



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

151st IPU Assembly and related meetings

Geneva, Switzerland
19–23 October 2025

Results of the proceedings



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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151st Assembly

1. Opening of the Assembly

The IPU Anthem was played.

Ms. G. Morawska-Stanecka, IPU Vice-President and President of the 151st Assembly, opened the Assembly on 20 October 2025 and conveyed the warm regards of IPU President Dr. Tulia Ackson, who was unable to attend the Assembly due to forthcoming elections in her country. The subject of international humanitarian law (IHL) was an apt one for an Assembly being held in Geneva, a city which almost 80 years previously had seen the adoption of the Geneva Conventions, the cornerstone of IHL, which were based on a deep conviction that human dignity must be safeguarded even in the midst of conflict. Over time, IHL had been expanded to acknowledge that certain weapons and tactics were too inhumane to be tolerated and should be consigned to history.

The growing number of conflicts around the world had led to devastating consequences: almost 310 million people were in need of humanitarian assistance, 123 million people had been forcibly displaced and 1.9 million people were in the grips of catastrophic hunger. At the same time, humanitarian norms were being questioned and cast aside, and humanitarian action was being defunded. She made three suggestions for actions parliaments could take: taking steps before the eruption of conflict to prevent violations of IHL, rigorously enforcing humanitarian norms through effective accountability, and constantly ensuring that humanitarian concerns were at the heart of all parliamentary work. She urged parliamentarians to show courage, not to turn away from suffering, and to stand up for their principles by upholding humanitarian norms and protecting principled humanitarian action.

Mr. M. Chungong, IPU Secretary General, said that, as conflict continued to rage in many parts of the world, the focus of the Assembly on IHL, intended to protect everyone from the worst atrocities of war, was timely. The IPU had a long history of promoting respect for IHL, with a Committee devoted to that very issue in place for over 30 years, conducting missions, liaising with key partners the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) and the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), and guiding other areas of the IPU's work. The IPU had also been at the forefront of the development and ratification of key humanitarian disarmament and non-proliferation instruments. In short, there was a special link between the IPU and IHL.

During the Assembly, the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law would hold a special open session on safeguarding humanitarian action, and the ICRC had set up a virtual reality stand to give participants a glimpse of the horrific reality of armed conflict. IHL was of particular relevance to the IPU's 2025 focus on gender equality: efforts by parliaments to become more gendersensitive would enable the adoption of laws and policies that would implement IHL in a way that would account for the needs of women and girls and effectively combat conflict-related sexual violence. Parliaments were not only instrumental in the ratification of IHL treaties and conventions, but also in ensuring that governments adhered to them. Parliaments needed to step up their advocacy and legislative efforts for humanitarian action, fulfilling their fundamental responsibility to help those caught up in conflict and disaster.

Ms. C. López Castro (Mexico), President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, observed that the humanitarian framework built over many decades was currently in danger, but she urged parliamentarians to see that threat as an opportunity to renew their commitment to multilateralism and peace. Humanitarian crises were particularly harmful for women: every day, 500 women and girls died from pregnancy and childbirth in fragile humanitarian situations, 60% of those facing food deprivation and hunger were women and girls, and sexual violence continued to be used as a weapon in many warzones. Gender-responsive humanitarian action was needed for the good of all, not just women.

Likewise, gender-responsive humanitarian budgeting should be viewed as an investment in breaking cycles of violence, preventing instability and fostering recovery. Efforts to address humanitarian crises — whether related to conflict, the climate crisis, pandemics, food insecurity or the negative effects of

new technology — needed women at the table. Despite large numbers of elections around the world in 2024 and 2025, women still only accounted for 27.2% of MPs. More women were needed in parliaments and leadership roles, especially in peacebuilding efforts.

Ms. J. Sierra (Uruguay), Member of the Bureau of Young Parliamentarians, representing the President of the Bureau, Ms. N. Abu Ghosh, said that millions of young people were growing up in areas of armed conflict and that youth were among those most impacted by war. More than one in six children currently lived in conflict situations and over 240 million young people faced disruption to their education due to conflict. The lives of young people must be protected in all circumstances, as must their hopes, which represented the hopes of the whole of society. In its resolution on youth, peace and security in 2015, the UN Security Council had determined that it was no longer an option to exclude younger generations from peacebuilding processes and humanitarian responses.

Just 2.8% of MPs worldwide were currently aged 30 or under, a figure that had not improved since 2023. The share of young women under 30 in parliament had declined. When young people were excluded from power, they would seek other ways to be heard, as demonstrated by the recent “Gen Z” movements in multiple regions of the world. She encouraged parliamentarians to make efforts to enhance youth participation, to safeguard education and employment for young people, and to uphold the fundamental rights of young people, even in crisis and conflict situations. For the sake of the future of hundreds of millions of young people, parliamentarians needed to do their part to ensure unhindered humanitarian assistance, respect for IHL, and a just and sustainable peace.

Mr. P. Krähenbühl, Director-General of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), keynote speaker, expressed his gratitude for the IPU’s longstanding commitment to humanitarian principles, especially at present, when those principles were under great strain. The theme of the General Debate invited participants to do more than just reflect, but to act immediately to preserve human dignity and translate principle into concrete protection, including by investing in mechanisms to prevent and resolve armed conflicts. The ICRC and the IPU had a long shared history, with two of their respective founders, Henry Dunant and Frédéric Passy, having been jointly awarded the first Nobel Peace Prize in 1901.

The ICRC was currently aware of more than 130 armed conflicts worldwide, the highest number in recent decades. ICRC colleagues were witnessing the scale of devastation daily in Palestine, Ukraine, Sudan, Myanmar, Afghanistan and the Syrian Arab Republic, among others. Conflicts were proliferating and intensifying as funding for humanitarian response was shrinking and access to people in need was being blocked by insecurity and administrative impediments. The ICRC continued to respond with neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action, but its operations had been made increasingly difficult by the weakening of States’ commitment to upholding humanitarian norms. IHL was now endangered by three principal threats: widespread violations and complacency, selective application and permissive interpretations, and the reluctance to ratify, implement or remain bound by the relevant treaties.

Behind those threats was a deeper social process: dehumanization. The erosion of empathy and the normalization of suffering was lowering political and legal barriers to permissive policies, weakening demands for accountability and making legal backsliding more politically tolerable. IHL remained a bulwark against that slide but parliaments needed to reaffirm their commitment. Real preparedness required parliaments to enact and update legislation to implement treaty obligations, to embed qualified legal advisors in operational planning, and to maintain independent oversight and accountability mechanisms. In 2024, the ICRC and six national partners had launched the Global Initiative to Galvanize Political Commitment to International Humanitarian Law, aimed at making IHL a political priority, mobilizing leadership and producing practical recommendations for national action. The message of the Global Initiative was simple: in war, humanity must prevail. He urged the parliamentarians present to encourage their governments to join and meaningfully engage in the initiative.

The question before the IPU Assembly was not only the fate of IHL, but the fate of humanity itself. Parliaments could play a role in breaking a vicious cycle in which wars were casually treated as almost inevitable. Parliamentarians needed to lend their voice, political courage and leadership to the ICRC to ensure a world where common humanity was the norm, not the exception.

2. Participation

Delegations from 129 Member Parliaments took part in the work of the Assembly*:

Afghanistan**, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gambia (The), Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lesotho, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar**, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The following six Associate Members also took part in the Assembly: the Arab Parliament, the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), the Pan-African Parliament, the Parliament of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Parliamentary Assembly of La Francophonie (APF) and the Parliament of MERCOSUR (PARLASUR).

Observers included representatives of:

- (i) the United Nations and related organizations: United Nations, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH), United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Trade Organization (WTO);
- (ii) parliamentary assemblies and associations: African Parliamentary Union (APU), Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union (AIPU), Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA), Collective Security Treaty Organization Parliamentary Assembly (CSTO PA), Forum of Parliaments of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (FP-ICGLR), International Parliamentary Network for Education (IPNEd), Interparliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy (IAO), Maghreb Consultative Council, ParlAmericas, Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (PNND), Parliamentary Assembly of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (AP-CPLP), Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM), Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic States (TURKPA), Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean (PA-UfM), Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas (COPA), Parliamentary Union of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation Member States (PUIC), Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum (SADC-PF), and UNITE Parliamentarians Network for Global Health;
- (iii) international non-governmental organizations: Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI);
- (iv) international political party federations: Global Greens, Liberal International (LI), Permanent Conference of Political Parties of Latin America and the Caribbean (COPPPAL);
- (v) other partner organizations: Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), International Development Law Organization (IDLO), International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), and Sovereign Order of Malta.

Several special guests also attended the Assembly and gave addresses at high-level segments.

* For the complete list of IPU Members, see [page 42](#).

** As per the decision of the Governing Council in Madrid in November 2021, the IPU continues to engage with the former, democratically elected parliamentarians from Afghanistan and with the Committee to Represent Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH) for Myanmar. The corresponding delegations attend Assemblies in a non-voting observer capacity.

Of the 1,103 delegates who attended the Assembly, 594 were members of parliament (581 from Member Parliaments and 13 from Associate Member delegations), including 42 Presiding Officers, and 40 Deputy Presiding Officers. Member Parliament delegations included 216 women MPs (37.2%) and 80 young MPs (13.7%).

In continuation of practices established at recent Assemblies, the 151st Assembly was an in-person event with adaptations for hybrid participation. All of the session rooms were equipped for external engagement and remote interpretation and these technical capacities were used throughout the Assembly. A total of 91 meetings were held, and all allowed remote participation.

The proceedings of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians, Assembly General Debate and all sittings of the Governing Council were live streamed in English and the original language, with a total of 9,291 views. See the [Media and Communications](#) section for more details.

3. Choice of an emergency item

On 21 October 2025, the following two requests for the inclusion of an emergency item had been submitted:

- *Global call for parliamentary solidarity and coordinated action on Madagascar* (South Africa, on behalf of the African Group)
- *Parliamentary action against transnational organized crime, cybercrime and hybrid threats to democracy and human security* (Thailand, Argentina, Chile, Poland and Sweden, with the support of the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean and the Twelve Plus Group)

The President of the Assembly invited the sponsors to present their proposals. Following the presentation of the second proposal, a delegate from the Russian Federation stated that his delegation opposed the proposal on procedural grounds, adding that it violated Rule 11.2 of the Assembly, since the proposal did not address a major situation of international concern. The delegate underscored that the objection of the Russian Federation was procedural and not related to the content of the proposal.

In response, the President of the Assembly explained that, in accordance with Rule 11.3 of the Assembly, the Steering Committee had met that morning and confirmed that the second proposal met the criteria stipulated in Rule 11.2.

The Assembly then proceeded with a roll-call vote on the two proposals (see [pages 54-55](#)).

The President of the Assembly announced that both had obtained the requisite two-thirds majority. In accordance with Rule 11.2 (b) of the Assembly, the second proposal, which received the largest number of positive votes, was included on the agenda of the 151st Assembly.

4. Debates and decisions of the Assembly and its Standing Committees

- (a) General Debate: Upholding humanitarian norms and supporting humanitarian action in times of crisis
(Item 3)

During the three days of deliberations, some 132 legislators from 114 Member Parliaments, including 33 Presiding Officers and 15 young parliamentarians, as well as representatives of 5 Associate Members and 14 permanent observers, contributed to the General Debate. The proceedings of the Debate were webcast, and many of the good practices and recommendations that emerged were reflected in the outcome document.

- (b) Standing Committee on Peace and International Security

The Standing Committee on Peace and International Security held two sittings, on 20 and 21 October 2025, with its President, Ms. A. Kuspan (Kazakhstan), in the chair.

At its first sitting, the Committee held two panel discussions back-to-back. The first focused on *Arms control policy and non-proliferation: Preventing the next arms race*. Discussions covered the urgent need to revitalize multilateral disarmament amid record military spending and growing geopolitical tensions, and highlighted that over 130 armed conflicts were ongoing worldwide, leaving arms control and humanitarian disarmament frameworks under increasing strain. Panellists underlined the central role of parliaments in strengthening arms control regimes, preventing illicit arms flows, and ensuring transparency and accountability in national oversight. More than twenty delegates took the floor, emphasizing the importance of transparency, verification and stronger parliamentary engagement in disarmament and

technology governance. They called for renewed political dialogue to prevent a new arms race, adherence to humanitarian disarmament instruments, and greater investment in disarmament education and confidence-building measures.

The second panel discussion focused on *Strengthening parliamentary oversight of defence spending* and began with the launch of an IPU issue brief advocating transparency, accountability and democratic control in defence budgeting, alongside the presentation of a new joint research project on exceptional defence budget practices, in collaboration with the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF) and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). The panel emphasized that oversight is a democratic duty essential to maintaining public trust, particularly as global military expenditure reached USD 2.7 trillion in 2024, with over 100 countries increasing their budgets for the tenth consecutive year. The discussion linked unchecked military spending to reduced investment in social sectors and greater environmental impact. Eight delegates took the floor, agreeing that genuine security extends beyond armament and depends on transparency, accountability and equitable resource allocation.

At its second sitting, the Committee held an expert hearing on the theme of its next resolution *The role of parliaments in establishing robust post-conflict management mechanisms and restoring a just and lasting peace*. The invited experts stressed that lasting peace relies on justice, inclusion and political will rather than quick or superficial settlements. They emphasized parliaments' unique role in bridging divides, building trust and ensuring legitimacy. Inclusive recovery was identified as essential, with calls for gender-responsive and whole-of-society approaches linking parliaments and civil society. The Rapporteur provided initial views on the draft resolution under preparation, outlining a focus on four pillars: justice and accountability, implementation of peace agreements, governance reform, and nationally owned recovery with international support. In the debate, delegates underscored the importance of legislative action to uphold peace agreements, protect displaced persons, and promote truth and reconciliation mechanisms, and agreed that parliaments are central peacebuilders, capable of translating commitments into laws and oversight that ensure justice, reconciliation and sustainable peace.

At the end of the Committee session, elections were held to fill positions on the Committee's Bureau, including those of President and Vice-President.

See the Committee's full report on [page 59](#).

(c) Standing Committee on Sustainable Development

The Committee met on 21 and 22 October 2025 and held three debates featuring experts from the United Nations, civil society and academia. About 50 delegations were in attendance.

Ms. M.S. Al Suwaidi (United Arab Emirates), Vice-President of the Standing Committee, chaired the session.

The first panel featured a debate entitled *Building a fair and sustainable global economy: The role of parliaments in combating protectionism, reducing tariffs and preventing corporate tax evasion*, which corresponds to the title of the resolution that will be presented to the Committee at its next session in April 2026. The Committee approved the co-Rapporteurs' proposal to replace the term "evasion" with "avoidance" in the resolution title, allowing a focus on legal tax loopholes that parliaments can address.

The second debate examined the impact of climate change on vulnerable communities and countries. Experts and people with lived experience highlighted threats to environmental defenders, the growing frequency of extreme weather events, rising sea levels and biodiversity loss. Twenty-four delegates shared national experiences and called for inclusive climate policies, stronger international cooperation, and parliamentary engagement in tackling methane emissions and other key environmental issues.

The third debate presented the draft outcome document of the Parliamentary Meeting that would be taking place in Belém, Brazil at the 2025 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP30), which would be focusing on follow-up to the Paris Agreement on climate change.

At the end of the Committee session, elections were held to fill positions on the Committee's Bureau, including those of President and Vice-President.

The Committee also approved its workplan for the next Assembly. It will dedicate all its sittings to the drafting of the resolution.

See the Committee's full report on [page 63](#).

(d) Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights

The Standing Committee held two sittings, on 20 and 22 October 2025, with the acting President of the Standing Committee, Ms. D. O'Neill (Australia), as the Chair.

On 20 October 2025, the Committee considered the draft resolution, *Recognizing and supporting the victims of illegal international adoption and taking measures to prevent this practice*, introduced by the co-Rapporteurs, Ms. C.L. Crexell (Argentina), Mr. M. De Maegd (Belgium) and Mr. S. Patra (India).

When examining the draft resolution, the Committee considered 174 amendments submitted by 26 parliaments: Argentina, Azerbaijan, Canada, China, Finland, France, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Lithuania, Morocco, Netherlands, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, South Sudan, Switzerland, Thailand, Türkiye, United Arab Emirates and Ukraine. Three amendments were proposed by the Forum of Women Parliamentarians.

The co-Rapporteurs presented the revised draft resolution to the Committee at its final sitting on 22 October 2025. The Committee took final decisions on two proposed amendments, then adopted the draft resolution. The Russian Federation expressed its opposition to the entire text of the resolution. Belarus expressed a reservation on the entire text of the resolution.

The Bureau met on 22 October 2025 to consider proposals for the Committee's future work programme. It recommended that the subject of the next resolution should be *Inclusive social development for all: Parliamentary strategies to promote the rights and empowerment of people living with disabilities*. It further recommended that the Committee hold a debate, that would not lead to a resolution, at the 152nd Assembly in April 2026 on the theme of artificial intelligence (AI).

The Committee approved both proposals. It also approved the nomination of Ms. F. Öncü (Türkiye), Mr. C. Lohr (Switzerland) and Ms. C.M. Mumma (Kenya) as co-Rapporteurs of the next resolution. A preparatory debate would take place at the 152nd Assembly in April 2026 and the resolution would be finalized at the 153rd Assembly in October 2026.

At its final sitting, the Committee elected new members of the Bureau. It took note that the Eurasia Group had not put forward a candidate for the presidency of the Committee as foreseen by the agreed distribution of leadership positions for the Standing Committees, and approved the nomination from the African Group of Ms. F. Ilimi Haddouche (Algeria) as Vice-President of the Committee.

(e) Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs

The Committee held two sittings on 21 and 22 October 2025 with the Vice-President of the Committee, Ms. C.L. Crexell (Argentina), in the chair.

The first sitting was dedicated to a discussion on the election process for the United Nations Secretary-General. The presenters were: Mr. A. Motter, IPU Senior Advisor, Economic and Social Affairs, Office of the Permanent Observer of the IPU to the United Nations; Ms. C. Gallach, Representative of GWL Voices; and Ms. M.N. Leoni, Director of GQUAL.

A motion entitled *Recommendation to elect the first woman to the post of United Nations Secretary-General*, introduced by Ms. S. Atallahjan (Canada), was adopted. 34 delegations participated in the sitting, and 14 interventions were heard.

The second sitting focused on the new UN80 reform initiative. The presenters were: Mr. G. Ryder, UN Under-Secretary-General for Policy, Mr. P. Linnér, Director of Programmes at the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, and Ms. B. Adams, Chair of the Board of the Global Policy Forum (GPF). 28 delegations were present and 11 members spoke in response to the panel.

See the Committee's full report on [page 66](#).

(f) Debate on the emergency item

The debate, opened by the President of the Assembly and chaired by Mr. T. Tavares-Finson (Jamaica), addressed the urgent issue of transnational organized crime, cybercrime, and hybrid threats to democracy and human security. The discussion emphasized the interconnected nature of these threats, the importance of legislative action, and the impact on democracy, human rights and regional stability. Key issues discussed included drug trafficking, cyber threats, disinformation, and the shared responsibility of parliamentarians to establish a coherent legal framework.

Participants discussed the alarming proliferation of illegal drugs and the significant challenges posed by cybercrime and misinformation, calling for robust action against these growing issues and the necessity for a strong IPU resolution.

Participants also highlighted incidents of attacks and airspace violations, questioning whether they stemmed from incompetence or sabotage, and called for international condemnation of such threats. The complexity of transnational crime, linking issues like human trafficking and cyber offences to a broader need for an international legal framework among democracies, was underscored.

The impact of transnational crime on the humanitarian crisis in Myanmar demonstrated the need for a legislative framework to combat criminal organizations operating in the region since the 2021 coup.

In conclusion, a delegate from Thailand, co-sponsor of the resolution, highlighted the urgency of addressing organized crime and hybrid threats, emphasizing the global scale of these issues and noting that the draft resolution was a call for comprehensive, coordinated efforts among parliaments to safeguard democratic values and human rights.

The Assembly referred the emergency item to a drafting committee made up of representatives of Algeria, Cambodia, China, Djibouti, Jordan, Mexico, Netherlands, South Africa, Sweden and Thailand.

5. Special Accountability Segment of the General Debate

As in previous Assemblies, the General Debate included a special accountability segment. It was chaired by the IPU Vice-President, and delegations were invited to contribute with interventions on their actions to implement IPU outcomes.

The IPU Vice-President conveyed the importance of translating IPU decisions into national policies and underscored the duty of delegates to submit IPU resolutions to their parliaments, stimulate their implementation, and report results obtained to the IPU Secretariat. Ms. A. Filip, IPU Director of the Division for Member Parliaments and External Relations, presented the 2025 Member Parliaments' reporting exercise, which included an annual survey circulated to a selection of parliaments from each geopolitical group.

The response rate to the 2025 survey had reached 76%. The survey highlighted that 81% of respondents were relaying IPU Assembly outcomes to their parliaments, with nearly half taking additional steps such as revising legislation or engaging in parliamentary debates.

A total of 20 delegations and one partner organization took the floor to share concrete examples of parliamentary follow-up on IPU decisions, with particular emphasis on sustainability, gender equality and multilateral cooperation.

Examples included:

- Australia: Parliament operates entirely on renewable energy and incorporates biodiversity-friendly practices within its premises, including beehives and animal-friendly grounds. Cooperation with Pacific parliaments was further strengthened through a AUD 1.3 billion commitment to climate initiatives and a AUD 125 million Pacific energy transition programme.
- Azerbaijan: A parliamentary guide on carbon markets was launched in Azerbaijani, and the Parliament also announced plans to triple the country's renewable energy capacity, aligning national oversight mechanisms with IPU recommendations on climate action.
- Canada: Amendments to the Competition Act were introduced to counter greenwashing, requiring companies to substantiate environmental claims. Parliament also advanced legislation to expand internet access for northern and Indigenous communities and developed a new framework on Artificial Intelligence and cybersecurity.
- Chile: Parliament received the UN Gender Equality Seal for Public Institutions. In partnership with UNDP, it implemented measures to promote equal representation, adopted anti-harassment protocols, and introduced a manual on inclusive workplace language.
- Germany: Parliament presented its *Parliamentarians Protect Parliamentarians* initiative, created in 2003, which allows MPs to support colleagues at risk worldwide. Currently, 95 German MPs support 187 parliamentarians and human rights defenders from 43 countries.
- Portugal: A moratorium on deep-sea mining was introduced pending scientific assessment of environmental impacts. Under the National Energy and Climate Plan for 2030, the country aims to raise renewable energy use by 51%. Furthermore, an independent Climate Action Council was created to enhance parliamentary oversight.

- Singapore: Parliament reported on the country's environmental objectives, including a target to reduce 50 million tonnes of CO₂ emissions by 2030 and achieve net zero by 2050. Cooperation with Indonesia was strengthened through three Memoranda of Understanding on carbon capture and sustainable industry.
- Türkiye: A parliamentary research commission on Artificial Intelligence completed its work earlier in the year. Legislation adopted in 2025 included a cybersecurity law in March and a climate law in July, establishing binding low-carbon targets. Türkiye reiterated its commitment to multilateralism and called for reform of the UN Security Council.

Other delegations that took the floor during this segment included Algeria, Bahrain, India, Mexico, Morocco, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, Yemen and Zimbabwe, as well as a representative of the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH).

6. Special segment on the launch of IPU publications

The Vice-President and Secretary General launched two new IPU publications at the Assembly: an Issue Brief on parliamentary oversight of military expenditure, and a toolkit for onboarding and offboarding MPs.

With global military expenditure rising to a record estimate of USD 2.7 trillion in 2024, the Issue Brief [Democratic checks, military balances: Parliamentary oversight in an era of rising military expenditure](#) calls for parliaments to strengthen their scrutiny of defence spending in the interests of transparency, accountability and democracy.

The new Toolkit [Welcoming new parliamentarians: Good practices for onboarding and offboarding MPs](#), developed in partnership with the Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments (ASGP), offers insights and inspiration for parliamentary administrations worldwide as they carry out the important task of onboarding and orienting both first-time and re-elected members.

The second edition of the [Gender-Responsive Assemblies](#) Toolkit was also launched. Developed by the IPU, International Gender Champions, and Women at the Table, it serves as a how-to guide for creating environments that support women's equal participation and influence at assemblies, and ensuring that deliberations deliver on gender equality. The Toolkit highlights key measures to be taken before, during and after assemblies, offering inspiration for parliaments and other deliberative bodies.

7. Concluding sitting of the Assembly

At the concluding sitting on 23 October 2025, **Ms. H.P. Manyeneng (Botswana)** and **Mr. L. Wehrli (Switzerland)** introduced the Geneva Declaration on *Upholding humanitarian norms and supporting humanitarian action in times of crisis* (see [page 44](#)). The Assembly unanimously endorsed the Geneva Declaration.

Mr. M. De Maegd (Belgium), co-Rapporteur of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights, presented the resolution *Recognizing and supporting the victims of illegal international adoption and taking measures to prevent this practice* (see [page 48](#)). The Assembly adopted the resolution, with opposition expressed by the Russian Federation and a reservation on the whole text expressed by Belarus. The Assembly took note of an update on the Standing Committee's future programme of work from its President, **Ms. D. O'Neill (Australia)**.

The Assembly took note of the reports of the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security, presented by member of the Bureau **Ms. F. Belhirsch (Netherlands)**; of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, presented by its Vice-President, **Ms. M.S. Al Suwaidi (United Arab Emirates)**; and of the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs, presented by its Vice-President, **Ms. C.L. Crexell (Argentina)** (see [page 59](#)).

The Assembly approved the subject item for the resolution to be drafted by the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights, for adoption at the 153rd Assembly, together with the rapporteurs who would be working on the draft resolution (see [page 40](#)).

The Assembly took note of the decision of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development to amend the title of the resolution it would be drafting for adoption at the 152nd Assembly, *The role of parliaments in combating protectionism, reducing tariffs and preventing corporate tax avoidance*, in which the word "evasion" had been changed to "avoidance".

The Assembly took note of the motion adopted by the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs, *Recommendation to elect the first woman to the post of United Nations Secretary-General*.

A video message from the President of the UN General Assembly, Ms. A. Baerbock, was shown, inviting IPU Member Parliaments to mark the 80th anniversary of the United Nations on 24 October 2025.

The Assembly unanimously adopted an amendment to the IPU Statutes formalizing the status of non-voting observer for Member Parliaments no longer functioning on the territory of the country concerned.

The Assembly took note that, during the vote to select an emergency item on 21 October 2025, errors had been made in recording the votes of the delegations of Algeria and Viet Nam. Those errors had now been duly corrected but had not affected the outcome of the vote.

Mr. H. Aden Gueddi (Djibouti), rapporteur of the drafting committee, introduced the emergency item resolution, *Parliamentary action against transnational organized crime, cybercrime and hybrid threats to democracy and human security* (see [page 56](#)). The Assembly unanimously adopted the resolution.

At the conclusion of the Assembly, the representatives of the geopolitical groups took the floor: **Ms. A.T. Didiza (South Africa)**, President of the African Group, **Mr. J. Fakhro (Bahrain)** on behalf of the Arab Group, **Mr. Tian Xuejun (China)**, Chair of the Asia-Pacific Group, **Mr. R. Edwards (Chile)** President of the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean, and **Mr. L. Wehrli (Switzerland)**, Chair of the Twelve Plus Group. They thanked the President of the Assembly, the Secretary General and the Secretariat and all those involved for the preparations made for another successful Assembly, and congratulated those present on the fruitful outcomes, which covered a wide range of pressing issues. They reported on the deliberations and decisions of their respective Groups. They welcomed the leadership statement on the situation in Madagascar (see [page 47](#)), issued on the basis of the emergency item proposal from South Africa that had taken second place in the vote. They wished all delegations safe travels and looked forward to the 152nd Assembly in Istanbul, Türkiye in April 2026.

In his concluding remarks, **Mr. M. Chungong, IPU Secretary General**, expressed his heartfelt thanks to Ms. Morawska-Stanecka for her capable presidency of the Assembly and said that he had observed a renewed spirit of cooperation among IPU Member Parliaments over the past few days that was reflected in the decisions and outcomes they had just adopted. In particular, active cooperation between the geopolitical groups had led to the adoption of an emergency item resolution on a constantly evolving issue that merited the renewed attention of the global parliamentary community. The IPU's parliamentary diplomacy efforts had continued on multiple fronts during the Assembly, notably in the form of a further bilateral meeting between the Speakers of Armenia and Azerbaijan and the start of a similar process with parliamentarians from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda. Over the coming weeks, the IPU would have a busy programme of work, with events planned for the Second World Summit for Social Development in Qatar and COP30 in Brazil, along with a parliamentary conference on artificial intelligence in Malaysia. Finally, he paid tribute to Switzerland, the host country of the IPU's headquarters, which always stood ready to host IPU Assemblies in Geneva, and thanked all those who worked both in the spotlight and behind the scenes to keep the wheels of the IPU's Assemblies turning.

In her concluding remarks, **Ms. G. Morawska-Stanecka, President of the 151st Assembly and IPU Vice-President**, thanked all those present for their active participation and engagement and said that the 151st Assembly had demonstrated the best of the IPU: respect, dialogue and a shared resolve to place humanity at the centre of its deliberations. The highlight had undoubtedly been the adoption of the Geneva Declaration, which stressed the role of international humanitarian law as the moral and legal foundation that protects human dignity even in the darkest of times. The Declaration looked to a world in which men and women would participate equally, young people would have a seat at the table, and dialogue would be confirmed as the surest path to understanding. Parliamentarians now needed to turn the compassion they clearly felt into concrete policy. A further highlight had been the adoption of an emergency item resolution on cybercrime and other threats, which had been supported by sponsors from across multiple geopolitical groups. She was also pleased that it had been possible to issue a leadership statement on the situation in Madagascar. She hoped that the sense of purpose she had seen among the parliamentarians present would guide them in the months ahead and strengthen their resolve to protect life, dignity and peace wherever they were at risk.

Ms. G. Morawska-Stanecka declared the 151st IPU Assembly closed and the IPU Anthem was played.

216th session of the Governing Council

1. Report of the IPU President

The Governing Council took note of the report of the IPU President, presented on her behalf by the Secretary General in the President's absence due to parliamentary elections in her country. The President's activities since the last session of the Governing Council had included representation of the IPU at regional and international high-level meetings, and chairing IPU and partner meetings. These activities contributed to promoting the work of the IPU as per its strategic objectives.

The Governing Council congratulated the IPU President on the extensive activities undertaken and extended its best wishes for her successful re-election to Parliament.

2. Report of the Secretary General

The Governing Council heard the Secretary General's report on the activities carried out by the IPU over the past nine months to implement its Strategy. Since January 2025, the IPU had organized:

- 27 national support activities in 17 countries to build the capacity of parliaments institutionally and on key thematic issues.
- A total of 69 regional and global events to mobilize and leverage parliamentary action and facilitate learning, held in person (36), online (28) and in hybrid format (5).

The IPU had also launched six new publications, with three others being presented at the current Assembly.

The Secretary General presented a review of activities carried out under each of the IPU's five strategic objectives. Particular focus had been placed on support to countries in transition, artificial intelligence and digital transformation, and major global initiatives facilitating dialogue, peace and parliamentary diplomacy.

The Governing Council took note of this interim report by the Secretary General. A more comprehensive report on the impact of the IPU's work throughout 2025 will be presented at the next Assembly, as per usual practice.

3. Financial situation of the IPU

The Governing Council received a report on the financial situation of the IPU as at 31 July 2025 and an updated list of unpaid assessed contributions. Reporting on behalf of the Executive Committee, Mr. M. Dick (Australia) noted that the IPU's budget performance was on track for the year so far and the Organization's finances were currently healthy and stable. Global investment markets had had an unsteady start to 2025 but the investment portfolio for the IPU and its closed Pension Fund had nevertheless seen a positive return of 1% since the start of the year. The current situation of voluntary funding was healthy for the remainder of the year. The Executive Committee had also discussed the arrears of assessed contributions, which now stood at CHF 1.5 million, an improvement of almost CHF 1 million since the last Assembly.

4. Consolidated IPU budget for 2026

The consolidated draft budget for 2026 was presented to the Governing Council. The draft budget had been prepared under the supervision of the Sub-Committee on Finance and had been reviewed in detail by the Executive Committee. Reporting on behalf of the Executive Committee, Mr. Dick summarized the draft budget, which was projected at a total of CHF 18,994,000 in income and expenditure. He noted that 2026 would be the fifth and final year of the current IPU Strategy. Funds had been set aside for evaluation of the current Strategy and the design of the new Strategy for 2027-2031. The budget reflected IPU engagement with global crises: multiple conflicts, climate and environmental emergencies, pandemic effects and growing inequality. Parliamentary ecosystems would be mobilized around a range of international agreements and instruments, as set out in the budget document. Integration between the various IPU programmes — democracy, peace and security, development, climate change, and scientific and technological innovation — was proceeding alongside the ongoing digital transformation of the IPU's working practices. The IPU was supporting parliamentary efforts to manage and regulate the development and use of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, harnessing its potential

and minimizing risks. Meanwhile, the IPU would continue investing in the digitization of its archives, with a view to preserving and sharing the long and proud history of the Organization. Full details of all the planned activities in 2026, across the five Strategic Objectives, were set out in the main body of the budget document. Mr. Dick reported that the Secretariat was also driving down costs wherever possible and gave several practical examples of areas where the IPU was doing more with less while simultaneously reducing emissions along the path to a carbon-neutral IPU.

In terms of income, the core budget included an increase of 3% in total assessed contributions, as agreed by the Governing Council in October 2022, in order to rebalance total contributions by the end of the current Strategy period back to their level of 2011. He also recalled the longer-term commitment to gradual growth in Member Parliaments' assessed contributions from 2027 onwards to keep up with the IPU's needs and inflationary increases. External resource mobilization was estimated to generate voluntary contributions amounting to CHF 4.7 million next year, or 25% of the total income budget. This was a slight increase in expected voluntary income compared to 2025, thanks to major multi-year grants from Swedish Sida, the European Union, the National People's Congress of China and the Shura Council of Qatar among others. Mr. Dick encouraged all Member Parliaments to assist with the mobilization of voluntary funds for the IPU from within their own countries and geopolitical groups.

The Governing Council approved the 2026 consolidated budget.

5. Questions relating to membership and observer status

The IPU's ongoing efforts to reach universal membership continued to yield fruit. In that regard, on the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the Governing Council welcomed the Parliament of Brunei Darussalam as the IPU's newest Member Parliament. The Governing Council was pleased to note that the objective of universal membership was within reach, and committed to redoubling its efforts to that end.

The Governing Council took note of the request of Niger to rejoin the IPU following the suspension of its affiliation in April 2025 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Taking note of the conversations the Executive Committee had had with the Speaker of the Advisory Council of the Refoundation (CCR), Mr. M. Djingarey, including a request for support from the IPU for the CCR's efforts to guide reform processes in his country, the Governing Council endorsed the recommendation of the Executive Committee to accept the request for re-affiliation of Niger.

On the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the Governing Council approved the requests for permanent observer status from Parliamentarians for Global Action, the European Parliamentary Forum for Sexual and Reproductive Rights, and the World Future Council.

Regarding two other requests for permanent observer status, received from the Conference of Speakers and Presidents of African Legislatures (CoSPAL) and the Asian-African Parliamentary Council respectively, the Governing Council took note of the view of the Executive Committee that those two organizations had been founded relatively recently and thus needed to establish a track record of cooperation with the IPU so as to meet the requirements for obtaining observer status.

The Governing Council took note of the ongoing arrears in the contributions of Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Vanuatu, and decided to defer a decision on suspending their membership rights to its next session, pending ongoing negotiations to resolve the issue.

The Governing Council endorsed the recommendation of the Executive Committee to suspend the Associate Membership rights of the Andean Parliament due to non-payment of its contribution since 2018.

The Governing Council was apprised of the situation of certain parliaments, grouped as follows:

I. Parliaments that are not functioning

- Afghanistan

The IPU did not recognize the Taliban, which had taken power and dissolved institutions including the elected parliament in August 2021. In solidarity, the IPU recognized the members of the parliament elected in 2018, many of whom were living in exile, as its interlocutors and allowed them to attend its meetings in a non-voting observer capacity.

An amendment to the Statutes was tabled at the present Assembly to create a specific status of non-voting observer Member Parliament, for parliamentary entities that are not functioning on the territory of an independent or sovereign state, but which the governing bodies have decided to recognize as their interlocutors in the interests of democracy and legitimacy. The Governing Council reconfirmed its decision to continue to recognize the parliament in place before the Taliban took over the country.

Bangladesh

The Parliament had been dissolved following social unrest in July 2024 and several politicians of the Awami League, including former IPU President Saber Chowdhury, had been arrested. Following an intervention by the IPU, Mr. Chowdhury had been released. Several cases of violations of the human rights of parliamentarians were before the IPU's dedicated committee. Recent news suggested that elections might be held in February 2026.

The Governing Council took note of these developments, invited the Secretary General to continue to monitor the situation and expressed hope that the governing bodies would soon have the pleasure of welcoming a fully-fledged parliament from Bangladesh back to IPU Assemblies.

