



Inter-Parliamentary Union  
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T +41 22 919 41 50  
F +41 22 919 41 60  
E [postbox@ipu.org](mailto:postbox@ipu.org)  
[www.ipu.org](http://www.ipu.org)

Chemin du Pommier 5  
Case postale 330  
1218 Le Grand-Saconnex  
Geneva – Switzerland

# Speech by Mr. Martin Chungong, IPU Secretary General

152nd Assembly and related meetings  
Forum of Young Parliamentarians

Istanbul, 16 April 2026

Madam President of the Bureau of Young Parliamentarians  
Madam President of the IPU,  
Dear young parliamentarians,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is both a pleasure and a deeply emotional moment for me to address you today at the Forum of Young Parliamentarians. Not only because it is my final Assembly as Secretary General, but because the story of this Forum is one I have been part of from the very beginning.

In 2010, when the IPU passed a landmark resolution on youth participation in the democratic process. That resolution declared that achieving meaningful democracy requires the full and active participation of young people. At the time, I was not yet Secretary General of the IPU, but I had the privilege of serving as Secretary of the Committee that adopted that resolution. It was a conviction members shared deeply: that democracy cannot be complete without the voices of young people at its heart.

That resolution led to this Forum, which was created to make youth participation in parliaments and the IPU not a courtesy, but a commitment. Seeing what this Forum has become fills me with genuine pride. You have been present and engaged at every Assembly. You have contributed to shaping outcomes. You have pushed for institutional reforms that have made this Forum younger, stronger and more relevant for generations to come.

I am particularly proud of the Forum's commitment to gender parity within its leadership, the requirement that each region be represented by one man and one woman, and that the presidency rotate between men and women. Equality is not optional; it is foundational. In this, the Forum has set a standard that the world would do well to follow.

But much work remains. Youth participation in parliaments is still too often absent. Young people continue to face barriers to standing for election, to holding leadership positions, and to having their priorities taken seriously.

That is the unfinished work of the 2010 resolution. That is the continuing mission of this Forum.

I leave this role with optimism. I have seen, time and again, that when young MPs are entrusted with responsibility, they rise to the occasion. The energy, vision and courage I have witnessed here give me every confidence in what comes next.

I thank you all for your commitment to this noble cause. I encourage you to keep pushing boundaries and building bridges, and to keep strengthening youth in your parliament and in this organization.

The future of this Forum, and of the IPU, is in very capable hands.

Thank you.