



Inter-Parliamentary Union  
For democracy. For everyone.

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 Amb. Anda Filip IPU Secretary General

IPU Parliamentary Forum at the 2026 UN High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

New York, 14 July 2026

Distinguished parliamentarians,

It is a real pleasure to join in this meeting today, my first at UN Headquarters as Secretary General of the IPU.

Like all of you, I learned many things in the conversation that just concluded, and that is the whole point of these meetings IPU organizes during HLPF: to help parliamentarians learn from each other so you are better equipped to make a difference for your people back at home.

For me, one takeaway emerges above all else: when there is a will there is a way.

Every country regardless of its means can advance the SDGs to some degree simply by mobilizing political will, working to bring *all* people together and bridging political divides.

Any action for the SDGs is better than no action; every win, big and small, is better than nothing at all.

The world may not get to the anticipated finish line in 2030, but it is very important that we get close enough so that we can be better positioned for what comes afterwards.

We can't anticipate what a post-2030 development agenda will look like— will the SDGs deadline be extended? Will the goals be reduced or modified?

We heard some opinions about this today. For a more definitive vision of the future, we will need to wait for next year's SDG Summit.

What we know for sure is that greening the economy is not enough anymore: we need to redefine progress in terms that are less consumeristic and more human centred, as the IPU argued during the SDG negotiation over ten years ago.

We can be proud that the IPU was among those that advocated for new measures of progress “beyond GDP”, for which a negotiation will soon finally get underway here at the UN.

IPU will follow this process closely and make sure you are well informed and you can ask your governments for regular briefings.

The success of the development agenda, which is about social justice as much as environmental sustainability, is also key to the survival of the multilateral system.  
Too much remains to be done.

We can't let go of this agenda no matter what shape it takes in the years ahead.

People expect this system – and their governments and parliaments - to deliver progress to them.

This is why IPU's new strategy for the years 2027 to 2031, aims squarely at empowering parliaments as key institutions of democracy. Please make sure to pick up a copy of the strategy booklet here in the room.

This strategy identifies democracy's backsliding as one of the underlying factors impeding progress on the SDGs.

Its first two substantive objectives are: building strong and inclusive parliaments, and facilitating parliamentary diplomacy, dialogue and joint action.

These objectives relate most closely to SDG 16, the so-called governance goal, that the IPU helped shape back in 2015. SDG 16 includes targets on inclusive, representative and accountable parliaments.

Going forward, IPU's strategic policy priorities build on the work of the past few years: climate change; democracy and human rights; gender equality and youth participation; peace and security; and sustainable development for all - with the "wild card" of Artificial Intelligence as a cross-cutting issue.

This regular meeting at the HLPF is a good example of IPU's work to empower parliaments.

It aims at strengthening your capacities as parliamentarians to develop your own views of your nation's SDGs progress, based on hard data and expert insights, so you can push your governments to take more action for the SDGs.

If your government has yet to produce an SDG strategy, it is not too late for you to insist they develop one now.

If a strategy is already in place, please, go and check that it is still current, and that it is appropriately focused on the next four years to get your country as close to the SDGs as possible.

As in the past several years, this year again we surveyed the parliaments of the 36 countries submitting progress reports to the HLPF, the so-called voluntary national reviews (VNRs). We asked the parliaments how much they have been engaged in this key accountability process that is supposed to be nationally owned.

The results are still coming in but so far, they suggest a disappointing picture with only a few champions and most parliaments standing on the side-lines. We will continue to push hard to get parliaments more deeply engaged.

In closing, I just want to reassure you that each and every one of you can count on the IPU for support and guidance. This is *your* organization, and my staff and I are here to serve you.

I hope you will not hesitate to contact us with whatever question or need you may have. The world is counting on us to make progress.

Now, on a lighter note, let me draw your attention to the reception that will be held starting at 17:30 at our observer office, just across the street, inside Uganda House.

You can find the details in the programme. Please bring your Ambassadors with you as well! They have been invited.

I look forward to seeing you there.

Thank you.