- **Guinea Bissau**

The power struggle between the Head of State and the Speaker of the National Assembly had ultimately resulted in the removal of the latter and his replacement by one of his deputies. The IPU governing bodies had consistently invited the deposed Speaker and his delegation to attend IPU meetings. Recently, the Speaker had reported that he had been disqualified by the authorities from the parliamentary elections due for November 2025.

The Governing Council endorsed the recommendation of the Executive Committee to express regret over the restrictions on the political rights of members of parliament and other politicians in Guinea-Bissau and decided to continue to show solidarity with the Parliament in place until the election of a new Parliament in accordance with the will of the people.

- **Haiti**

The IPU membership rights of Haiti had been suspended in 2023 due to non-payment of its contributions and at present there was no functioning parliament in the country. The IPU continued to monitor developments. Elections were due for November 2025 and any developments would be brought to the attention of the governing bodies.

The Governing Council took note of recent developments in Haiti and expressed the hope that elections would take place as foreseen.

- **Kuwait**

The Parliament of Kuwait had been dissolved in 2024 and a timeline of four years had been set for elections. In the meantime, the administration of the Parliament was still functioning.

The Governing Council endorsed the recommendation of the Executive Committee to continue to monitor the situation in the country and stressed the need for elections to take place as soon as possible in order for it to be able to welcome a fully-fledged parliament back to the IPU.

- **Myanmar**

As in Afghanistan, the IPU recognized the Parliament that had been democratically elected in Myanmar and subsequently suspended by the military. A group of parliamentarians, the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH) represented the Parliament of Myanmar in exile and was therefore the IPU's interlocutor, enjoying the same non-voting observer status as Afghanistan. Representatives of the CRPH continued to attend the IPU's Assemblies.

The Governing Council endorsed the recommendation of the Executive Committee to maintain its initial decision to recognize the CRPH as the interlocutor of the IPU in a non-voting observer capacity, and expressed the view that more action should be undertaken, beyond monitoring and statements of condemnation, to restore democracy in Myanmar.

- **Sudan**

Sudan's affiliation to the IPU remained suspended as no parliament was functioning in the country. Recent developments did not point to the prospect of any elections soon.

In light of the ongoing war, the Governing Council reiterated its calls for a ceasefire and dialogue, and approved the recommendation of the Executive Committee that the IPU continue to monitor the situation and identify ways of supporting any efforts that might lead to the restoration of constitutional rule in Sudan.

- **Syrian Arab Republic**

Some progress had been reported since the overthrow of President Bashar al-Assad. Parliamentary elections had been held, with 119 seats out of 140 filled. The newly elected Parliament would henceforth be the IPU's interlocutor.

The Governing Council took note of these positive developments and urged the IPU to continue to identify ways of supporting the transitional process in the Syrian Arab Republic.

II. Transitional parliaments

- **Burkina Faso**

The Transitional Legislative Assembly remained the IPU's interlocutor in Burkina Faso and was ably fulfilling its legislative mission. On the recommendation of the governing bodies, the IPU had designed and was implementing several activities aimed at speeding up a return to constitutional normality.

The Governing Council took note of these encouraging developments, and on the recommendation of the Executive Committee, stressed the need for the transitional process to reach its conclusion in a timely manner.

- **Eritrea**

Despite the IPU Secretariat's efforts to reach out to the country, including its Ambassador in Geneva, no updates had been received on the situation of the Transitional National Assembly of Eritrea, which had never been an IPU Member Parliament. The IPU Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians was dealing with a number of cases related to the human rights of parliamentarians in the country.

The Governing Council took note of the lack of progress and encouraged the Secretariat to continue to identify opportunities for engagement.

- **Gabon**

Considerable progress had been reported, including the organization of both presidential and legislative elections, effectively concluding Gabon's transitional process, which the IPU had supported substantially, in conformity with the recommendations of the governing bodies.

The Governing Council took note of these positive developments and looked forward to engaging with the new fully-fledged Parliament.

- **Guinea**

On the request of the governing bodies, the IPU Secretariat had continued its engagement with the Transitional National Council. A new Constitution had been approved on 15 September 2025 and the IPU had agreed to provide support with the drafting of legislation to implement its provisions.

The Governing Council endorsed the recommendation of the Executive Committee to take note of this positive progress and encourage the authorities to follow through with their plans for the transition.

- **Libya**

The IPU-recognized Parliament elected in 2014 in Libya used to be based in Tobruk but was now in Benghazi. In recent years, efforts had been made to hold elections but for a variety of reasons they had not taken place. Elections had however taken place at the municipal level and consultations were ongoing with a view to organizing presidential and parliamentary elections in the very near future.

The Governing Council took note of this report and urged the Secretary General to undertake a mission to Libya and report back to the governing bodies.

- **Mali**

Mali was in a similar situation to the other transitional parliaments in Central and West Africa. In recent months, there had been a worrying lack of clarity with regard to the transitional process, with political parties having been dissolved for a variety of reasons and some infighting among the ruling authorities of the country.

The Governing Council invited the Secretary General to continue to monitor the situation closely and to bring any further cause for concern to the attention of the governing bodies for immediate response.

- **Niger**

In the absence of a functioning parliament, the Governing Council had suspended the affiliation of Niger to the IPU in April 2025. Just a few weeks later, the Advisory Council of the Refoundation (CCR) had been set up, composed of 194 members from across the country's sociopolitical and economic spectrum. The Speaker of the CCR, Mr. M. Djingarey, had met with the members of the Executive Committee on two occasions, during which he had pleaded in favour of the reaffiliation of his Parliament to the IPU. On the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the Governing Council had approved Niger's request for reaffiliation earlier in the session.

The Governing Council invited the Secretary General to continue to monitor the situation and work with the CCR to ensure that it met the timeline established for the transition.

- **South Sudan**

The situation had deteriorated in South Sudan, with elections postponed several times. The Vice-President and Minister of the Interior had recently been arrested and the unity government had now collapsed.

On the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the Governing Council expressed its deep concern over the instability in South Sudan and the continuous postponement of elections, and expressed hope that the internal conflicts in the country could be resolved as soon as possible to put the transitional period back on track.

III. Countries where the political situation is impacting the functioning of parliament

- **Madagascar**

Protests led by the "Gen Z" movement had erupted in Madagascar in September 2025 and the President had attempted to dissolve the National Assembly. Colonel M. Randrianirina had recently been sworn in as interim President and had promised a transition period of a maximum of two years.

The Governing Council took note with regret of the worrying events in Madagascar and, on the recommendation of the Executive Committee, agreed that the IPU should respond robustly, including monitoring the situation and identifying opportunities to work with the new authorities in Madagascar to stabilize the situation.

- **Nepal**

Similar "Gen Z"-led protests to those in Madagascar had recently erupted in Nepal as a result of discontent among young people, leading to property destruction. The upper house of Parliament continued to meet but the lower house had been dissolved in view of elections scheduled for March 2026.

The Governing Council expressed its concern regarding the recent events in Nepal and encouraged the IPU Secretariat to explore possible avenues of engagement with the Parliament in order to support a return to normality.

- **Palestine**

No recent progress on elections had been reported and the overall situation in Palestine made it unlikely that elections would be held any time soon.

On the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the Governing Council expressed its concern at the ongoing crisis in Palestine and reiterated the IPU's stance, as per the resolution adopted at the 150th Assembly in April 2025, in favour of a two-State solution to the crisis in the Middle East.

- **Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela**

The Governing Council took note that there had been no recent significant developments in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and, on the recommendation of the Executive Committee, agreed to return to the matter in 2026, after the new National Assembly elected in May 2025 had taken office.

- **Yemen**

The Parliament of Yemen continued to work under difficult circumstances and had recently requested exemption from paying its contribution to the IPU due to financial difficulties.

On the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the Governing Council agreed to return to the matter at its next session.

- **Georgia**

The Governing Council took note with concern of reports that the mandates of over a third of MPs had recently been terminated and that several had subsequently been imprisoned, and invited the Secretary General to continue monitoring the situation.

6. Sixth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament

The Governing Council heard a report on the Sixth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, which took place at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 29 to 31 July 2025, and on the 15th Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament, held at the headquarters of the International Labour Organization in Geneva, on 28 July 2025. The Governing Council endorsed the outcome declarations from these two high-level events (see [page 70](#)).

7. IPU priority theme for 2026

The IPU Secretary General presented the proposed priority theme for 2026. After a focus in recent years on climate change (2023), peace and security (2024), and gender equality (2025), it was proposed that the 2026 priority theme focus on respect for human rights.

2026 offers three crucial entry points for the IPU to reaffirm its commitment to human rights. Together, these milestones provide a timely platform to strengthen parliamentary engagement with the global human rights system and reinforce the universality and indivisibility of human rights. 2026 will mark:

- The **50th anniversary** of the **Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians (CHRP)**, the IPU's unique accountability mechanism for defending the rights of elected representatives worldwide.
- The **20th anniversary** of the **United Nations Human Rights Council**, a key body with which the IPU has partnered to foster parliamentary engagement with global human rights mechanisms.
- The **60th anniversary** of the **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)** and the **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)**, two cornerstones of the international human rights framework, providing an additional platform to reaffirm the universality and indivisibility of rights.

In addition, the IPU carries out extensive capacity-building programmes to help parliaments strengthen their role as promoters and protectors of human rights. Through training, technical assistance and the sharing of good practices, these initiatives equip parliamentarians with the tools, knowledge and institutional frameworks needed to advance human rights in law and practice, and to engage effectively with international human rights mechanisms.

The priority theme will therefore offer an opportunity for the IPU to strengthen its engagement for the defence of the human rights of parliamentarians as well as its support to parliaments in their work to defend respect for the human rights of all citizens.

8. Future inter-parliamentary meetings

The Governing Council approved the list of future meetings as recommended by the Executive Committee. The delegation of Türkiye warmly invited those present to the 152nd IPU Assembly in Istanbul from 15 to 19 April 2026.

9. Amendments to the IPU Statutes and Rules

The Governing Council approved amendments to the Rules and Practices of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians, with a view to formalizing broad geopolitical representation among its membership.

10. Reports of committees and other bodies

The Governing Council approved the recommendations contained in the reports on the activities of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians (CHRP), the Forum of Women Parliamentarians, the Forum of Young Parliamentarians, the Gender Partnership Group, the Committee on Middle East Questions, the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law, the Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine, the Committee on Health, the Working Group on Science and Technology and the High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG). The Council endorsed the new appointments to those bodies (see [page 37](#)).

11. IPU Sustainability Policy

The Secretary General reported that, at its current session, the Executive Committee had reviewed a draft IPU Sustainability Policy, which would be tabled for formal adoption by the Governing Council at its 217th session in April 2026.

297th session of the Executive Committee

1. Sub-Committee on Finance

The President of the Sub-Committee on Finance, Mr. M. Dick, informed the Executive Committee of the work of the Sub-Committee, which had met to discuss financial questions ahead of the session of the Executive Committee. The Sub-Committee had reviewed the financial situation of the IPU at 31 July 2025. The Organization's budget performance was on track for the year so far and its finances were healthy and stable. The situation of voluntary funding was also healthy for the remainder of 2025. Accumulated arrears of IPU assessed contributions currently stood at CHF 1.5 million, a significant improvement since the start of 2025.

The Sub-Committee had discussed the IPU's draft budget for 2026 and reviewed the budget document, which it presented to the Executive Committee in full. The core budget included the increase of 3% in total assessed contributions agreed in October 2022 by the Governing Council, aimed at rebalancing total contributions back to their level of 2011 by the end of the current Strategy period. At the same time, voluntary income was projected to increase slightly as grants had been received or renewed. The Sub-Committee advised the Executive Committee to recommend the 2026 budget to the Governing Council.

The Executive Committee also heard the Secretary General's usual update on the mobilization of voluntary funding. Mr. Dick expressed his appreciation for the support of the members of the Sub-Committee on Finance and thanked the IPU Secretariat team for their work.

2. Questions relating to IPU membership and observer status

The Executive Committee unanimously endorsed the request from the Parliament of Brunei Darussalam to join the IPU and submitted it to the Governing Council for approval.

The Executive Committee had had two very fruitful conversations with the Speaker of the Advisory Council of the Refoundation (CCR) of Niger (in June 2025 via videoconference and again in-person in the context of the 151st Assembly), during which he explained the rationale for his body's request to

rejoin the Organization: principally that the IPU's support would be much appreciated to accompany the Parliament's efforts to restore democracy and good governance.

The Executive Committee recommended that the Governing Council accept the request for Niger to rejoin the IPU and invited the Secretary General to engage with the CCR and to explore how best the IPU could assist its work.

The Executive Committee discussed requests for observer status from five organizations, three of which it recommended for the Governing Council's approval and two of which were from organizations founded relatively recently and which thus needed to establish a track record of cooperation with the IPU before being eligible to become permanent observers.

The Executive Committee discussed the arrears situation of three Member Parliaments in the small island developing States. For Vanuatu, on the basis of ongoing outreach efforts by the Parliament of Australia to help resolve the matter, it recommended deferring a decision on suspension of membership rights under Article 5.3 of the Statutes until its next session, in Doha, Qatar, in January 2026. For Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, it recommended suspension of membership rights under Article 5.3 of the Statutes. Subsequently, the Governing Council did not adopt this recommendation due to similar expectations that the situation could be resolved through support (including by re-examining the terms of reference for the Parliamentary Solidarity Fund) and outreach within the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean.

The Executive Committee recommended that the Governing Council suspend the Associate Membership rights of the Andean Parliament due to non-payment of its contribution since 2018.

3. IPU initiatives in the area of parliamentary diplomacy and mechanisms that deal with crisis situations

The Executive Committee reviewed the IPU's ongoing work on crisis management and parliamentary diplomacy, building on previous discussions and incorporating feedback from its session in Olympia, Greece, in June 2025.

The Executive Committee stressed the importance of continuing to build parliamentary capacity for negotiation, mediation and crisis management, including through the rollout of tools and workshops.

The Executive Committee called for continued reliance on the IPU's existing structures, with an openness to creating ad hoc groups as and when new crises emerged. The Executive Committee expressed its support for a proposal to call on prominent IPU figures to assist with parliamentary diplomacy efforts on a case-by-case basis, but did not agree with the need to establish a formal group of high-level personalities for this purpose.

4. Preparation of the IPU Strategy for 2027-2031

The Executive Committee heard a presentation by the consultant recruited to conduct the review of the IPU Strategy for 2022-2026 and prepare the IPU Strategy for 2027-2031. The Executive Committee took note of the objective for the process to be conducted in a spirit of even greater inclusivity than previously, drawing on new ways to engage Member Parliaments and leverage evidence of the IPU's impact.

The Executive Committee encouraged broad participation in the associated survey and focus group discussions by all relevant stakeholders, and recommended a particular focus on benchmarking and gathering outside perspectives on strategic positioning, especially from the United Nations system.

5. IPU Sustainability Policy

The Executive Committee reviewed the draft IPU Sustainability Policy, aimed at clarifying and guiding sustainability practices across the IPU, and recommended its submission to the Governing Council at the next session in Istanbul in April 2025.

The Executive Committee made several recommendations to support the implementation of the policy, namely to develop regular implementation plans with measurable targets and budget allocations.

6. IPU Secretariat

The Executive Committee was informed of staff movements and promotions (see [page 102](#)) and updated on the process for the selection of a new Secretary General.

7. Cooperation between the IPU and the Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments (ASGP)

The Executive Committee received an update on the IPU's cooperation with the Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments (ASGP) provided by its President, Mr. J.P. Montero.

Cooperation was progressing well and the active complementarity of the two institutions was constantly being strengthened.

The Executive Committee welcomed this fruitful cooperation and encouraged the continuation of bilateral exchanges and shared learning among national parliaments and between the ASGP and the IPU.

Subsidiary bodies of the Governing Council

1. Forum and Bureau of Women Parliamentarians

The 40th session of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians was held on 19 October 2025 with 244 participants in attendance, including 158 parliamentarians (136 women and 22 men) from 73 countries. The President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, Ms. C. López Castro (Mexico), chaired the session.

As a contribution to the work of the Assembly, participants examined, from a gender perspective, the draft resolution before the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights, entitled *Recognizing and supporting the victims of illegal international adoption and taking measures to prevent this practice*. The Forum proposed amendments from a gender perspective, all of which were incorporated into the text of the draft resolution.

The Forum held a panel discussion on *Transforming leadership: Overcoming new challenges to gender equality*, during which participants shared their leadership journeys and reflected on how they confront persistent and new barriers to political participation. Common strategies mentioned included challenging entrenched patriarchal norms, redefining leadership cultures towards inclusivity and equality, reforming institutional policies and processes, and working in partnership among women and with men. They agreed that feminist leadership was a collective and restorative practice of shared power, accountability and resilience.

The Bureau of Women Parliamentarians met on 19 and 22 October 2025. In their deliberations, members discussed the situation of women in conflict-affected areas and expressed their solidarity with women and girls impacted by conflict. They called for greater involvement and leadership of women in building and sustaining peace, and for the IPU to focus future activities on women as peacebuilders.

2. Forum and Bureau of Young Parliamentarians

The Forum of Young Parliamentarians was held on 20 October 2025, with more than 100 participants, including 61 parliamentarians (21 young women and 40 young men) from 48 countries. It was presided over by Ms. J. Sierra (Uruguay), who, as the youngest member of the Bureau present, replaced the President of the Bureau of Young Parliamentarians.

The IPU Vice-President and Secretary General made opening remarks focused on the importance of the Forum's mission to amplify youth voices amid the rise of Gen Z movements. Young MPs' leadership in advancing gender equality was highlighted, and it was noted that the 11th Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians had achieved gender parity among participants for the first time in the Conference's history.

Members of the Forum shared recent developments in advancing youth participation in their countries, including the creation of youth caucuses, the appointment of young MPs to leadership roles and reforms to lower the age of eligibility to stand for office. Noting new IPU data showing that the proportion of young MPs had stalled since 2023, they warned that the world was moving too slowly on youth inclusion and called for more transformative action.

Members discussed the theme of the General Debate of the 151st Assembly from a youth perspective. They emphasized the need to ensure education and economic opportunity for young people in times of crisis and called for the adaptation of humanitarian systems to new threats. They also discussed their

perspectives on the draft resolution *Recognizing and supporting the victims of illegal international adoption and taking measures to prevent this practice*. They stressed the need for stronger legal safeguards, psychological support and reintegration programmes for victims of illegal international adoption, and public awareness campaigns.

In preparation for the 152nd IPU Assembly, the Forum appointed Mr. H. Ebrahim (Bahrain) to serve as youth rapporteur for the proposed resolution on *The role of parliaments in establishing robust post-conflict management mechanisms and restoring a just and lasting peace*. In this regard, participants called for greater institutionalization of youth participation in peace efforts, and for the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 2250 (2015) on youth, peace and security. The Forum also appointed Mr. W. Soto (Peru) to serve as youth rapporteur for the proposed resolution on *Building a fair and sustainable global economy: The role of parliaments in combating protectionism, reducing tariffs and preventing corporate tax evasion*. Participants highlighted the importance of capacity-building for young MPs to scrutinize international trade and fight tax evasion, including in partnership with other stakeholders.

The Forum also held a Q&A on the IPU's *Achieving gender equality, action by action* campaign, identifying synergies with the *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign and reaffirming that youth empowerment and gender equality are mutually reinforcing.

Earlier that day, the Bureau of Young Parliamentarians reviewed youth participation at the 151st Assembly and urged parliaments in future to include at least one MP under 40 in each delegation. They also agreed on procedures to implement the recent change to the IPU Statutes and Rules allowing the Forum to propose amendments to Standing Committee resolutions.

3. Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians

The Committee held its 178th session from 18 to 22 October 2025. Mr. E. Blanc (France), President, chaired the session.

During the session, the Committee examined the situation of 300 parliamentarians (30% women) in 16 countries. New cases concerning 9 parliamentarians were declared admissible, namely 1 MP in Algeria, 1 MP in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 3 MPs in Somalia and 4 MPs in Türkiye. One case in Ecuador was declared inadmissible. The Committee also held 10 hearings with national delegations, civil society organizations, and complainants, both online and in-person.

The Committee submitted decisions to the Governing Council for adoption on the situation of 288 parliamentarians in the following countries: Algeria, Bangladesh, Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Eswatini, Iraq, Israel, Myanmar, Pakistan, Palestine, Somalia, Thailand and Türkiye.

[See the document detailing the decisions adopted.](#)

4. Committee on Middle East Questions

The Committee on Middle East Questions met twice, on 20 and 22 October 2025, with Mr. H.-J. Talsma (Netherlands), President of the Committee, in the chair.

The Secretariat introduced a new AI Agent intended to assist the Committee's analytical and reporting work, accompanied by a code of ethics governing its use. The Agent provided a briefing on developments in the Gaza Strip since the 150th Assembly, covering the humanitarian situation, casualty figures and international ceasefire efforts. Members expressed grave concern over reports of continued hostilities despite the announcement of a ceasefire. They urged the consolidation of a sustainable, verifiable and unconditional ceasefire to prevent further suffering, and reaffirmed that humanitarian assistance must remain unconditional and unhindered in accordance with international law.

The Committee heard a presentation by Mr. D.F. Puyana, Ambassador and Permanent Observer of the University for Peace to the United Nations in Geneva, on education for peace and coexistence. He highlighted the role of parliaments in promoting peace education and inclusive dialogue. Members agreed that education for peace is essential for rebuilding trust and tolerance, but noted that it must be tied to tangible political progress and reflect realities on the ground. They underlined that advancing peace education in situations of occupation remains difficult and must go hand in hand with efforts to restore faith in international law and institutions.

Turning to organizational matters, the Committee discussed the proposed restructuring of its composition and working methods, in line with the resolution *The role of parliaments in advancing a two-State solution in Palestine* adopted in April 2025. The Committee took note of the Secretariat's amended proposal, which would maintain 12 elected members with equitable geopolitical distribution and gender parity, preserve both ex officio members (Israel and Palestine), and include standing invitations to the Bureaux of Women and Young Parliamentarians. While members agreed on the importance of ensuring representativeness and continuity of engagement, several expressed reservations about aspects of the proposed changes. In particular, members questioned the need for new mechanisms, such as a Group of Facilitators for Israel and Palestine, warning that they could divert from the Committee's core purpose as the main parliamentary forum for dialogue on the subject. The Committee concurred that the Israeli-Palestinian question must remain central to its mandate and that any restructuring should strengthen its founding purpose and enhance participation, inclusiveness, representativeness and effectiveness. The Secretariat was requested to adjust the proposal accordingly and to present a revised version at the next meeting.

Members voiced concern at the continued absence of the Israeli ex officio representative, including from the present session, and agreed that the President should formally seek clarification from both ex officio members, Israel and Palestine, to reaffirm their engagement and commitment to the Committee's work.

The Committee reaffirmed its unwavering commitment to the swift and effective implementation of a fair and sustainable two-State solution, in accordance with international law, ensuring an end to occupation and the realization of Palestinian sovereignty as the only credible path to lasting peace. Members stressed that this objective requires urgent and coordinated parliamentary action.

The Committee reiterated the need for immediate humanitarian access, renewed political dialogue, and continued efforts to rebuild trust between the parties.

The Secretariat informed members of progress in preparing a report outlining the IPU's long-standing engagement in the Middle East and presented a draft workplan for 2025–2026. This includes organizing a Committee retreat in early 2026 to review working methods and strengthen cooperation ahead of the 152nd Assembly in April 2026. Members also welcomed the preparations by the King Hamad Global Center for Coexistence and Tolerance for an event marking the International Day of Peaceful Coexistence to be held in Bahrain, considering both this event and the retreat as timely opportunities to advance dialogue and visibility of the Committee's work.

5. Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law

The Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL) met on 21 October 2025. The meeting was chaired by Mr. A. Farrugia (Malta), President of the Committee.

The Committee heard an update on parliamentary efforts in Thailand to end statelessness and protect refugees. Recent legislative action had led the government to decide to simplify and streamline the application process for Thai nationality or permanent residency for about 480,000 stateless people. In addition, the government had adopted a resolution that would grant some 81,000 long-staying refugees from Myanmar the right to work in Thailand. The Committee also heard about initiatives taken to provide assistance to former members of parliament from Afghanistan who found themselves currently at risk. It welcomed the initiatives reported by the representatives from Thailand and Malta.

The Committee received an update on the humanitarian situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The Committee held a hearing with the delegation of the DRC, led by the President of the Senate of the DRC, Mr. J.-M. Sama Lukonde Kyenge.

The President reported to the Committee on the dire humanitarian situation that the DRC is facing. Currently, there are nearly 7.3 million internally displaced persons in the DRC, with a large majority — around 80% — in the eastern part of the country. The constant flow of displacement, temporary returns, and repeated re-displacement place a heavy burden on host communities and peripheral urban services. Levels of violence targeting women and children remain high in eastern DRC, while the number of incidents involving humanitarian actors is also concerning, with 126 incidents identified between August and September 2025. This situation has been aggravated by public health emergencies, including Ebola, cholera and measles. The issue of humanitarian access was also raised as a concern, especially in areas occupied or controlled by armed groups. This continues to hamper the delivery and continuity of humanitarian operations, leaving large segments of the population without assistance. The Committee called on the global parliamentary community to raise awareness on the

humanitarian crisis in the DRC and to scale up action to provide financial support for ongoing activities as well as support for humanitarian assistance, particularly in the areas of food security, health, nutrition, shelter, household items and education.

The Committee expressed serious concerns about the devastating humanitarian landscape in the DRC, especially about how recent funding cuts to humanitarian aid globally have heavily impacted the humanitarian response in the country. In 2025, only USD 389 million of the USD 2.5 billion required for humanitarian assistance in the DRC were received. The Committee highlighted the vital role played by humanitarian actors in the DRC, and also stressed the importance of making mechanisms available for victims to seek assistance, including legal assistance and medical and psychological support. Committee members also recalled that respecting IHL in the DRC is crucial to reducing attacks on hospitals and schools, which continue to occur amid the ongoing conflict.

The Committee discussed efforts towards ending statelessness, with a focus on childhood statelessness. Committee members decided that the open session of the IHL Committee at the 152nd IPU Assembly would focus on the topic of statelessness.

The Committee continued its consideration of the findings of the ICRC report [International Humanitarian Law and the Challenges of Contemporary Armed Conflicts](#) and discussed the issue of the protection of medical facilities, with a focus on the protection of hospitals in armed conflicts. The Committee acknowledged that parliamentary action is essential in making this protection effective through the national implementation of the relevant IHL norms in domestic legislation and policies.

The Committee also highlighted the relevance of the ongoing [Global Initiative to Galvanize Political Commitment to International Humanitarian Law](#), launched by the ICRC with six partner countries in September 2024. Members agreed to raise awareness of the Global Initiative within their parliaments and geopolitical groups, and to use parliamentary channels to encourage their governments to join the Initiative, if they have not yet done so, and engage with its workstreams — in particular those on “Prevention and Good Practices” and “National IHL Committees”.

The Committee also decided on the topics for its future webinar series: IHL compliance when implementing counterterrorism measures; IHL and the natural environment; and preparedness measures to comply with IHL in large-scale conflicts, including detention and accounting for the missing and the dead.

The Committee continued its work on raising awareness on key humanitarian disarmament treaties. During this session, the Committee focused its discussions on the [Convention on Cluster Munitions](#) (CCM). The Committee considered different measures through which parliaments can support the universalization and national implementation of the Convention and called on Member Parliaments to take up this issue in their respective institutions.

The Committee re-elected as its Chair Mr. A. Farrugia (Malta) for another one-year term. The Committee also took note of the absence of one of its members from the Eurasia Group (from Armenia) for three consecutive sessions and decided, in line with its Rules, to declare the seat vacant.

6. Committee on Health

The Committee on Health held its first meeting on 19 October 2025 with 10 members in attendance. The Committee also held a dialogue with technical partners on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) on the same day. The Committee elected Ms. O. Ataniyazova (Uzbekistan) as President for a one-year term.

Building on the IPU’s work on health and the contributions of the now discontinued IPU Advisory Group on Health, the Committee discussed parliamentary engagement on universal health coverage (UHC) in follow-up to the 2019 IPU resolution *Achieving universal health coverage by 2030: The role of parliaments in ensuring the right to health*. It discussed options for engagement, highlighting the importance of complementing global data with good practices and examples of parliamentary action at the country level, taking into account different national contexts. It underscored the importance of cooperation — particularly during times of crisis — as well as equity and resilience as cross-cutting priorities, while recognizing the need to concentrate its efforts on a limited number of high-impact issues. The Committee requested that the IPU Secretariat propose a roadmap for implementing activities in the lead-up to the 2027 United Nations High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage.

The Committee further reflected on the outcomes of its dialogue with technical partners on SRHR, one of the most contested areas of healthcare due to fragmented global health architecture and funding, regressive policy environments, the devaluation of science, and the increasing marginalization of the

SRHR agenda amid concurrent crises. The discussion uncovered many SRHR priorities, stressing the complexity of their interconnections and the need to link them to structural issues related to equity, resilience, and social and economic contexts. The Committee highlighted the importance of listening to and working with people, of focusing on youth and of promoting education and raising awareness. It shared examples of legislation as an instrument to protect rights, address harmful practices and improve access to SRHR services, including through harmonization at the regional level.

Finally, the Committee discussed its workplan for the coming year, including engagement on adolescent health and closer connections with parliaments through field visits.

7. Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine

Since its inception in March 2022, the Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine has worked to promote political dialogue in support of peacebuilding efforts and explore potential channels for cooperation to address the humanitarian consequences of the conflict. The Task Force remains gravely concerned about the continuing war, which has resulted in the destruction of essential civilian infrastructure and a tragic loss of human life.

The Task Force continued its discussions with the delegations of Ukraine and the Russian Federation on the humanitarian issue of children separated from their parents and close relatives. In 2024, following a Task Force request, the Ukrainian delegation had submitted an initial set of cases for consideration. However, despite rounds of indirect exchanges between the parties through the Task Force, progress remained limited. In 2025, the Task Force therefore invited the submission of new cases with clearer documentation of family ties. These were subsequently provided by the Ukrainian delegation in June and transmitted to the delegation of the Russian Federation, which issued a formal response. The Task Force was pleased to note that international efforts had yielded tangible results, leading to one child successfully reunited with her father. The Ukrainian delegation highlighted this development during its hearing at the 15th meeting of the Task Force, held on 20 October 2025, and indicated that a new set of cases would be submitted.

During this meeting, the Task Force welcomed the continued engagement and indirect communication between the two sides and encouraged both parties to urge their respective national authorities to pursue efforts aimed at resolving the outstanding issue of family reunification. Task Force members emphasized that protecting the well-being and rights of children and their families remained a worthy humanitarian endeavour and reaffirmed their full commitment to working constructively with both parties.

In line with the theme of the 151st IPU Assembly, *Upholding humanitarian norms and supporting humanitarian action in times of crisis*, the Task Force expressed deep concern over the worsening humanitarian toll of the war, particularly on the most vulnerable, including the elderly, people with disabilities, and displaced persons. Members noted that continued attacks on energy infrastructure risked further exacerbating the plight of civilians, especially with the onset of the winter months, when access to electricity, heating and basic services would become even more critical. Furthermore, the Task Force received a formal communication from the delegation of the Russian Federation, accompanied by a list of 496 alleged political prisoners. The Task Force took note of this submission, which will be examined in due course.

The Task Force welcomed the opportunity to hold its next meeting in Türkiye in April 2026. Members agreed to make the most of this occasion to meet under the auspices of a country that has positioned itself as a key actor and mediator in the conflict, hosting talks between the Russian Federation and Ukraine, working to de-escalate tensions and contain hostilities, and facilitating important agreements such as the Black Sea Grain Initiative.

Lastly, the members appointed Ms. S. D'Hose (Belgium) as Vice-President, filling the vacancy left by Mr. P. Katjavivi (Namibia).

8. High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism

Since the last Assembly, the High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism had held a webinar on 21 August 2025, the International Day of Remembrance of and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism, entitled *Education as a Tool for Prevention, Reconciliation and Empowerment*. Participants from around 20 parliaments, international organizations and civil society emphasized the role of education in preventing radicalization, promoting social cohesion, and integrating victims' testimonies into educational systems.

During the 151st Assembly, the Group held its 19th meeting on 19 October 2025, chaired by Ms. M. Guerra Castillo (Mexico). IPU Secretary General Mr. M. Chungong underlined the interconnected nature of terrorism, social and environmental crises, and the need for inclusive and human rights-based responses.

The meeting included an expert hearing on climate change and violent extremism featuring speakers from the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), who highlighted climate change as a “threat amplifier” in fragile regions such as the Sahel, stressing the need for inclusive governance and resilience through the Positive Peace framework.

The Group reviewed progress on the *Call of the Sahel* initiative, appointed new facilitators for its five priority areas — security, education, environment, community and development — and agreed to undertake parliamentary field visits to strengthen cooperation with national parliaments and identify opportunities to replicate successful initiatives. Among the programmes proposed for presentation during these visits were the Positive Peace framework and Dr. Fatima Akilu’s Lafiya Sarari programme, an education and rehabilitation model for girls affected by Boko Haram’s violence, which combines formal education, trauma therapy and psychosocial support for reintegration.

On 20 October 2025, the HLAG organized a panel discussion on *Migration, terrorism and transnational organized crime: Challenges and parliamentary responses*.

All HLAG activities reflected the Group’s commitment to integrating prevention, education, human rights and humanitarian action into parliamentary strategies to counter terrorism and violent extremism, while advancing peace, inclusion and solidarity through stronger parliamentary cooperation and field engagement.

9. Working Group on Science and Technology

Two sittings of the Working Group on Science and Technology were held, one online on 16 June 2025, and one in Geneva on 21 October 2025.

During its sitting on 16 June, the new Working Group members reviewed the *IPU Charter on the Ethics of Science and Technology*, and discussed promoting it within national parliaments, particularly in emerging fields such as artificial intelligence (AI), and strengthening cooperation with the scientific community. Members were briefed by the IPU Secretariat on the Science for Peace School session for parliamentary staff on *Understanding artificial intelligence (AI) and its impact on parliamentary work: AI, human consciousness and ethics* held from 5 to 9 May 2025 at the Synchrotron-light for Experimental Science and Applications in the Middle East (SESAME) in Allan, Jordan.

During its sitting on 21 October 2025, the Working Group members held a broad discussion on strengthening parliamentary engagement with science and technology. All members present shared their respective national initiatives and institutional mechanisms in this regard. They emphasized the importance of evidence-based policymaking, improving scientific literacy among legislators and ensuring equitable access to digital technologies. Members collectively underscored that technological progress should be guided by ethical principles, inclusiveness and respect for human rights.

The Working Group reaffirmed water as a central theme of parliamentary engagement, recognizing it as a long-standing priority, and agreed to designate water as a key thematic focus to be advanced in cooperation with the United Nations. The Working Group heard a presentation from Ms. S. Koepfel, Secretary of the UN Water Convention, who shared insights on global water challenges and the role of science, data and AI in achieving sustainable and peaceful water management. She stressed that technology must be complemented by strong legislation, adequate funding and robust parliamentary oversight to ensure equitable access to clean water and sanitation.

The Working Group discussed the rapid evolution of AI and its influence on all sectors such as education, healthcare, national security and electoral integrity, and underscored the need for parliaments to address both its potential opportunities and risks. Members shared national experiences in promoting AI-driven innovation while regulating its ethical application, and highlighted the importance of transparency, accountability, human oversight and inclusivity in AI development and use. Members also warned that, without proper regulation, AI could exacerbate inequality and fuel misinformation.

The Working Group reaffirmed the *IPU Charter on the Ethics of Science and Technology* as a key framework guiding the ethical governance of scientific and technological progress. Recognizing the complexity and transformative impact of AI, members agreed to develop an *Annex on AI Ethics* to the

Charter to provide practical guidance for legislators on AI policy and lawmaking. Members appointed Mr. N. In-na (Thailand) as rapporteur for the Annex and underscored the responsibility of parliaments to ensure that AI serves societal well-being while protecting citizens' rights and values.

Two invited experts contributed to the discussion on AI. Mr. P. Glauner, Professor of Artificial Intelligence at the Deggendorf Institute of Technology, Germany, highlighted the transformative impact of AI across all sectors and stressed that legislation must evolve in step with technological progress. He warned that insufficient oversight could lead to ethical violations, discrimination and loss of public trust, and emphasized the need for proactive parliamentary engagement and international cooperation in AI regulation. Mr. A. Bikha, Project Officer at the IPU Centre for Innovation in Parliament, outlined the Centre's work on AI in policymaking and parliamentary operations to promote responsible use, transparency and citizen engagement. Key initiatives include the *Transforming Parliaments* webinar series and publications on generative AI, guidelines and global use cases. An AI maturity framework is also being developed to guide parliaments in ethical and effective AI adoption.

10. Gender Partnership Group

The Gender Partnership Group held its 52nd session on 18 and 22 October 2025. In attendance were Mr. A. Almodóbar Barceló (Spain), who chaired the session, Ms. S. Mikayilova (Azerbaijan), Mr. M. Ali Sera (Indonesia) and Ms. C. López Castro (Bureau of Women Parliamentarians). The IPU Secretary General attended the Group's meeting on 22 October.

