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Speech by Mr. Martin Chungong, IPU Secretary General

Regional Seminar: African Parliaments for Climate Action: Reducing Methane
Promoting Development.

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Excellencies,
Honourable Speakers and Members of Parliament,
Distinguished partners
Ladies and gentlemen

It is a great pleasure to address you on the occasion of this Regional Seminar: African parliaments for climate action: Reducing methane, promoting development.

Allow me first to thank the Parliament of Kenya for hosting this important gathering, and to acknowledge our partners, including the Climate Vulnerable Forum, the Climate and Clean Air Coalition, Climate Parliament, and the Global Methane Hub, whose support has helped make this meeting possible.

I would also like to recognize the important leadership already being shown by the Parliament of Kenya in advancing dialogue on methane emissions reduction at national level. The recent parliamentary engagement and media dialogue held in Nairobi demonstrates how parliaments can help raise awareness, convene stakeholders, identify policy and legislative gaps, and build momentum for practical action.

This regional seminar builds on that growing engagement and reflects Kenya's commitment to contributing to climate solutions that are grounded in development priorities and national realities.

Our work on methane sits within the IPU's wider engagement on climate change, which has been a central strategic priority under our 2022–2026 Strategy. Over these past years, we have worked steadily to ensure that parliaments are not only part of the climate conversation, but are equipped to lead it through oversight, representation, budgeting and legislation.

This seminar comes at a particularly important moment. Across the world, methane emissions are receiving increasing attention, not only because of their impact on climate change, but because of what action on methane can mean for economies, public health, energy access, agriculture, and sustainable development.

And increasingly, Africa is helping to lead this conversation.

Over the past year, through the IPU initiative on methane emissions reduction, we have seen strong momentum emerging from African parliaments. What is particularly encouraging is that this momentum is translating into concrete parliamentary action and national leadership.

In countries such as Ghana, Zambia and Nigeria, parliaments are already working with the IPU and taking important steps to integrate methane into committee workplans, strengthen dialogue with governments, advance oversight efforts, and explore legislative and policy responses adapted to their national realities.

We have also seen how regional and peer exchange can accelerate progress. Experiences shared by parliamentarians in one country are already inspiring action in others. This demonstrates the real value of parliamentary cooperation and South-South exchange.

What has been especially striking is how quickly results have emerged through targeted support, practical dialogue and strong partnerships. This reinforces an important lesson - when parliaments are equipped with the right information, connected to technical expertise, and given space to exchange experiences, they can become powerful drivers of climate action and sustainable development.

At the same time, this seminar rightly recognizes that methane is not only an environmental issue. It is closely linked to development priorities that matter deeply across the African continent: food security, public health, waste management, clean energy access, economic opportunity and resilient communities.

I am particularly encouraged that this seminar lays strong emphasis on practical experiences and African leadership. Africa is not simply participating in the global climate discussion. African parliaments are helping to shape solutions that are grounded in national realities and development needs.

This is why the discussions over the coming days are so important.

You will examine practical solutions in sectors such as agriculture, waste systems and decentralized energy. You will explore how parliamentary action can help reduce emissions while also supporting development goals, improving public health, creating jobs and strengthening resilience.

As many of you know, my tenure as Secretary General of the IPU will come to an end in the coming months. One of the great privileges of these years has been witnessing the growing role of parliaments in addressing global challenges such as climate change.

Today, there is increasing recognition that meaningful climate action cannot succeed without strong parliamentary engagement through legislation, oversight, budgeting and representation.

The IPU remains fully committed to supporting its Member Parliaments in this journey by strengthening capacity, promoting dialogue and facilitating exchange across regions.

Allow me to conclude by thanking all those who have contributed to advancing this important work, and especially the parliamentarians from across Africa whose leadership and engagement are helping to drive this agenda forward.

I wish you productive discussions and every success for this seminar.

Thank you very much.