



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

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Speech by Mr. Martin Chungong, IPU Secretary General

Farewell to Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Director-General, World Trade Organization

Geneva, 24 June 2026

Dear Madam Director-General,

First of all, I would like to express my deep gratitude to you and to all your staff for the dedication, unwavering support and spirit of cooperation you have consistently demonstrated throughout our collaboration. Over the years, we have come to appreciate the quality of the valuable cooperation between our two institutions and our shared commitment to promoting a rules-based, open, transparent and inclusive multilateral trading system.

I would also like to pay tribute to your leadership, Madam Director-General, and to the interest and utmost importance you attach to parliamentarians. Your dedication has helped to preserve an essential space for dialogue and cooperation between nations.

As Secretary General of the IPU, I have noted the conviction of parliamentarians from all regions of the world that trade is the driver of growth, development and shared prosperity. Given the challenges we are facing – whether geopolitical tensions, digital transformation, climate imperatives, or the growing expectations of our people – it is more necessary than ever to strengthen multilateralism and international cooperation.

I am stepping down from my post in the firm belief that dialogue between elected representatives of the people and international institutions remains essential to ensuring that multilateral decisions are more closely aligned with the practical concerns of our citizens. Parliaments have a fundamental role to play in strengthening the legitimacy, understanding and ownership of the rules governing world trade.

As I step down from this role, I wish to express my confidence in the ability of the World Trade Organization to continue its mission and adapt to a changing world, whilst remaining true to the principles that guided its creation. In the same vein, I would like to call for a resolution of the status of the Inter-Parliamentary Union within the WTO. It is my belief, also bearing in mind the plea of some of our Member Parliaments, that resolving the IPU's status would strengthen further our cooperation.

I wish, however, to reassure you that the baton is being securely passed on to Ambassador Anda Filip who is very well informed about our efforts in the field of trade and, as Secretary General-elect, will spare no effort to deepen this valuable collaboration and make it even more successful.

I shall cherish fond memories of our cooperation and remain confident that the bonds forged over these years will continue to bear fruit.

Dear Madam Director-General,

I thank you sincerely for your confidence, sisterhood, friendship and commendable commitment.

Thank you very much.