As per its mandate, the Group reviewed the state of women's participation in national parliaments, as well as in IPU bodies and Assemblies. It examined in particular the composition of delegations at the 151st Assembly. As of 22 October 2025, 36.9% of the delegates at the Assembly were women (see [page 96](#)), which is slightly below the last Assembly and higher than the previous five Assemblies. At this Assembly, 39 delegations out of 132 (29.5%) were gender-balanced, meaning that they were composed of 40–60% women or men. This is a lower percentage than at the last Assembly (see [page 97](#)). Of the 132 delegations present, 121 were composed of at least two delegates, of which 9 were all-male (6.4%). In addition, two delegations of two or more delegates were composed entirely of women. All in all, four delegations were subject to sanctions at this Assembly.

The Group welcomed the release of the second edition of the Gender-Responsive Assemblies Toolkit, which was developed by the International Gender Champions, in collaboration with the IPU and Women at the Table. It includes many of the pioneering policies that the IPU has been advancing over the years, thanks in part to the work of the Gender Partnership Group. The Group encouraged Member Parliaments to apply the Toolkit in their respective countries, drawing inspiration from the good practices it highlights.

The Group also took stock of the measures taken to implement the *Policy to prevent and address harassment, including sexual harassment, at IPU Assemblies and other IPU events*. As part of the IPU's harassment prevention efforts, the Policy was made even more visible at this Assembly, including through lapel pins, and anti-harassment training was provided to Assembly participants for the first time. The Group also recommended that Member Parliaments call on the IPU to provide similar training sessions for their members and staff.

As foreseen in the Policy itself, the Group assessed the implementation of the Policy in the two years since its adoption (see [page 97](#)). It took note that 11 incidents have been addressed since the adoption of the Policy. Incidents reported related to sexual harassment and to harassment. The informal reporting mechanism set out in the Policy was followed in all cases. The confidentiality of those who experienced harassment, including sexual harassment, as well as their wishes with regard to protective measures, were respected, putting them at the centre of the process. All alleged perpetrators were identified, measures were taken to protect those who reported incidents during Assemblies, and the Secretary General and the anti-harassment focal points notified all those concerned of the progress of the procedures and their outcomes, as needed and to prevent any further harm. All incidents were recorded to help identify potential patterns or systemic issues and to develop targeted preventive strategies if necessary.

As per its mandate to promote women's participation in national parliaments, the Group held dialogues with two delegations from parliaments that have less than 10% women members — the Gambia and Nigeria — to discuss how to improve the situation following the decrease in the representation of women.

The Group had a fruitful dialogue with the delegation from the Gambia, led by the Deputy Speaker. As a result of the 2022 elections, women now hold 5 out of 58 parliamentary seats, making up 8.6% of the members, down from 10.3% in the 2017 elections. In 2022, only 8% of candidates were women, and of the 19 women who stood for election, just 3 were elected — only one representing a political party, while the other two won as independents. The delegation indicated that harmful social norms and financial barriers remained the key obstacles to women's political participation. There was currently limited support for the adoption of legislation on gender quotas. It was therefore important to conduct community outreach, empower male champions and encourage political parties to adopt voluntary quotas to redress women's underrepresentation. The Group indicated that the IPU stood ready to support the Parliament of the Gambia's efforts ahead of the 2027 elections.

The Group also met with the delegation from Nigeria, where women's representation following the 2023 elections had dipped to just 3.9% of seats in the House of Representatives and 2.8% in the Senate. This was the fourth dialogue the Group had held with Nigeria, following those that had taken place at the 144th, 145th and 147th Assemblies. The delegation of Nigeria reiterated the persistent challenges women face in getting family and political party support to run for office and remain in politics. Gender stereotypes, combined with limited financial support, are the main barriers to having a level playing field for women. The delegation indicated that a constitutional amendment bill reserving seats for women in Parliament was currently being considered in both houses. In addition to the bill, it was important to ensure that political parties open up to women and become more gender-sensitive. Advocacy efforts were under way and the IPU's role would be crucial in building broad support among members of parliament and other political leaders to ensure the bill passes. The Group welcomed the ongoing efforts to amend the Constitution of Nigeria to reserve seats for women, as well as the delegation's request for the IPU's support in building political will among political parties and decision-makers. The Group committed to following up on this request, including by exploring the possibility of sending a high-level delegation of the IPU to Nigeria.

Other activities and events

1. **Joint meeting with the Chairpersons of the geopolitical groups, the Presidents of the Standing Committees, and the Presidents of the other specialized bodies of the IPU**

On 19 October 2025, the IPU Vice-President and Secretary General met with the Chairs of the geopolitical groups, the Presidents of the Standing Committees, and the Presidents of the other specialized bodies of the IPU.

The IPU Vice-President recalled that, following amendments to the Rules of the Assembly, the format of the meeting had been expanded to include the Presidents of all subsidiary bodies of the Governing Council. Discussions were therefore aimed at enhancing coordination and promoting synergies across the IPU's different organs.

The meeting addressed three substantive items: (1) the IPU's initiatives in the area of parliamentary diplomacy and mechanisms that deal with crisis situations; (2) the IPU priority theme for 2025 and its related amendments to the Statutes and Rules, as well as the priority theme for 2026; and (3) preparations for the next IPU Strategy.

Mr. M. Chungong, IPU Secretary General, presented an overview of IPU mechanisms aimed at addressing crisis situations and advancing parliamentary diplomacy. He outlined three main categories: institutional, political and programmatic.

Under institutional mechanisms, the Secretary General referred to mediation efforts in several regions, including West Africa, the South Caucasus and the Korean Peninsula; and most recently in Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. He also noted the contribution of specialized IPU bodies that focus on specific situations, such as the wars in Ukraine and in the Middle East. Regarding the IPU's political mechanisms, he highlighted the role of the Standing Committees and the emergency item resolutions in mobilizing parliamentary action through political statements. Lastly, under programmatic mechanisms, he referred to activities designed to translate political commitments into practice, including capacity-building, advocacy and reconciliation initiatives.

In the ensuing discussion, participants underlined the need to ensure coherence, efficiency, and complementarity among existing IPU mechanisms. Several IPU officeholders supported efforts to streamline structures, avoid duplication, and make better use of existing expertise within the

Organization. Others conveyed the importance of maintaining dialogue with all parties to conflict and ensuring that parliamentary diplomacy remained flexible and preventive, not merely reactive. Participants also highlighted that cross-committee coordination was needed, as well as stronger information-sharing between geopolitical groups and specialized bodies.

Turning to the second agenda item, the Secretary General recalled that gender equality had been selected as the IPU priority theme for 2025. He noted that this year marked several milestones, including the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 40th anniversary of the IPU Forum of Women Parliamentarians. He also announced the priority theme for 2026, which would be human rights, in recognition of the 50th anniversary of the IPU Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

Ms. C. López Castro (Mexico), President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, presented the amendments recently adopted to improve gender parity in the IPU Statutes and Rules. She recalled that the reforms adopted in 2024-2025 had strengthened gender balance and alternation in leadership positions, ensured the participation of the President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians in key IPU bodies, and defined parity as an organizational objective. She outlined the Bureau's new proposals aimed at reinforcing sanctions for single-sex delegations, promoting gender-balanced representation among IPU office holders, and reducing the size of delegations that lacked gender diversity. These proposals would need to be circulated among the geopolitical groups for consultation.

Introducing the third item, Ms. K. Jabre, Director of Programmes, presented the roadmap for the preparation of the IPU 2027-2031 Strategy, to be adopted at the 152nd Assembly in April 2026. She explained that the process would be led by the Executive Committee with the support of the Secretariat and structured in two phases: an assessment phase (October-December 2025) and a development phase (January-March 2026). The methodology would include desk reviews, surveys, focus group discussions, and interviews with IPU Member Parliaments, partners and donors. The approach would be inclusive, consultative and results-oriented.

During the discussions, some preliminary suggestions were put forth on possible priorities for the next five-year Strategy. It was also suggested that each Standing Committee could consider channelling its draft resolutions through the relevant specialized IPU body for the annual priority theme. For example, in 2026, this process could be followed with the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law, with a view to mainstreaming human rights across the Organization's work. It was also proposed that a serious re-evaluation be undertaken of the modalities for the IPU emergency item process, with a view to enhancing constructive and inclusive exchanges and making sure topical issues were adequately addressed.

2. Workshop on *Breaking the hunger cycle: Addressing food security* (organized by the IPU, WHO, PMNCH and FAO)

The workshop, held on 20 October 2025, was organized jointly with the World Health Organization (WHO), the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH), and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). It was moderated by Ms. C. Roth (Germany), who emphasized that food systems are under stress from conflicts, climate change and various intersecting crises, and that breaking the hunger cycle requires a focus on multisectoral legislation and policies, equity, resilience and innovation.

Mr. J.-L. Touadi (FAO) called for renewed efforts for the implementation of the right to food, as hunger is not declining fast enough due to persistent structural inequalities, making it a key justice and governance issue. He stressed that legislation has the power to make the invisible visible and the importance of multilateralism. Finally, he informed participants about the upcoming Third Global Parliamentary Summit against Hunger and Malnutrition to be held in 2026 in South Africa, noting that the present workshop would help to shape and inform the preparations for the Summit.

Ms. K. Engesveen (WHO) highlighted that most countries either lack sufficient data or are off track to achieve global nutrition targets, leading to various forms of malnutrition. She presented several interventions that parliamentarians can promote, including food labelling, restricting the marketing of unhealthy food, advocating for the taxation of sugary drinks and unhealthy food, protecting breastfeeding, and advancing food safety.

Ms. E.T. Muteka (Namibia) underlined that food insecurity is a serious challenge in Namibia, affecting 40% of the population, due to climate shocks, rising food prices and high unemployment rates. Women, children under five, subsistence farmers and the elderly are among the most affected groups.

She further stressed the gender dimension of food security and the situation of remote rural areas. She highlighted priorities for parliamentary action, including strengthening legislation and oversight, improving access to food at the community level, building resilience, and cooperating at the regional and international levels.

Ms. M. del Socorro Núñez Monreal (Mexico) outlined Mexico's progress on food security and nutrition through a series of measures, including stronger legislation and regulations to address the double burden of malnutrition, taxes on sugar-sweetened beverages, social programmes to reduce poverty, and initiatives targeting indigenous communities and marginalized rural populations.

Ms. S. Panzani (Scaling Up Nutrition Movement), described the current context marked by fewer resources and increased competition for funds across sectors. However, unprecedented commitment was shown at the 2025 Nutrition for Growth Summit, testifying that nutrition is worth investing in. She called on parliamentarians to support implementation of nutrition commitments, and shared examples of successful multisectoral efforts and parliamentary engagement at the national and regional levels.

Parliamentarians and representatives from Bahrain, Burkina Faso, Canada, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Namibia, Peru, the Philippines, the Russian Federation, and the Andean Parliament took the floor in the discussion. They highlighted the impacts of climate change, conflict, population displacement and trade policies on food security and nutrition, as well as the lack of access to means of production for indigenous populations and women. The issue of methane and its impact on climate change was also raised. Examples of actions to improve nutrition for children and women — especially pregnant and breastfeeding women — were shared, including education, welfare programmes, agriculture reforms, and legislation. The discussion testified to the importance of sharing experiences and adopting comprehensive approaches to food security and nutrition.

3. Panel discussion on *Migration, terrorism and transnational organized crime: Challenges and parliamentary responses*

On 20 October 2025, the High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG) held a panel discussion to examine the complex intersection between migration, terrorism and transnational organized crime. The session brought together over 30 participants, including parliamentarians from various countries, as well as experts from specialized organizations and academia.

The discussion highlighted that one of today's major global challenges stems from the exploitation of displaced people and migrants — in particular unaccompanied migrant children — by criminal networks operating in vulnerable contexts. Participants noted that political and media narratives often link migration with insecurity and terrorism, obscuring real structural causes such as poverty, inequality and climate change.

Experts emphasized that migration should not be conflated with terrorism or insecurity, highlighting the need for approaches grounded in human rights, protection and international cooperation. They pointed to the emergence of "terror-criminal ecosystems" in regions such as the Sahel, where terrorism and organized crime increasingly overlap. The discussion also underscored that effective migration governance should focus on protection, prevention and partnership, while promoting institutional resilience, social cohesion, and economic opportunity to address the root causes of radicalization.

Representatives from the Sahel region pointed to the ongoing illicit trafficking of resources such as gold and fuel that continues to finance terrorism. They proposed creating a permanent committee within the IPU and enhancing coordination with regional mechanisms such as the Alliance of Sahel States (AES). Delegates from other regions, including Asia and Europe, stressed the high human and economic costs of terrorism and called for harmonized legal frameworks, anti-corruption measures, and stronger protection for vulnerable groups.

In closing, the Chair of the HLAG, Ms. M. Guerra Castillo, underscored the importance of strengthening humanitarian responses grounded in solidarity, dignity and shared responsibility. She highlighted the essential role of parliaments in enacting legislation that safeguards migrants and displaced people affected by terrorism and violent extremism. Finally, she urged the international community to place humanitarian action at the core of global security strategies, reaffirming that lasting peace requires compassion, inclusion and protection for those most affected by instability. Parliamentarians must ensure that humanitarian protection remains a central pillar in the global agenda.

4. **Workshop on Triple win: Protecting climate, health and economy by cutting methane**

The workshop, held on 21 October 2025, brought together 48 participants, including 42 parliamentarians and parliamentary staff from 31 countries spanning every region of the world. It was attended by one Speaker and one Deputy Speaker, along with high-level representatives from the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC), Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH), Campaign for Nature and other partners.

The discussion focused on how parliaments can use their legislative, budgetary and oversight powers to accelerate methane reduction and deliver multiple benefits for climate, health and the economy. Ms. M. Otto, Head of the CCAC Secretariat, underlined that “methane is our emergency brake”, the fastest lever for reducing global temperatures this decade, and emphasized the need for clear policy signals, legislation and investment frameworks from parliamentarians.

Parliamentarians shared practical national examples of parliamentary action on methane. A delegate from Ghana reported new climate laws and composting initiatives creating green jobs, and a delegate from the United Kingdom presented outcomes of its parliamentary inquiry on methane. A delegate from India discussed agricultural and waste-to-energy programmes reducing emissions and a delegate from Greece described national follow-up to previous IPU workshops as well as dedicated parliamentary hearings on methane, the new European Union regulation on reducing methane emissions, and initiatives to capture landfill gas and convert it into biogas and biomethane. Delegates from Pakistan, South Africa, Bhutan and others described efforts to strengthen monitoring, regulation, education and legislation.

Parliamentarians recognized the need to integrate methane reduction into national climate laws, nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and budget processes. Participants proposed that governments be required by law to inform parliaments of their NDC commitments, ensuring stronger oversight.

The workshop concluded with the shared recognition that parliamentary action is crucial for translating global methane commitments into national results. Participants emphasized that reducing methane is a cost-effective and high-impact strategy for protecting the climate, health and economies. They agreed on the importance of continued cooperation through the IPU's project, *Enhancing parliamentary action on climate change: Building capacity and strengthening efforts to reduce methane emissions*, funded by the Global Methane Hub.

5. **Open session of the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law: Safeguarding humanitarian action in times of armed conflict**

On 21 October 2025, the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL) held an open session debate on the theme *Safeguarding humanitarian action in times of armed conflict*. Panellists included Ms. E. Misola Richard, Legal Adviser, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC); Ms. J. Wong, Legal Adviser, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF); Ms. S. Howard, Director, Geneva Global Office, World Food Programme (WFP); and Ms. G. Morawska-Stanecka (Vice-President of the IPU and member of the IHL Committee). The session was chaired by the President of the Committee, Mr. A. Farrugia (Malta).

According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), [over 300 million people are estimated to be in need of humanitarian assistance](#) around the world in 2025, mainly as a consequence of armed conflict. The situation of humanitarian action today is a very challenging one, especially during armed conflict. Impartial and neutral humanitarian actors have been subjected to abuse, threats and acts of violence in armed conflicts. According to OCHA, in 2024, a [record 383 aid workers were killed, while an additional 308 were wounded, 125 were kidnapped and 45 were detained](#). In counterterrorism settings, broadly regulated restrictions and measures have also led in some instances to the criminalization of activities carried out by impartial, neutral and independent humanitarian organizations.

In this context, the open session of the Committee discussed the role of parliaments in safeguarding and facilitating humanitarian action in times of armed conflict. Panellists recalled that IHL provides a legal framework that protects principled humanitarian action and imposes an obligation on States to protect humanitarian personnel as well as allowing and facilitating the rapid and unimpeded passage of impartial humanitarian assistance to civilians in need. In addition, consent to humanitarian assistance must not be refused on arbitrary grounds. The panel also shed light on the fact that hospitals and

healthcare facilities have been the target of attacks in contemporary armed conflicts. In the case of MSF, the organization has faced additional challenges to providing impartial healthcare in conflict zones controlled or occupied by non-State armed groups due to counterterrorism sanctions and measures imposed on them. This has led to MSF staff members being arrested and/or criminally charged for allegedly “supporting terrorism”.

Panellists and participants raised the issue of the recent funding cuts to humanitarian aid globally, which have heavily impacted the delivery of humanitarian aid by organizations such as WFP. In 2025, WFP has seen a 40% shortfall of its funding in comparison to 2024, which has created substantial challenges for its operations to provide food assistance to persons affected by armed conflict, particularly those facing famine in Sudan and Gaza. Participants also heard a presentation on how the Parliament of Poland is supporting humanitarian action by enacting a number of laws governing medical services within the framework of humanitarian aid. While not itself a party to an armed conflict, Poland has been impacted by one, and has enacted laws and created programmes to facilitate humanitarian assistance and ensure the social inclusion of over 2 million refugees from Ukraine who have sought asylum in Poland.

Participants highlighted additional challenges including the lack of political will to create an environment at the country level where humanitarian norms and principles are a priority, and the difficulties faced by smaller countries in contributing to global humanitarian initiatives. Although the implementation of IHL norms in domestic legislation was identified as a challenge, participants highlighted that parliamentarians play a key role in ensuring that laws and policies reflect those norms with a view to protecting humanitarian action. They agreed that humanitarian aid must not be used as a weapon of war, and that it is essential to raise the humanitarian agenda in parliament and more broadly at the IPU. Participants were also encouraged to call on their governments to endorse the recently launched [Declaration for the Protection of Humanitarian Personnel](#).

6. *Workshop on Parliaments taking action on AI: Learning from global experience*

The workshop brought together parliamentarians from multiple countries to discuss the challenges and opportunities of artificial intelligence governance. It was moderated by Ms. S. Teleanu (DiploFoundation), with opening remarks from Mr. H. Ebrahim (Bahrain) and Mr. R. Edwards (Chile).

Five central themes emerged from the discussions, revealing both the complexity of the task ahead and the commitment of legislative bodies to responsibly address this transformative technology.

Understanding and capacity-building: A recurring theme was the critical need for parliamentary capacity development. Effective AI governance requires legislators to have sufficient technical literacy — not to become programmers, but to understand enough to ask the right questions. This knowledge gap presents a significant challenge, as parliamentarians must evaluate complex technological systems while ensuring accountability and transparency. A delegate from the Netherlands noted that effective oversight requires lawmakers to understand AI systems adequately, even if they do not have advanced technical expertise. This foundation of understanding was consistently identified as the prerequisite for all subsequent legislative and oversight activities.

AI governance approaches: Participants discussed various regulatory frameworks being adopted globally, with particular attention to risk-based approaches that distinguish between high-risk and low-risk AI applications. Chile and several other countries, drawing on the European Union’s risk-based model for AI governance, are implementing systems that apply stricter requirements for AI used in sensitive areas such as healthcare, justice and public administration, while maintaining lighter regulations for lower-risk applications. The debate revealed tension between horizontal frameworks that establish broad national AI policies and sector-specific legislation targeting particular use cases such as autonomous vehicles or copyright protection. A delegate from Argentina highlighted a fundamental challenge: territorial regulation struggles to govern a global phenomenon, potentially creating competitive disadvantages for regions with stricter rules while failing to adequately control transnational AI systems.

Education and human capital: The presentation on educational AI integration in Bahrain provided a concrete example of systemic implementation. The proposed model connects ministries, educational institutions, teachers, students and parents through an integrated platform that personalizes learning, generates adaptive assessments, and provides system-wide analytics while maintaining human oversight. This approach exemplifies the dual focus on AI as both a topic for curricula and a tool for educational delivery. Multiple speakers emphasized that preparing future generations for an AI-integrated world requires immediate action in educational systems, as students will constitute the workforce navigating increasingly automated environments.

Parliamentary action and oversight: Discussions revealed diverse approaches to parliamentary engagement with AI. A delegate from India described the government’s comprehensive “AI for All” vision, supported by parliamentary committees examining AI’s multifaceted impacts and digital platforms enhancing legislative accessibility. A delegate from Türkiye highlighted the establishment of a dedicated parliamentary AI commission in 2024. IPU research has also identified four main areas of parliamentary action: establishing foundational structures such as committees and working groups; drafting and adopting AI-specific legislation; exercising oversight through ministerial questioning and public hearings; and organizing multistakeholder consultations to ensure broad participation in AI policy development.

International cooperation: Perhaps the most emphatic consensus emerged around the necessity of global collaboration. Given that AI development and infrastructure remain concentrated in the United States and China, speakers stressed that international cooperation is essential to prevent widening technological and economic divides. Chile emphasized that countries must work together to ensure open-source alternatives and shared standards, warning that failure to cooperate will result in a world with greater inequalities. References to multilateral initiatives including the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence, UNESCO frameworks, and the upcoming AI Impact Summit in India demonstrated growing recognition that effective AI governance transcends national boundaries and requires coordinated international approaches to establish interoperable systems, common ethical standards, and equitable access to AI benefits.

7. *Interfaith workshop on Countering intolerance and fostering religious literacy for more inclusive and peaceful societies*

The workshop introduced parliamentarians to religious literacy, religious engagement and inclusive citizenship as tools to help parliamentarians counter intolerance, celebrate religious diversity, uphold freedom of religion or belief, and foster more peaceful and inclusive societies. It shared good practice examples from parliamentary and non-parliamentary actors in applying these tools in different contexts. The workshop was designed as a precursor to a toolkit on religious literacy and inclusive citizenship which the IPU was developing.

Ms. A. Filip, IPU Director of the Division for Member Parliaments and External Relations, offered opening remarks and situated the workshop within the broader framing of the IPU’s work on interfaith dialogue. The workshop was moderated by Ms. S. Markiewicz, IPU Advisor for Interfaith Dialogue. Panellists included, as subject matter experts, Mr. F. Daou, Executive Director of Globethics, and Mr. J. Cass, Senior Advisor for Freedom of Religion or Belief at the Culham St. Gabriel’s Trust. Speakers sharing good practice examples from non-parliamentary organizations included Mr. A. Adam, Executive Director of Adyan, an organization based in Beirut, Lebanon, dedicated to fostering inclusive citizenship in the region; and Mr. A. Mahmood, Deputy Chair of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom. The workshop also heard good practice examples of religious engagement by parliaments, shared by Ms. N. Mutti (Zambia), Ms. S. Atallahjan (Canada) and Ms. K. Bradley (United Kingdom).

The two experts provided an overview of the key themes of the workshop. This was followed by good practice examples shared by organizations engaged in inclusive citizenship and human rights promotion, and parliamentary initiatives to promote inclusive policies and counter intolerance. Interventions were taken from the floor from parliamentarians and representatives of parliamentary assemblies, faith-based organizations and national institutions. Participants highlighted the importance of robust education on religions and beliefs, as well as on civics, values, democracy and human rights, especially from an early age, to foster societies that celebrate diversity and are more inclusive. It was also highlighted that good religious education could flourish where religious freedom was upheld. Participants further underlined that religious engagement begins with the premise that secular actors acknowledge the impact of religion on societies and the need to partner with faith actors to advance their own agendas. It was noted that inclusive citizenship requires a culture of comprehensive participation in public life. Good practice examples showcased included projects encouraging values-driven reform efforts within a sectarian system; parliamentary diplomacy to foster interfaith dialogue, solidarity and reconciliation; and human rights promotion, especially freedom of religion or belief, as a measure to make societies more inclusive. Policymakers must be aware of the dangers of religion being instrumentalized by political actors, and vice-versa.

8. Workshop on *Children's rights in the digital environment*

The workshop on *Children's rights in the digital environment*, held on 21 October 2025, was organized in collaboration with the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

Ms. S. Kiladze, Chairperson of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, set the tone by recognizing that digital environments pose both immense opportunities and serious risks to children, with increasing violations of children's rights online compared to previous generations. She stressed that a number of the problems identified include AI-driven harm (e.g. chatbot-related suicides), skyrocketing child sexual abuse online, cyberbullying, and limited rehabilitation services for victims.

Mr. S.A. Ndiaye (Senegal) suggested four major governance models including: centralized, market-driven, multi-stakeholder (public, private and civil society), and distributed (standard- and norm-based). He stressed broad support for multi-stakeholder, rights-based and risk-adaptive approaches, with parliamentary control and algorithmic transparency. He believed that international cooperation had a determining role to play due to the cross-border nature of online crimes and the global reach of digital platforms.

Mr. I. Annan, Director of Human Rights at the Parliament of Ghana, addressing issues related to culture, said that cultural context should shape child rights policy implementation, but must not be used to justify practices that cross red lines, such as corporal punishment. He raised concerns about children's lack of direct voice in policymaking, with suggestions for increasing their involvement in developing relevant laws and policies. He advocated for responsible parental engagement and digital literacy for parents and teachers, and acknowledged the difficulty in policing and investigating online crimes against children due to their scale and complexity.

Both speakers underscored that parliaments were crucial actors in protecting child rights, with functions spanning legislation, oversight, budgeting and public advocacy. They called for comprehensive laws, annual parliamentary reporting on child rights, budget prioritization, and the creation and monitoring of national strategies and frameworks for online child protection.

The following national practices were highlighted:

- Senegal and Ghana: Multi-actor governance, national frameworks, oversight committees, and public education efforts.
- Andorra: Creation of a digital well-being centre, child-safe SIM cards, parental controls, and educational programmes.
- India: National commissions, child helplines, legal reforms, and strong campaigns for digital literacy and safety.
- Iran (Islamic Republic of): Legislative updates, age controls, parental control apps, and a focus on digital privacy.
- Philippines: Digital inclusion policies, critical media literacy bills, and active oversight and updating of laws to address online sexual abuse.
- Fiji: Reviewing its Online Safety Act and seeking international best practices for AI-related child protection.

9. Workshop on parliamentary mediation

This workshop, held on 22 October 2025, examined the unique role of parliamentarians in mediation and conflict resolution. It sought to strengthen participants' understanding of mediation principles and consider how these might be reframed to fit the parliamentary mandate, address practical challenges, and find innovative approaches to fostering sustainable peace through inclusive, people-centred dialogue.

Opening the session, Ms. Ş. Pavey, Senior Adviser, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and former Member of the Turkish Parliament, emphasized the preventive value of mediation in averting humanitarian crises and underscored the importance of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. Drawing on her parliamentary and UN experience, she illustrated how parliamentarians can act as mediators within their constituencies. She shared examples of successful initiatives such as the creation of the Australian Turkish Friendship Association, building on the legacy of reconciliation after the Gallipoli campaign of 1915, and a local mediation effort in eastern Sudan where community and religious leaders secured land for displaced persons through trust and moral authority. She concluded that parliamentarians are natural mediators because of their daily engagement in dialogue and representation.

Joining remotely, Mr. D. Kiniger-Passigli, Vice-President of the World Academy of Art and Science and founder of the New Peace Offensive initiative, discussed the conceptual and ethical foundations of mediation. He stressed that parliamentarians serve as vital links between national institutions and local communities, and that genuine peace results from sustained, trust-based engagement rather than quick agreements. Referring to the UN Charter, he identified key “golden rules”: consent, impartiality, preparedness, respect for context, and ensuring ownership of outcomes by the parties themselves. He also underlined the role of science, culture and education in rebuilding trust amid the erosion of multilateralism.

Ms. S. Naraghi Anderlini, founder and CEO of the International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN), focused on inclusive mediation and the need to reframe peace processes to better integrate local and civil-society actors. She cautioned against models that reward violence or prioritize armed groups over community peacebuilders, emphasizing that women who are often the first to mediate crises are still routinely excluded from formal processes. Drawing from experiences in Colombia, Somalia and Yemen, she argued that sustainable peace depends on both political will and inclusivity, without which agreements lack legitimacy and public support. She noted that Parliamentarians are uniquely positioned to bridge divides between State institutions and communities, counter misinformation, and promote diplomacy and human security over coercive measures.

The ensuing discussion reflected a broad range of parliamentary perspectives on mediation in practice. Participants shared experiences of working in complex political and cultural environments, highlighting both the potential and the constraints of parliamentary engagement in peacebuilding. Examples illustrated the courage and persistence required to sustain dialogue under pressure, including efforts to defuse religious tensions through engagement, even with hardline community figures, and regional mediation initiatives to ease border disputes in South-East Asia.

The discussion further underlined the value of integrating humanitarian and legal principles into peace processes. Respect for international humanitarian law and human rights, along with stronger inclusion of women and civil-society representatives in peace efforts, were viewed as essential for building confidence among parties and for creating the conditions necessary for lasting peace.

Participants highlighted that mediation requires not only technical expertise but also a shift in mindset. As elected representatives, parliamentarians often work within partisan frameworks, yet effective mediation demands neutrality, empathy and trust-building across divides. It was noted that sustainable peace cannot rely solely on individual leadership but must be supported by resilient and inclusive institutions capable of sustaining dialogue and reconciliation over time. Participants called for practical tools to help parliamentarians apply mediation principles and efficiently perform that role.

The debate concluded by reaffirming that parliamentary mediation is both a privilege and a responsibility. By drawing on their legitimacy, public trust and proximity to citizens, parliamentarians can act as credible facilitators of dialogue, bridging the gap between political actors and local communities and contributing meaningfully to sustainable, inclusive peace.

10. Parity debate on the theme *Men and women MPs championing gender equality and equal care in parliament*

On 22 October 2025, the Forum of Women Parliamentarians organized a parity debate with 88 participants, including 30 women and 16 men parliamentarians from 30 countries. Ms. T. Vardanyan (Armenia), First Vice-President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, presided over the session.

Participants lamented the stagnation in the progress of women's participation in parliament, with the proportion of women MPs around the world remaining at about 27%. They also highlighted the persistent prevalence of sexism, harassment and violence against women in politics.

Turning to solutions, they shared insights from initiatives carried out in their respective countries and parliaments, not only to enhance women's participation and address gender-based violence but also to transform parliamentary institutions into gender-sensitive and equal care-friendly workplaces for both men and women MPs and staff. Sharing of good practices focused on parental leave, childcare facilities, inclusive policies on equal care, and measures for equality in leadership positions in parliament.

The debate concluded with a call to action for parliamentarians to join the IPU's *Achieving gender equality, action by action* campaign and to strengthen their efforts in championing gender equality and equal care responsibilities in their respective institutions.

11. Implementing the IPU anti-harassment policy: Skills-building session

A skills-building session on implementing the IPU anti-harassment policy was organized as part of the IPU's efforts to implement its [Policy to prevent and address harassment, including sexual harassment, at IPU Assemblies and other IPU events](#), approved by the Governing Council at the 147th Assembly in Luanda, Angola, in October 2023. The Policy aims to ensure an inclusive, respectful and safe environment during and around IPU Assemblies and other IPU meetings by preventing unacceptable behaviour such as abuse of authority, discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment.

The session was open to all Assembly participants and aimed to bridge the gap between policy and practice by:

- raising awareness of the IPU anti-harassment policy;
- promoting a common understanding of what is expected of everyone in an environment of zero tolerance for harassment;
- encouraging various response options, including reporting and bystander intervention; and
- facilitating the sharing of best practices in tackling harassment at the IPU and in national parliaments.

After a presentation of the Policy and the mechanisms in place for its enforcement, participants held an exchange of views with an expert independent consultant on building secure working environments. Tips and strategies on how to respond to harassment as a bystander were shared. Participants then went on to share good practices of what is currently being done in their respective parliaments to prevent and address harassment, including sexual harassment. They heard a short presentation from the Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives of Australia, who had spearheaded efforts in that regard in her country.

Participants expressed their gratitude for the training session and encouraged delegations to send more participants, including men, to future sessions. They recommended that the session become a regular fixture on the programme of the Assembly and that more visibility be given to the Policy, including through short videos and other communication material to raise awareness.

12. Joint IPU and ASGP session: *Parliaments in a changing world: Navigating complexity, uncertainty and disruption*

This session, held on 22 October 2025 and co-organized by the IPU and the Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments (ASGP), aimed to create a space for parliamentary practitioners to have honest conversations about the pressures parliaments face in today's world and how they are responding. The event was facilitated by Ms. V. Hasson (IPU Secretariat) and Ms. A. Ferreyra (United Nations Development Programme), and was attended by over 40 parliamentarians and parliamentary officials from more than 15 countries. The session was designed to enable peer learning through three thematic questions, with participants engaging in peer discussions before sharing experiences in plenary.

The opening address was delivered by Mr. Kim Minki (Secretary General of the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea), who described how his Parliament had overcome a democratic crisis when the President had declared martial law on 3 December 2024. Special troops, 400 armed soldiers, and 1,800 police officers had been deployed to block members and staff from entering the National Assembly. The previous summer, the parliamentary leadership had prepared procedures to deploy in the event of such situations. When the troops had arrived at Parliament, staff, aides and security personnel had barricaded entrances to resist them. Within a couple of hours, the National Assembly had been able to hold a sitting, at which it had nullified the unlawful declaration of martial law. Impeachment proceedings had begun on 4 December 2024 and, by 4 April 2025, the Constitutional Court had removed the President from office. Mr. Kim emphasized that democracy remains vulnerable unless actively protected.

This address framed the first theme, "Parliaments under Pressure", which explored the challenges that parliaments had faced in recent years. Mr. J.M. Nyegenye (Clerk of the Senate of Kenya) explained how protesters had invaded parliament in June 2025 during discussions of tax measures, and acknowledged the need for parliaments to be responsive to public sentiment. A delegate from the Democratic Republic of the Congo shared experiences of fierce political competition during the transition of power following the 2019 elections. Mr. S. Godefroy (Adviser, Senate of France) described structural pressures from media proliferation and social media, where public expectations for immediate parliamentary action conflicted with the deliberative process needed for quality legislation.

The second theme, “Making Parliaments Work”, examined barriers to parliamentary effectiveness. Mr. M. Xaso (Secretary of the National Assembly of South Africa) described the implementation of an oversight plan to measure the impact of laws. Mr. L. Rojas (Deputy Secretary of the Chamber of Deputies of Chile) highlighted the use of artificial intelligence tools and databases to help parliamentarians access legislation and assess impacts more efficiently, while emphasizing the need for human validation of all outputs. Mr. I. Mattson (Secretary General of the Riksdagen of Sweden) cautioned against overemphasizing efficiency, arguing that democracy required time for proper scrutiny. Mr. J.P. Montero (Secretary General of the Senate of Uruguay) stressed that parliamentary work should be measured by quality rather than quantity, underlining that opposition parties needed adequate time for debate.

The third theme, “Looking to the Future”, explored how parliaments address long-term challenges. Mr. L. Rojas (Deputy Secretary of the Chamber of Deputies of Chile) highlighted concerns among civil servants about changing roles due to digitalization, and emphasized that technology should facilitate better service to citizens. Ms. C. Surtees (Clerk of the House of Representatives of Australia) emphasized the importance of strong leadership for parliamentary staff and of nurturing productive relationships between staff and members. Mr. T. Molise (Clerk of the Senate of Lesotho) described ongoing parliamentary reforms and early-stage digitalization efforts. Mr. N. El Khadi (Secretary General of the Chamber of Deputies of Morocco) highlighted the importance of institutional communication to combat misinformation and the need to strengthen parliamentary skills.

Mr. C. Rennard (United Kingdom) delivered closing remarks, drawing a parallel between recent events in the Republic of Korea and a historic episode in the United Kingdom from 1642 when King Charles I attempted to arrest five members of the House of Commons, leading to seven years of civil war and ultimately establishing parliamentary rule over absolute monarchy.

Elections and appointments

1. Executive Committee

The Governing Council elected the following members to the Executive Committee for a four-year term ending in October 2029:

African Group

- Mr. H.A. Gueddi (Djibouti)

Twelve Plus Group

- Mr. A. Gryffroy (Belgium)
- Ms. K. Bradley (United Kingdom)

2. Bureau of Women Parliamentarians

The Forum of Women Parliamentarians elected the following regional representative to the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians for a term ending in March 2027:

Asia-Pacific Group

- Ms. S. Claydon (Australia)

3. Committee on Middle East Questions

The Governing Council elected the following member for a four-year term ending in October 2029:

- Ms. L. Procopio Quartapelle (Italy)

4. Bureau of Young Parliamentarians

The Forum elected the following member to its Bureau for the seat that was not filled at the 150th IPU Assembly, for a term ending in March 2027:

African Group

- Ms. J. Quashie (Ghana)

5. Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law

A vacancy remains for the Eurasia Group on this Committee.

