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## Speech by Dr. Tulia Ackson, IPU President

55th Session of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians - 152nd IPU Assembly

Istanbul, 15 April 2026

Madam President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians,  
Mr. Secretary General,  
Dear colleagues,

I am very pleased to join the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians this morning.

This Bureau holds a distinctive place in the IPU. It brings together leadership, experience and determination in a way that keeps gender equality firmly anchored in the work of our organization.

It is in that spirit that I wish to acknowledge our Secretary General and gender champion.

Mr. Secretary General, Dear Martin,

A defining feature of your tenure has been the way you placed gender equality within the leadership of this organization itself. You did not treat it as a matter to be encouraged from the sidelines, nor as a concern to be left to one part of the institution. You gave it standing, weight and consequence across the IPU as a whole. And that has made a profound difference.

Because women parliamentarians' leadership, including through this Bureau, could only reshape the institution if it was met by the institution's leadership prepared to carry the same cause with conviction. Under your stewardship, that connection was made real. The aspirations, priorities and demands advanced in spaces such as this one found institutional traction.

That is one of the marks you leave profoundly anchored.

You also showed, in a very concrete way, what men's allyship truly means.

Not abstract words of support. Not symbolic endorsement, but steady, principled and visible leadership in full support of equality.

That kind of allyship is transformative. It helps transform commitment into change. And it reminds us that gender equality advances most powerfully when it is upheld by those willing to use their authority to promote and enforce it.

As President of the IPU, I want to express my respect for that leadership, and my gratitude for it. I do so also with a clear sense of responsibility.

The right tribute is not only to thank you. It is to continue with the same conviction. To preserve what has been built and further strengthen it. And to ensure that the IPU continues to advance gender equality with consistency, courage and purpose.

That responsibility is especially important at a time when women's rights and freedoms continue to face organized pushbacks in many parts of the world.

So, Mr. Secretary General, I thank you for the authority, the clarity and the commitment with which you have carried this work.

Your leadership has left a lasting mark on this institution. It now falls to all of us to carry that work forward with the same determination.

Thank you.