



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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Speech by Ms. Anda Filip, IPU Secretary General

Opening ceremony
2026 Interregional Seminar on the Achievement of the SDGs for Parliaments of
Developing Countries

Beijing, 24 August 2026

Excellencies,
Distinguished United Nations Resident Coordinator in China,
Honourable Members of Parliament,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great honour for me to address you at the opening of the 2026 Interregional Seminar on the Achievement of the SDGs for Parliaments of Developing Countries, titled *Stronger inter-parliamentary exchanges for a better achievement of the SDGs*.

Allow me to begin by expressing my profound gratitude to the National People's Congress of China (NPC) for its generous hospitality and cooperation. It is a privilege to be here for the first time as Secretary General. I have followed with great interest China's development – the sound progress built throughout the years is an example of what determination and engagement to advance sustainable development can look like.

The NPC is one of the IPU's most committed supporters of the work we conduct to raise awareness and help parliaments effectively deliver on the SDGs through their work and core functions. This collaboration is not a matter of words, but of implementation

This eighth edition of the SDG interregional seminar also marks the signing of a new cooperation agreement between the IPU and the NPC on the promotion of sustainable development for all. We are profoundly grateful for the continued trust and support shown, which allow us to properly assist our Member Parliaments and also position the IPU as the leading organization for parliamentary engagement with the SDGs.

Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the IPU has implemented more than 100 awareness-raising and capacity-building activities at the global, regional and national levels. We have helped strengthen parliamentary capacities and empowered parliaments and their members to contribute to the development of their nations. We have developed knowledge products and created platforms allowing parliamentarians to exchange their knowledge and experience. We have worked to ensure that all United Nations Member States duly recognize the essential role that parliaments play in advancing the implementation of the SDGs.

Excellencies,
Honourable Members of Parliament,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to welcome you to this joint interregional seminar on behalf of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. The Interregional Seminar on the Achievement of the SDGs for Parliaments of Developing Countries is a cornerstone of the enduring partnership between the NPC and the IPU on sustainable development.

Held annually since 2016, these gatherings have mobilized hundreds of parliamentarians and parliamentary staff from developing nations across Africa, the Middle East, the Asia-Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean, to promote exchanges of practices and foster interregional collaboration on sustainable development.

I would like to warmly welcome participating delegations from: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominica, Maldives, Nepal, Niger, Suriname, Türkiye and the United Republic of Tanzania. Welcome – Bienvenidos – Bienvenus – to all of you!

I am very pleased to note that for some of your parliaments this is not the first time that you participate in this interregional seminar. Returning to this event is not a small thing, it shows strong commitment and interest of your country in remaining actively engaged in parliamentary exchanges to advance the implementation of the SDGs.

Excellencies,
Honourable Members of Parliament,
Ladies and gentlemen,

This event provides a timely opportunity to take stock of the progress of SDG implementation in our respective contexts, discuss topical issues and, most of all, engage in fruitful discussions on respective experience, good practices and challenges that can also be addressed through interregional cooperation.

As you might be aware, the latest United Nations data are alarming. Only 36% of SDG targets are on track or making moderate progress, and 15% have actually regressed. This means, for example, that: more than 800 million people still live in extreme poverty, about 2.1 billion people lack access to safely managed drinking water services, and maternal mortality remains nearly three times higher the global target.

The role that parliaments can play to ensure inclusive progress and the effective achievement of SDGs is crucial. As parliamentarians, the opportunities that you have to make a real difference in the life of people and the planet are huge and precious.

Thanks to your responsibilities and powers, you can help ensure that global commitments are properly translated into national law. You can ensure that appropriate budgets are available to effectively turn ambition into infrastructure, into services, into concrete opportunities for all. You can monitor progress on the ground and ensure that the needs of all are properly taken into consideration – with no one left behind.

Through our direct work with parliaments as well as research we have developed a number of promising actions that have been implemented to mainstream the SDGs into parliaments' work and so help advance their realization on the ground.

For example, the SDG Commission of the Parliament of Uzbekistan communicates regularly with other parliamentary commissions to facilitate the coordination and alignment of various legislative initiatives with nationalized SDG targets, and to elaborate reform packages to accelerate implementation. This work extends to government oversight as well, with quarterly hearings held on progress in major socioeconomic and healthcare reforms. The 12th IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians, which will be hosted by the Parliament of Uzbekistan from 4 to 6 September this year, will place special attention on Uzbekistan's leadership and their sponsoring of the 2022 UN General Assembly resolution on *Enhancing the role of parliaments in accelerating the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals*, adopted by consensus, as well as their ongoing efforts to develop a follow-up resolution to further strengthen parliamentary engagement in SDG implementation.

The Parliament of Fiji undertook an SDG self-assessment exercise twice – in 2017 and 2026 – using the IPU toolkit *Parliaments and the Sustainable Development Goals*. This process helped the Parliament to

identify how it can make fuller use of its existing constitutional and procedural roles to support implementation, scrutiny and accountability in relation to Fiji's development priorities. This exercise also showed that the Parliament made important progress since its first self-assessment. Not only are the SDGs now anchored in a national planning framework, but the Parliament has also accumulated practical experience, research capacity, committee practice, gender mainstreaming tools and budget analysis.

In Ghana, following a 2025 training organized in collaboration with the IPU, the Parliament translated its acquired knowledge into sustained institutional action on development-related issue, more precisely on methane – a potent driver of climate change and a direct link to SDG 13 on climate action and SDG 7 on affordable and clean energy. The Speaker expressed full support for the methane agenda and intervened in the budget process to ensure allocation to climate and methane-related activities, while the relevant committee formally incorporated methane into its official 2026 work plan. MPs took this commitment beyond the chamber, conducting two weeks of oversight visits to mining companies to examine the sector's contribution to methane emissions and explore measurement and mitigation measures, and engaging directly with agricultural communities to discuss methane in the context of farming.

Accelerating the implementation of the SDGs is possible, but it will not happen by default. It will happen because parliaments, parliamentarians and parliamentary staff, like you, choose deliberately and urgently to act, to legislate with ambition, to budget with discipline, to cooperate across borders with solidarity. The IPU stands ready to strengthen cooperation with your parliaments and provide technical support if and when needed.

I thank you and wish you very productive discussions and exchanges during this interregional seminar.