6. High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG)

The Governing Council elected the following members for a four-year term ending in October 2029:

African Group

- Mr. K. Kabre (Burkina Faso)

Eurasia Group

- Two vacancies remain for this Group

Group of Latin America and the Caribbean

- Mr. A. Gajadien (Suriname)

7. Working Group on Science and Technology

The Governing Council elected the following members for a four-year term ending in October 2029:

Arab Group

- Ms. M. Aljaghoub (Jordan)

Asia-Pacific Group

- Ms. S. Kiran (Fiji)

Eurasia Group

- Two vacancies remain for this Group

Group of Latin America and the Caribbean

- Ms. B. Rodríguez (Uruguay)

Group of Twelve Plus

- Mr. B. Akburak (Türkiye)

8. Committee on Health

The Governing Council elected the following members for a four-year term ending in October 2029:

- Mr. M.I. Ravalia (Canada)
- Mr. H. Obeidat (Jordan)
- Mr. I. Danfa (Senegal)

The Committee elected Ms. O. Ataniyazova (Uzbekistan) as its President, for a period of one year.

9. Internal Auditors for the 2026 accounts

The Governing Council appointed the following Internal Auditors for the 2026 accounts:

- Mr. S. Patra (India)
- Mr. R. Parmessar (Suriname)

10. Bureaux of the Standing Committees

Further to consultations within the geopolitical groups on the agreed formula for the distribution of the positions of Presidents and Vice-Presidents of the Standing Committees, the following office holders were elected for the next two-year cycle, October 2025–October 2027:

Standing Committee on Peace and International Security

President: Mr. H. Mohammad (Malaysia)

Vice-President: Ms. F. Belhirsch (Netherlands)

Standing Committee on Sustainable Development

President: Ms. M. Al Suwaidi (United Arab Emirates)

Vice-President: Mr. C. Rendón García (Mexico)

Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights

President: the position remains vacant

Vice-President: Ms. F. Ilimi Haddouche (Algeria)

Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs

President: Ms. V. Centeno (Ecuador)

Vice-President: Mr. F. Al-Nouiri (Libya)

The Standing Committees also elected the following members to their respective Bureaux for terms ending in October 2027:

Standing Committee on Peace and International Security

Arab Group

- Mr. A.N. Salman Ahmed (Bahrain) for a second term
- Ms. S. Najem (Mauritania) for a first term

Eurasia Group

- Ms. A. Kuspan (Kazakhstan) for a second term
- One vacancy to replace Mr. K. Bayramov (Azerbaijan), who did not seek re-election for a second term

Asia-Pacific Group

- Ms. S. Faruqui (Pakistan) for a first term

Group of Latin America and the Caribbean

- A vacancy remains for this Group

Twelve Plus Group

- Ms. F. Belhirsch (Netherlands) for a second term

Standing Committee on Sustainable Development

African Group

- Mr. M.A. Bouchouit (Algeria) for a first term

Eurasia Group

- A vacancy remains for this Group

Twelve Plus Group

- Mr. A. Gerasymov (Ukraine) for a second term

Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights

African Group

- Mr. C. Lutundula Apala Pen' Apala (Democratic Republic of the Congo) for a first term

Eurasia Group

- Ms. A. Aghazada (Azerbaijan) for a second term
- A vacancy remains for this Group

Group of Latin America and the Caribbean

- Mr. E. Goerling (Argentina) for a first term
- Ms. R. Abed (Paraguay) for a first term

Twelve Plus Group

- Mr. M. De Maegd (Belgium) for a second term

Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs

African Group

- Mr. J. Uerikua (Namibia) for a first term

Arab Group

- Ms. R.S. Alyahya (Saudi Arabia) for a first term

Asia-Pacific Group

- Ms. M.I. Marcos (Philippines) for a first term

Eurasia Group

- A vacancy remains for this Group

Group of Latin America and the Caribbean

- Ms. V. Centeno (Ecuador) for a first term

Twelve Plus Group

- Ms. M. Tender (Portugal) for a first term

11. Rapporteurs

On the proposal of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights, the Assembly appointed Ms. F. Öncü (Türkiye), Mr. C. Lohr (Switzerland) and Ms. C. Mumma (Kenya) as co-Rapporteurs for the subject item *Inclusive social development for all: Parliamentary strategies to promote the rights and empowerment of people living with disabilities*.

Media and communications

The 151st IPU Assembly saw a substantial increase in website traffic, more views of the livestream, and consistent engagement levels across social media platforms comparable to previous Assemblies. There was also a noteworthy appetite for hard copies of the IPU's recent publications.

However, media coverage was lower than for previous Assemblies, probably due to media fatigue after the Sixth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, which had taken place just three months previously, also in Geneva.

Media

The IPU issued eight press releases and news pieces over the 10-day period.

The 151st Assembly was mentioned in some 2,500 media outlets, compared with 3,210 during the 150th IPU Assembly in Tashkent and 3,500 at the 149th Assembly in Geneva. Most coverage was from the national media accompanying their delegations. Indian media was particularly active at the Assembly.

Despite less interest from the UN media correspondents in Geneva, there was some local media coverage including from the France 3 Alpes TV, which produced a special piece following the French MPs from the region who were attending the Assembly, as well as local press reporting on anti-Russian demonstrations at the entrance to the conference centre.

Web, livestream and video on demand

More than 11,400 people in total watched the live feed of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians, the Governing Council and Assembly, compared with around 10,000 at the last two Assemblies.

The provision of video extracts of plenary speeches during the General Debate was again a popular service with delegates. The communications team clipped 26 requests for video on demand, mostly from the General Debate.

Over 26,000 people visited ipu.org over the two weeks around the Assembly (an increase of 4,000 compared with the 150th Assembly).

Some 80,000 web pages on ipu.org were viewed over the same period — up from around 70,000 during the last Assembly. Top visiting countries were the United States, France, Switzerland, India and China.

Social media platforms

Participants from over 100 countries contributed to the IPU [social media wall](#) using the dedicated hashtag #IPU151. Partners, guest speakers, MPs and parliamentary staff all posted. Türkiye was very active in promoting the 152nd IPU Assembly.

109 tweets were published on X over the fortnight, resulting in 44,000 impressions and an engagement rate of 2.5%. This is lower than previous Assemblies and is probably due to an exodus of MPs and parliaments from the platform or accounts being left to go dormant. Notably, there are now significantly fewer official parliament accounts on X.

The IPU's LinkedIn page had 8,600 impressions over the Assembly period, up from 7,000 in Tashkent, and gained 140 followers.

The IPU YouTube channel recorded 12,000 views over the two weeks around the Assembly and gained 85 subscribers.

On Instagram, 201 posts resulted in 130,285 impressions. Total views of the daily stories were 66,434. The IPU account gained 215 followers. Engagement rate was 4.5% (the Tashkent Assembly was slightly higher at 5.5%).

The initiative to mobilize the IPU's Gen Z interns (who produced eight videos as reporters at the Assembly) contributed to healthy viewing figures on Instagram.

On Facebook, IPU content reached 30,000 impressions and gained 300 new followers, twice as many as the last Assembly. 75,000 accounts visited the IPU page.

MP interviews

During the Assembly, the IPU team interviewed a dozen MPs and experts on various subjects, including the theme of the Assembly and the IPU's gender equality and climate campaigns.

Publications

There was strong demand for hard copies of the IPU publications displayed at the communications stand. An estimated 700 print copies of IPU publications in multiple languages were taken from the stand, including those launched at the Assembly and other recent products. The team had to replenish stocks several times during the Assembly.

Top ten demands were:

1. Issue brief on *Democratic checks, military balances: Parliamentary oversight in an era of rising military expenditure*
2. Toolkit on *Welcoming new parliamentarians: Good practices for onboarding and offboarding MPs*
3. *10 actions for gender equality*
4. Women in Politics: 2025 map
5. Women in Parliament 1995-2025
6. Issue brief on *Sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliaments in the Asia-Pacific region*
7. Infographic on *Youth participation in national parliaments 2025*
8. Report on the Sixth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament
9. *Parliamentary report on religion and belief – Working towards more peaceful and inclusive societies: Part II*
10. IPU Impact Report 2024

Photography

The team of photographers produced hundreds of high-quality photographs from some 75 sessions, bilateral meetings, signing ceremonies and other side events.

New contacts

Over 700 contacts were added to the IPU's central Zoho database, showing that IPU Assemblies bring together not just familiar but also new faces.

Membership of the Inter-Parliamentary Union¹

Members (183)

Afghanistan**, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic*, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo*, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia (The), Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti*, Honduras*, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar**, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Palestine, Panama, Papua New Guinea*, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Associate Members (15)

Andean Parliament*, Arab Parliament, Central American Parliament (PARLACEN), East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), European Parliament, Interparliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States (IPA CIS), Inter-Parliamentary Committee of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), Latin American and Caribbean Parliament (PARLATINO), MERCOSUR Parliament (PARLASUR), Pan-African Parliament, Parliament of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Parliament of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC)*, Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC), Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) and Parliamentary Assembly of La Francophonie (APF).

¹ As at the close of the 151st Assembly.

* Non-participating Members or Associate Members (all rights suspended)

** Members participating in the work of the IPU in a non-voting observer capacity

Agenda, resolutions and other texts of the 151st Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

1. Election of the President of the 151st Assembly
2. Consideration of requests for the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda
3. General Debate on the theme *Upholding humanitarian norms and supporting humanitarian action in times of crisis*
4. Special accountability segment on the implementation of IPU resolutions and other decisions
5. *Recognizing and supporting the victims of illegal international adoption and taking measures to prevent this practice*
(Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights)
6. Reports of the Standing Committees
7. Approval of the subject item for the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights at the 153rd IPU Assembly and appointment of the co-Rapporteurs
8. Amendments to the IPU Statutes and Rules
9. Parliamentary action against transnational organized crime, cybercrime and hybrid threats to democracy and human security

Geneva Declaration

Upholding humanitarian norms and supporting humanitarian action in times of crisis

*Endorsed by the 151st IPU Assembly
(Geneva, 23 October 2025)*

We, Members of Parliament from around the world participating in the 151st IPU Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland, reaffirm our commitment to uphold and promote respect for international humanitarian law (IHL) and support humanitarian action.

We are meeting at a time of unprecedented levels of armed violence involving State and non-State actors, which has brought about major humanitarian challenges. Civilians bear the brunt of hostilities, especially women and girls, who have been disproportionately affected, along with the most vulnerable — children, the elderly, people with disabilities, displaced persons, and the wounded and sick. Civilian infrastructure, hospitals, and medical and relief personnel have also come under attack.

We recall that IHL was designed to ensure a balance between the principles of humanity and military necessity. Its norms and principles aim to alleviate suffering and protect human dignity during armed conflict by protecting individuals who are not, or are no longer, participating in hostilities and by restricting the means and methods of warfare. They represent the minimum standards of common humanity in the battlefield and must be respected by all parties to armed conflict at all times.

The 1949 Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols are the core of IHL, adopted as a multilateral response to the horrors of the Second World War. The four Geneva Conventions have been universally ratified and largely incorporated into customary international law, binding on all our States and all parties to armed conflicts.

Over time, and in response to developments in warfare, other important IHL instruments, such as the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) and the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), were also adopted. These treaties aim to ban specific weapons due to the devastating humanitarian consequences resulting from their use, including consequences that last long after armed conflicts have ended.

These humanitarian instruments were created to minimize civilian suffering during armed conflict, and their *raison d'être* is therefore to be applied and respected in times of armed conflict. IHL treaties are tools of protection, which must not be applied selectively, interpreted permissively or used as political tools. Upholding these norms means preserving the moral values that unite us.

Since their adoption, IHL-related legal frameworks, when enforced and respected, have saved millions of lives and considerably limited the impact of armed conflicts on our citizens, their lives and their future. While new methods and means of warfare have emerged over time as a result of technological developments, existing IHL rules remain valid and must continue to apply, including to cyber military operations, autonomous weapons systems, and artificial intelligence used in military planning and decision-making.

Humanitarian action is also facing increased challenges.

The current global environment has led to increased politicization of humanitarian assistance and has heavily jeopardized humanitarian action. Questions of access to conflict zones and the capacity to deliver aid have become major concerns. Funding cuts to humanitarian aid worldwide have left the humanitarian system at a breaking point, with many of those in need of assistance at risk of losing their lives.

We recall the importance of supporting principled humanitarian action — meaning humanitarian activities carried out in accordance with the fundamental principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence. Furthermore, IHL imposes an obligation on all parties to a conflict to allow and facilitate the rapid and unimpeded passage of impartial humanitarian assistance. This means that

hospitals, healthcare centres, ambulances and humanitarian convoys must never be targeted or misused for military purposes; medical ethics must be upheld; and medical personnel must never be coerced to act against their humanitarian duties.

We recall the importance of providing adequate financial support for the activities of humanitarian organizations and express our support for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, including the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the United Nations humanitarian agencies and other humanitarian organizations. We commend the vital work done by humanitarian professionals, often at great personal risk. Their protection and independence must be ensured at all times. We welcome the [Declaration for the Protection of Humanitarian Personnel](#), launched at the 80th UN General Assembly, and call on IPU Member Parliaments to encourage their respective governments to endorse it.

In a time of proliferating armed conflicts, increased polarization and inequality, and widespread misinformation, a strong and sustained political commitment to respect and ensure respect for IHL and support humanitarian action is more necessary than ever. We parliamentarians recognize that we have a key role to play through our legislative, oversight and representation functions.

We therefore pledge to work to:

Strengthen the current IHL legal framework and its enforcement by:

- pursuing efforts towards accession to or ratification of IHL treaties;
- ensuring the full incorporation of IHL into domestic legislation by adopting new legislation and/or reviewing and amending legislation to enshrine IHL obligations in our national legal frameworks;
- integrating IHL into military training by ensuring that defence budgets include provisions for recurrent IHL training for armed and security forces;
- making sure that effective sanction mechanisms for domestic repression of IHL violations are put in place, including by adopting appropriate criminal legislation and ensuring that national judicial authorities have the legislative means to prosecute those who are responsible for serious IHL violations and war crimes;
- strengthening our oversight functions to ensure that all government decisions related to the use of armed force, arms transfer or peace operations are based on evidence and consistent with IHL obligations and that the humanitarian impact of decisions taken is clearly considered;
- supporting regional and global mechanisms established to end impunity for the perpetrators of IHL violations, including the International Criminal Court established by the Rome Statute.

Prevent violations of IHL by:

- supporting the establishment or strengthening of national IHL committees that assist the government in implementing, monitoring compliance with and spreading knowledge of IHL;
- allocating predictable and multi-year financial resources for IHL capacity-building and national implementation;
- integrating IHL expertise into our own parliamentary research and legislative services to ensure that new laws are compatible with our States' obligations under IHL, including by establishing a parliamentary body dealing with matters pertaining to IHL;
- shaping public understanding of humanitarian norms and action by using our influence as opinion leaders and representatives of the people to speak out to reaffirm the relevance of IHL, counter misinformation, and promote mutual respect and dialogue;
- combating the "dehumanization" that often accompanies conflict and polarization and leads to the erosion of empathy and the normalization of suffering, and recognizing that IHL protects all persons affected by armed conflict, irrespective of the party to the conflict to which they belong or with which are affiliated.

Support the provision of principled humanitarian action by:

- adopting laws and administrative frameworks ensuring rapid and unimpeded humanitarian access, while safeguarding the neutrality, impartiality and independence of humanitarian action, and ensuring that these provisions are known and implemented;
- reviewing national sanctions and counter-terrorism frameworks to ensure that their scope, if broadly regulated, does not adversely affect the activities carried out by impartial, neutral and independent humanitarian organizations;
- advocating for humanitarian assistance and providing political and financial support to national and international humanitarian aid agencies.

Strengthen the global humanitarian ecosystem by:

- building partnerships nationally, regionally and globally with relevant IHL stakeholders;
- strengthening cooperation with the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, including the ICRC, UN humanitarian agencies and humanitarian organizations;
- adopting a multisectoral and inclusive approach in our work, which is essential to advancing the humanitarian agenda. This includes addressing broader political, social and development challenges that amplify civilian suffering in situations of armed conflict, and taking into account the needs of those most vulnerable in times of armed conflict;
- ensuring the meaningful participation of women and youth in decision-making processes, both within parliament and beyond. Women and girls, in particular, contend with structural gender inequality, including in conflict contexts. Taking into account these differences when implementing IHL will result in better protection for all;
- investing in parliamentary diplomacy and dialogue as indispensable tools for the preservation and renewal of multilateral values such as inclusion, solidarity, cooperation, shared responsibility and a rules-based international order.

We welcome the ongoing [Global Initiative to Galvanize Political Commitment to International Humanitarian Law](#), launched by the ICRC together with Brazil, China, France, Jordan, Kazakhstan and South Africa, and the UN Secretary-General's [global campaign](#) to uphold the norms of humanitarian disarmament and strengthen mine action. We commit to raising awareness in our parliaments about these initiatives and to encourage our governments to formally endorse and actively participate in them.

We emphasize that the IPU plays a unique role by making IHL a political priority in the global parliamentary agenda. We encourage the IPU to continue mainstreaming IHL in its activities and to enhance technical support to parliaments in this area. We encourage the IPU to continue building partnerships with the ICRC, the United Nations and other stakeholders to ensure that parliaments remain effective champions of humanitarian norms and action at the global level.

Let us be advocates for humanity, compassion and the rule of law.

We pledge to take this Declaration back to our respective parliaments, disseminate the outcome of our collective work to our national authorities and seek to implement its principles through legislative, budgetary, oversight and representative actions. We commit to sustaining this agenda within our parliaments, and through ongoing inter-parliamentary dialogue and cooperation, including under the auspices of the IPU.

IPU leadership statement on the situation in Madagascar

*Issued at the 151st IPU Assembly
(Geneva, 23 October 2025)*

On behalf of the global parliamentary community, we wish to express our deep concern about the military takeover in Madagascar and the suspension of the Constitution.

We deplore the loss of life, injuries and destruction of property resulting from the unrest.

We call for immediate coordinated international action to address the ongoing crisis in Madagascar.

The situation unfolding represents not just a grave threat to the stability of the Southern African region, it also sets a dangerous precedent for democracy across the whole continent, in clear violation of international law.

When one democracy falters, it weakens democracy everywhere.

Madagascar's current instability threatens to escalate the humanitarian emergency in the country, with large-scale displacement and suffering of people, especially among the most vulnerable, including elderly people and children.

We call for calm, restraint and inclusive dialogue.

We stand ready to work with other international bodies, including the United Nations, the Southern African Development Community and the African Union, for a peaceful resolution of the crisis and the restoration of constitutional order.

The IPU and the global parliamentary community are here to actively support a functioning, representative and effective parliamentary democracy that serves and delivers for all the people of Madagascar.

*Tulia Ackson, IPU President, and
Martin Chungong, IPU Secretary General*

Recognizing and supporting the victims of illegal international adoption and taking measures to prevent this practice

Resolution adopted by consensus by the 151st IPU Assembly
(Geneva, 23 October 2025)*

The 151st Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Recalling the fundamental principles of human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1989, in particular its Article 21, as well as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2006, all of which emphasize the primacy of the best interests of the child, principles reaffirmed in the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children of 1990 and in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

Referring in particular to Article 7 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which relates to birth registration and the right to identity, as well as to Article 8, which obliges States Parties to provide appropriate assistance in re-establishing the identity of a child who has been illegally deprived thereof,

Referring also to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, adopted in 2000, in particular its Article 3, and the 2009 Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children,

Taking into consideration international conventions, such as the 1993 Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption, that aim to ensure that intercountry adoptions are lawful, and in the best interests of the child, and respect his or her fundamental rights, while preventing the abduction, sale and trafficking of children, and *recognizing* that some States, consistent with their domestic laws and cultural or religious principles, provide for alternative child care and placement systems, such as guardianship or kafala, instead of adoption as defined in the 1993 Hague Convention,

Acknowledging the particular vulnerability of children who are internationally displaced due to conflict, as recognized by the Hague Recommendation on Refugee Children,

Acknowledging also the growing global movement of illegally adopted individuals who are courageously advocating for justice and remedies for the grave human rights violations they have endured, and *affirming* their fundamental rights to truth, identity and redress, and their right to meaningful participation in all relevant processes affecting their lives,

Recognizing that illegal intercountry adoption compromises the safety and dignity of children and families while undermining the integrity of lawful adoption systems and eroding trust among States, institutions and communities,

Noting the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, and in particular its Article 25, which requires States Parties to take the necessary,

Noting also the *Joint statement on illegal intercountry adoption*, issued on 29 September 2022 by the UN Committee on Enforced Disappearances on behalf of several other UN bodies and special rapporteurs, which affirms that illegal adoptions may amount to crimes against humanity,

Referring to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime,

Recognizing that the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court classifies the deportation, transfer, or illegal adoption of children, particularly in times of armed conflict, as war crimes or crimes against humanity when committed as part of widespread or systematic attacks; *recalling* that relevant international mechanisms have acknowledged the gravity of such acts, including through the issuing of arrest warrants against the perpetrators of such crimes by the International Criminal Court; and *emphasizing* the importance of States' cooperation with these mechanisms to ensure justice, accountability and the protection of children in conflict situations,

Considering that illegal intercountry adoptions may constitute a form of human trafficking, and hinder progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, which serve as critical enablers of peace and prosperity, in particular target 16.2, which aims to “end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children”,

Considering also that it is of utmost importance for parliaments, together with their governments, to raise public awareness of the negative impact of illegal intercountry adoption on children,

Recalling the resolution *Orphanage trafficking: The role of parliaments in reducing harm*, adopted at the 147th IPU Assembly on 27 October 2023, and the resolution *Parliamentary impetus to local and regional development of countries with high levels of international migration and to stopping all forms, including state-sponsored, of human-trafficking and human rights abuses*, adopted at the 145th IPU Assembly on 15 October 2022, which reaffirmed “the right of every human being to be free from arbitrary deportation by a foreign power, such as the Russian Federation’s forced displacement of Ukrainian civilians, including thousands of children, from the temporarily occupied territories to the Russian Federation”,

Deeply concerned by the persistence of illegal intercountry adoptions, often involving child trafficking, forced separations, and identity falsifications, which constitute serious violations of children’s rights and inflict lasting trauma on victims, their families and their communities,

Aware that these illegal adoptions create devastating situations for children, who, as victims, suffer from a vicious circle of multiple losses, including loss of identity and cultural heritage, biological family, psychological stability, protection from abuse and exploitation, and often civil rights, and are sometimes exposed to ideological indoctrination, making an immediate and adequate response essential to address these injustices,

Recognizing that there are three categories of victims in these situations: the children, who may face challenges related to their roots, cultural identity, and ties with their biological parents; the biological parents, who are deprived of their fundamental right to care for their child, often resulting in grief; and the adoptive parents, who may have been misled by intermediaries or authorities, and who may suffer distress or feelings of guilt upon discovering the circumstances of the adoption,

Recognizing also that illegally adopted children may be exposed to forms of exploitation such as begging, prostitution and pornography, drug trafficking, or recruitment by armed groups, particularly in the context of armed conflicts,

Deeply concerned by various reports published by United Nations specialized agencies, in particular UNICEF and its partners, on the situation of children in armed conflict zones and the alarming increase in cases of abduction, unlawful detention, illegal adoption, identity falsification and military recruitment of victims by armed groups, especially terrorist and separatist groups; and *recalling* that the military recruitment of children is considered “a war crime” and is prohibited by international conventions and treaties, in particular the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption, the Vancouver Principles, and the Paris Principles,

Recalling that, in the context of armed conflicts, Article 50 of the Fourth Geneva Convention prohibits an Occupying Power from changing the personal status of a child, including through adoption,

Specifying that the administrative consequences for victims of illegal adoptions can also lead to human rights violations as they relate to nationality and identity, creating obstacles in accessing education, marriage, name changes or legally recognizing a child,

Emphasizing that many children who are victims of illegal adoption remain unaware of their status until adulthood, and that this could be taken into consideration regarding limitation periods of crimes,

Emphasizing also that adoption procedures must be transparent, and that, in particular, financial aspects, the prevention of closed adoption practices and the oversight of adoption bodies, including private agencies, by the State or independent entities, must be strengthened to prevent abuses and to ensure respect for the full rights and best interests of the child,

Emphasizing further that international collaboration and cooperation, using relevant international instruments to curb illegal intercountry adoption, will minimize this criminal practice against children,

Recognizing that gender-based discrimination and violence, often rooted in patriarchal norms and moral and religious constructs regarding the social or marital status of the mother, the exclusion of persons belonging to minorities and Indigenous Peoples, and gaps in national legislation, have been key drivers of illegal adoption,

Aware that limited domestic care options, corruption, economic hardship, poverty, disability, helplessness, migration, forced displacement, parental incarceration, substance abuse and lack of social support from relevant authorities are additional driving factors behind the unnecessary separation of children from their families and must be duly taken into account,

Recognizing the essential role of parliaments in preventing, monitoring and punishing practices that violate children's rights, and in harmonizing national legislation with international human rights standards,

Recognizing also that new technologies, including artificial intelligence and digital record-keeping, can play a vital role in the prevention and detection of identity fraud related to illegal adoptions,

Aware that international conflicts and instability create conditions conducive to the operation of child trafficking networks, including those involved in illegal adoptions,

Concerned that illegal adoptions, as a modern form of trafficking in persons, are increasingly facilitated through digital platforms and online networks, which pose new challenges for prevention and enforcement,

1. *Urges* States that are not currently Contracting Parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and/or to the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption to strengthen their national child adoption frameworks in line with the Conventions' principles, including by considering the possibility of adopting the relevant and necessary procedures to acquire such status; and *reaffirms* that States Parties must ensure and promote the proper functioning of legal procedures for intercountry adoption in accordance with the best interests of the child;
2. *Urges* all States, regardless of whether they are parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child or the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption, to formally acknowledge the existence of illegal intercountry adoptions and their impact on the children and their families, and to implement the necessary legal, administrative and investigative measures to bring to account those responsible and to prevent their occurrence and recurrence, in accordance with relevant international agreements, while maintaining confidence in legal adoptions carried out in accordance with international standards;
3. *Also urges* all States to formally recognize the persons affected by illegal intercountry adoptions (adopted children, biological parents and adoptive parents) as victims, to issue an apology and commit to providing them with appropriate support, protection, access to justice, remedies and, where possible, reunification; finding a balance between recognizing suffering and ensuring accountability for those involved, making it clear that legal adoptions remain a valid form of protection and should not be stigmatized;

4. *Condemns* in the strongest terms the unlawful deportation, transfer and adoption of children from occupied territories, and *stresses* that such acts constitute grave breaches of international humanitarian law;
5. *Also condemns* the transfer of thousands of Ukrainian children by the Russian Federation from occupied territories, which facilitates unlawful adoption and constitutes a violation of the Russian Federation's obligations under international humanitarian law, including the prohibition on interfering with the personal identity, nationality and family ties of children as set out in Article 50 of the Fourth Geneva Convention;
6. *Urges* States to assess the extent to which the national legal framework should classify illegal intercountry adoption as a form of human trafficking in accordance with their respective legal systems, and to explore effective measures for the prevention of such practices; and *further urges* parliaments to adopt legislation defining the military recruitment of persons who were victims of illegal intercountry adoptions as a war crime;
7. *Urges* parliaments to advocate for the establishment of national protocols for reporting and investigating allegations of child trafficking, abduction and sale in intercountry adoption, as proactive measures to detect and address such acts; these protocols must ensure accessible reporting mechanisms, independent and transparent investigation and the protection of all victims;
8. *Calls upon* parliaments to conduct independent investigations to identify legislative, administrative or judicial failures that allowed these illegal adoptions, and to take both concrete steps to remedy these failures and reparative measures to ensure justice is delivered to victims of such practices and support them;
9. *Also calls upon* parliaments to introduce or strengthen legal sanctions for individuals or institutions — including private agencies, healthcare workers and officials — found complicit in illegal adoption practices;
10. *Urges* the strengthening of international cooperation and the establishment of regional and multilateral task forces to coordinate efforts against illegal intercountry adoptions to prevent them, and to promote the exchange of good practices that strengthen legal systems for intercountry adoption, through existing bilateral or multilateral arrangements and relevant international instruments, enhanced monitoring systems, information exchange between States, joint investigations and the sanctioning of criminal networks involved in these activities, as well as through aligning legal practices and cooperation with international justice mechanisms, including the International Criminal Court, in investigating and prosecuting cases of unlawful deportation and adoption of children;
11. *Urges* the various United Nations agencies, in particular the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees and UN peacekeeping missions, to contribute to the prevention of illegal intercountry adoptions, in particular by establishing a register of persons who are victims of illegal intercountry adoptions in areas of armed conflict;
12. *Calls upon* parliaments to actively address the underlying drivers of illegal intercountry adoptions, with particular attention to gender stereotypes related to a mother's social or marital status, xenophobia, poverty and discrimination, such as the targeting of specific population groups, including ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, migrants, refugees and Indigenous Peoples; and *stresses* that the adoption of children from ethnic groups must respect their rights, particularly their right to preserve their cultural, linguistic and ethnic identity, in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child;
13. *Also calls upon* parliaments to enact legislation to regulate the activities of private adoption agencies;
14. *Further calls upon* parliaments to prevent illegal intercountry adoptions by strengthening social protection systems, investing in parenting support, and ensuring access to essential services;

15. *Urges* States to develop and implement secure, centralized digital systems for tracking adoption procedures, including biometric data and digital birth registration, to prevent falsification of identity and ensure accountability;
16. *Calls upon* States, in cooperation with civil society and international actors, to support and, where necessary, establish mechanisms for the identification, tracing and return of unlawfully deported or adopted children, ensuring their best interests, including family reunification or appropriate care in their country of origin, and the restoration of their legal identity and nationality;
17. *Also calls upon* States to establish financial and structural support for victims of illegal intercountry adoptions, including:
 - (a) Facilitated access to archives to help victims trace their origins;
 - (b) Guarantees that the potential annulment of their adoption does not result in any loss of civil rights, nationality or identity;
 - (c) Psychological, legal, social and administrative assistance for victims and their families that is accessible, with associated fees waived for victims;
 - (d) Facilitation of name changes to reclaim lost identities;
 - (e) Elimination of the statute of limitations for such offences, allowing victims who discover the truth later to still pursue legal action;
 - (f) The establishment of DNA databases with due consideration for privacy, informed consent and related safeguards;
 - (g) The establishment of language re-learning and cultural reintegration programmes for illegally adopted persons wishing to reconnect with their country of origin;
 - (h) The inclusion of victims' organizations in processes related to truth-seeking, opening of archives, legal support, and public awareness-raising;
 - (i) The creation of national or international trust funds to finance legal aid, DNA testing, therapy and travel for victims of illegal adoptions seeking justice or family reunification;
18. *Urges* States to include case studies of illegal intercountry adoptions in the training programmes of judges, prosecutors, lawyers, police officers, social workers, and diplomats, especially consuls, in order to strengthen their capacity to identify and address such situations;
19. *Also urges* States to strengthen comprehensive cooperation with one another, including through bilateral, regional and multilateral mechanisms, in order to share best practices, lessons learned, and success stories in adoption processes, while ensuring that such practices are consistent with internationally binding legal instruments;
20. *Urges* parliaments to recommend that their respective governments establish reparative measures for victims through legal compensation mechanisms, as well as through support in tracing their origins;
21. *Also urges* parliaments to recommend that their respective governments promote increased vigilance in conflict zones and humanitarian crises, where the risk of illegal intercountry adoptions and child trafficking, as well as the military recruitment of children, is heightened, by reinforcing child protection measures in these contexts, ensuring that the rights and specific needs of women and girls are fully addressed, as they are among the groups most vulnerable to violations in situations of conflict and humanitarian emergencies; and, where appropriate, temporarily suspending intercountry adoptions in those areas and focusing on training officials in the detection of child abduction at borders, airports and maritime crossings;
22. *Urges* States and parliaments to strengthen the monitoring and regulation of digital platforms to prevent their misuse in facilitating illegal adoptions and related trafficking activities;

23. *Encourages* the establishment of senior official-level platforms for regular dialogue and technical assistance to enhance transparency, oversight and accountability in intercountry adoption systems;
24. *Urges* States to collaborate with international bodies such as the United Nations and the International Criminal Court to address cases of illegal intercountry adoptions and the military recruitment of victims within an international justice framework and recognize these acts as serious human rights violations that may constitute crimes against humanity, and to propose new avenues of redress for victims;
25. *Invites* States to consider adopting relevant legislation that would create a legal basis for prosecuting perpetrators of the crime of illegal adoption on a universal level;
26. *Urges* parliaments to prioritize national adoption to preserve children's social and cultural ties, and to ensure that adoptions in conflict zones are carried out only through internationally recognized agencies such as the United Nations or the International Committee of the Red Cross;
27. *Calls upon* parliaments to raise awareness among authorities and the general public, through information campaigns and, where appropriate, to include in school curricula and broader educational modules the importance of transparent adoption procedures that comply with international law and ethical principles;
28. *Urges* parliaments to ensure effective, well-resourced and independent oversight of adoption processes, guaranteeing that decisions are made with transparency and full respect for the best interests of the child and that whistleblowers and witnesses are protected from retaliation, thereby safeguarding the credibility of legal intercountry adoptions;
29. *Calls on* the competent authorities to ensure that the public acknowledgment of cases of illegal intercountry adoptions does not result in the stigmatization of adopted children, by establishing strict safeguards for confidentiality and the protection of identity;
30. *Invites* States and their parliaments to preserve their archives and ensure the collection of reliable data on cases of illegal intercountry adoptions and the military recruitment of victims, where appropriate in collaboration with international institutions, in order to assess the scale of the phenomenon and improve policy responses, and to collect and share data on good practices in legal adoption systems;
31. *Urges* States to integrate a gender-responsive perspective and apply the principle of non-discrimination in line with international human rights standards, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, into all measures aimed at preventing and combating illegal intercountry adoption, as well as when providing remedies and support to victims, and to ensure that the rights and specific needs of women and girls are fully addressed;
32. *Invites* States and parliaments to adopt policies that strengthen and promote legal systems for intercountry adoption to provide children deprived of parental care with the opportunity for a safe and loving family environment, in accordance with international law;
33. *Invites* the Inter-Parliamentary Union and national parliaments to strengthen their cooperation with the relevant United Nations bodies with a view to implementing action plans to prevent illegal intercountry adoptions; and *urges* the IPU Executive Committee to consider the proposal for the IPU and its partners to organize a parliamentary conference on the prevention of illegal intercountry adoptions.

*- The Russian Federation expressed its opposition to the entire text of the resolution.
 - Belarus expressed a reservation on the entire text of the resolution.

Global call for parliamentary solidarity and coordinated action on Madagascar

Results of roll-call vote on the request of the delegations of South Africa, on behalf of the African Group for the inclusion of an emergency item

Results

Affirmative votes743 Total of affirmative and negative votes ..881
 Negative votes138 Two-thirds majority587
 Abstentions468

Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.
Albania		Absent		Finland			12	Norway			12
Algeria	16			France	18			Oman	12		
Andorra		10		Gambia (The)	Absent			Pakistan			22
Angola	15			Georgia			10	Palestine	Absent		
Argentina		16		Germany	9		10	Paraguay			12
Armenia			11	Ghana	15			Peru		15	
Australia			14	Greece	5		8	Philippines	Absent		
Austria	6		6	Hungary		10		Poland		15	
Azerbaijan	Absent			Iceland			10	Portugal		13	
Bahamas	Absent			India	23			Qatar	Absent		
Bahrain	11			Iran (Islamic Republic of)	19			Republic of Korea	17		
Belarus	10			Ireland	Absent			Romania			13
Belgium		13		Italy			17	Russian Federation	20		
Benin	Absent			Jamaica	Absent			Rwanda	13		
Bhutan			10	Japan	10			San Marino	Absent		
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Absent			Jordan	13			Saudi Arabia	15		
Botswana	11			Kazakhstan	Absent			Senegal	Absent		
Brazil			22	Kenya	17			Serbia			12
Brunei Darussalam	Absent			Lao People's Dem. Republic			12	Singapore			12
Bulgaria	Absent			Latvia		11		Slovenia			11
Burkina Faso	Absent			Lesotho	11			Somalia	13		
Burundi	Absent			Libya	12			South Africa	18		
Cabo Verde	10			Liechtenstein			10	South Sudan	13		
Cambodia	Absent			Lithuania		11		Spain			16
Canada	16			Luxembourg	Absent			Sri Lanka		14	
Chad	13			Malaysia	15			Suriname	2		8
Chile			13	Maldives	10			Sweden			13
China			23	Malta	10			Switzerland			12
Costa Rica	5		5	Mauritania	12			Thailand			18
Croatia			10	Mauritius	11			Tunisia	13		
Cyprus	6		5	Mexico			20	Türkiye	19		
Czechia		10		Monaco	Absent			Turkmenistan	Absent		
DR of the Congo	20			Montenegro			10	Uganda	Absent		
Denmark	6		6	Morocco	10			Ukraine	Absent		
Djibouti	11			Mozambique	15			United Arab Emirates	13		
Dominican Rep.			13	Namibia	11			United Kingdom	18		
Ecuador			10	Nepal	14			Uruguay	10		1
Egypt	Absent			Netherlands	6		7	Uzbekistan	Absent		
Equatorial Guinea	11			New Zealand			12	Viet Nam			20
Estonia	Absent			Niger	Absent			Yemen	13		
Eswatini	11			Nigeria	22			Zambia	14		
Ethiopia	20			North Macedonia	11			Zimbabwe	13		
Fiji	10										

N.B. This list does not include delegations present at the session which were not entitled to vote pursuant to the provisions of Articles 5.2 and 5.3 of the Statutes. Parliaments participating in the IPU in a non-voting observer capacity in accordance with the decision of the 209th session of the Governing Council in Nusa Dua do not appear on this list.

