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Speech by Ms. Anda Filip, IPU Secretary General

Meeting of the IPU Committee on Health

Arusha, 5 October 2026

Dear Members of the IPU Committee on Health,

It is a pleasure to address you at the beginning of this meeting. As it is my first Assembly as IPU Secretary General, I wish to use the opportunity to welcome you and underline the importance of the IPU's work on health, which has been carried out by the IPU Advisory Group on Health first, and now by this Committee.

We all know that health is fundamental to individuals and societies. But health is not only about protecting populations from disease. It is a cross-cutting issue that connects directly with development, human rights, gender equality, climate change, and peace and security — all of which are key priorities for the IPU.

I therefore hope that the work of this Committee will help build stronger connections across these policy areas and different IPU structures. The new IPU Strategy for 2027-2031 provides an important framework for doing so. It comes at a time of rapid change, marked by the emergence of new technologies, including artificial intelligence, as well as profound environmental and social transformations.

At the same time, many of the challenges we face remain familiar. They concern equity and gender equality; the protection of human rights; and ensuring that all people, regardless of their circumstances, have access to the information, services and opportunities they need to live healthy and dignified lives. Some of the instruments we have been using are also more relevant than ever. The IPU has been leveraging parliamentary diplomacy for a very long time, and I firmly believe that there is great value in bringing parliaments across countries and regions together, fostering dialogue, exchange experiences and build common ground to address the complexities of our globalized world.

Against this backdrop, you have an important role to play. The work of the Committee can provide important lessons on effective parliamentary approaches and practices on inclusion, trust-building, and community empowerment. It can also provide a space to discuss emerging trends, exchange perspectives and ensure that parliamentary responses continue to adapt to a changing world — while keeping health as an essential reference point. It is also important for the work of the Committee to remain grounded in existing realities through exchanges with stakeholders and field visits. I hope this practice can continue and that a host will be identified for the next field visit.

The implementation of the Strategy will also depend on strong partnerships and on building a more connected and inclusive parliamentary ecosystem. The Committee is already leading by example through its own practices: by fostering dialogue with partners, including WHO as the lead global health organization, bringing different perspectives together, and ensuring that the voices and experiences of civil society are included in discussions.

I know you are a very committed and engaged group, with strong expertise and experience across countries and regions. This commitment and engagement are among the Committee's greatest strengths, and I am confident that they will continue to drive constructive dialogue and practical contributions to the work of the IPU.

I wish you all a very productive meeting. Thank you.