



Inter-Parliamentary Union

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IPU Address

Mr. Martin Chungong
IPU Secretary General

2018 Irena Legislators Forum
“Renewable Energy – the Role of
Legislators in Catalysing Action to
Accelerate the Energy
Transformation”

Abu Dhabi, 12 January 2018

Mr. Director-General of IRENA,
Honourable Minister for Climate Change and the Environment of the
UAE
Distinguished Speakers and Members of Parliament,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a distinct honour for me to address you at this important gathering as Secretary General of the Inter-Parliamentary union (IPU) – the global organization of parliaments. I had the pleasure of addressing the joint IRENA-FNC event yesterday and was able to take the pulse of the participants early on.

What I felt and saw in the meeting room and corridors yesterday was very reassuring for the IPU. IRENA – the global forum for cooperation and information exchange on renewable energy – has understood the pivotal role lawmakers like yourselves play or can play in spurring action to accelerate the energy transformation. Furthermore, they have decided to convene a special Legislators’ Forum just for you to discuss how you can play this role to the fullest.

Gone are the days of endless oil and natural gas. Fossil fuels have proved to be a costly and environment-unfriendly source of energy and are slowing becoming the relics of the industrial era.

Today, in the age of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), all eyes are turning towards cleaner, alternative, less costly and more efficient sources of energy, specifically renewable energy.

Ladies and gentlemen,

You may be asking what difference – if any- you, as legislators, can make to the changing energy landscape of the world. The answer is a

huge difference. Yes, you as legislators have important constitutional powers that can make a real difference to the daily lives of your citizens and the planet as a whole.

Through your oversight role, you can ensure that your governments honour their international commitments that seek to combat climate change, reduce the use of fossil fuels and promote the use of renewable energy.

As lawmakers, you can draft, propose and pass legislation aimed at promoting the increased use of renewable energy for your country's sustainable development. All UN Members have subscribed to the SDGs so we all have a commitment to all 17 Goals.

Lastly, as representatives of the people, you have the duty to listen to their needs and aspirations and work towards securing a healthy and lasting planet for the current and future generations.

Ladies and gentlemen,

At the IPU, we are committed to promoting parliament's role in the implementation of the SDGs. In fact, our roadmap, our Strategy for 2017-2021 is based on the new sustainable development architecture. We have developed an SDGs self-assessment toolkit for parliaments to ensure that they are "fit for purpose" and we invite all of you to undertake this useful exercise.

The IPU has also organized very successful regional SDG Seminars in South-Asia, South America and Africa and very soon in the CIS region. We would be pleased to organize one for Arab parliaments too. These seminars serve to share best practices and highlight success stories, thereby ensuring a snowball effect.

One of the IPU's Standing Committees will be debating and adopting a draft resolution at our next Assembly in March. The text stresses that progress on SDG 7 will have a direct and positive impact on economic development and poverty reduction, on people's health and well-being and on the environment. It recommends that parliaments make sure that the specific needs of small local projects are taken into account in their efforts to engage the private sector in this field.

The draft resolution also points out the particular relevance of SDG 17 on global partnership for sustainable development to the attainment of SDG 7. Developing countries are at a particular disadvantage when it comes to access to the technology and finance required to achieve universal access to energy, especially renewable energy. It therefore

calls for more cooperation leading to the transfer of innovative green technologies and for new international investment agreements for the implementation of the SDGs in general.

Last but not least, the draft IPU resolution recommends more exchange between parliaments, the IPU, regional parliamentary organizations and other international organizations on SDG policymaking and implementation. Through the events in Abu Dhabi this week you will address a wide array of topics that will help you engage effectively with the SDGs and renewable energy.

I wish you fruitful deliberations and productive exchanges.

Thank you.