Parliamentary action against transnational organized crime, cybercrime and hybrid threats to democracy and human security

Results of roll-call vote on the request of the delegations of Thailand, Argentina, Chile, Poland and Sweden, with the support of the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean and the Twelve Plus Group for the inclusion of an emergency item

Results

Affirmative votes..... 834 Total of affirmative and negative votes ..1,069
 Negative votes 235 Two-thirds majority..... 713
 Abstentions 280

Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.
Albania	Absent			Finland	12			Norway	12		
Algeria		16		France	18			Oman			12
Andorra	10			Gambia (The)	Absent			Pakistan		11	11
Angola		15		Georgia	10			Palestine	Absent		
Argentina	16			Germany	19			Paraguay	12		
Armenia	11			Ghana		15		Peru	15		
Australia	14			Greece	13			Philippines	Absent		
Austria	12			Hungary	10			Poland	15		
Azerbaijan	Absent			Iceland	10			Portugal	13		
Bahamas	Absent			India			23	Qatar	Absent		
Bahrain	11			Iran (Islamic Republic of)	19			Republic of Korea	17		
Belarus			10	Ireland	Absent			Romania	13		
Belgium	13			Italy	17			Russian Federation		20	
Benin	Absent			Jamaica	Absent			Rwanda			13
Bhutan	10			Japan	10			San Marino	Absent		
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Absent			Jordan			13	Saudi Arabia			15
Botswana		11		Kazakhstan	Absent			Senegal	Absent		
Brazil	22			Kenya			17	Serbia	12		
Brunei Darussalam	Absent			Lao People's Dem. Republic	12			Singapore	12		
Bulgaria	Absent			Latvia	11			Slovenia	11		
Burkina Faso	Absent			Lesotho			11	Somalia	13		
Burundi	Absent			Libya		12		South Africa		18	
Cabo Verde	5		5	Liechtenstein	10			South Sudan			13
Cambodia	Absent			Lithuania	11			Spain	16		
Canada	16			Luxembourg	Absent			Sri Lanka	14		
Chad	13			Malaysia	8	7		Suriname	10		
Chile	13			Maldives	10			Sweden	13		
China		10	13	Malta	10			Switzerland	12		
Costa Rica	10			Mauritania			12	Thailand	18		
Croatia	10			Mauritius	1	10		Tunisia			13
Cyprus	6		5	Mexico	20			Türkiye			19
Czechia	10			Monaco	Absent			Turkmenistan	Absent		
DR of the Congo		20		Montenegro	10			Uganda	Absent		
Denmark	12			Morocco		10		Ukraine	Absent		
Djibouti			11	Mozambique			15	United Arab Emirates			13
Dominican Rep.	13			Namibia		11		United Kingdom	18		
Ecuador	10			Nepal			14	Uruguay	11		
Egypt	Absent			Netherlands	13			Uzbekistan	Absent		
Equatorial Guinea		11		New Zealand	12			Viet Nam	20		
Estonia	Absent			Niger	Absent			Yemen	13		
Eswatini		11		Nigeria			22	Zambia		14	
Ethiopia	20			North Macedonia	11			Zimbabwe		13	
Fiji	10										

N.B. This list does not include delegations present at the session which were not entitled to vote pursuant to the provisions of Articles 5.2 and 5.3 of the Statutes. Parliaments participating in the IPU in a non-voting observer capacity in accordance with the decision of the 209th session of the Governing Council in Nusa Dua do not appear on this list.

Parliamentary action against transnational organized crime, cybercrime and hybrid threats to democracy and human security

*Resolution adopted unanimously by the 151st IPU Assembly
(Geneva, 23 October 2025)*

The 151st Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Recalling the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including respect for national sovereignty, territorial integrity, non-intervention in internal affairs, and the peaceful resolution of disputes, as well as of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC, 2000), the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC, 2003), and other relevant international instruments,

Reaffirming the commitment of the IPU, alongside other institutions and civil society, to democracy, peace, human rights and the rule of law as the foundations of legitimate governance, and *taking note* of the forthcoming United Nations Convention against Cybercrime,

Alarmed by the growing convergence between transnational organized crime, drug trafficking, cybercrime and hybrid threats, which endangers democratic institutions, national security and global stability, and undermines democracy, corrupts institutions and destroys the social and economic fabric of our societies,

Deeply concerned about attacks, threats, online gender-based violence and assassinations targeting parliamentarians, journalists, and political, civic and business leaders for their role in defending transparency and the rule of law,

Recognizing the need to strengthen cooperation among national parliaments, the United Nations, the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and regional organizations to harmonize legislative frameworks and counter these evolving threats, particularly cyber-enabled fraud, human trafficking, illicit drugs, money laundering, and related abuses that are increasingly transnational in scope,

Taking note of the Letter of Intent signed between the IPU and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in June 2025 and their shared commitment to strengthen parliamentary capacities in the fight against organized crime,

Alarmed by a recent UNODC report¹ that reveals the industrial-scale proliferation of scam compounds across Southeast Asia, where hundreds of thousands of victims from more than 70 countries around the world have been trafficked and coerced into cyber scams,

Deeply alarmed that scam compounds are rapidly transforming from regional criminal hubs into a globalized shadow economy, that they exploit governance gaps in developing regions under the facade of investment, city-building or entertainment complexes, often enabled by complicit local power brokers, and that they are now generating revenues rivalling national GDPs and are expanding globally,

Acknowledging the reports of UNODC (2025) and others, which reveal alarming levels of digital scam exploitation, human trafficking, disinformation and corruption by State and non-State actors, including operations directly linked to organized criminal syndicates, illicit online marketplaces and underground banking systems, generating annual revenues exceeding USD 50-75 billion,

Deeply concerned by recent instances of both State and non-State actors using coordinated cyber intrusions, sabotage of critical infrastructure, espionage and targeted disinformation campaigns affecting multiple countries across continents,

¹ UNODC, [Inflection Point: Global Implications of Scam Centres, Underground Banking and Illicit Online Marketplaces in Southeast Asia](#), April 2025.

Recalling that transnational criminal networks exploit governance gaps, special economic zones, conflict-affected areas and casinos to launder the proceeds of crime, fuelling corruption, destabilizing communities, violating human rights, undermining sovereignty, threatening regional stability, hindering development, and challenging international efforts to combat organized crime and uphold the rule of law,

Recalling also striking examples of the destructive use of hybrid tactics by State actors, including indiscriminate use of military force, cyber operations and psychological warfare,

Concerned that victims, including women, children and other vulnerable groups, are subjected to forced cyber scams under threat of torture and detention, and often risk re-trafficking or additional violations of their rights,

Recognizing the role of parliaments in strengthening legislation, oversight and cooperation to address the intersection between cybercrime, human trafficking, money laundering and corruption, while ensuring that countermeasures fully uphold humanitarian and human rights principles,

Considering that the transnational and technologically advanced nature of criminal organizations creates an asymmetry that strengthens their expansion and influence, requiring justice and security institutions to respond through supranational institutions and technologically advanced strategies and means, and *recognizing* that such threats become even more serious when the actors involved are States or operate with State support,

Recognizing the IPU's role and policy focus in providing a global platform for multilateral dialogue among national parliaments on peace and security issues, and in facilitating tangible solutions through its 2022–2026 Strategy under Strategic Objective 4: Catalysing collective parliamentary action,

1. *Declares* that the fight against transnational organized crime, drug trafficking, cybercrime and hybrid threats — whether perpetrated by State or non-State actors — is a global priority requiring unified parliamentary action and strong democratic governance, and *urges* parliaments to consider measures to ensure accountability for perpetrators of such crimes;
2. *Condemns* all forms of organized crime, including cyber-enabled human trafficking, forced criminality and modern slavery, perpetrated by both State and non-State actors, with particular attention to the disproportionate impact on women and children, and *urges* parliaments to adopt legislation and policies that promote victim-centred approaches and ensure the protection and rehabilitation of all victims and survivors;
3. *Stresses* the importance of addressing the root causes of vulnerability, including poverty, lack of education, inequality, human trafficking, conflict and corruption, which fuel recruitment into scam compounds, and *urges* the relevant authorities to implement practical solutions to tackle these issues;
4. *Urges* IPU Member Parliaments to update national legislation in a manner consistent with applicable international laws to combat State and non-State participation in cybercrime and improve parliamentary oversight mechanisms of security and intelligence agencies, ensuring respect for the rule of law and human rights, while also ensuring that cybercrime measures do not result in violations of humanitarian principles or secondary victimization of trafficked persons;
5. *Urges* parliaments to strengthen national legal frameworks to:
 - (a) criminalize coercion for the purpose of cyber scams;
 - (b) increase sanctions on security companies implicated in abuses;
 - (c) close legal loopholes exploited by illicit online gambling, cryptocurrency laundering and underground banking systems;
 - (d) review electoral, financial and transparency laws to prevent the infiltration of organized crime and foreign interference in democratic institutions;
 - (e) enhance independent oversight of State security and law enforcement bodies to prevent complicity in trafficking and cybercrime;
 - (f) increase sanctions on any civil servants and governments involved in abuses;

6. *Calls for* the protection of parliamentarians and *requests* the IPU Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians to monitor and document attacks against them;
7. *Invites* governments and parliaments to address the structural causes of vulnerability — poverty, inequality, institutional weakness and corruption — through inclusive and sustainable policies;
8. *Supports* the work of existing regional, international and global legal and security bodies combating transnational organized crime under the UNTOC — such as the UNODC, INTERPOL, and regional agencies against organized crime — and the creation of new institutions to address organized crime in the transnational sphere in which it operates, such as an international court against corruption, the Latin American and Caribbean Criminal Court against Transnational Organized Crime (COPLA), or a MERCOSUR agency against transnational organized crime;
9. *Invites* IPU Member Parliaments, in accordance with international law and emerging international criminal jurisprudence to recognize that actions of transnational organized crime — whether committed by non-State actors or by a State or its agents acting in an organized or systematic manner — may constitute crimes against humanity;
10. *Recommends* developing joint cybersecurity frameworks and standards among Member Parliaments to protect critical infrastructure and public information systems, in line with the IPU resolution *Cybercrimes: The new risks to global security*, adopted at the 146th Assembly (Manama, Bahrain, March 2023);
11. *Calls for* stronger regulation of cryptocurrencies, online platforms and cross-border financial flows to curb illicit money laundering linked to scam compounds, and *urges* global financial institutions to adopt enhanced due diligence;
12. *Encourages* parliaments to work jointly with the private sector and civil society to foster technological innovation that counters disinformation and digital exploitation, while upholding civil liberties, safeguarding privacy, and ensuring full respect for human rights in all measures addressing digital threats;
13. *Recognizes* that hybrid threat tactics — including cyber-enabled sabotage, disinformation and attacks on critical infrastructure — when conducted or sponsored by State or non-State actors, may constitute violations of international law and, in certain cases, acts of terrorism, and therefore *urges* full respect for international humanitarian law and human rights norms;
14. *Denounces* the use of airspace violations, coordinated influence operations and targeted cyber intrusions as tools of intimidation, aggression and interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States;
15. *Requests* the IPU to utilize its existing bodies to facilitate legislative cooperation in tackling coerced criminality, financial crimes, and violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, and to monitor implementation;
16. *Suggests* including this matter under a standing agenda item, “Democracy, Governance and Global Security”, and to review progress at future IPU Assemblies.

Report of the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security

*Noted by the 151st IPU Assembly
(Geneva, 23 October 2025)*

The Standing Committee on Peace and International Security held two sittings on 20 and 21 October 2025 with its President, Ms. A. Kuspan (Kazakhstan), in the chair.

On 20 October, the Standing Committee held a first panel discussion on *Arms control policy and non-proliferation: Preventing the next arms race*, introduced by Ms. A. Kuspan (Kazakhstan), President of the Committee. The session was moderated by Ms. Y. Issar, Peace and Disarmament Programme, Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) in Geneva, who emphasized the urgency of revitalizing multilateral disarmament amid record military spending and escalating global tensions. She highlighted that over 120 armed conflicts were ongoing worldwide, while arms control and humanitarian disarmament frameworks were under increasing strain, and that parliamentarians played a crucial role in preventing renewed militarization and safeguarding humanitarian principles.

Ms. C. Solmirano, Head of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) Secretariat, emphasized the crucial role of parliaments in implementing the ATT, the first legally binding instrument governing the international trade in conventional arms. She explained that with 117 States Parties, the Treaty aimed to prevent the illicit trade and diversion of weapons that fuelled conflict and human rights violations. Drawing on insights from a regional workshop in Zambia, she highlighted that political will and parliamentary oversight were essential to effective implementation and to bridging global commitments with national practice. She concluded that regulating the arms trade was not only a security imperative, but also a matter of human responsibility. Mr. C. Foradori, President of the Eleventh Conference of States Parties to the ATT (CSP11), complemented Ms. Solmirano's presentation by highlighting the Treaty's contribution to peace and transparency in the global arms market. He noted that gaps in adherence, particularly in regions with limited participation, such as Latin America, created risks – “black holes”, exploited by criminal networks. He called on parliamentarians to promote ratification, strengthen national oversight and engage youth to sustain disarmament efforts.

Ms. M. Parke, Executive Director of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) and former parliamentarian, warned that the risk of nuclear use was higher today than at any time since the cold war. She noted that even a limited nuclear exchange would have devastating humanitarian and climatic consequences, compounded by the collapse of key arms control agreements and the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into nuclear systems. Presenting the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) as a pathway to disarmament and victim assistance, she stressed the essential role of parliaments in aligning national policies with international law and humanitarian principles. She urged members to raise the issue in their legislatures, sign ICAN's parliamentary pledge, and participate in upcoming meetings of States Parties, reaffirming that nuclear disarmament was not utopian but an existential imperative.

Ms. S. Mohan, Associate Researcher at the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), addressed the governance of emerging technologies, particularly AI and cyber capabilities. She noted their growing use in military contexts, including autonomous weapons and cyber operations, and referred to ongoing UN processes such as the Open-Ended Working Group on ICT Security and the Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems. She emphasized the importance of bridging digital divides, integrating gender perspectives, and linking disarmament, cybersecurity, and the women, peace and security agendas. Ms. Mohan urged parliamentarians to promote responsible innovation, strengthen oversight capacities and support inclusive governance of technologies shaping global security.

Mr. R. Lennane, Disarmament Adviser at the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), emphasized a humanitarian approach to disarmament focused on the human impact of weapons rather than their possession or number. He explained that this perspective placed responsibility on all States, and he underscored the link between disarmament and the protection of people represented by parliaments. Highlighting the achievements of humanitarian disarmament treaties, such as the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions, he noted their success in reducing suffering and shaping global norms, even among States not party to them. Mr. Lennane

warned that recent withdrawals from these instruments risked undermining decades of progress, and urged parliamentarians to defend and promote their universalization, stressing that humanitarian norms were most essential in times of conflict as well as peace.

Over 20 delegates took the floor, converging on the need to strengthen existing arms control regimes and improve governance of emerging technologies. Interventions reflected national experiences with weapons contamination, stockpile destruction and AI oversight. Delegates stressed the importance of transparency, verification and reciprocal compliance, and called for stronger parliamentary engagement in developing ethical and legal frameworks for new technologies. Several statements underscored adherence to humanitarian disarmament treaties, particularly the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, and highlighted the human, environmental and socioeconomic impacts of weapons contamination. Other interventions called for political dialogue and confidence-building to prevent a new arms race, greater investment in disarmament and peace education, and for steps to reduce nuclear risks.

In their closing remarks, the panellists reaffirmed the shared responsibility of parliamentarians in advancing peace, disarmament and non-proliferation. They called for rebuilding confidence in multilateralism, upholding international law and humanitarian principles, and strengthening parliamentary oversight of emerging technologies. The session concluded with a collective call to renew dialogue, solidarity and trust to build a safer and more peaceful world for future generations.

The same day, the Standing Committee held a second panel discussion on *Strengthening parliamentary oversight of defence spending*. Ms. A. Kuspan (Kazakhstan), President of the Standing Committee, opened the session and launched the IPU issue brief *Democratic checks, military balances: Parliamentary oversight in an era of rising military expenditure*. The publication calls for greater transparency and accountability in defence budgeting, emphasizing parliaments' vital role in ensuring that military allocations align with democratic principles and citizens' security priorities. The President also announced a joint IPU-DCAF-SIPRI research project on exceptional defence budget practices and invited delegates to contribute to a global survey supporting the initiative.

The moderator, Ms. Y. Issar (QUNO) opened the session by underscoring that parliamentary oversight was not a procedural formality but a democratic responsibility fundamental to accountability, transparency and public trust. She noted that global military expenditure reached a record US\$ 2.7 trillion in 2024, cautioning that this continued growth risked exacerbating inequality, eroding trust between States and diverting resources from human security and sustainable development.

Mr. D. Lopes da Silva, Researcher with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) presented an analytical overview of recent trends in global military expenditure. He observed that over 100 countries increased their defence budgets in 2024, marking the tenth consecutive year of growth. He warned that the growing reliance on off-budget and extra-budgetary mechanisms undermined democratic control and weakened parliamentary scrutiny. He called on parliaments to ensure that defence allocations remain transparent, efficient and responsive to citizens' needs.

Ms. C. Fredriksen, Senior Manager at INTOSAI Development Initiative (IDI) highlighted the indispensable role of supreme audit institutions (SAIs) in promoting fiscal transparency and accountability in the defence sector. She noted that excessive secrecy and exemptions often led to inefficiency, mismanagement and declining public trust. Drawing parallels with emergency spending during the COVID-19 pandemic, she warned that unchecked military spending could have similar consequences, diverting resources from essential public services. She urged parliamentarians to use audit findings proactively to enhance oversight and strengthen good governance.

Ms. D. Lui, Programme Manager at the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF) stressed that effective oversight required robust legal mandates, institutional capacity and a steadfast commitment to democratic principles. She presented the joint IPU-DCAF-SIPRI initiative to survey global parliamentary practices on defence oversight, designed to identify common challenges and good practices. She also underlined the importance of governance frameworks that addressed emerging technologies such as AI and autonomous weapons, calling for human-centred and responsible innovation in the security sector.

Mr. M. Spies, Senior Political Affairs Officer with the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), recalled the United Nations' long-standing efforts to link disarmament and development, including studies on the social and economic impacts of military expenditure. He called for renewed

efforts to assess the environmental and societal costs of militarization, and to explore how disarmament savings could support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). He further emphasized that transparent national reporting to the United Nations was essential for fostering dialogue on reducing military spending.

In the ensuing debate, eight delegates took the floor. Speakers acknowledged that while military investment remained necessary amid ongoing conflicts, cyber threats and global instability, true security could not rest on weapons alone. They remarked that oversight was what transformed expenditure into genuine protection, be it of borders, of democracy or of human dignity, and ensured that funding also supported prevention, mediation and inclusion. Participants also highlighted the need for informed and transparent parliamentary debate on the long-term implications of rising military budgets, particularly the risks of opacity and off-budget mechanisms that weakened accountability. Several delegates reiterated that with global military spending soaring, resources were diverted from social investment and contributing to increased emissions. They called for a balanced approach that safeguarded funding for peacebuilding, innovation and social resilience while addressing the environmental and economic costs of militarization.

Across interventions, there was also broad consensus that transparency was a source of strength and that parliamentary oversight was essential to ensuring defence budgets were not merely larger where needed, but also wiser, fairer and better aligned with the principles of human and common security. The panel concluded that rising defence budgets present not only fiscal but also democratic and ethical challenges. Strong parliamentary oversight, supported by transparency and accountability, remained indispensable to ensuring that public resources contributed to peace, stability and human security.

On 21 October, Ms. A. Kuspan (Kazakhstan) introduced and chaired the expert hearing on the theme of the Committee's next resolution *The role of parliaments in establishing robust post-conflict management mechanisms and restoring a just and lasting peace*. The session brought together experts and parliamentarians to explore how legislative institutions can foster sustainable peace, justice and inclusion in societies emerging from conflict.

Mr. P. Dziatkowiec, Director of Mediation and Peace Support at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP), highlighted the crucial role of parliaments in sustaining peace and transitional justice. Drawing on over 20 years of diplomatic and mediation experience, he stressed that lasting peace depended on justice, inclusion and political will, not on "quick fixes" or superficial agreements. Citing examples from Colombia, Northern Ireland and the Western Balkans, he showed that involving victims, civil society and parliaments enhanced legitimacy and reduced the risk of renewed conflict. He concluded that parliamentarians, through their legislative, oversight, and representative roles, were uniquely placed to bridge divides, build trust and foster ongoing dialogue within and between societies.

Ms. S. Naraghi Anderlini, Founder and CEO of the International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN), underscored the urgent need for inclusive peacebuilding amid widespread global conflict. With over 120 million displaced and 2 billion living in fragile contexts, she stressed that recovery after war must go beyond security to include health, education, justice and gender-responsive policies. Drawing on examples from Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Iraq and Afghanistan, she warned that excluding women and ignoring gender dynamics sustained inequality and instability. She urged parliaments to enshrine inclusion, dignity and human potential in law and policy, emphasizing that only a "whole-of-society" approach, linking parliaments and civil society, could turn crisis into lasting peace and shared prosperity.

Ms. F. Belhirsch (Netherlands), co-Rapporteur of the draft resolution, outlined the co-Rapporteurs' vision for post-conflict recovery. She emphasized that the resolution aimed not only to have parliaments end wars formally but to empower parliaments to turn fragile ceasefires into just and inclusive peace. Stressing that injustice and impunity fuel renewed violence, she called for durable peace built on accountability, reparations and truth. The draft resolution rests on four pillars: justice and accountability, implementation of peace agreements, institutional and governance reform, and internationally supported but nationally owned recovery. Highlighting the importance of inclusion, especially of women, youth, displaced persons and minorities, she referred to UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) as a guiding framework. Ms. Belhirsch concluded that parliaments were key peacebuilders, restoring legitimacy and trust, and affirmed that the draft resolution would centre on justice, inclusivity and ownership, reminding that "peace without justice is no peace at all".

In the debate that followed, 19 delegates took the floor. Many underscored parliaments' central role in turning ceasefires into lasting peace through lawmaking and oversight, and a focus on justice, inclusion and accountability. They emphasized the importance of nationally owned recovery and called for legislative action to validate peace agreements, to protect displaced persons and to establish truth, reparations and amnesty mechanisms. Participants also highlighted the need for civilian-led security sector reform and parliamentary leadership in funding reconstruction, education and psychosocial support.

Several delegates urged institutionalizing inclusion, especially of women, youth and minorities, through mechanisms like double-majority rules and intercommunity committees. Others called for stronger anti-corruption frameworks, measurable reconciliation indicators, and a shift from militarized to human security by supporting early warning systems and civil society. The importance of parliamentary diplomacy, regional cooperation and countering disinformation was also stressed. The debate concluded with a broad consensus that parliaments were decisive peacebuilders, able to codify commitments, oversee implementation, reintegrate ex-combatants and foster social cohesion to ensure peace was both achieved and sustained.

Report of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development

*Noted by the 151st IPU Assembly
(Geneva, 23 October 2025)*

The Standing Committee on Sustainable Development held its sittings on 21 and 22 October. Both sittings were chaired by the Committee Vice President, Ms. M.S. Al Suwaidi (United Arab Emirates).

Debate on the theme of the Committee's next resolution, entitled *Building a fair and sustainable global economy: The role of parliaments in combating protectionism, reducing tariffs and preventing corporate tax evasion*

The theme of the next resolution was introduced by four experts: Mr. A.R. Khan, Advisor, International Cooperation and Tax Policy, Financing for Sustainable Development Office, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA); Ms. V. Gonzalez Behar, Head, Partnerships, Outreach and Resource Mobilization at the Enhanced Integrated Framework, World Trade Organization (WTO); Mr. M. Kobetsky, Honorary Professor at the Australian National University College of Law, and Fellow at the Tax and Transfer Policy Institute at the Crawford School of Public Policy; and Ms. M. St. Louis, Director, Global Trade Watch, Public Citizen. The co-Rapporteurs, Ms. D. O'Neill (Australia), Mr. J.M.R. Edwards (Chile) and Ms. J. Sabao (Zambia) were also present.

Mr. A.R. Khan (DESA) informed that global public debt had exceeded US\$ 100 trillion, with developing countries under significant fiscal pressure. According to World Bank data, US\$ 1.4 trillion was paid annually to service external debt, including US\$ 400 billion in interest – leaving nearly half the world's population in countries that are spending more on interest than on health and education combined. Mr. Khan observed that efforts to raise taxes to reduce debt had often eroded public trust, revealing a structural issue in revenue mobilization. He noted that a number of multinational corporations that benefit from the best tax expertise, paid the least amount of taxes. He highlighted that governments could have the same opportunity if they were able to tackle this problem in a more coordinated manner. Mr. Khan emphasized the need for coordinated government action and stronger parliamentary roles to improve fiscal governance, particularly through Public Accounts Committees, oversight mechanisms and finance committees.

Ms. V. Gonzalez Behar (WTO) emphasized that trade encompassed more than tariffs as it also involved standards and regulations that facilitate the movement of goods and services across borders. Recalling the 1930s, she warned that protectionist measures had led to a collapse in global trade and ultimately contributed to the Second World War. While today's trade system was more resilient thanks to international rules that had been established to prevent certain situations from happening again, she cautioned that trade remained fragile. She stressed that parliamentarians were central to trade policy and provided some suggestions to help shape the next resolution. She recommended focusing on non-tariff measures, ratifying the WTO Fisheries Agreement, supporting WTO reform, and participating in the upcoming Parliamentary Conference taking place at the WTO so that the resolution could be a resource for ministers.

Mr. M. Kobetsky (Australian National University College of Law) highlighted that tax revenue was essential for funding public goods and services. He underscored the crucial role of parliaments in imposing tax liabilities on multinational corporations and reforming legislation to reflect their global operations. Just as multinationals were well advised and resourced, parliamentarians also needed to be equally well advised and act at the global level through forums such as those provided by the IPU and the UN. He emphasized that there were a number of mechanisms that could help develop effective tax policies to ensure that multinationals would not find loopholes. It was in fact crucial to address that issue as when there was tax avoidance, either taxpayers had to cover those gaps, or governments had to increase borrowing.

Ms. M. St. Louis (Public Citizen) noted that global trade was necessary, however current free trade agreements and neoliberal policies, which were mainly shaped by the interests of major corporations in the global north, were unsustainable. She urged parliaments to advocate for fairer global trade rules, corporate accountability, and investment in supply chains that respect workers, human rights and

support a green economy. She also called for greater transparency and accountability in trade policymaking and for protecting domestic policy space and regulating it in the public interest. Finally, she emphasized the need for parliamentarians to actively engage in debates concerning trade and investment agreements as they had huge implications on many aspects of domestic policy making.

Following the experts' presentation, 22 delegates shared examples of how their countries were strengthening efforts to combat tax evasion and avoidance, promote economic growth and contribute to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The actions that they implemented included enacting laws, advancing data analytics, introducing penalty regimes, and enhancing international cooperation. Some countries criminalized fraudulent tax declarations and recognized tax evasion as a form of money laundering.

Delegates voiced concern that global economic interdependence left developing and smaller economies particularly vulnerable. They highlighted that millions of people lived in extreme poverty, that many were still deprived of access to water and shelter, and that the global economy was fragmenting due to protectionism, coercive measures, sanctions, unilateral closure of borders, disruption of international logistics and supply chains. They stressed that protectionism appeared to temporarily protect national interests but, in the long run, it weakened competitiveness, disrupted supply chains and undermined trust among countries at a time when solidarity and multilateral cooperation were most needed.

Parliaments were recognized as key actors in reversing these negative trends by enacting fair and transparent tax laws, closing loopholes and ensuring alignment of national policies with the SDGs. Delegates stressed that parliaments played a vital role in promoting sustainable trade and investment, strengthening oversight of international commitments, and ensuring that economic policies prioritize people over profits. Delegates also stressed the importance of parliamentary dialogue, information sharing, and collaboration in international forums — like the IPU, UN, OECD, G20 etc. — to foster equitable global economic governance.

The co-Rapporteurs also addressed the Committee. They requested that the word “evasion” in the resolution title be changed to “avoidance” to allow them to focus on legal tax loopholes on which parliaments could act. The Committee approved the proposal.

Panel discussion on the theme *The impact of global warming: A parliamentary call to protect the most vulnerable*

The panel discussion focused on the role of parliaments in addressing the impacts of climate change on vulnerable communities. The Moderator, Ms. A. Ellis, Senior Director Strategic Partnerships and Networks, Julie Ann Wrigley Global Futures Laboratory, emphasized that climate change was not just an environmental crisis but that it was also a human crisis with those contributing least to climate change often bearing the heaviest burden. The panel consisted of Ms. A. Tolentino, a youth advocate and Leader at Care About Climate, Philippines, who joined virtually; Mr. I. Seruiratu, a Member of the Parliament of Fiji; and Mr. R. Feingold, Chair of the Global Steering Committee of the Campaign for Nature and former US Senator.

Ms. A. Tolentino (Care About Climate) discussed the severe impacts that climate change was having in the Philippines, including in the health sector due to increasing climate-related illnesses. She also highlighted the increasing risks faced by environmental defenders who were targeted and the underreporting of such circumstances in the media. Ms. Tolentino emphasized the importance of inclusive climate leadership and the role of youth in advocating for climate justice. She called for increased partnerships with youth-led organizations, the embedding of climate education in schools and awareness-raising campaigns to inform and empower local communities.

Mr. I. Seruiratu (Fiji) described the direct impacts of climate change in Fiji, including rising sea levels and ocean acidification. He mentioned the repercussions that was having on society, including internal displacement and the erosion of identity and heritage for fishing communities who could no longer live in coastal areas. He emphasized the need for international support, including funding and technology, and for countries to honor their commitments made under the Paris Agreement. Mr. Seruiratu highlighted that Fiji was fulfilling its commitments on climate change mitigation but that international support to advance adaptation must be strengthened.

Mr. R. Feingold (Campaign for Nature) discussed the interconnectedness of climate change and biodiversity loss, highlighting the importance of treating both with equal urgency. He underscored the importance of forests and coral reefs for mitigating climate change, the need for increased funding to support biodiversity conservation, and the role of indigenous peoples in preserving biodiversity.

Mr. Feingold highlighted the challenges of ensuring climate policy coherence across government administrations, and pointed out that biodiversity was a topic that could unite actors across party lines. He encouraged parliaments to work with their governments to protect at least 30% of the world's lands and oceans by 2030.

Participants from 23 countries made interventions from the floor. They highlighted key biodiversity and climate issues including the need for science-based and inclusive climate action, increased oversight on climate commitments, and more robust legal and budgetary frameworks for effective climate action. The importance of stronger international cooperation, including in terms of knowledge-sharing and technology transfer, was repeatedly highlighted.

Preparations for the Parliamentary Meeting at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP30) in Brazil

The Rapporteur of the Parliamentary Meeting at COP30, Mr. H. Costa, a Member of the Parliament of Brazil, stated that the Parliamentary Meeting at COP30, organized by the IPU and the Parliament of Brazil, would take place on 14 November 2025 in Belém, Brazil. A brief video was shown on the Parliamentary Meeting and main COP venues in Belém.

Mr. Costa then presented the key themes of the preliminary draft outcome document of the Parliamentary Meeting at COP30. He highlighted that the document called on parliaments to take a number of actions to strengthen climate action including the need to: ensure international climate commitments are translated into national legislation and policies; consider methane emissions, decarbonization, reforestation, and health in climate responses; prioritize the need of vulnerable groups; and foster the responsible use of artificial intelligence to address climate change.

Parliamentarians from seven national parliaments and representatives from four organizations and one regional parliament made interventions from the floor. The points raised in the discussion included: the importance of oversight and climate change accountability, the need to recognize climate change linkages with human health and displacement, the urgency of addressing methane emissions, and the vital role of indigenous peoples and other vulnerable groups in climate action.

Report of the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs

*Noted by the 151st IPU Assembly
(Geneva, 23 October 2025)*

The Committee held two sittings on 21 and 22 October 2025, with Ms. L. Crexell (Argentina), Chair of the Bureau of the Committee, presiding. After opening the session, Ms. Crexell invited all present to adopt the agenda of the session and approve the summary record of the previous session, held at the 150th IPU Assembly in Tashkent in April 2025.

The election process for the UN Secretary-General: Modalities and political underpinnings

Presenters: Mr. A. Motter, Senior Advisor for Economic and Social Affairs, Office of the Permanent Observer of the IPU to the United Nations; Ms. C. Gallach, member of GWL Voices; Ms. M. Noel Leoni, Campaign Director, Gqual; Ms. S. Ataullahjan (Canada), Senator, member of the Bureau of the Committee.

The sitting featured a discussion on the election process for the UN Secretary-General (UNSG) and the need for a woman to be chosen to replace the current post-holder, Mr. A. Guterres, when his term in office expired on 31 December 2026. A motion entitled *Electing the first woman to the post of United Nations Secretary-General*, referred by the Bureau of the Committee, was up for discussion. After Mr. Motter's short presentation on the key steps to elect the UNSG, the Chair invited the two main panellists, Ms. Gallach and Ms. Noel Leoni, to expound the argument for a woman UNSG.

Ms. C. Gallach (GWL Voices) presented her Group's view of the main reasons why it was time for a woman to become the world's "top diplomat", for which some 80 governments had already expressed their support. Electing the first woman UNSG after a string of nine men since the birth of the organization in 1945 was simply the right thing to do in light of the UN's commitment to gender equality. The existential crisis that the UN was going through and the deteriorating world situation, called for a fresh new approach and leadership style, which a woman was more likely to provide. Ms. Gallach very much welcomed parliaments' engagement on the issue as the best way to make the voices of the people heard.

For her part, Ms. M. Noel Leoni (Gqual) elaborated on the recent General Assembly resolution that established the UNSG's election process, noting that while it represented an improvement from the past in terms of transparency and openness, it fell short of expectations by not calling explicitly for a woman to be elected next time around. Ms. Leoni suggested that the qualifications required for the post needed better defining so that prospective candidates could be more easily screened on the basis of merit. Parliaments could help flesh out the appropriate qualifications with public hearings. Furthermore, she encouraged the active participation of civil society and of parliaments throughout the election process, including by advocating for women candidates in their respective countries and by inviting all candidates to respond to a set of questions.

Having heard from the panel, the Chair invited Ms. S. Ataullahjan (Canada) to present the motion that she had proposed to the Bureau of the Committee the day before and that the Bureau had supported. Ms. Ataullahjan said that upon further consideration the motion's title should be changed to *Recommendation to elect the first woman to the post of United Nations Secretary-General*. She highlighted the text which called unequivocally for a woman to be elected in 2026, namely, that parliaments should hold briefings to take stock of the upcoming election while proactively working with governments to identify as many prospective women candidates to put forward as possible.

The ensuing debate, in which 34 delegations participated, with 16 interventions, highlighted the following points:

- The best way for parliaments to help ensure the election of a woman UNSG in 2026 was to support as many women candidates as possible. To the extent possible, the five permanent members of the Security Council, whose support was needed (by virtue of their veto power), should be persuaded to field or support only women candidates.

- Candidates' records should highlight their skills and respect of all UN values, as well as impartiality and moral authority.
- Regardless of who was elected in the end, the new SG would need greater autonomy to take decisions for the good of the organization and the world.
- The election of a first woman UNSG the following year was also important to open doors to women leaders in other parts of the UN system where they continued to be under-represented.

At the end of the debate, the Chair put the retitled motion to a vote. The motion was adopted unanimously.

UN80: A most ambitious and far-reaching makeover for the UN system as a whole

Presenters: Mr. G. Ryder, UN Under-Secretary-General for Policy, Chief coordinator of the UN80 Initiative; Mr. P. Linnér, Programme Director, Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation; Ms. B. Adama, Global Policy Forum.

As the chief coordinator of the UN80 Initiative, Mr. G. Ryder set out the context and the purpose of the initiative which was intended to make the UN more relevant and more effective in responding to current global challenges. The UN was strapped for cash as a few major donors were not paying their dues on time and in full. Worse still, the UN was confronted with a “value crisis” whereby multilateralism was being undermined by a “go it alone approach”.

Mr. Ryder explained the three main workstreams of the UN80 Initiative which essentially aimed at cutting the UN budget in the order of 15% to 20% across the system, eliminating or streamlining a multitude of mandates accumulated over the decades, and merging or refocusing existing agencies and programmes to reduce overlap. The UN80 Initiative however should not be seen merely as a cost cutting exercise: its real purpose was to refocus the UN on what mattered most within its core mission. A nimbler UN system would be more effective at tackling challenges like artificial intelligence (AI) and other critical issues appearing on the horizon.

