*, is timely. The *challenges* and the *opportunities* facing the African continent are tremendous, and good governance and strong and responsible leadership will be decisive in shaping the continent's future.

This is a moment to reflect on how to strengthen parliamentary cooperation, advance democratic governance, and amplify Africa's legislative voice in shaping global and regional priorities. Having this work led by African legislators—by Africans and for Africans—echoes my hope for the continent to be the architect of its own future.

Strengthening African parliaments is a priority for the IPU and for me personally. At the 145th IPU Assembly in Kigali in 2022, I called on our Members to find innovative solutions to support peace, sustainable development, and alternatives to military responses to instability. I stressed the importance of multilateralism, solidarity, and support for parliaments striving for democracy and the rule of law, since this fosters good governance which is people-centred. I also encouraged the IPU's governing bodies to consider partnering with African institutions to identify pathways for addressing instability on the continent. I must say we have our job cut out for us, judging from the recent developments in Guinea Bissau where the military have taken control of the country and in the process, subverted an ongoing electoral process. The IPU condemns strongly this military take-over, which sets the continent back on the path to democracy. The IPU will not relent in its efforts to help parliaments, specially in Africa, as they work to live up to the expectations of their people.

The IPU focuses on helping parliaments build capacity and supports peace processes. This year, I undertook missions to Gabon, Niger, the DRC and Rwanda, and the IPU recently provided assistance to the parliaments of Burundi, Gabon, Burkina Faso, Guinea and Chad.

Our support includes facilitating peer-to-peer exchanges, access to expertise and training – including induction sessions for new MPs, contributing to the drafting of new constitutions, aiding in budget oversight, creating legal frameworks for inclusive decision-making, citizen engagement during crises, reviewing internal parliamentary structures, and supporting new legislatures as well as parliaments in transition.

We welcome the efforts of African Presidents and Speakers and look forward to stronger cooperation.

I wish you a successful Conference and look forward to hearing the outcomes, and to seeing many of you at the 152nd IPU Assembly in Istanbul in April 2026.

Thank you.