



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

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Speech by Ms. Anda Filip, IPU Secretary General

12th IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians
Opening session

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Madam Chairperson of the Senate of Uzbekistan,
Mr. Speaker of the Legislative Chamber of Uzbekistan,
Madam President of the IPU,
Distinguished members of the Bureau of Young Parliamentarians,
Dear Young Parliamentarians,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am deeply honoured to address you today at the Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians.

At the outset, I would like to thank Mr. President, Madam Chairperson, the parliamentarians and staff of the Oliy Majlis, and the people of Uzbekistan, for hosting us so generously.

We are grateful to be so warmly welcomed in this beautiful city of Samarkand, where ancient history and modern aspirations intertwine, a city that has stood for centuries at the crossroads of civilizations, dialogue and exchange. It is a most fitting place for young parliamentarians from across the world to gather.

Let me also say how particularly meaningful it is for me to address this Conference for the first time as Secretary General. I have long believed in the importance of young people having a meaningful place in political decision making. I could not agree more with the motto of the IPU's young MPs: "No decisions about us, without us." It is a simple principle, but one that stands at the core of the work of parliament and which is how and why inclusion is so important. It is about justice. It is about political rights. And it is also because by bringing young people in, we can design better policy results for all.

C'est l'un des enseignements que nous tirons du mouvement des jeunes de l'UIP, mais il y en a bien sûr beaucoup d'autres. L'énergie et l'esprit d'innovation de cette Conférence sont un autre exemple.

Cette Conférence, qui en est désormais à sa douzième édition, reste l'un des rassemblements les plus dynamiques et les plus tournés vers l'avenir de l'UIP. C'est un événement qui nous permet d'essayer de nouvelles idées qui peuvent être une source d'inspiration pour l'ensemble de l'UIP, comme les "anticonférences" et les ateliers interactifs. Je suis fermement convaincue que ces initiatives enrichissent l'UIP dans son ensemble.

So, my message to you today is simple: this Organization truly believes in youth leadership, and in empowering young MPs. The IPU walks the talk. And under my mandate as Secretary General, this will continue to be the case. We need your energy, your creativity and your drive to help future-proof parliaments and design sustainable policies in the interest of young and future generations.

We convene today under the overall theme of Reclaiming human rights, justice and dignity for all in turbulent times. In this spirit, it is only fitting that this Conference be one of the flagship initiatives in the context of the IPU's focus this year on human rights. Among other things, it will provide valuable input in the lead up to the Global Parliamentary Conference on Human Rights, taking place in Geneva in November.

Like in so many areas where youth perspectives shine a light on the future, I have no doubts that the views and commitments developed here in Samarkand will live on and travel with us to Geneva for the November Conference. This is an example of how at the IPU, the perspectives of young MPs are a centre piece of our work, not a mere footnote, nor an afterthought.

There are many more ways that we hope you, as young MPs, can be active in the fight for human rights.

One is through the IPU's Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians, which follows cases where MPs, including many young MPs, are targeted simply for exercising their mandate. In 2025 alone, the Committee reviewed over one thousand individual cases of alleged human rights violations against parliamentarians. The Committee's work is a reminder that when an elected representative is silenced, democratic representation, as a whole, is weakened. Young MPs can support the work of this Committee by raising their parliament's cases in their parliaments and in international forums.

Another way for young MPs to contribute on human rights is through their parliament's engagement with international bodies like the United Nations Human Rights Council and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. When one of these bodies reviews your country's performance in these areas, there are dedicated channels for parliamentary engagement. We hope that you, young MPs, can be strong contributors to your parliament's work with these bodies.

And then, we are counting on you to be dynamic partners for our new campaign on Bringing human rights into focus.

Ladies and gentlemen,

There is one further ambition I want to share with you today, one that is close to my own heart as I begin this mandate.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted in 1948. Rising from the ashes of the atrocities of the Second World War, it is one of humanity's most remarkable achievements. It has inspired more than 80 international treaties and declarations, and it continues to shape human rights law. Yet almost 80 years later, its content, and the rights it guarantees, are still too little known and too little taught, including to young people. It is such a simple, yet powerful and fundamental document. 30 articles starting with all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.

Then, everyone has the right to life, liberty and the security of person.
No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
Everyone has the right to recognition as a person before the law.
Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.
Everyone has the right to education and so on.

If our leaders were more or a bit more careful and considerate of the provisions, our world would definitely be a better place.

So, I believe young parliamentarians can be tremendously important champions both in raising awareness of this Declaration and in making its application fit for purpose to today's modern problems.

- You can advocate and push for human rights and civics education to be embedded in schools.
- As community leaders, you can use your platforms, in your constituencies and on social media, to make these rights better known and understood.
- And as policymakers, you can help translate the Universal Declaration to today's world so that the Declaration becomes a living framework for addressing the challenges of our present and our future.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As I mentioned in my introduction, for centuries, people came through Samarkand carrying ideas, knowledge and ambitions from one part of the world to another. No traveller made that journey entirely alone. They relied on routes built by others, on places to meet and on people who could help them find the way forward.

This is very much still the case today with this Conference, and with the IPU. You are the ones making the journey. You are the ones leading change in your countries. This Conference and the IPU's role is to help connect you, support you, and ensure that you do not have to make that journey alone. You can always count on the support of the IPU.

Thank you.