That said, Mr. Ryder noted that there was no escaping the need for the UN financial house to be placed on a much sounder footing. Just two donors accounted for nearly half of the UN Secretariat's regular budget, making the whole organization financially vulnerable to non-payment or late payments. Funds received in the last quarter of the year often could not be spent on agreed project work and therefore, under the current rules, must be returned to the donor, effectively making a late payment the same as a non-payment. The more the UN was unable to fulfill its mandate, the less trust it enjoyed from the world's community.

Speaking as a close UN associate on financial management, Mr. P. Linnér of the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation focused his remarks on the need for the current UN restructuring to consider not just the quantity but also the *quality* of funding. Most notably, too much of the UN's actual work in countries depended on earmarked funds in which donors tied their funding to specific projects instead of giving to more cost-efficient funding pools. Mr. Linnér also expressed concern that today's liquidity crisis at the UN, as serious as it was, should not preclude taking a more long-term perspective on the role of the UN in the world. Important changes to the UN funding base should aim at repositioning the UN for the future. Mr. Linnér exhorted parliamentarians to engage with their foreign ministers as well as their constituents on all those issues, to exercise stronger oversight and demand more accountability for results.

Elaborating further on the question of quality of funding, Ms. B. Adama of the Global Policy Forum, noted that earmarked contributions to the UN system had doubled since 2010 from US\$ 20 billion to over US\$ 40 billion despite a UN Funding Compact from a few years back which called on countries to reverse that trend. Ms. Adama noted that too much of the UN's budget was allocated to humanitarian aid at the expense of the long-term development work that was key to both preventing humanitarian crises and to improving overall human well-being and sustainability. Echoing the other panellists, Ms. Adama highlighted the funding imbalance whereby a shortlist of about 10 countries were in control of the UN's programmatic work by virtue of their paying nearly half of the UN budget. It was critical that the UN80 Initiative went well beyond a mere cost-cutting exercise to address all of those imbalances.

The ensuing debate, in which 11 delegations contributed, coalesced around the following key points:

- Parliaments ought to exercise close oversight of the UN80 Initiative to ensure that it led to better results both in terms of concrete work to support countries and in terms of managing complex global issues.
- Parliaments ought to do a better job in dissecting all budget allocations to the UN system to ensure that they were of good quality, with less earmarking and more money going to more efficient funding pools.
- While much of the future of the UN system depended on its funding base, ultimately what needed to change were its decision-making processes and structures, such as the Security Council, where a few countries ran the show.
- Any restructuring of the UN system needed to respect all three pillars of the UN — i.e., peace and security, human rights and development — making sure that none was sacrificed at the expense of the others. In particular, current under-funding of the human rights pillar needed to be redressed.
- As a way of securing its financial independence, the UN should not shy away from looking at innovative financial schemes (e.g., a small tax on air travel).
- Improving the effectiveness and accountability of the UN as the leading multilateral organization would depend critically on strengthening its engagement with parliaments, civil society, the private sector and other actors along the lines established in the 2025 Pact for the Future.

As a final announcement, the Secretariat informed that the President of the General Assembly had sent a letter to all Speakers inviting them to mark UN Day on 24 October in their parliaments. All delegations present were encouraged to support relevant activities.

Recommendation to elect the first woman to the post of United Nations Secretary-General

*Motion adopted by the IPU Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs
(Geneva, 21 October 2025)*

Since the inception of the United Nations in 1945, nine men have successively been elected or re-elected as its Secretary-General. This gender imbalance is principally attributed to the male-dominated international and cultural orders in which the United Nations has operated.

Much has changed around the world during the 80 years that the United Nations has been in existence, including a growing consensus around gender equality and women's right to hold leadership positions nationally and internationally. The principle of gender equality has been entrenched in numerous international agreements, and both the United Nations and the IPU have made it a key driver of their work on development, human rights and democracy.

Last year, in the landmark **Pact for the Future** (September 2024), the Member States of the United Nations decided to:

“Stress the need for the selection and appointment process of the Secretary-General to be guided by the principles of merit, transparency and inclusiveness and with due regard to gender balance and regional rotation and take into account during the next and in subsequent selection and appointment processes the regrettable fact that there has never been a woman Secretary-General, and we encourage Member States to consider nominating women as candidates.”

The latest resolution on *Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly* (September 2025), which makes the election process of the UN Secretary-General more open and transparent than ever before, reiterates the sentiment of “regret” that is in the Pact for the Future, but avoids making a direct appeal for a woman to be elected in 2026.

In adopting this motion, the IPU Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs affirms that, in the context of the current process for selecting the next United Nations Secretary-General in 2026, the historic moment has come to elect a woman as United Nations Secretary-General — both as a matter of principle and as a demonstration of the United Nations' commitment to ensure equality for all.

We recognize the many accomplished women leaders who have held, or continue to hold, leadership roles worldwide, including in the Latin American and Caribbean region, which is considered next in the geographical rotation for the position of United Nations Secretary-General. Noting further that candidates for the position need to be officially sponsored by their respective governments, the Committee calls upon IPU Member Parliaments, particularly members of the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean, to:

1. Hold briefings in their respective foreign affairs committees to take stock of the modalities for electing the UN Secretary-General and of the timing whereby the selection and appointment process will unfold during 2026; and
2. Engage with their government leadership to initiate a search for women candidates as soon as possible with a view to ensuring a large pool of highly-qualified women candidates for election by the Security Council.

High-Level Declaration of the Sixth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament ¹

A world in turmoil: Parliamentary cooperation and multilateralism for peace, justice and prosperity for all

*Adopted at the Sixth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament
(Geneva, 31 July 2025)*

*and endorsed by the IPU Governing Council at its 216th session
(Geneva, 20 October 2025)*

We, Speakers of Parliament from around the world, have come together to take stock of the many crises that engulf the world today, and to reaffirm the fundamental principles that must guide our future parliamentary action.

As Speakers, we can help inspire public debate, uphold democratic practices in our parliaments and engage in parliamentary diplomacy to advance peace and understanding among peoples. Above all, we can exercise moral leadership and serve as role models for our fellow parliamentarians and citizens at large.

A world in turmoil

We note with concern that conditions around the world are not significantly better today than when we last met, in 2021, during the COVID-19 pandemic. Today, almost everywhere globally, we observe a pervasive sense of malaise and anxiety. This reflects, in our view, a lack of peace, understood not only as freedom from conflict but also as the fulfilment of basic human needs at the individual and societal level.

Particularly alarming is the accelerated erosion of multilateralism and the growth of self-seeking, zero-sum perspectives that overlook the complex realities on the ground. Progress towards a peaceful world and the transformative vision of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its accompanying Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which inspired our past declarations, has all but stalled. In particular:

- We are witnessing a growing trend for disregard of the rule of law and increased threats to democracy, both nationally and internationally.
- Conflicts within and between countries, as well as civilian casualties disproportionately affecting women and children, have grown in number and scope. Unchecked, these conflicts have created circumstances in which violations of international humanitarian law and human rights are occurring with greater frequency. Terrorism and violent extremism remain prevalent features of the global landscape.
- Rising nationalism and the implementation of protectionist policies are eroding the spirit of collaboration and cooperation among nations. This trend poses a threat to global interconnectedness and challenges the principles of cooperation and solidarity that underpin multilateralism.
- Increasing disinformation and the misuse of global communication platforms has led to the distortion of public perception and decision-making processes. This phenomenon has the potential to sway elections, policy decisions and international relations.

¹ L'expression "présidents de parlement" désigne tous les présidents des parlements nationaux monocaméraux ou de l'une ou l'autre chambre des parlements nationaux bicaméraux, quel que soit leur titre officiel.

- Progress in promoting inclusiveness, accessibility and support for people with disabilities in political offices has been slow, leading to a lack of representation and participation, which can perpetuate policies that inadequately address the needs and rights of the disability community.
- The number of forcibly displaced people is at an all-time high.
- An alarming resumption of the nuclear arms race with increasing threats of weapon use and the erosion of disarmament norms constitutes an existential risk to human survival.
- Politics has grown more fractured: too often opposing parties are depicted as enemies and common ground among political factions is too hard to find. The role of evidence-based decision-making and fundamental scientific truths is being called into doubt.
- The planet's carrying capacity, which determines the limits of sustainability, continues to be strained, with no end in sight. The world is facing a climate emergency, with most of the burden borne by developing countries and people in vulnerable situations.
- Poverty is again on the rise and inequalities are deepening.
- Economic and financial power is increasingly concentrated in the hands of the few, challenging principles of fairness, equality and inclusive participation. A comprehensive review of funding structures could facilitate better prospects to close existing gaps, reduce inequality, and encourage more cooperative participation among nations.
- Progress towards gender equality and the realization of women's rights is far too slow, facing resistance and regression in a number of countries.
- Intolerance towards migrants and refugees, faith-based communities, indigenous people and other people in vulnerable situations, including stateless persons, is resurgent.
- Artificial intelligence and other emerging information and communication technologies are penetrating every aspect of human existence with only limited tools to protect people and institutions.
- Young people remain extremely underrepresented in political decision-making when they, and future generations, will be most affected by the shortfall in efforts to address all these challenges.
- The existing international political and economic architecture has fallen short in responding to all the above challenges and crises.

To recover from this mix of slow progress, setbacks and emerging threats, we need to do more than simply address their main causes. Above all, we need to appeal to a basic sense of shared humanity and to work collectively towards a more peaceful, just and prosperous world that is solidly anchored in the protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

As long as there is no justice and impunity prevails for the perpetrators, there will be no real peace for people experiencing exclusion, exploitation, violence, discrimination and the denial of fundamental rights and freedoms.

Key transitions toward peace, justice and prosperity

Inspired by the IPU's values and principles, as well as by the outcomes of major United Nations processes over the past few years, we conclude that building a more peaceful, just and prosperous world requires the following key broad policy transitions:

- Ensuring the complete and consistent observance of international law and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including sovereignty, territorial integrity, non-interference in the internal affairs of States and the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, in a coherent and non-selective manner.
- Building strong, transparent and accountable institutions to maintain peace and justice. This includes reforming judicial systems, enhancing law enforcement, and ensuring that governance structures are inclusive and equitable.
- Prioritizing and investing in conflict prevention, as well as redefining "security" more broadly, pairing the traditional concept based on military might with the approaches of human security and common security,² so as to achieve comprehensive and sustainable security.

² *Human security* focuses on protecting individuals from threats of fear, want, and indignity by addressing the root causes of insecurity and human suffering; *common security* embodies the idea that no nation can achieve security alone, at the expense of another, and that the best way for countries to build security is through cooperation, reciprocity and multilateralism.

- Promoting the peaceful, secure, open and inclusive use of information and communication technologies (ICTs), in accordance with international law, including international human rights law, and joining efforts to prevent and combat cybercrime and malicious cyber activity by supporting global and regional cooperation, capacity-building, and responsible State behaviour in cyberspace, including through the United Nations and its specialized bodies, while respecting privacy and other fundamental rights.
- More effectively embedding the SDGs into national policies, strategies and budgets to provide an integrated approach to eradicating poverty, addressing climate change, reducing inequalities, and fostering peace, justice and prosperity.
- Shifting the current economic paradigm to a more people-centred model based on cooperation, solidarity, inclusion and sustainability. Economic models such as the paid care economy, the green economy and the circular economy, among others, need to be mainstreamed. The transition away from an economy based on fossil fuels needs to accelerate if we are to enjoy a sustainable future on this planet. Simultaneously, this shift should be carefully planned, taking into account different national circumstances and priorities. Cooperation should be the driving force of scientific and technological innovation for the betterment of humanity.
- Investing more in health, education, environmental preservation, and other public goods that benefit individuals directly. Expenditure on social programmes and public infrastructure should be seen as *investments* in the future and not merely as present-day costs. Austerity measures dictated by budget shortfalls and other financial imperatives need to be calibrated to protect the people in vulnerable situations first.
- Advancing gender equality, in law and in practice, in all fields and at all levels, especially in parliaments but also in international institutions, in civil society and in the business sector, as a necessary condition of peace, development and justice. The world cannot afford to waste 50% of its talent. Gender parity in parliaments is a key step in the meaningful transition towards achieving gender equality and respect for women's rights worldwide. Laws, policies and budgets must be analysed and monitored through a gender lens to ensure that they are delivered equitably and support a culture of zero tolerance of discrimination and violence against women.
- Empowering young people, harnessing their perspectives and potential, building their trust in policymaking and leveraging their innovation so they can better contribute to resolving global challenges. This includes boosting the political participation and leadership of both young men and women and delivering youth-responsive public policies in all fields.
- Valuing diversity in our societies as an asset to be nurtured and protected as opposed to a threat to be feared, including by ensuring that the rights of all individuals, as recognized in international human rights law, are respected and protected. Greater inclusion of diverse experiences and the cross-fertilization of ideas and cultures, which in turn enhance knowledge, lead to innovation and facilitate the efforts of all stakeholders to navigate the complexities of this century. More awareness of our diversity can also help to build tolerance, acceptance and mutual understanding between people, communities and groups, creating the conditions for lasting peace. Migration has long been a contributor to diversity as well as development and can be appropriately managed to maximize its benefits to both destination and origin countries.
- Embracing the idea that global problems require collective action based on the realization that no single State or group of actors can tackle these global challenges alone. Multilateral engagement is the most effective way for countries to find solutions to the burning issues of our time, from nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation to climate change, global financial stability, global health, international trade, artificial intelligence and migration. Multilateral cooperation mechanisms such as the G7, G20, BRICS, OECD and others need to work in close cooperation and coordination with the United Nations-led multilateral system.
- Reinforcing the practice of democracy in our countries and in international relations, with a strong emphasis on multilateral engagement, and upholding democratic values of transparency, inclusive dialogue and promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms throughout politics and society. Parliaments, as the core representative institution of the nation, have a special responsibility to embody democratic practices and values and ensure accountability.

Our commitment going forward

We welcome the United Nations Pact for the Future of September 2024 and its accompanying Global Digital Compact and Declaration for Future Generations as the latest effort by the global community to reconstitute multilateral order on stronger foundations, turbocharge the SDGs and find common ground on the key issues of our time.

We highlight the crucial role of parliamentary organizations and inter-parliamentary cooperation in global governance, in particular in supporting respect for the norms and principles of international law, peacebuilding and sustaining peace, human rights and sustainable development.

We note in particular Action 55 of the Pact, which calls for a deepening of the engagement of parliaments in the work of the United Nations, including its inter-governmental processes, which builds on 25 years of growing interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the IPU. We note with satisfaction the IPU's work to help democratize global governance by opening the United Nations-led multilateral system to the input of parliaments and parliamentarians.

With this background in mind, we will work to:

- Step up efforts to build stronger and more effective multilateralism, with the United Nations at its core, that delivers for the people and the planet.
- Help advance effective reform of the United Nations, including of the Security Council, as well as of the global financial architecture, for peaceful, just and inclusive societies, for achieving the SDGs and closing the financing gap for developing countries.
- Ensure a fair, open, non-discriminatory multilateral trading system, with the World Trade Organization at its core, and foster a favourable trade and investment environment for all.
- Raise awareness within parliaments of major United Nations agreements such as the Pact for the Future, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, the Global Compact on Refugees, and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, among others, so that, within each national context, commitments are implemented through law, regulations, policies and budgets.
- Encourage parliamentary oversight of the positions taken, and agreements entered into, by governments at the United Nations and other international forums.
- Share knowledge with constituents and the public at large of major United Nations agreements to support deeper national ownership and understanding of their goals.
- Ensure more active participation of our parliaments in key United Nations and other global processes in order to provide input and enhance parliamentary ownership of relevant outcomes, paying particular attention to the inclusion of all major political forces and the participation of women and young people.
- Facilitate gender equality and greater representation of youth as well as people in vulnerable situations and other underrepresented groups in our parliaments to better reflect their share of the general population and ensure their participation and influence. This includes ensuring that parliaments are safe environments free from discrimination and violence.
- Open our parliaments up to greater participation in the legislative process by civil society, the business community, the scientific community, labour unions, faith-based communities, minority groups as well as citizens at large in all their diversity.
- Strengthen trust and embrace hope for our common future through the IPU's work on interfaith dialogue.
- Pursue parliamentary diplomacy as a complement to governmental efforts in order to prevent and resolve conflict by addressing its root causes, engaging in direct dialogue with all relevant actors, and prioritizing civilian safety and respect for International Humanitarian Law.
- Recognize and promote science diplomacy as a fundamental tool for addressing the problems the world faces, informing decision-making processes and advancing diplomatic objectives more broadly. Parliaments should actively support the integration of scientific expertise into diplomatic efforts and use evidence-based approaches to create more informed policy.
- Support the prevention of arms-inflicted human suffering and ensure parliamentary oversight of commitments to disarmament and arms control measures and to non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.
- Encourage parliamentary hearings that, inter alia, examine the root causes of conflict and insecurity, such as climate change, environmental degradation, food insecurity, disease, poverty, social exclusion and discrimination.
- Actively participate in global efforts to regulate and harness the potential of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, in order to maximize their benefits and minimize their risks.

- Support a plan of action to build digital competencies among parliamentarians and the parliamentary administration, to ensure that parliament is a modern institution that is equipped to shape our digital future, notably with regards to the ethical regulation of artificial intelligence.
- Promote inclusive and effective legislative processes, to support a culture of mutual respect, dialogue and understanding within parliamentary deliberations, ensuring that all voices, perspectives and constituencies are heard and valued.
- In parliaments where one does not already exist, consider the establishment of a parliamentary Committee of the Future to deal with emerging cross-cutting issues.

We thank our hosts, Switzerland and the United Nations Office at Geneva, as well as the United Nations Secretary-General and the President of the United Nations General Assembly, for their support of our Conference, which has been yet another demonstration of the close partnership between the IPU and the United Nations: one of the keys to making this world a better place, with pathways to peace, justice and prosperity for all.

N.B. It is recognized that due to their constitutional positions or other factors, certain Speakers cannot directly associate themselves with substantive political statements, and therefore should not be seen as indicating specific support for all sections. Nonetheless, on behalf of their chambers, they recognize the importance of the issues raised and the intentions of their colleagues in proposing particular ways forward.

Final Declaration of the 15th Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament

Leading for inclusive and lasting peace

*Adopted at the 15th Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament
(Geneva, 28 July 2025)*

*and endorsed by the IPU Governing Council at its 216th session
(Geneva, 20 October 2025)*

The 15th Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament (15SWSP), convened by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in close cooperation with the Swiss Parliament, took place in Geneva, Switzerland, on Monday, 28 July 2025. 29 women Speakers of Parliament and 3 presiding officers of parliamentary assemblies and organizations, among about 330 participants from 37 countries, were in attendance.

As an outcome of their deliberations, the women Speakers of Parliament adopted the following final declaration:

- (1) We, *women Speakers of Parliament*, gathered at the 15th Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament at a critical juncture and in a year of many milestones for the women and girls of the world, marking the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the 10-year milestone of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the 25 years of existence of the Women, Peace and Security agenda, aiming to inspire the next chapter in the pursuit of gender equality and women's empowerment and leadership,
- (2) Deeply concerned by the growing sense of despair and disillusionment over the state of global affairs, and the alarming disregard for democratic values and principles, universal human rights and international humanitarian law, the erosion of trust in institutions, and the spread of polarization, conflict and hostility that undermine civic cohesion and inclusive peaceful governance,
- (3) Concerned that persistent negative norms and stereotypes related to masculinity and femininity, and the roles of men and women, continue to shape the conduct of politics and international relations, often reinforcing exclusion and adversarial approaches that undermine inclusive and sustainable peace,
- (4) Alarmed by the toll of armed conflict on civilian populations and underscoring that armed conflicts disproportionately affect women and girls; that gender-based violence, including its use as a weapon of war, is one of the gravest threats to security, exacerbating existing inequalities, and obstructing paths to justice and sustainable peace,
- (5) Expressing our solidarity with all women and girls in areas of conflicts and wars,
- (6) Recognizing the importance of respecting civilizational and religious pluralism in shaping models of women's empowerment and leadership, including those models based on religious references and national traditions,
- (7) Convinced that the voices and leadership of women are integral to accelerating progress on the Sustainable Development Goals, yet continue to be excluded from decision-making roles in processes critical to mitigating risks, responding to crises and building resilience,
- (8) Affirming that gender equality⁴, inclusivity and women's leadership are critical to sustainable peace and security, as recognized in the Women, Peace and Security agenda, with clear evidence showing that inclusive, multidimensional, multilateral and participatory processes, led by women and showing due respect for international law, contribute to conflict prevention, resolution, and post-conflict recovery, and result in more durable and effective peace agreements,
- (9) Concerned that the underrepresentation of women in peace mediation and negotiation remains a significant barrier to achieving lasting peace and inclusive governance,
- (10) Gravely concerned by the significant underrepresentation of women in diplomatic roles, as highlighted by UN General Assembly resolution 76/269, reaffirming the critical importance of advancing women's leadership in foreign affairs, multilateral institutions and diplomacy to

⁴ In IPU's *Plan of action for gender-sensitive parliaments*, adopted unanimously by the 127th IPU Assembly (Quebec City, October 2012), the IPU defines gender equality as follows: "Gender equality means that women and men enjoy full and equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities".

- strengthen inclusive global governance, and acknowledging the importance of the International Day of Women in Diplomacy in order to promote the full and equal participation of women at all levels of diplomacy,
- (11) Emphasizing that science and diplomacy are linked in addressing transboundary challenges, and that the role of women diplomats and scientists is pivotal and in need of empowerment in shaping both scientific and political solutions,
 - (12) Certain that today's most urgent global challenges, including climate change, technological transformation, the erosion of human rights and entrenched gender inequality, are reshaping the prospects for peace, and require strong, coordinated and gender-sensitive leadership and action in partnership between men and women,
 - (13) Worried that women are persistently underrepresented in climate decision-making and recognizing that climate change intensifies precarity and drives instability, particularly in fragile contexts, with impact on women and girls,
 - (14) Recognizing that emerging technologies are transforming societies and governance, bringing both opportunities and serious risks, and concerned by the lack of gender-inclusive political dialogue on the governance of artificial intelligence,
 - (15) Stressing the imperative of women's leadership in the development, governance and regulation of emerging technologies, to ensure these systems are inclusive, free from bias and supportive of social cohesion and gender equality,
 - (16) Welcoming progress in women's representation in national parliaments, which has more than doubled over the past 30 years, growing from 11.3% in 1995 to 27.2% in 2025, noting that the implementation of gender quotas, or other initiatives and supports that increase women's participation in politics, remains a crucial driver of these gains, welcoming progress in women's leadership of parliaments from 10.5% 30 years ago to 23.7% today, and calling for continued commitment and accelerated action in partnership between men and women towards parity in participation and leadership,
 - (17) Affirming that gender parity is fundamental to the legitimacy, resilience and effectiveness of democratic institutions across all areas of life, and convinced that achieving gender parity in parliaments and decision-making spaces is more urgent than ever to effectively address global challenges and to build inclusive and sustainable peace,
 - (18) Reaffirming our unequivocal commitment to achieving gender parity, as enshrined in the plan of action for gender parity in parliament adopted at the IPU Global Conference of Women Parliamentarians in March 2025 in Mexico, which was a decisive call to make parity a universal political standard, in line with the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women's General Recommendation No. 40 on the equal and inclusive representation of women in decision-making systems,

We commit to:

- Engage within and beyond our parliaments to raise awareness of the importance of multilateralism and inclusive interparliamentary dialogue as a fundamental trust-building mechanism for effective international cooperation and sustainable peace.
- Call for full respect of international humanitarian and human rights law, working through our parliaments to promote peaceful, negotiated settlements in place of a growing reliance on violence and war, and addressing their gender-related consequences, and reaffirm the urgency of gender-sensitive diplomacy and inclusive peace processes as the only sustainable path to lasting peace.
- Support women's leadership in diplomacy and foreign affairs by strengthening gender-balanced representation across all levels of diplomatic service and supporting inclusive foreign policy institutions that reflect and drive systemic change in global governance.
- Encourage all institutions, governments and organizations engaged in mediation and negotiation to adopt gender-inclusive policies and ensure the meaningful participation of women at all stages of these processes; and to further urge the allocation of adequate resources, training and support to empower women mediators and negotiators, particularly at the grassroots and community levels.
- Promote greater awareness in our parliaments of sustainable and inclusive peace as a multidimensional process by placing gender equality at its core.
- Lead a paradigm shift in politics by transforming our parliaments into gender-sensitive institutions while confronting harmful gender norms through inclusive procedures, sustained capacity-building and structural reforms.

- Step up efforts to rebuild trust in democratic institutions by fostering inclusive leadership and addressing the root causes of disengagement, particularly among younger generations, to bridge the widening generational divide.
- Reiterate our commitment to making parity the norm within and beyond our parliaments, while actively supporting global advocacy to encourage and enable all parliaments to adopt gender-sensitive practices and structures.
- Strengthen the response of our parliaments to address all forms of violence against women and gender-based violence within and beyond parliaments, by adopting and upholding zero-tolerance laws and policies, reinforcing accountability and treating this issue as a fundamental challenge to democracy.
- Take urgent action to ensure women's full participation in climate change responses and recognize that gender-responsive strategies are essential to building resilience, enabling adaptation and driving a just, equitable transition.
- Strengthen institutional knowledge and parliamentary capacities to oversee emerging technologies, ensuring their governance is inclusive, gender-sensitive and free from bias, with women equally represented with men in the design, development and oversight of these systems.
- Promote science diplomacy by championing gender-balanced representation of women diplomats and scientists in multilateral scientific forums, and foster clear pathways for girls and young women to enter and thrive in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) — building on successful models such as the Women in Science (WINS) programme and encouraging their deployment worldwide.
- Leverage the milestone anniversaries in 2025 of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Women, Peace and Security agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals, and the 40th anniversary of the IPU Forum of Women Parliamentarians to accelerate implementation and renew commitments to gender equality and inclusive peacebuilding.
- Join the IPU *Achieving gender equality, action by action* campaign, promote the campaign in our parliaments, and implement the 10 most transformative and urgent actions that it calls on us to take.

We will ensure that this outcome document informs the proceedings of the Sixth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, with a view to prioritizing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls on the agenda of all parliaments.

NB. It is recognized that due to their constitutional positions or other factors, certain Speakers cannot directly associate themselves with substantive political statements, and therefore should not be seen as indicating specific support for all sections. Nonetheless, on behalf of their chambers, they recognize the importance of the issues raised and the intentions of their colleagues in proposing particular ways forward.

IPU Budget for 2026

*Approved by the IPU Governing Council at its 216th session
(Geneva, 20 October 2025)*

	2025 Budget	2026 Budget		
		Regular budget	Other sources	All funds
Assessed contributions	11,937,000	12,294,900		12,294,900
Working Capital Fund (IPSAS)	230,000	230,000		230,000
Working Capital Fund (liquid)	435,700	344,900		344,900
Staff assessment	1,162,100	1,294,200		1,294,200
Interest	100,000	100,000		100,000
Programme support costs	0	349,800	(349,800)	0
Other revenue	16,000	16,000		16,000
Voluntary contributions	4,323,300		4,714,500	4,714,500
TOTAL REVENUES	18,204,100	14,629,800	4,364,700	18,994,500
1. Building effective and empowered parliaments	4,016,800	2,304,400	2,226,600	4,531,000
2. Promoting inclusive and representative parliaments	1,178,900	754,100	563,100	1,317,200
3. Supporting resilient and innovative parliaments	916,800	360,700	517,500	878,200
4. Catalysing collective parliamentary action	8,496,800	7,113,300	1,385,700	8,499,000
5. Strengthening the IPU's accountability	3,770,400	3,952,700	21,600	3,974,300
Other charges	144,600	144,600		144,600
Eliminations	(320,200)		(349,800)	(349,800)
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	18,204,100	14,629,800	4,364,700	18,994,500

Approved 2026 capital budget

Item	2026
1. Replacement of computers and servers	35,000
2. Furniture	15,000
3. Website development	100,000
Total capital expenditures	150,000

Scale of contributions for 2026

Scale of contributions for 2026 based on the UN scale of assessment

*Approved by the IPU Governing Council at its 216th session
(Geneva, 20 October 2025)*

Country name	UN 2025–2027	Approved 2026 scale	
	Per cent	Per cent	CHF
Albania	0.010%	0.120%	14,800
Algeria	0.087%	0.230%	28,300
Andorra	0.004%	0.110%	13,500
Angola	0.010%	0.120%	14,800
Argentina	0.490%	0.750%	92,200
Armenia	0.007%	0.110%	13,500
Australia	2.040%	2.540%	312,400
Austria	0.626%	0.920%	113,200
Azerbaijan	0.034%	0.150%	18,400
Bahamas	0.015%	0.120%	14,800
Bahrain	0.050%	0.180%	22,100
Bangladesh	0.010%	0.120%	14,800
Belarus	0.043%	0.170%	20,900
Belgium	0.773%	1.090%	134,100
Belize	0.001%	0.100%	12,300
Benin	0.005%	0.110%	13,500
Bhutan	0.001%	0.100%	12,300
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	0.018%	0.130%	16,000
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0.014%	0.120%	14,800
Botswana	0.013%	0.120%	14,800
Brazil	1.411%	1.830%	225,100
Bulgaria	0.071%	0.210%	25,800
Burkina Faso	0.005%	0.110%	13,500
Burundi	0.001%	0.100%	12,300
Cabo Verde	0.001%	0.100%	12,300
Cambodia	0.008%	0.110%	13,500
Cameroon	0.014%	0.120%	14,800
Canada	2.543%	3.100%	381,300
Chad	0.005%	0.110%	13,500
Chile	0.374%	0.610%	75,000
China	20.004%	11.750%	1,445,200
Colombia	0.197%	0.380%	46,700
Comoros	0.001%	0.100%	12,300
Costa Rica	0.063%	0.200%	24,600
Côte d'Ivoire	0.024%	0.140%	17,200
Croatia	0.088%	0.230%	28,300
Cuba	0.122%	0.280%	34,400
Cyprus	0.035%	0.160%	19,700
Czechia	0.344%	0.570%	70,100
Democratic PR of Korea	0.005%	0.110%	13,500
Democratic Republic Congo	0.010%	0.120%	14,800
Denmark	0.531%	0.800%	98,400
Djibouti	0.002%	0.100%	12,300
Dominican Republic	0.069%	0.210%	25,800

Country name	UN 2025–2027	Approved 2026 scale	
	Per cent	Per cent	CHF
Ecuador	0.065%	0.200%	24,600
Egypt	0.182%	0.360%	44,300
El Salvador	0.013%	0.120%	14,800
Equatorial Guinea	0.008%	0.110%	13,500
Estonia	0.045%	0.170%	20,900
Eswatini	0.002%	0.100%	12,300
Ethiopia	0.010%	0.120%	14,800
Fiji	0.003%	0.100%	12,300
Finland	0.386%	0.620%	76,300
France	3.858%	4.510%	554,700
Gabon	0.011%	0.120%	14,800
Gambia	0.001%	0.100%	12,300
Georgia	0.009%	0.110%	13,500
Germany	5.692%	6.380%	784,700
Ghana	0.025%	0.140%	17,200
Greece	0.280%	0.490%	60,300
Guatemala	0.046%	0.170%	20,900
Guinea	0.004%	0.110%	13,500
Guinea Bissau	0.001%	0.100%	12,300
Guyana	0.011%	0.120%	14,800
Hungary	0.223%	0.410%	50,400
Iceland	0.035%	0.160%	19,700
India	1.106%	1.480%	182,000
Indonesia	0.579%	0.860%	105,800
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	0.386%	0.620%	76,300
Iraq	0.131%	0.290%	35,700
Ireland	0.472%	0.730%	89,800
Israel	0.609%	0.890%	109,500
Italy	2.813%	3.390%	417,000
Jamaica	0.007%	0.110%	13,500
Japan	6.930%	7.580%	932,300
Jordan	0.021%	0.130%	16,000
Kazakhstan	0.131%	0.290%	35,700
Kenya	0.037%	0.160%	19,700
Kuwait	0.222%	0.410%	50,400
Kyrgyzstan	0.003%	0.100%	12,300
Lao People's Democratic Republic	0.006%	0.110%	13,500
Latvia	0.050%	0.180%	22,100
Lebanon	0.022%	0.140%	17,200
Lesotho	0.001%	0.100%	12,300
Liberia	0.001%	0.100%	12,300
Libya	0.040%	0.160%	19,700
Liechtenstein	0.009%	0.110%	13,500
Lithuania	0.081%	0.220%	27,100
Luxembourg	0.073%	0.210%	25,800
Madagascar	0.004%	0.110%	13,500
Malawi	0.003%	0.100%	12,300
Malaysia	0.326%	0.550%	67,600
Maldives	0.004%	0.110%	13,500
Mali	0.005%	0.110%	13,500
Malta	0.020%	0.130%	16,000
Marshall Islands	0.001%	0.100%	12,300
Mauritania	0.003%	0.100%	12,300
Mauritius	0.010%	0.120%	14,800
Mexico	1.137%	1.520%	187,000
Micronesia (Federated States of)	0.001%	0.100%	12,300
Monaco	0.011%	0.120%	14,800

Country name	UN 2025–2027	Approved 2026 scale	
	Per cent	Per cent	CHF
Mongolia	0.004%	0.110%	13,500
Montenegro	0.004%	0.110%	13,500
Morocco	0.059%	0.190%	23,400
Mozambique	0.002%	0.100%	12,300
Namibia	0.007%	0.110%	13,500
Nepal	0.010%	0.120%	14,800
Netherlands	1.298%	1.710%	210,300
New Zealand	0.302%	0.520%	64,000
Nicaragua	0.004%	0.110%	13,500
Nigeria	0.150%	0.320%	39,400
North Macedonia	0.008%	0.110%	13,500
Norway	0.653%	0.950%	116,800
Oman	0.115%	0.270%	33,200
Pakistan	0.123%	0.280%	34,400
Palau	0.001%	0.100%	12,300
Palestine		0.100%	12,300
Panama	0.086%	0.230%	28,300
Paraguay	0.023%	0.140%	17,200
Peru	0.145%	0.310%	38,100
Philippines	0.198%	0.380%	46,700
Poland	0.831%	1.160%	142,700
Portugal	0.328%	0.550%	67,600
Qatar	0.245%	0.440%	54,100
Republic of Korea	2.349%	2.890%	355,500
Republic of Moldova	0.006%	0.110%	13,500
Romania	0.358%	0.590%	72,600
Russian Federation	2.094%	2.600%	319,800
Rwanda	0.003%	0.100%	12,300
Saint Lucia	0.002%	0.100%	12,300
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	0.001%	0.100%	12,300
Samoa	0.001%	0.100%	12,300
San Marino	0.002%	0.100%	12,300
Sao Tome & Principe	0.001%	0.100%	12,300
Saudi Arabia	1.217%	1.610%	198,000
Senegal	0.007%	0.110%	13,500
Serbia	0.040%	0.160%	19,700
Seychelles	0.002%	0.100%	12,300
Sierra Leone	0.001%	0.100%	12,300
Singapore	0.479%	0.740%	91,000
Slovakia	0.149%	0.320%	39,400
Slovenia	0.077%	0.220%	27,100
Somalia	0.002%	0.100%	12,300
South Africa	0.251%	0.450%	55,300
South Sudan	0.005%	0.110%	13,500
Spain	1.895%	2.380%	292,700
Sri Lanka	0.038%	0.160%	19,700
Suriname	0.002%	0.100%	12,300
Sweden	0.822%	1.150%	141,400
Switzerland	1.029%	1.390%	171,000
Syrian Arab Republic	0.006%	0.110%	13,500
Tajikistan	0.003%	0.100%	12,300
Thailand	0.341%	0.560%	68,900
Timor-Leste	0.001%	0.100%	12,300
Togo	0.002%	0.100%	12,300
Tonga	0.001%	0.100%	12,300
Trinidad and Tobago	0.033%	0.150%	18,400
Tunisia	0.018%	0.130%	16,000

Country name	UN 2025–2027	Approved 2026 scale	
	Per cent	Per cent	CHF
Türkiye	0.685%	0.990%	121,800
Turkmenistan	0.036%	0.160%	19,700
Tuvalu	0.001%	0.100%	12,300
Uganda	0.010%	0.120%	14,800
Ukraine	0.074%	0.210%	25,800
United Arab Emirates	0.574%	0.850%	104,500
United Kingdom	3.991%	4.650%	571,900
United Republic of Tanzania	0.010%	0.120%	14,800
Uruguay	0.079%	0.220%	27,100
Uzbekistan	0.024%	0.140%	17,200
Vanuatu	0.001%	0.100%	12,300
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	0.069%	0.210%	25,800
Viet Nam	0.159%	0.330%	40,600
Yemen	0.003%	0.100%	12,300
Zambia	0.006%	0.110%	13,500
Zimbabwe	0.007%	0.110%	13,500

Associate Member	UN 2025-2027	Approved 2026 scale	
	Per cent	Per cent	CHF
Andean Parliament		0.020%	2,500
Arab Parliament		0.030%	3,700
Central American Parliament		0.020%	2,500
East African Legislative Assembly		0.020%	2,500
European Parliament		0.060%	7,400
Interparliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States		0.020%	2,500
Inter-Parliamentary Committee of the West African Economic and Monetary Union		0.020%	2,500
Latin American and Caribbean Parliament		0.020%	2,500
Parliament of MERCOSUR		0.030%	3,700
Pan-African Parliament		0.020%	2,500
Parliament of the Economic Community of West African States		0.020%	2,500
Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation		0.020%	2,500
Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe		0.040%	4,900
Parliamentary Assembly of La Francophonie		0.020%	2,500
Total		100%	12,294,900

Amendments to the IPU Statutes and Rules

Statutes

*Amendments adopted by the 151st IPU Assembly
(Geneva, 23 October 2025)*

Article 4

2. When a Member Parliament of the IPU has ceased to function as such, the Executive Committee shall consider the situation and express an opinion to the Governing Council. The Governing Council shall take a decision on the suspension of the affiliation of that Member Parliament to the IPU. **If the Governing Council decides not to suspend the affiliation of the Parliament, it may exceptionally take a decision to allow a parliamentary entity to participate in the IPU as the country's legitimate interlocutor, in a non-voting observer capacity. In such a case, any arrears of contributions owed by that Parliament shall be written off and the assessment of future financial contributions shall be suspended until such time as a parliament is re-established in the country in accordance with Article 3.1.**

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Rules and Practices of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians

*Amendments adopted by the IPU Governing Council at its 216th session
(Geneva, 23 October 2025)*

Rule 1

1. The Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians (hereinafter called the Committee) shall be composed of ~~40~~ **12** members of Member Parliaments of IPU, elected by the Governing Council in an individual capacity on the basis of their competence, commitment to human rights and availability. They shall have a good command of at least one of the IPU's two working languages: English and French. The IPU Secretary General shall ensure that candidates standing for election, the geopolitical groups and IPU Member Parliaments are fully aware of the requirements stated above.

