Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

T +41 22 919 41 50
F +41 22 919 41 60
E postbox@ipu.org
www.ipu.org

Chemin du Pommier 5
Case postale 330
1218 Le Grand-Saconnex
Geneva – Switzerland

Speech by Ms. Anda Filip, IPU Secretary General

World e-Parliament Conference
Closing session

Brussels, 18 November 2026

Colleagues, friends.

We have reached the end of two full days. Before we leave, let me thank the European Parliament for hosting us so generously here in Brussels.

Yesterday morning, the IPU President asked us to leave Brussels with clear commitments. I want to use these last few minutes to say what the IPU believes those commitments should be.

Let me start with why this matters.

Digital technologies and AI are reshaping our societies, our economies and the way democracy works. For parliaments, they bring real opportunities: to make better laws, to hold governments to account and to stay close to the people they represent.

They also bring risks. Countries depend on a small number of providers for critical infrastructure, data and computing power. AI-generated disinformation threatens public debate and elections. Digital violence, algorithmic discrimination and mass surveillance threaten fundamental rights.

It falls to parliaments to set the rules. Parliaments carry people's hopes and fears into law, and then check that the law is working. Making sure that AI develops in a way that serves people is a core responsibility of every parliament.

But a parliament can only shape how AI is governed in society if it is a strong institution itself.

So, the IPU makes three calls today.

The first is to lead.

As Maria Ressa said in yesterday's keynote, "Don't stay with the way you used to do things. Old systems aren't ready for the world we live in today". We have heard many inspiring examples this week from parliaments in all parts of the world. But seizing the opportunities is a matter of leadership, because decisions about technology are decisions about how parliament works.

This is why the World e-Parliament Report identifies a strategic approach to digital transformation as a key factor for success. Everyone in parliament, everyone in this room, has a part to play in developing the vision, from the Speaker and the members of parliament, through to the Secretary General and the expert staff in the parliament administration. So, I call for strong leadership to make digital transformation an institutional priority, and make parliament a modern, outward-facing institution for the people.

The second call is to close the gap.

Our World e-Parliament Report shows that digital maturity is rising across the world. It also shows that the distance between the most and least advanced parliaments is growing. As the IPU President said yesterday, a digital divide between parliaments becomes a democratic divide between people.

The commitment to support AI capacity-building in parliaments has been made, and it has been repeated. Now it must be kept.

We need a step change. The IPU urges parliaments, governments and international partners to accelerate their investment: in continuous digital and AI literacy for members and staff, and in the skills, governance and infrastructure that parliaments need to use AI safely and with confidence.

The parliamentary AI skills coalition announced yesterday will help us to do this.

The third call is to work together.

No parliament needs to face the digital era alone, and no country can act effectively in isolation. Parliaments learn best from one another. A solution developed in one parliament can serve many.

Please, share your knowledge, your tools and your expertise. Give priority to smaller and less-resourced parliaments. Take part in communities of practice such as the IPU's Centre for Innovation in Parliament.

And take the voice of parliaments into the local, regional and international discussions where the future of these technologies is being decided. They must serve people, democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

Lead. Close the gap. Work together.

The IPU will play its part. We will keep working with you, our Member Parliaments, and with our partners to support this effort.

If parliaments act together, digital transformation will strengthen democracy and the trust of the people we serve.

Thank you, and safe travels home.