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Speech by Ms. Anda Filip, IPU Secretary General

Official Meeting and banquet with Hon. Liu Ning, Chairperson of the Standing Committee of the Henan Provincial People's Congress - 2026 Interregional Seminar on the Achievement of the SDGs for Parliaments of Developing Countries

Beijing, 28 August 2026

Hon. Liu Ning, Chairperson of the Standing Committee of the Henan Provincial People's Congress,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great honour for me to meet with you today here in Zhengzhou (“jeng-zhoh”). Thank you for receiving us with such warm hospitality and courtesy. Your generosity in making time for us, despite your demanding schedule, and in offering us this wonderful banquet, reflects a spirit of kindness and cooperation that I know so well characterizes your country.

This is my first visit to China and what I have observed during these days has given me a vivid sense of how deeply this country's history and its modern ambitions are intertwined – starting from the ancient heritage of its imperial capital to the dynamism of its fastest-growing cities. It is a privilege to have the opportunity to now visit your province together with the participants of the 2026 Interregional Seminar on the Achievement of the SDGs for Parliaments of Developing Countries. I arrive at this meeting with great enthusiasm following what I have already witnessed, and even greater curiosity for what I will learn from our exchange and from what I will see tomorrow, when we visit the Local Legislative Outreach Office of the People's Congress of Jinshui District as well as a local manufacturer – the Yutong Bus Co., Ltd., and a food enterprise – the Haoxiangni Health Food Co., Ltd.

At the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the global organization of national parliaments, we place great importance to promoting the implementation of sustainable development through parliamentary diplomacy, dialogue and actions at the global, regional and national levels.

Every year since 2016, the IPU and the National People's Congress of China have been organizing jointly the Interregional Seminars on the Achievement of the SDGs for Parliaments of Developing Countries. These events are a key reflection of the strong and enduring partnership between the NPC and the IPU aimed at cooperating and engaging on advancing the effective achievement of the SDGs for all.

Visiting the Henan Province is a precious opportunity to witness how sustainable development can be implemented at the local level. Indeed, it is at the local level that global aspirations meet the realities of people's lives. It is here that a national target for clean water becomes a functioning irrigation system, and a national commitment to education becomes a new school in a rural area. Provincial and local institutions are the primary architects of sustainable development on the ground.

In light of this, I strongly believe that the relationship between national parliaments and provincial and local authorities is crucial. National parliaments set the legal and budgetary framework; but it is provincial and local bodies that adapt that framework to local conditions, that hold local administrations accountable for delivery, and that often see problems and opportunities long before they become visible at the national level. I am therefore very pleased that our meeting today offers us further food for thought on how this type of collaboration could be strengthened and promoted in different contexts so as to accelerate the effective implementation of sustainable development on the ground.

Mr. Chairperson of the Standing Committee of the Henan Provincial People's Congress, thank you once more for your kind hospitality and for your openness in sharing Henan's experience with our participants.

Thank you.