2. Committee members shall be elected for a single five-year term. In case of resignation, loss of parliamentary mandate or death of a member, or if the rights or affiliation of the parliament to which the member belongs are suspended, his/her term shall automatically come to an end. Members who are absent for two consecutive sessions without a valid reason may lose their seat by decision of the Governing Council following a recommendation by the Committee. Upon loss of Committee membership, another person shall be elected from the same geopolitical group for a new, full five-year term.

3. The composition of the Committee should reflect an equitable geopolitical distribution of seats. **The exact composition shall be reviewed periodically by the Committee to ensure regional balance (1).**

Add footnote: **“(1) At the time of approval of this Rule, the equitable geopolitical composition of the Committee was defined as: three parliamentarians each from the African Group and Twelve Plus Group, two each from the Asia-Pacific Group and GRULAC, and one each from the Arab Group and Eurasia Group.”**

4. The Committee as a whole should be gender-balanced and ~~in principle comprise five~~ **six** men and ~~five~~ **six** women. ~~In any case, there shall be no fewer than four members of either sex.~~

Report of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 216th session
(Geneva, 23 October 2025)*

1. The 40th session of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians was held on 19 October 2025. It brought together 244 participants, including 158 parliamentarians (136 women and 22 men) from 74 countries, along with representatives from various international organizations.

2. The President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, Ms. C. López Castro, and the IPU Vice-President, Ms. G. Morawska-Stanecka, welcomed participants to the Forum and to the 151st IPU Assembly. Ms. López Castro presided over the 40th session of the Forum. Vice-Presidents and members of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians acted as chairpersons or rapporteurs of the debates.

Initiatives to promote gender equality

3. Ms. M. Mophuting (Botswana), member of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, reported on the work of the 53rd session of the Bureau, which had taken place in Tashkent in April 2025, and of the first sitting of the 54th session of the Bureau held immediately prior to the 40th session of the Forum. She updated participants on the IPU's regional studies on sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliaments, and invited them to enrol in an innovative e-safety online training course, tested by the members of the Bureau, to counter technology-facilitated violence against women in politics.

4. Ms. S. Mikayilova (Azerbaijan) reported on the work of the Gender Partnership Group, including the monitoring of women's participation in delegations to the 151st Assembly. The Group welcomed the high turnout of women at the Assembly but warned of a decline in gender-balanced delegations. The Group also reported on the implementation of the IPU's anti-harassment policy, welcoming growing awareness of, and trust in, the response mechanism established through the policy.

5. Participants were informed of the IPU's recent activities to promote gender equality. Ms. N. Mutti (Zambia), reported on the proceedings and outcomes of the 15th Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament, held in Geneva on 28 July 2025. Ms. Z. Hilal, Secretary of the Forum, briefed the participants on the IPU's *Achieving gender equality, action by action* campaign. The campaign had been launched in line with the IPU's focus on gender equality as its priority theme for 2025, a year of important milestones for women's rights and empowerment. She also called attention to the *Plan of action for gender parity in parliament*, adopted at the Global Conference of Women Parliamentarians in Mexico in March 2025, which would be presented for endorsement by the Governing Council during the Assembly. Ms. I. Stamatović (Serbia) invited the participants to attend the 2026 Global Conference of Women Parliamentarians, which would take place in Belgrade from 2 to 4 June 2026.

Contributions to the work of the 151st Assembly from a gender perspective

6. As a contribution to the work of the Assembly, participants examined, from a gender perspective, the draft resolution of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights entitled *Recognizing and supporting the victims of illegal international adoption and taking measures to prevent this practice*. The debate began with a presentation by two of the co-Rapporteurs of the draft resolution, Mr. M. De Maegd (Belgium) and Mr. S. Patra (India). The debate continued in plenary, presided over by Ms. D.-T. Avgerinopoulou (Greece), member of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, and with Ms. T. Vardanyan (Armenia), First Vice-President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, as Rapporteur.

7. In the debate, participants noted that patriarchal norms, discrimination and socioeconomic exclusion combined to create structural inequalities that drove illegal adoptions. Such inequalities were further exacerbated in times of conflict and displacement. Vulnerabilities leading to such practices were strongly gendered, as biological mothers were particularly exposed to misinformation when they were young, unmarried, poor, belonged to a minority or indigenous group, had a migrant background, or faced other forms of exclusion. Participants called for the formal recognition of illegal international adoption as a form of trafficking and for its inclusion in anti-trafficking efforts with a rights-based, victim-centred approach. They underlined the need to align national legal frameworks with international standards, including the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), to strengthen monitoring mechanisms, and to establish robust victim-support systems providing psychological assistance and legal aid. They stressed the importance of awareness-raising and capacity-building for law enforcement officials, social workers and judges to help detect and prevent such practices. They emphasized that non-discrimination and gender equality must inform a holistic

response that tackles the structural and gendered inequalities underlying illegal adoptions, ensures justice for the women and girls affected, whether biological or adoptive mothers or adopted children, and strengthens prevention efforts.

8. The debate resulted in the formulation of three amendments to the Standing Committee's draft resolution. Subsequently, all the amendments proposed by the Forum were integrated into the draft resolution, enhancing the gender perspective of the text.

Panel discussion on *Transforming leadership: Overcoming new challenges to gender equality*

9. Discussions focused on how women leaders navigate and transform leadership amid persistent and emerging gendered barriers to political participation. They shared personal experiences of overcoming obstacles, supporting other women, and advancing gender equality through transformative leadership and solidarity.

10. The panel discussion opened with presentations from Ms. S. Kuugongelwa-Amadhila (Namibia), Ms. C. Roth (Germany), and Ms. A. Ellis (Senior Director Strategic Partnerships & Networks at the Julie Ann Wrigley Global Futures Laboratory, ASU Global Institute of Sustainability and Innovation).

11. Participants agreed that persistent patriarchal norms continued to shape women's leadership and access to power. They described their leadership journeys, marked by struggles in which backlash and violence sometimes led to self-censorship and psychological harm. They called for the transformation of leadership cultures as a shared responsibility supported by men's allyship. Experiences of leadership in times of crisis as well as in liberation movements revealed how gendered dynamics shape exposure, resilience and inclusive responses in peace negotiation, humanitarian action and political transitions. Participants called for institutional reforms that recognize equal care, flexible work and mentorship as important strategies to support and sustain women's leadership. Robust mechanisms to prevent and address gender-based violence in all its forms, including technology-based violence were also necessary measures in favour of women's leadership. Special focus was placed on the inclusion of women from marginalized and minority communities, survivors of violence, women with disabilities, migrant women and young women, ensuring that decision-making reflects the full spectrum of women's realities. Feminist leadership was highlighted as a collective and restorative practice of shared power, mutual accountability and resilience.

12. Mr. M. Chungong, IPU Secretary General and Chair of the International Gender Champions (IGC) Global Board, together with Ms. C. Kraft-Buchman, CEO and Founder of Women at the Table, presented the second edition of the *Gender-Responsive Assemblies Toolkit*.

Elections to the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians

13. The Forum elected Ms. S. Claydon (Australia) to fill the vacant seat of the Asia-Pacific Group, for a term running until March 2027.

Bureau of Women Parliamentarians

14. The Bureau met on 19 and 22 October 2025. The sitting of 19 October was dedicated to preparing for the 40th session of the Forum, and the sitting of 22 October took stock of the results of the 151st Assembly from a gender perspective and reviewed preparations for the Forum's next session and future work. The Bureau welcomed recent advancements towards peace in Gaza and expressed solidarity with women in Gaza and other conflict-affected areas. Members stressed the urgent need for the stronger involvement and leadership of women in peace processes. They requested that any future IPU event on peace include a strong focus on women and their key role as peacebuilders.

Report of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 216th session
(Geneva, 23 October 2025)*

The Forum of Young Parliamentarians was held on 20 October 2025. It brought together more than 100 participants, including 61 parliamentarians (21 young women and 40 young men) from 48 countries, as well as representatives from partner organizations. It was presided over by Ms. Julieta Sierra (Uruguay), who, as the youngest member of the Bureau present, replaced the President of the Bureau of Young Parliamentarians.

In her opening remarks, Ms. Sierra paid tribute to the IPU leadership for their longstanding support of the IPU youth movement. She underscored that, amid the rise of Gen Z movements challenging political systems worldwide, the Forum's mission to amplify youth voices was more vital than ever. She urged participants to use every available tool during the IPU Assembly to provide youth perspectives to the discussions and outcomes.

The Vice-President of the IPU addressed the Forum, commending young MPs for their leadership in promoting gender equality. She highlighted the success of the 11th Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians, held in Peru in September 2025, at which gender parity among participants was achieved for the first time. She underlined the mutually reinforcing nature of youth empowerment and gender equality and urged participants to continue advancing both causes together. The IPU Secretary General also addressed the Forum, emphasizing the fresh perspectives and solutions young parliamentarians brought to global challenges, including humanitarian crises.

The young MPs updated the Forum on recent developments in promoting youth participation in their countries. Highlights included efforts to empower young parliamentarians already in office, including through training, such as in Chad. They also praised examples of young MPs being appointed to political leadership roles in their countries and new efforts to lower the age of eligibility to run for office, such as in Peru. New initiatives to create youth caucuses, such as in the Philippines, were also underlined.

Young MPs referenced the Gen Z youth movements taking place in countries around the world and warned that the world was moving too slow on inclusion. Failure to listen to these voices and include more youth and young women in politics would only further erode trust. Noting new IPU data showing that the proportion of young MPs had stalled since 2023, they called for greater action to regain momentum to advance youth representation.

The Forum approved the nomination made by the African Group for Ms. J. Quashie (Ghana) to become a member of the Bureau of Young Parliamentarians for 2025–2027.

Contributing to the work of the 151st Assembly, young MPs examined the theme of the General Debate, *Upholding humanitarian norms and supporting humanitarian action in times of crisis*, from a youth perspective. They underlined that humanitarian action is a matter of justice, dignity and intergenerational equity. They called for increased international support for young people affected by crisis, especially in terms of education, employment and other economic opportunities. They gave examples of their countries' efforts in this regard, with many highlighting support for young people in Gaza. Many also called for humanitarian systems to be adapted to new threats such as disinformation, AI misuse and climate-induced crises.

The youth overview report on the draft resolution considered at the Assembly on *Recognizing and supporting the victims of illegal international adoption and taking measures to prevent this practice*, was presented by former member of the Bureau of Young Parliamentarians Mr. K. Ait Mik (Morocco). Young MPs emphasized the importance of recognition and support for the victims of illegal adoption, both adopted persons and their families. They called for enhanced psychological support, reintegration programmes, public awareness campaigns — including through digital platforms — and safeguards to ensure confidentiality for children. They also called for greater efforts to prevent this practice through strengthened legislation, enhanced oversight of verification mechanisms and increased international cooperation. They highlighted the role of young MPs in particular to be champions of advocacy and innovation on this issue.

In preparation for the 152nd IPU Assembly, the Forum appointed Mr. H. Ebrahim (Bahrain) to serve as youth rapporteur for the proposed resolution on *The role of parliaments in establishing robust post-conflict management mechanisms and restoring a just and lasting peace*. Providing their youth perspectives, young MPs called for greater institutionalization of youth participation in peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts, and for the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 2250 on youth, peace and security. The Forum also appointed Mr. W. Soto (Peru) to serve as youth rapporteur for the proposed resolution on *Building a fair and sustainable global economy: The role of parliaments in combating protectionism, reducing tariffs and preventing corporate tax evasion*. On this topic, participants highlighted the importance of capacity-building for young MPs to better scrutinize international trade and fight tax evasion, including in partnership with civil society and other stakeholders.

The Forum held a Q&A session on the new IPU campaign *Achieving gender equality, action by action*, exploring its synergies with the *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign. Young MPs emphasized that gender equality and youth empowerment are mutually reinforcing and called for combined efforts to ensure greater inclusion of young people as well as other groups in marginalized and vulnerable situations.

Earlier in the day, the Bureau of Young Parliamentarians met and took stock of youth participation at the 151st Assembly. Supporting implementation of the recent rule change to lower the age to be considered a young MP from under 45 to under 40 years of age, they urged parliaments and geopolitical groups to ensure that at least one MP under 40 years of age would be included in each delegation to IPU Assemblies. This would bring the Forum's target of 25% of delegates being young MPs back into reach. They also agreed on a distribution of roles among the Bureau members to take part in various bureaux and bodies, as well as procedures to address the recent change to the IPU Statutes and Rules allowing the Forum to propose amendments to Standing Committee resolutions. Regarding upcoming activities, the Bureau members discussed the theme of the 12th IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians and agreed on a focus on human rights. They also discussed the topic for a future Empowerment Series briefing, agreeing on a training session for young women MPs on e-safety.

Report of the Committee on Middle East Questions

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 216th session
(Geneva, 23 October 2025)*

Two sittings of the Committee were held on 20 and 22 October 2025.

The Secretariat introduced a new AI Agent designed to assist the Committee's presentations, data analysis and reporting, accompanied by a code of ethics governing its use. Members heard a report from the Secretariat on regional developments in the Gaza Strip since the 150th Assembly. These included a statistical overview of the casualties and the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip and of the ceasefire efforts in the international community.

The Committee heard a presentation by Mr. D. Fernández Puyana, Ambassador and Permanent Observer of the United Nations University for Peace to the United Nations in Geneva, on education for peace and coexistence. He encouraged parliaments to adopt decrees promoting peace education, create cross-party committees on coexistence and integrate peace education into the national curriculum. Mr. Puyana stressed that investing in education for peace contributes to security and dialogue, recalling the 1999 Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace and the 2016 Declaration on the Right to Peace, and he called for coherence between the United Nations and parliaments.

In discussion, members agreed that education is key to fostering tolerance and rebuilding trust, but observed that the education curriculum should reflect realities on the ground and be linked to tangible political progress. Several members drew attention to the difficulties of promoting peace education under occupation and to the loss of confidence among younger generations, noting that peace education should go hand in hand with efforts to restore faith in international law and institutions. These points were discussed in the broader context of Gaza and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, where it is crucial to ensure that educational initiatives are aligned with humanitarian and political developments.

Members expressed grave concern at reports of continued hostilities in the Gaza Strip despite the announcement of a ceasefire. They urged consolidation of a sustainable, verifiable and unconditional ceasefire to prevent further destruction and famine, and reiterated the importance of upholding international law and ensuring the safe, permanent and unimpeded delivery of humanitarian assistance. Members emphasized that humanitarian aid must never be a subject of negotiation. The Committee reaffirmed that only a fair and credible two-State solution — ending occupation and ensuring Palestinian sovereignty, the security of both peoples, and the protection of civilians and humanitarian workers — can lay the foundation for a just and lasting peace.

The Committee further considered organizational matters, including the ongoing discussion on its composition and working modalities. In the resolution *The role of parliaments in advancing a two-State solution in Palestine*, adopted on 9 April 2025 at the 150th Assembly in Tashkent, operative paragraph 17 presents a proposal drafted by the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security concerning the restructuring of the Committee on Middle East Questions.

Members recalled that the Secretariat had circulated a first proposal in February 2025, discussed during the Committee's informal and formal meetings at the 150th Assembly. Concerns had been expressed at the time regarding the Committee's scope, continuity and representativeness. In response, the Secretariat circulated in September 2025 a draft briefing note setting out an amended version of the proposed restructuring. The amended proposal provides for twelve elected members, distributed equally

among the geopolitical groups and ensuring gender parity; the two current ex officio members (Israel and Palestine); standing invitations to the Bureaus of Women and Young Parliamentarians; and the election of a President and Vice-President for one-year renewable terms. It also envisages selecting, at each Assembly, one thematic and one regional priority; convening hearings and missions as appropriate; and establishing a Group of Facilitators for Israel and Palestine, modelled in part on the IPU's practice for Cyprus, to sustain dialogue and report to the Committee.

During the second sitting, members continued their discussion of the restructuring proposal. They underlined the need to preserve the centrality of the Israeli–Palestinian question within the Committee's mandate, expressing concern that the creation of a smaller group of facilitators might risk diminishing that focus. Several members stressed that the Committee should remain the principal forum for dialogue on the conflict and that all members should be involved in deliberations on this core issue. Members also reaffirmed the importance of maintaining geopolitical balance, gender parity and diversity of representation, as well as ensuring that the Committee's mandate continues to reflect its founding purpose while adapting to new regional dynamics. It was suggested that the Committee's membership could be expanded to achieve better balance among geopolitical groups, and that any restructuring should enhance participation.

In the course of the exchange, members voiced concern regarding the continued absence of the Israeli ex officio representative from recent meetings. Members agreed that the President of the Committee should formally seek clarification from both ex officio members from Israel and Palestine regarding their commitment to the Committee's work and the mandate of each designated representative. Members also agreed that both ex officio members should be invited to reconfirm their engagement and commitment to constructive participation.

Members emphasized that the Israeli-Palestinian question must remain at the core of the Committee's agenda, consistent with its historic purpose and with resolutions adopted by the United Nations and endorsed by the IPU. Members called for a clear reaffirmation of support for the two-State solution, urging that the Committee issue a statement in favour of an immediate ceasefire, humanitarian access, and renewed political dialogue. They also underscored the need for the Committee to act more swiftly and visibly between Assemblies, including through parliamentary diplomacy and communication with the Executive Committee.

The Secretariat informed members of the preparation of a report on the IPU's historical engagement in the Middle East and of the draft workplan for 2025–2026, which includes the organization of a Committee retreat in early 2026. The retreat would provide an opportunity for members to reflect on the Committee's working methods and future activities. Members agreed that the retreat should take place before the next formal meeting of the Committee during the 152nd Assembly in April 2026, providing a timely opportunity to reflect on the Committee's working methods, direction and relevance.

Members were also briefed by representatives of the King Hamad Global Center for Coexistence and Tolerance on preparations for the International Day of Peaceful Coexistence to be held in Bahrain. Members welcomed the initiative and agreed that both the retreat and the International Day of Peaceful Coexistence would be timely and complementary opportunities to enhance dialogue, cooperation and visibility for the Committee's work.

Report of the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 216th session
(Geneva, 23 October 2025)*

The Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL) met on 21 October 2025.

Actions taken on selected humanitarian issues

The Committee discussed developments since its previous session in April 2025 and reported on actions taken by its members.

The Committee heard an update on parliamentary efforts in Thailand to end statelessness and protect refugees. Recent legislative action had led the government to decide to simplify and streamline the application process for Thai nationality or permanent residency for about 480,000 stateless people. In addition, at the initiative of the Thai Parliament, the government adopted a resolution that will grant

some 81,000 long-staying refugees from Myanmar the right to work in Thailand. Action was also taken within Parliament to raise awareness on the need to combat the practice of transnational repression against refugees and asylum seekers in Thailand.

The Committee also heard about initiatives taken to provide assistance to former Members of Parliament from Afghanistan who find themselves currently at risk.

The Committee welcomed the initiatives reported on by the representatives from Thailand and Malta.

Review of specific situations of humanitarian concern

The Committee received an update on recent developments in situations of humanitarian concern and paid particular attention to the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). In addition to receiving a briefing by the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), the Committee held a hearing with the delegation of the DRC, led by the President of the Senate of the DRC, Mr. J.-M. Sama Lukonde Kyenge.

The President reported to the Committee on the dire humanitarian situation that the DRC is undergoing. Currently, there are nearly 7.3 million internally displaced persons in the DRC, with a large majority — around 80% — in the eastern part of the country. The provinces of North Kivu and South Kivu continue to see the largest influx of displaced persons as a result of ongoing fighting. The constant flow of displacement, temporary returns, and repeated re-displacement place a heavy burden on host communities and peripheral urban services. Violence targeting women and children remains high in eastern DRC, while the number of incidents involving humanitarian actors is also concerning, with 126 incidents identified between August and September 2025. This situation has been aggravated by public health emergencies, including Ebola, cholera and measles. The issue of humanitarian access was also raised as a concern, especially in areas occupied or controlled by armed groups. This continues to hamper the delivery and continuity of humanitarian operations, leaving large segments of the population without assistance. The President called on the global parliamentary community to raise awareness on the humanitarian crisis in the DRC and scale up action to provide financial support for ongoing activities as well as support for humanitarian assistance, particularly in the areas of food security, health, nutrition, shelter, household items and education.

The Committee expressed serious concerns about the devastating humanitarian landscape in the DRC, especially about how recent funding cuts to humanitarian aid globally have heavily impacted the humanitarian response in the country. In 2025, only 389 million USD of the 2.5 billion required for humanitarian assistance in the DRC were received. The Committee highlighted the vital role played by humanitarian actors in the DRC, especially in delivering aid and assistance to persons located in areas difficult to access. The Committee also stressed the importance of making mechanisms available for victims to seek assistance, including legal assistance and medical and psychological support. Committee members also recalled that respecting IHL in the DRC is crucial to reducing attacks on hospitals and schools, which continue to occur amid the ongoing conflict.

The Committee calls on IPU Member Parliaments to raise awareness on the humanitarian situation in the DRC within their institutions and geopolitical groups, and to encourage their governments to increase financial and material support to humanitarian response efforts.

Parliamentary commitments towards ending statelessness

The Committee discussed efforts towards ending statelessness, with a focus on childhood statelessness. It heard from UNHCR experts on the impacts of statelessness on children, including the lack of legal identity, protection and sense of belonging, as well as barriers to education and healthcare. The Committee considered measures to prevent childhood statelessness, including the importance of adopting legislative frameworks that promote universal birth registration. The Committee also identified that a more effective implementation of the [1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness](#) is needed with a view to ending childhood statelessness. Further to the discussion, Committee members decided that the open session of the IHL Committee at the 152nd IPU Assembly would focus on the topic of statelessness.

International humanitarian law and the challenges of contemporary armed conflicts

The Committee continued its consideration of the findings of the ICRC report entitled [International Humanitarian Law and the Challenges of Contemporary Armed Conflicts](#). During this session, Committee members exchanged with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on the issue of the protection of medical facilities, with a focus on the protection of hospitals in armed conflicts.

Members expressed concern that, in today's armed conflicts, hospitals are increasingly being attacked or misused for military purposes, undermining the specific protection of medical establishments afforded by IHL. The Committee acknowledged that parliamentary action is essential in making this protection effective through the national implementation of the relevant IHL norms in domestic legislation and policies.

The Committee also highlighted the relevance of the ongoing [Global Initiative to Galvanize Political Commitment to International Humanitarian Law](#), launched by the ICRC with six other countries in September 2024. Members agreed to raise awareness on the Global Initiative within their parliaments and geopolitical groups, and to use parliamentary channels to encourage their governments to join the Initiative, if they have not yet done so, and engage with its workstreams — in particular those on “Prevention and Good Practices” and “National IHL Committees”.

The Committee also decided on the topics for its future webinar series on IHL: IHL compliance when implementing counterterrorism measures; IHL and the natural environment; and preparedness measures to comply with IHL in large-scale conflicts, including detention and accounting for the missing and the dead.

Humanitarian disarmament treaties

The Committee continued its work on raising awareness on key humanitarian disarmament treaties. During this session, the Committee focused its discussions on the [Convention on Cluster Munitions](#) (CCM). A briefing on the CCM was provided by the Implementation Support Unit of the CCM. The Committee considered different measures through which parliaments can support the universalization and national implementation of the Convention. These include promoting accession and ratification of the CCM; strengthening national legislation on the prohibition of the use, production, transfer and stockpiling of cluster munitions; allocating resources for the clearance of contaminated areas, victim assistance, and risk education; promoting public awareness on the humanitarian impacts of cluster munitions; and engaging with inter-parliamentary dialogue to promote universalization, exchange legislative practices and implementation experiences, and sustain political attention.

Committee membership

The Committee re-elected as its Chair Mr. A. Farrugia (Malta) for another one-year term.

The Committee took note of the absence of one of its members from the Eurasia group for three consecutive sessions and decided, in line with its rules, to declare the seat vacant.

Report of the Committee on Health

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 216th session
(Geneva, 23 October 2025)*

The Committee on Health met for its first meeting on 19 October with ten members in attendance. The Committee also held a dialogue with technical partners on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) on the same day. The Committee elected Ms. O. Ataniyazova (Uzbekistan) as President for a one-year term.

The Committee was informed of the IPU's work on health and the engagement of the IPU Advisory Group on Health, which has spanned nearly twenty years and focused on health equity and addressing barriers to access to health services. In continuation of these efforts, the Committee discussed parliamentary engagement on universal health coverage (UHC) in follow-up to the 2019 IPU resolution *Achieving universal health coverage by 2030: The role of parliaments in ensuring the right to health*. It discussed options for engagement, highlighting the importance of complementing global data with good practices and examples of parliamentary action at the country level, taking into account different national contexts. It underscored the importance of cooperation — particularly during times of crisis — as well as equity and resilience as cross-cutting priorities, while recognizing the need to concentrate its efforts on a limited number of high-impact issues. The Committee requested the IPU Secretariat to propose a roadmap for implementing activities in the lead-up to the 2027 United Nations High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage.

The Committee further reflected on the outcomes of its dialogue with technical partners on SRHR, one of the most contested areas of healthcare due to fragmented global health architecture and funding, regressive policy environments, the devaluation of science, and the increasing invisibilization of the SRHR agenda amid concurrent crises. The discussion uncovered many SRHR priorities, stressing the complexity of their interconnections and the importance of linking to structural issues in relation to equity, resilience, and social and economic contexts. The Committee highlighted the importance of listening to and working with people, of focusing on youth and of promoting education and raising awareness. It shared examples of legislation as an instrument to protect rights, address harmful practices and improve access to SRHR services, including through harmonization at the regional level.

Finally, the Committee discussed its workplan for the coming year, including engagement on adolescent health and closer connections with parliaments through field visits.

Report of the High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG)

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 216th session
(Geneva, 23 October 2025)*

On 21 August 2025, the High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG) held a webinar to mark the International Day of Remembrance and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism. The event focused on education as a tool for prevention, reconciliation and empowerment. It brought together representatives from around 20 national parliaments, as well as experts from international organizations, civil society and victims of terrorism, who shared their experiences and perspectives. Discussions emphasized that education must go beyond security-oriented approaches to promote inclusion, equality and critical thinking, thereby strengthening social cohesion and resilience. Participants underlined the importance of integrating the voices and testimonies of victims into educational systems as a way to restore dignity and counter extremist narratives. The debate also highlighted the crucial role of parliaments in protecting the right to education, allocating adequate resources, and ensuring that schools remain safe spaces even in contexts affected by terrorism. The session concluded that investing in education and amplifying the voices of victims are essential to preventing radicalization, fostering healing and protecting the shared future of humanity.

During the 151st IPU Assembly, the HLAG held its nineteenth meeting on 19 October 2025. The meeting was chaired by Ms. M. Guerra Castillo (Mexico), Chairperson of the Group. In her opening remarks, she underscored the Group's vital role as a platform for parliamentary dialogue and policy exchange in the global fight against terrorism and violent extremism. She noted that terrorism continues to evolve, exploiting humanitarian, social and environmental crises, and called for strong parliamentary leadership anchored in democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

The Secretary General of the IPU, Mr. M. Chungong, followed with opening remarks reaffirming the IPU's commitment to supporting parliaments in developing effective, rights-based responses to terrorism. He commended the Group's continued dedication to addressing one of the world's most complex challenges and praised the Chairperson's leadership in keeping the HLAG active and results-oriented. He emphasized that terrorism is increasingly linked to social, economic and environmental crises, citing the Sahel as a region where environmental degradation, insecurity and lack of opportunity have created conditions for displacement and radicalization. Mr. Chungong stressed the indispensable role of parliaments in shaping responses through legislation, oversight and resource allocation, and highlighted that true security must be built on inclusion and opportunity.

The Group then held an expert hearing on climate change, resource scarcity and violent extremism, focusing on the security, displacement and community risks arising from environmental degradation. Mr. S. Stroobants (Institute for Economics and Peace, IEP) presented findings from the IEP's Ecological Threat Report showing that ecological pressures — particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa and the MENA region — are increasingly linked to conflict and instability. He explained that climate change acts as a "threat amplifier", intensifying vulnerabilities caused by food and water scarcity, weak governance and population pressures. The Sahel was identified as a global hotspot where environmental degradation, insecurity and poor governance converge, creating conditions conducive to extremist recruitment. Mr. Stroobants emphasized the importance of building resilience through the IEP's Positive Peace framework.

Ms. C. Wong (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)) reinforced these findings, describing climate change as a risk multiplier that aggravates instability and enables extremist groups to exploit resource crises and governance gaps. She shared examples from Somalia, Mali and the Sahel, where armed groups have turned environmental stress into economic and political leverage. Drawing on the UNDP's Journey to Extremism study, she noted that lack of economic opportunity — not ideology — is the main driver of recruitment into violent groups. Ms. Wong called for greater access to climate finance in fragile contexts and for reintegration programmes to include climate-resilient livelihoods, highlighting the UNDP's work with the Lake Chad Basin Commission in supporting displaced populations to return home.

The meeting then turned to the implementation of the *Call of the Sahel*. The Chairperson outlined the initiative's holistic approach, integrating five priority areas: security, education, environment, community and development. She noted the need to appoint new facilitators for the ad hoc committee, and the following members were nominated: Mr. J.O. Makali (Kenya) for Security; Ms. R. Abouras (Libya) for Development; Mr. A. Alharbi (Saudi Arabia) for Education; Ms. A. Rasheed (Maldives) for Community; and Ms. L. Saint-Paul (France) for Environment.

The Chairperson also proposed that HLAG members undertake parliamentary visits to countries in the Sahel as part of the *Call of the Sahel* initiative. These visits would allow direct engagement with national parliaments to better understand local challenges, share experiences, and strengthen cooperation on counter-terrorism and the prevention of violent extremism. The missions would aim to promote trust, visibility and joint action, particularly given the limited capacity of many Sahelian parliaments to participate in IPU activities. They would also include exchanges with community leaders, presentation of the Positive Peace framework, and exploration of how successful programmes — such as Dr. Fatima Akilu's education and rehabilitation initiative in Nigeria — could be replicated in other countries. The proposal reflects the Group's commitment to practical, field-based collaboration that reinforces peace, development and resilience in the region.

On 20 October 2025, the HLAG organized a panel discussion on the complex intersection of migration, terrorism and transnational organized crime. The debate underscored that this global challenge largely concerns the exploitation of displaced persons, particularly unaccompanied children, by criminal networks.

The Chairperson observed that political and media narratives often conflate migration with insecurity and terrorism, obscuring the underlying structural causes such as poverty and climate change. Experts provided key insights: Mr. A. Luzzi (UNODC) described the emergence of “terro-criminal ecosystems” and the increasingly blurred boundaries between terrorism financing and organized crime, particularly in the Sahel, and called for the creation of “networks of legality” rooted in human rights. Ms. S. Kuzucu (UNHCR) stressed that anti-trafficking measures must not undermine the right to asylum, citing the European Union's Temporary Protection Directive as a positive example. She emphasized that effective migration governance depends on three pillars: protection, prevention and partnership. Mr. S. Stroobants (Institute for Economics and Peace) presented data disproving the supposed link between migration and terrorism, and noted that radicalization often occurs rapidly among marginalized populations. He advocated for strengthening institutional resilience through the promotion of Positive Peace.

The discussion then turned to regional perspectives and practical solutions. Representatives from the Sahel region described how illicit trafficking of gold, fuel and other resources continues to finance terrorism, calling for the establishment of a permanent committee within the IPU and stronger coordination with regional mechanisms such as the Alliance of Sahel States (AES). Other delegates highlighted the heavy human and economic toll of terrorism in Asia and Europe, and the urgent need to harmonize legal frameworks, combat corruption and protect vulnerable groups from exploitation by criminal networks. Concluding the session, the Chairperson emphasized that these transnational threats require immediate and coordinated international action, and that parliaments must lead the way by enacting strong legislation to protect migrants, combat money laundering, and dismantle human trafficking networks.

The Chairperson further stressed the need to strengthen humanitarian responses grounded in solidarity, dignity and shared responsibility. She highlighted the essential role of parliaments in ensuring the protection of migrants and people displaced by terrorism and violent extremism, and in promoting legislative frameworks that uphold human rights and humanitarian principles. She called on the international community to place humanitarian action at the centre of global security strategies, recognizing that lasting peace cannot be achieved without compassion, inclusion and protection for those most affected by conflict and instability. The Chairperson also proposed that this priority be reflected in the outcomes of the General Debate of the 151st Assembly, ensuring that humanitarian protection remains a central pillar of the IPU's global agenda.

Report of the Working Group on Science and Technology

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 216th Session
(Geneva, 23 October 2025)*

Two sittings of the Working Group were held, one online on 16 June 2025, and one in Geneva on 21 October 2025. At least ten members attended each of these meetings in person or virtually.

During its sitting on 16 June, the new Working Group members examined the *IPU Charter on the Ethics of Science and Technology*. Members discussed strategies for promoting and disseminating the Charter within their respective national parliamentary frameworks, with particular attention to its application in emerging fields such as artificial intelligence (AI). They exchanged views on how to integrate the Charter's ethical principles into legislation and underscored the importance of strengthening cooperation between parliaments and the scientific community. Members were also briefed by the IPU Secretariat on the Science for Peace Schools session for parliamentary staff on *Understanding artificial intelligence (AI) and its impact on parliamentary work: AI, human consciousness and ethics*, held from 5 to 9 May 2025 at the Synchrotron-light for Experimental Science and Applications in the Middle East (SESAME) in Allan, Jordan.

During its sitting on 21 October, the Working Group held a broad discussion on parliamentary engagement with science and technology, during which members exchanged experiences and good practices from their respective parliaments. Members from Algeria, Kenya, Maldives, Sweden, Thailand, the United Arab Emirates, Uruguay and Zimbabwe presented national initiatives and institutional frameworks for integrating science into parliamentary work. Examples included the establishment of research services for parliamentarians, AI-driven innovation strategies, partnerships with universities, digital transformation of parliamentary systems, and legislation on cybersecurity and data protection. They highlighted the importance of evidence-based policymaking, scientific literacy and equitable access to digital technologies. They agreed that parliaments must ensure that technological advancement is guided by ethics, inclusiveness and human rights.

Members underscored the significance of water as a key area of parliamentary engagement, recognizing it as a long-standing priority for the Working Group and agreeing to build upon that foundation through renewed focus and cooperation. They agreed to designate water as a key thematic area of work, to be advanced in cooperation with the United Nations and as a follow-up to the first edition of the IPU Science for Peace Schools on water.

Ms. Sonia Koeppel, Secretary of the UN Water Convention, delivered a presentation on global water challenges and the critical role of science, data and AI in promoting sustainable and peaceful water management. She emphasized that technology alone is not sufficient and must be supported by sound legislation, adequate budgets and strong parliamentary oversight to ensure equitable access to clean water and sanitation. She underlined that more than 60% of the world's freshwater resources are shared across borders, requiring effective cooperation and legal frameworks to prevent conflict and manage resources equitably. She invited the members to participate in the Global Workshop on AI and water technologies in May 2026 in Geneva, and in the UN Water Conference in December 2026 in the United Arab Emirates.

The Working Group held an extensive discussion on the rapid evolution of AI and its implications for governance, democracy and human rights. Members noted that AI was increasingly shaping all areas of public life, from education and health care to national security and electoral integrity, and agreed that parliaments must be equipped to address both its opportunities and risks. Members shared their respective national experiences, highlighting initiatives to harness AI for innovation while also regulating its ethical use. The discussion emphasized the importance of transparency, accountability, human oversight and inclusivity in AI development and deployment. Several members cautioned that while AI could greatly enhance efficiency, it also risked deepening inequality and spreading misinformation if left unregulated. There was consensus that parliaments must take a proactive role in setting ethical and legal standards for AI, ensuring that it serves human welfare.

