



Inter-Parliamentary Union  
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## Speech by Mr. Martin Chungong, IPU Secretary General

4th High-Level International Conference on the International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development" 2018-2028  
Opening session

Dushanbe, 26 May 2026

Excellencies,  
Distinguished guests,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am delighted to address you during the opening of the 4th Dushanbe Water Action Decade Conference.

I would like to begin by warmly thanking our Tajik hosts for welcoming us so generously here in Dushanbe and for their leadership in advancing the global water agenda.

Tajikistan has demonstrated remarkable commitment to water diplomacy over many years. Through the Dushanbe Water Process, the country has helped keep water at the centre of multilateral cooperation and sustainable development efforts.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union strongly supports the objectives of the International Decade for Action, "Water for Sustainable Development" 2018–2028. Water is not only a development issue. It is a climate issue, a health issue, a peace issue and a food security issue.

Today, billions of people still lack access to safe water and sanitation. At the same time, climate change is accelerating the melting of glaciers, intensifying droughts and floods, and increasing pressure on already fragile water systems. These challenges demand political leadership and coordinated action at every level.

Parliaments have a central role to play in this regard. They adopt laws, approve budgets, oversee implementation and help ensure that governments remain accountable for delivering on national and international commitments related to sustainable development, including SDG 6.

Just a few days ago, parliaments from across Eurasia had the opportunity to come together to engage in an important exchange on climate and water-related challenges. The IPU and the Parliament of Tajikistan co-organized the *Regional Seminar for the Parliaments of Eurasia on Addressing Climate Change and Sustainable Development through Parliamentary Action*, held here in Dushanbe on 22–23 May.

This was the first parliamentary gathering of its kind in the region, and I would like to express the IPU's sincere appreciation to the Parliament of Tajikistan for hosting this important and timely event.

The seminar demonstrated clearly that parliamentarians are increasingly engaged in advancing climate resilience, protecting natural resources and strengthening sustainable water governance. It also highlighted the importance of regional cooperation, knowledge sharing and inclusive policymaking.

The discussions held during the seminar strongly complement the objectives of this Conference we are gathered at today.

As we prepare for the 2026 UN Water Conference and look ahead to the final review of the Water Action Decade in 2028, we must continue strengthening the contribution of parliaments to ensuring global water securing and advancing climate action.

The IPU stands ready to continue working with the United Nations, with national parliaments and with all partners to help translate commitments on water into concrete results for people and for the planet.

Ladies and gentlemen, water connects us all. Our response to the global water crisis must therefore also be collective, inclusive and sustainable for both current and future generations.

I wish this Conference every success.

Thank you.