The Working Group recalled that the *IPU Charter on the Ethics of Science and Technology* is a framework for parliamentarians to guide the ethical dimensions of scientific and technological advancements. They highlighted that the scope and complexity of AI required a more detailed and specific framework, and agreed to develop an Annex on AI Ethics to the Charter that would translate ethical principles into practical guidance for lawmakers on AI policy and legislation, in line with the

Charter's principles of human dignity, equality, transparency, accountability and international cooperation. Members agreed to appoint Mr. N. In-na (Thailand) as rapporteur for the Annex, and emphasized parliaments' duty to ensure that AI technologies are used to benefit societies while safeguarding citizens' rights and values.

Two invited experts contributed to the discussion on AI. Mr. Patrick Glauner, Professor of Artificial Intelligence at the Deggendorf Institute of Technology in Germany, emphasized that AI is rapidly transforming all sectors of society and parliaments must ensure that legislation keeps pace with technological change. He cautioned that the absence of effective oversight could lead to ethical breaches, discrimination and public mistrust, and urged parliaments to exercise proactive oversight and international cooperation in regulating AI. Mr. Glauner outlined key ethical concerns, including algorithmic bias, data misuse and the opacity of AI systems, and urged parliaments to promote transparency, accountability and explainability in AI applications. He recommended that national parliaments strengthen their capacity through specialized committees and collaboration with the scientific and expert communities, and welcomed the Working Group's decision to develop an Annex on AI Ethics to the Charter, noting that such a framework could support global coherence in responsible AI governance.

Mr. Avinash Bikha, Project Officer at the IPU Centre for Innovation in Parliament, presented the Centre's work on AI, focusing on two main areas: AI in policymaking, which supports responsible legislation and oversight of AI, and AI in parliament, aimed at enhancing parliamentary operations, transparency and citizen engagement. Key initiatives include the *Transforming Parliaments* webinar series running since 2021 with an increasing focus on AI, the issue brief *Using generative AI in parliaments* (2024), the *Guidelines for AI in Parliaments* (2024), and *Use cases for AI in parliaments* (2024), highlighting 65 practical applications of AI worldwide. He showed examples of how parliaments are already applying AI through speech-to-text transcription, automatic translation, AI-powered search and document tagging, and virtual assistants that improve public access to information. An AI maturity framework was under development to help parliaments assess and plan their AI adoption. The IPU's efforts aim to ensure AI is used ethically and transparently to strengthen democratic governance, improve legislative processes and close the engagement gap between parliaments and citizens.

Finally, members expressed appreciation for the constructive discussions and the quality of the expert contributions. They reaffirmed their commitment to remain actively engaged in the Working Group's future meetings and activities.

Report of the Gender Partnership Group

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 216th session
(Geneva, 23 October 2025)*

The Gender Partnership Group held its 52nd session on 18 and 22 October 2025. In attendance were Mr. A. Almodóbar Barceló (Spain), who chaired the session, Ms. S. Mikayilova (Azerbaijan), Mr. M. Ali Sera (Indonesia) and Ms. C. López Castro (Bureau of Women Parliamentarians).

As per its mandate, the Group reviewed the state of women's participation in national parliaments, as well as in IPU bodies and Assemblies. It examined in particular the composition of delegations at the 151st Assembly. As of 22 October 2025, 36.9% of the delegates at the Assembly were women (see [below](#)), which is slightly below the last Assembly and higher than the previous five Assemblies. At this Assembly, 39 delegations out of 132 (29.5%) were gender-balanced, meaning that they were composed of 40–60% women or men. This is a lower percentage than at the last Assembly, where 38.6% of delegations (49 out of 127) were gender-balanced. The aforementioned 39 gender-balanced delegations attending the 151st Assembly are listed [below](#).

Of the 132 delegations present, 121 were composed of at least two delegates, of which 9 were all-male (6.4%). In addition, two delegations of two or more delegates were composed entirely of women. The 11 single-sex delegations were from the parliaments of Austria, Belarus, Brazil, Croatia, Georgia, Liberia, Malaysia, Mauritius, Palestine, San Marino and Yemen. In addition, there were 11 single-member delegations attending the Assembly. All in all, four delegations are subject to sanctions at this Assembly.

The Group welcomed the release of the second edition of the Gender-Responsive Assemblies Toolkit, which was developed by the International Gender Champions, in collaboration with the IPU and Women at the Table. The Toolkit is a how-to guide to create an enabling and inclusive environment for women's participation and make sure assemblies deliver on gender equality. It includes many of the pioneering policies that the IPU has been advancing over the years, thanks in part to the work of the Gender Partnership Group. The Group encouraged Member Parliaments to apply the Toolkit in their respective countries, drawing inspiration from the good practices it highlights.

The Group also took stock of the measures taken to implement the *Policy to prevent and address harassment, including sexual harassment, at IPU Assemblies and other IPU events*. As part of the IPU's harassment prevention efforts, the Policy was made even more visible at this Assembly, including through pins, and anti-harassment training was provided to Assembly participants for the first time. The Group also recommended that Member Parliaments call on the IPU to provide similar trainings for their members and staff.

As foreseen in the Policy itself, the Group assessed its implementation after two years since its adoption (see [below](#)). It took note that 11 incidents have been addressed since the adoption of the Policy. Incidents reported related to sexual harassment and to harassment. The informal reporting mechanism set out in the Policy was followed in all cases. The confidentiality of those who experienced harassment, including sexual harassment, as well as their wishes, were respected, putting them at the centre of the process. All alleged perpetrators were identified, measures were taken to protect those who reported incidents during Assemblies, and notifications from the Secretary General and the anti-harassment focal points were sent to those concerned, as needed and to prevent any further harm. All incidents were recorded to help identify potential patterns or systemic issues and to develop targeted preventive strategies if necessary.

As per its mandate to promote women's participation in national parliaments, the Group held dialogues with two delegations from parliaments that have less than 10% women members — The Gambia and Nigeria — to discuss how to improve the situation following the decrease in the representation of women.

The Group had a fruitful dialogue with the delegation from The Gambia, led by the Deputy Speaker. As a result of the 2022 elections, women now hold 5 out of 58 parliamentary seats, making up 8.6% of the members, down from 10.3% in the 2017 elections. In 2022, only 8% of candidates were women, and of the 19 women who contested, 3 were elected — only one representing a political party, while the other two won as independents.

The delegation indicated that harmful social norms and financial barriers remained the key obstacles to women's political participation. There was currently limited support to the adoption of legislation on gender quotas. It was therefore important to conduct community outreach, empower male champions and encourage political parties to adopt voluntary quotas to redress women's underrepresentation.

The Group indicated that the IPU stood ready to support the Parliament of The Gambia's efforts ahead of the 2027 elections.

The Group also met with the delegation from Nigeria, where women's representation following the 2023 elections had dipped to merely 3.9% of seats in the House of Representatives and 2.8% in the Senate. This was the fourth dialogue the Group had held with Nigeria, following those that had taken place at the 144th, 145th and 147th Assemblies. The delegation of Nigeria reiterated the persisting challenges women face in getting family and political party support to run for office and remain in politics. Gender stereotypes, combined with limited financial support, are the main barriers to having a level playing field for women. The delegation indicated that a constitutional amendment bill reserving seats for women in Parliament was currently being considered in both houses. In addition to the bill, it was important to ensure that political parties open up to women and become more gender-sensitive. Advocacy efforts were under way and the IPU's role would be crucial in building broad support among members of parliament and other political leaders to ensure the bill passes.

The Group welcomed the ongoing efforts to amend the Constitution of Nigeria to reserve seats for women, as well as the delegation's request for the IPU's support in building political will among political parties and decision-makers. The Group committed to following up on this request, including by exploring the possibility of fielding a high-level delegation of the IPU to Nigeria.

Statistics of the Gender Partnership Group

Composition of delegations of IPU members attending the last eight IPU statutory meetings (Nusa Dua March 2022 - present)

Meeting	Total delegates	Total/percentage of women delegates		Total delegations	Total/percentage of all-male delegations (2 or more)		Total all-female delegations (2 or more)	Total single-sex delegations (2 or more)	Total single-member delegations (male and female)
Geneva (22/10/25)	593	219	36.9	132	9	7.4	2	11	11
Tashkent (04/25)	682	254	37.2	127	10	8.1	4	14	4
Geneva (10/24)	615	224	36.4	129	7	5.8	2	9	9
Geneva (03/24)	703	252	35.8	142	15	11.4	2	17	10
Luanda (10/23)	600	217	36.2	128	10	8.3	3	13	8
Manama (03/23)	661	228	34.5	136	21	16	3	24	5
Kigali (10/22)	553	196	35.4	120	14	12.6	4	18	9
Nusa Dua (03/22)	393	153	38.9	101	13	14.4	3	16	11

Single-sex, multi-member delegations of IPU members present in Geneva (status on 22 October 2025)

N°	Country	Geneva Oct25			Tashkent Apr25			Geneva Oct24			Geneva Mar24			Luanda Oct23			Manama Mar23			Kigali Oct22			Nusa Dua Mar22		
		Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total
1	Austria	4	0	4	2	2	4	1	3	4	2	3	5	1	2	3	1	4	5	2	3	5	3	2	5
2	Belarus	0	2	2	3	3	6	0	2	2	absent			1	1	2	1	2	3	0	1	1	0	2	2
3	Brazil	0	6	6	1	7	8	0	4	4	0	7	7	2	3	5	0	6	6	0	1	1	absent		
4	Croatia*	0	2	2	0	2	2	1	2	3	absent			1	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	3	1	0	1
5	Georgia	0	2	2	1	2	3	absent			1	3	4	1	2	3	0	2	2	1	4	5	absent		
6	Liberia*	0	2	2	absent			0	2	2	absent			absent			1	1	2	suspended			suspended		
7	Malaysia	0	2	2	2	2	4	1	4	5	1	4	5	1	2	3	0	2	2	0	4	4	0	1	1
8	Mauritius	2	0	2	absent			absent			absent			1	2	3	1	3	4	1	0	1	1	1	2
9	Palestine	0	2	2	2	2	4	2	2	4	1	3	4	1	1	2	1	5	6	0	1	1	absent		
10	San Marino	0	4	4	2	2	4	1	3	4	2	2	4	absent			2	1	3	absent			1	2	3
11	Yemen*	0	4	4	absent			0	6	6	0	4	4	0	4	4	0	4	4	0	6	6	0	5	5

Single-member delegations of IPU members present in Geneva (status on 22 October 2025)

N°	Country	Geneva Oct25			Tashkent Apr25			Geneva Oct24			Geneva Mar24			Luanda Oct23			Manama Mar23			Kigali Oct22			Nusa Dua Mar22		
		Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total
1	Benin	1	0	1	absent			5	5	10	2	5	7	1	3	4	absent			1	3	4	0	2	2
2	Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	1	1	2	1	3	1	2	3	0	1	1	absent			absent			absent			absent		
3	Costa Rica	0	1	1	absent			absent			absent			absent			absent			absent					
4	Czechia	1	0	1	1	3	4	2	3	5	1	3	4	2	3	5	1	4	5	1	3	4	1	3	4
5	Estonia	0	1	1	2	0	2	3	2	5	3	2	5	3	1	4	3	1	4	3	1	4	3	1	4
6	Jamaica*	0	1	1	absent			0	1	1	not affiliated														
7	Japan	0	1	1	1	5	6	1	1	2	2	4	6	1	5	6	1	5	6	1	5	6	0	4	4
8	Kazakhstan	1	0	1	2	3	5	absent			2	6	8	absent			1	1	2	1	0	1	2	1	3
9	Luxembourg	0	1	1	1	2	3	absent			0	1	1	absent			absent			absent			absent		
10	Seychelles	0	1	1	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	0	3	3	0	2	2	1	1	2
11	Uganda	0	1	1	2	3	5	1	5	6	2	6	8	4	6	10	3	6	9	3	8	11	3	4	7

* Delegations subjected to sanctions at the 151st Assembly, pursuant to Articles 10.4 and 15.2c of the IPU Statutes, for being composed exclusively of representatives of the same sex for two consecutive Assemblies.

52nd session of the Gender Partnership Group

Geneva (Switzerland), 22 October 2025

Delegations with 40 to 60 per cent women parliamentarians

The Gender Partnership Group promotes gender parity within the delegations of IPU Member Parliaments to the Assemblies and has decided to give visibility to those that are composed of a minimum of 40 per cent and maximum of 60 per cent of each gender.

The countries below are ordered according to the percentage of women parliamentarians in their delegations at the 151st IPU Assembly.

There is a total of 39 gender-balanced delegations out of 132 delegations (29.5 per cent) of IPU Members attending the 151st IPU Assembly (as of 22 October 2025) compared to a total of 47 gender-balanced delegations out of 127 delegations (37 per cent) who attended the 150th IPU Assembly.

Delegations with 40 to 49.9 per cent women parliamentarians (10):

Equatorial Guinea	40%	Kenya	44%
Maldives	43%	Namibia	44%
Oman	43%	South Africa	44%
Romania	43%	Türkiye	44%
France	44%	Philippines	45%

Delegations with 50 per cent women parliamentarians (20):

Bahamas	Netherlands
Burundi	New Zealand
Ghana	Niger
Greece	Norway
Hungary	Qatar
Lao People's Democratic Republic	Serbia
Liechtenstein	Turkmenistan
Lithuania	United Arab Emirates
Mauritania	Uruguay
Monaco	Zimbabwe

Delegations with 50.1 to 60 per cent women parliamentarians (9):

United Kingdom	56%	Azerbaijan	60%
Canada	57%	Finland	60%
Poland	57%	Ireland	60%
Angola	60%	Uzbekistan	60%
Australia	60%		

Implementation of the IPU anti-harassment policy

At the initiative of the Gender Partnership Group, the [Policy to prevent and address harassment, including sexual harassment, at IPU Assemblies and other IPU events](#) (the Policy) was approved by the Governing Council at the 147th IPU Assembly in Angola in October 2023. It aims to ensure that everyone can participate in IPU Assemblies and events in an inclusive, respectful and safe environment, free from harassment, including sexual harassment.

The Policy requires the IPU Gender Partnership Group to present a report on its implementation every two years to the IPU membership, setting out results and the way forward.

This report fulfils this obligation by focusing on the implementation of the policy for the 2024-2025 period.

Introduction

The [Policy to prevent and address harassment, including sexual harassment, at IPU Assemblies and other IPU events](#) applies to all participants at IPU Assemblies and other IPU events, including parliamentarians and staff of IPU Member Parliaments, Associate Members and observers, IPU Secretariat personnel (including staff, external collaborators or interns), members of diplomatic missions, experts, advisers, consultants, invitees, employees of the Host Parliament and of outside companies servicing the events, and all persons attending or involved in any capacity at such events.

The Policy outlines the high ethical and professional standards of behaviour expected of all participants in a zero-tolerance environment for harassment. It strengthens the focus on the prevention of harassment, the timely and effective resolution of incidents, and the support and assistance to be provided to affected persons who report incidents of harassment. The Policy sets out the specific duties of the anti-harassment core group in this endeavour, as well as a procedure for investigating and resolving matters, and establishing accountability.

To facilitate effective implementation of the Policy, the Gender Partnership Group developed an implementation plan which has since guided enforcement efforts over the past two years.

The following provides an overview of initiatives carried out and results.

In 2024 and 2025, implementation efforts prioritized IPU Assemblies and major IPU meetings, including the IPU Parliamentary Hearings at the United Nations in New York, the Global Conference of Women Parliamentarians, the Second Parliamentary Conference on Interfaith Dialogue, the Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament, the Sixth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, and the Global Conferences of Young Parliamentarians.

Training and awareness

The Policy stipulates that preventing harassment, including sexual harassment, requires a common understanding of what is valued and what is expected by everyone, so that all participants at IPU Assemblies and events are conscious of their positions, behaviours and interactions. To achieve this goal, significant emphasis is placed on awareness and training.

In 2024-2025, numerous steps were taken to inform all participants of the Policy and encourage adherence to a zero-tolerance approach to harassment and sexual harassment.

Communication and awareness

Information on the Policy is available on the IPU website. A QR code for the Policy was also developed to facilitate access and dissemination.

When registering for Assemblies and other major IPU meetings, all delegates and participants must now commit to respecting the Policy. Information on the Policy and the process relating to the prevention of harassment is included in the participants' guide for each Assembly and on the Assembly App.

Visual banners and posters were prominently displayed at every Assembly and event, reminding participants that “bullying, threats or sexual harassment towards other participants, members of the IPU Secretariat and/or other personnel will not be tolerated”. This communication invites participants to report any act of harassment to the dedicated focal points and to speakout@ipu.org

During Assemblies and global meetings, chairpersons are asked to remind attendees of the Policy at the start of each meeting.

More generally, the Policy is now systematically included in all IPU agreements concluded with parliaments that host IPU events or capacity-building activities.

Training and skills-building sessions

A self-paced mandatory online course on harassment prevention in the workplace was provided to all IPU personnel in English and French. This training describes how to recognize, prevent and respond to workplace discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment. A specific online course for IPU managers was also provided focusing on their responsibility to take appropriate action to prevent and respond to incidents of harassment using prompt and effective measures. During the period covered by this report, 48 IPU personnel and managers completed the online training.

IPU personnel involved in implementing the Policy at IPU Assemblies and events, as well as those responsible for providing support under the Policy, such as the focal points and members of the anti-harassment core group, were provided with in-person sessions on combatting harassment. This training focused in part on developing skills to communicate with victims and witnesses of harassment and to respond appropriately to various situations.

Furthermore, all IPU personnel benefitted from a 2-hour in-person course, held in small groups, on combatting harassment.

At the 151st Assembly, a specific skills-building session on implementing the Policy was organized and open to all participants. The session aimed to develop a shared understanding of what constitutes and may be perceived as harassment, and to raise awareness of the reporting mechanisms in place at IPU Assemblies.

Overview of incidents since the adoption of the Policy

Eleven incidents were addressed since the adoption of the Policy. All were dealt with, so far, within the framework of the informal procedure of the Policy.

Incidents reported related to sexual harassment and to harassment. The informal reporting mechanism set out in the Policy was followed in all cases. The confidentiality of those who experienced harassment, including sexual harassment, as well as their wishes, were respected, putting them at the centre of the process. All alleged perpetrators were identified, measures were taken to protect those who reported incidents during Assemblies, when reported during the event, and notifications from the Secretary General and the anti-harassment focal points were sent to those concerned, as needed and to prevent any further harm. All incidents were recorded to help identify potential patterns or systemic issues and to develop targeted preventive strategies if necessary.

Plan of action for gender parity in parliament

*Adopted at the IPU Global Conference of Women Parliamentarians
(Mexico, 14 – 15 March 2025)*

*and endorsed by the IPU Governing Council at its 216th session
(Geneva, 23 October 2025)*

Preamble

The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) has a long history of promoting the equal representation of women in parliament, building on many years of collecting data and developing frameworks and resolutions to support women's participation in parliaments around the world. The IPU is the authoritative source for statistics, both current and historical, on the share of women in parliaments and the positions they occupy. It has published a long line of studies on gender equality in parliaments, including its pathbreaking work on gender-sensitive parliaments and sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliament.

2025 marks a turning point. For 40 years, including through its Forum of Women Parliamentarians, the IPU has led efforts to redress the gender imbalance in political representation in national parliaments. At the Global Conference of Women Parliamentarians, held in Mexico City, Mexico from 14 to 15 March 2025, more than 470 participants, including 376 women and men parliamentarians from 56 countries, agreed on a plan of action for achieving gender parity in parliaments. This vision reflects a parliamentary perspective on the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) General recommendation No. 40 (2024) on the equal and inclusive representation of women in decision-making systems.

The premise of this plan of action is that gender parity is more than a question of numbers. Achieving 50:50 representation is a starting point, but simply electing more women is not enough. Women and men must also be able to exercise equal levels of power. In leadership and committee assignments, they should exert equal influence in policymaking in all areas and in setting parliamentary agendas. Furthermore, parliamentary working conditions must be inclusive and equitable to ensure that women and men can participate fully and equally in all aspects of parliamentary work. A parity culture is one that is free from sexism, harassment and violence.

Objectives of the plan of action

Women's participation in politics is a human right and is essential for promoting justice and gender equality. Without women's full and equal contributions, it is not possible to achieve democracy, secure peace, or promote sustainable development. For too long, women have been prevented from being equal partners in decision-making, including in parliaments. The time has come to adopt a new model of governance based on the 50:50 sharing of power between women and men.

This action plan recognizes three dimensions of gender parity in parliaments: parity in numbers, parity in influence and power, and a parity culture. These dimensions are related but distinct. The full, equal and meaningful participation of women in politics cannot be achieved without transformative actions in all three areas.

Parity in numbers means a 50:50 balance between women and men in parliament, across all age groups and in line with other categories of diversity. As at January 2025, only twelve chambers – six lower or single houses and six upper houses – elected 50% or more women parliamentarians. The representation of young women is particularly low: globally, a mere 1.4% of MPs are women under the age of 30 and only 7.9% are women under 40.

Parity in influence and power involves ensuring that women and men have the same levels of leadership and influence in parliament, with equal opportunities to determine parliamentary agendas and inform policies across all subject areas. Yet, currently, only 23.7% of parliamentary speakers are women. As at 1 January 2025, women held 265 out of 951 chair positions across the five types of parliamentary committees (foreign affairs, defence, finance, human rights and gender equality) covered in the IPU's Parline database. This represents 27.9% of committee chairs, up from 27.2% in 2024. However, when gender equality committees are excluded, the proportion of women drops to 19.6%. Strong women's parliamentary caucuses serve to amplify women's voices across parties.

A parity culture means safe and inclusive working conditions, gender-sensitive parliaments and zero-tolerance for sexism, harassment and violence, both offline and online. The structures, operations and working methods of parliaments around the world tend to assume that MPs are men with few or no family obligations and as men are not usually experienced in combining work and family life this creates a conflict with women. Inside and outside parliament, women may also face hostility due to gender norms that perpetuate the idea that women do not belong in politics. More than 80% of women MPs say they have received threats or been harassed online, while between 20% and 30% report physical attacks, property damage and/or sexual violence connected to their work as parliamentarians.

Achieving parity is a project to be undertaken by women and men together as active and equal partners in fostering gender parity in all the above three dimensions.

Action area 1: Achieve parity in numbers

1.1 *Elect equal numbers of women and men to parliament*

Only 27.2% of parliamentarians worldwide are women. Despite these low numbers, many parliaments have seen dramatic changes in the numbers of women elected over the last 30 years, showing that it is possible to advance towards a model of 50:50 representation. In countries that had gender quotas in place, the proportion of women elected or appointed was 31.2% in 2024 compared to 16.8% in countries without quotas.

To advance gender parity in numbers, parliaments should consider the following measures:

- Ensure gender parity as a norm of governance is embedded in constitutions.
- Adopt or revise existing legislation on gender quotas to stipulate 50:50 representation.
- Take features of the electoral system into account when designing gender quotas to ensure the election of equal numbers of women and men.
- Bolster the impact of quotas by introducing strong and meaningful sanctions, in particular the rejection of candidate lists that do not comply with quota requirements.
- As an incentive for advancing women's representation, tie public funding subsidies for political parties to the election of women.
- Equalize campaign resources between women and men by introducing caps on campaign spending and offering free advertising time on television, radio and online.
- Make care expenses reimbursable as a campaign expense.

1.2 *Ensure diversity among the women and men elected to parliament*

Gender discrimination exists alongside other forms of marginalization based on ethnicity, age, disability, socioeconomic status and other categories. These intersecting inequalities create further exclusions of groups of women, leading to especially low levels of representation among women from minorities, younger age groups and women with disabilities. Many of these groups have limited access to parliament despite the fact that their participation is needed for more inclusive and efficient policymaking.

To promote diversity within gender parity, parliaments should consider the following measures:

- Collect and monitor data on the representation of different groups of women in parliament that will be defined on the basis of specific national contexts.
- Adopt or revise existing legislation to nest diversity requirements within gender quotas, or gender parity requirements within measures for other groups, for example gender parity requirements within youth quotas.
- Ensure that women from all backgrounds are able to access and benefit from campaign support, including care-related expenses.
- Introduce campaign supports that address multiple forms of discrimination, for example added expenses incurred by women candidates with disabilities.
- Create diversity-sensitive parliaments to ensure an inclusive environment attuned to different forms of inequality and exclusion, for example through translation services into indigenous languages and accessible spaces for women with disabilities.

Action area 2: Reach parity in leadership and influence in parliament

The impact of greater numbers of women to parliament will be limited if those women are excluded from leadership positions or restricted to leading committees covering only a few policy areas. Gender parity in terms of power requires that women and men have similar opportunities to set the agenda and to inform policies on all subjects.

To promote parity in terms of power, parliaments should consider the following measures:

- Establish alternation rules for top leadership positions, with women and men taking turns exercising these roles.
- Introduce dual leadership for parliamentary structures, where possible, appointing one woman and one man to serve as co-leaders.
- Require parity in leadership roles for all parliamentary functions, including the governing bureau and parliamentary committees.
- Support the establishment and functioning of cross-party women's caucuses with dedicated staff and expertise to amplify the influence and voices of women in parliament.
- Encourage the proportional and equitable distribution of women parliamentarians across all committees and in delegations to interparliamentary and international conferences.

Action area 3: Foster a parity culture in parliament

3.1 *Create a gender-sensitive parliamentary culture and infrastructure*

A gender-sensitive parliament responds to the needs and interests of both women and men in its structures, operations and methods of work, fostering an environment where women can and want to work. This includes taking steps to facilitate work-family balance and providing equitable resources for women and men to be treated as equals within the institution.

To create a parity working environment, parliaments should consider the following measures:

- Conduct a gender-sensitivity self-assessment of the parliament's work environment, culture and infrastructure to identify gaps and plan for reform in these areas.
- Adjust the sitting hours and calendar of parliamentary sessions and meetings to align with family obligations and school calendars.
- Allocate spaces in parliament for family rooms and childcare facilities.
- Establish a right to parental leave for both women and men in parliament.
- Introduce proxy voting procedures to enable members to cast votes if they are not able to attend sessions in person due to childbirth or breastfeeding.
- Ensure full equality in resources provided to women and men in parliament, in terms of office space, expenses and other facilities.

3.2 Adopt zero-tolerance for sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliament

Sexism, harassment and violence are common experiences among women parliamentarians, creating further gender-based barriers to their full and equal participation. A zero-tolerance policy towards such conduct inside and outside of parliament is vital for ensuring women's ability to participate fully and safely in all aspects of parliamentary work.

To ensure a safe and respectful workplace, parliaments should consider the following measures:

- Provide gender-awareness training for all members of parliament and parliamentary staff.
- Ensure the use of non-sexist and inclusive language in all official documents, including the standing orders of parliament.
- Introduce a code of conduct that requires all parliamentarians to be respectful, and penalize sexist language and behaviour.
- Develop and implement survivor-centered anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policies in line with national legislation and applicable to all parliamentarians and staff.
- Pass laws prohibiting violence against women in politics, including online threats, harassment, and hate speech.

To advance all three action areas, partnerships need to be fostered

Responsibility for gender equality is shared by all parliamentarians – men as well as women. Changing social norms and heightening gender awareness among men have resulted in stronger partnerships between women and men to advance gender equality. The IPU is well placed to initiate a project to collect information and monitor good practice in actions taken by men parliamentarians and further promote such action. Achieving gender parity also requires engaging closely with civil society organizations, international organizations, the academia, the media and other stakeholders.

To foster partnerships for gender parity, parliaments should consider the following measures:

- Provide gender-sensitive training to men parliamentarians.
- Appoint a woman and a man as co-chairs of gender equality committees.
- Encourage the inclusion of men in parliamentary events on gender-related issues.
- Promote international study trips and other forms of exchange among parliamentarians to share strategies and experiences on creating parity parliaments.
- Establish a reference group for women and men in parliament to raise awareness, strategize and evaluate measures for promoting gender parity.
- Provide spaces for civil society and other stakeholders to inform the work of parliament on gender parity, for example through open public meetings, invitations to provide expert testimony and opportunities to give feedback on proposed legislation.
- Collaborate with the media to raise awareness on the importance of gender parity.

Promotions in the IPU Secretariat

*Noted by the IPU Executive Committee at its 297th session
(Geneva, 22 October 2025)*

- **Ms. Sandrine BAUD**, Senior Human Resources Assistant, Support Services Division
- **Ms. Kate BROOKS**, Communications Officer, Division of Communications
- **Mr. Roshid Ahmad FARZAAM**, Document Management and Procurement Assistant, Support Services Division
- **Ms. Aushee Malika GUPTA**, Legal and Human resources Officer, Support Services Division
- **Mr. Mauricio HUERTAS GLAUSER**, Political Affairs Officer, Division for Member Parliaments and External Relations
- **Mr. Jonathan LANG**, Programme Officer, Technical cooperation and Youth participation Programmes
- **Ms. Marie-Graziella NGUINI**, Senior Assistant, Gender Partnership Programme

Calendar of future meetings and other activities

*Approved by the IPU Governing Council at its 216th session
(Geneva, 23 October 2025)*

Parliamentary Meeting at the Second World Summit for Social Development (WSSD2) (4 – 6 November)	DOHA (Qatar) 4 November 2025
Parliamentary Meeting at COP30 (10 – 21 November)	BELÉM (Brazil) 14 November 2025
Workshop for members of parliamentary human rights committees from French-speaking countries that have recently or will soon be reviewed by the Human Rights Council	DAKAR (Senegal) 26 – 28 November 2025
Parliamentary Conference on <i>The Role of Parliament in Shaping the Future of Responsible AI</i> . Jointly organized by the IPU, CPA, UNDP and the Parliament of Malaysia	KUALA LUMPUR (Malaysia) 28 – 30 November 2025
High-level seminar for parliamentarians from countries that have not yet joined the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)	VIENNA (Austria) 2025 (Dates to be confirmed)
Regional seminar for parliamentarians and parliamentary staff from Gulf and African Countries, co-organized with the WTO	United Arab Emirates 2025 (Venue and dates to be confirmed)
Regional Conference on the Elimination of Violence against Women in the Asia-Pacific region	2025 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Working together to advance women's political participation and decision-making: Series of in-person and online meetings between parliamentarians and partners in the Generation Equality Forum and/or WYDE Women's Leadership project	2025 Quarterly Venue to be confirmed
Information Seminar on the structure and functioning of the Inter-Parliamentary Union for Spanish-speaking participants	Virtual 17 – 19 November 2025
Transforming parliaments webinar series about the digital transformation of parliaments and the use of AI in parliament	Virtual 2025 (Series dates to be announced)
IPU-ESCAP-ECE webinar	Virtual December 2025 (Dates to be confirmed)
Global webinar on advancing parliamentary action on climate change adaptation	Virtual 2025 (Dates to be confirmed)
Global webinar on parliament's role in reducing global methane emissions	Virtual 2025 (Dates to be confirmed)
Webinar series on promoting the Model Legislative Provisions to support the victims of terrorism	Virtual 2025 (Series dates to be announced)
Webinar series for MPs on the United Nations organized by the IPU Permanent Observer Office to the United Nations in cooperation with relevant UN departments and missions (as needed)	Virtual 2025 (Series dates to be announced)
Webinar series to promote the use of human security and common security	Virtual 2025 (Series dates to be announced)

Webinar series on gender equality and women's empowerment	Virtual 2025 (Series dates to be announced)
Webinar series on enhanced cooperation between parliaments and supreme audit institutions	Virtual 2025 (Series dates to be announced)
Webinar series on parliamentary action on human rights issues	Virtual 2025 (Series dates to be announced)
Webinar series: Global empowerment series for young parliamentarians: Briefings and training courses	Virtual 2025 (Quarterly)
Meeting of the IPU Executive Committee	DOHA (Qatar) 13 – 14 January 2026
Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations	NEW YORK (USA) 9 – 10 February 2026
Parliamentary event at the AI Impact Summit	NEW DELHI (India) 19 – 20 February 2026
152nd Assembly and related meetings	ISTANBUL (Türkiye) 15 – 19 April 2026
Regional seminar for parliaments of the Western Balkans on climate action	Montenegro February 2026 (Dates to be confirmed)
Parliamentary Meeting and side events at the Commission on the Status of Women	NEW YORK (USA) March 2026 (Dates to be confirmed)
Parliamentary Conference on the WTO (PCWTO)	YAOUNDÉ (Cameroon) or Geneva (Switzerland) (Dates in early 2026 to be confirmed)
Parliamentary dialogue at the World Health Assembly	GENEVA (Switzerland) May 2026
Parliamentary event at the 11th UN Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs (UN STI Forum)	NEW YORK (USA) May 2026 (Dates to be confirmed)
Science for Peace School for parliamentary staff on <i>Green economy, energy and the Sustainable Development Goals</i> (third edition)	ALLAN (Jordan) May 2026 (Dates to be confirmed)
Global Conference of Women Parliamentarians 2026	Serbia 2 – 4 June 2026 (tentatively)
Parliamentary Forum at the UN High-Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development	NEW YORK (USA) July 2026 (Dates to be confirmed)
Wroxton Workshop of Parliamentary Scholars and Parliamentarians	WROXTON (United Kingdom) 25 – 26 July 2026
Science for Peace Parliamentary Meeting on <i>Regulating artificial intelligence: Ethics and the IPU Charter</i> (second edition)	QUY NHON (Viet Nam) September 2026 (Dates to be confirmed)

Parliamentary event at the High-Level Week of the General Assembly	NEW YORK (USA) September 2026 (Dates to be confirmed)
153rd Assembly and related meetings	United Republic of Tanzania October/November 2026 (Venue and dates to be confirmed)
Parliamentary Meeting to be held in conjunction with the UN Water Conference	United Arab Emirates December 2026 (Venue and dates to be confirmed)
Science for Peace Parliamentary Meeting on <i>Energy and climate change</i> (third edition)	QUY NHON (Viet Nam) 2026 (Dates to be confirmed)
Twelfth Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians	SAMARKAND (Uzbekistan) 2026 (Dates to be confirmed)
Information seminar on the structure and functioning of the Inter-Parliamentary Union for French-speaking participants	GENEVA (Switzerland) 2026 (Dates to be confirmed)
Global Parliamentary Conference on Human Rights	GENEVA (Switzerland) 2026 (Dates to be confirmed)
Regional seminar on the SDGs for the parliaments of the Eurasia Group	Tajikistan 2026 (Venue and dates to be confirmed)
Regional seminar for the Twelve Plus Group: <i>Workshop on artificial intelligence (AI), terrorism, and transnational organized crime: Risks, responses and regulation</i>	2026 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Fourth World Summit of Committees of the Future	2026 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Parliamentary Meeting at COP31	2026 Venue and dates to be confirmed
World e-Parliament Conference	2026 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Third Global Parliamentary Summit on Countering Terrorism and Preventing Violent Extremism	2026 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Parliamentary Track at the 21st Internet Governance Forum	2026 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Regional seminar for African parliaments on climate change and reducing methane emissions	2026 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Regional conference for European parliaments on global health security	2026 Venue and dates to be confirmed

Regional seminar on the promotion of Nuclear Security instruments (CPPNM, 2005 amendment and ICSANT)	2026 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Regional seminar to promote implementation of the legal framework on counter-terrorism for the African Group	2026 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Regional seminar on SDGs and climate change for Asia-Pacific parliaments	2026 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Working together to advance women’s political participation and decision-making: Series of in-person and online meetings between parliamentarians and partners in the Generation Equality Forum and/or WYDE Women’s Leadership project	2026 Quarterly Venue to be confirmed
Webinar to mark the International Day of Remembrance and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism	Virtual 21 August 2026
Webinar series on enhanced cooperation between parliaments and supreme audit institutions	Virtual 2026 (Series dates to be announced)
Webinar series on AI and digital policy	Virtual 2026 (Series dates to be announced)
Webinar series on gender equality and women’s empowerment	Virtual 2026 (Series dates to be announced)
Webinar series on the digital transformation of parliaments and the use of AI in parliament	Virtual 2026 (Series dates to be announced)
Webinar series to promote the use of human security and common security	Virtual 2026 (Series dates to be announced)
Webinar series on disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation	Virtual 2026 (Series dates to be announced)
Webinar series on parliamentary action on human rights issues	Virtual 2026 (Series dates to be announced)
Webinar series on parliamentary training institutes	Virtual 2026 (Series dates to be announced)
Webinar series on promoting the Model Legislative Provisions to support the victims of terrorism	Virtual 2026 (Series dates to be announced)

Agenda of the 152nd Assembly

(Istanbul, Türkiye, 15 – 19 April 2026)

1. Election of the President of the 152nd Assembly
2. Consideration of requests for the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda
3. General Debate
4. Special accountability segment on the implementation of IPU resolutions and other decisions
5. *The role of parliaments in establishing robust post-conflict management mechanisms and restoring a just and lasting peace*
(Standing Committee on Peace and International Security)
6. *Building a fair and sustainable global economy: The role of parliaments in combating protectionism, reducing tariffs and preventing corporate tax avoidance*
(Standing Committee on Sustainable Development)
7. Reports of the Standing Committees
8. Approval of the subject items for the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security and for the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development for the 154th Assembly and appointment of the co-Rapporteurs