



Inter-Parliamentary Union

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Geneva, 4 May 2018

Office of the  
Secretary General

Dear Madam President,  
Dear Mr. President,

I am pleased to inform you that the 71<sup>st</sup> World Health Assembly (WHA) will take place in Geneva from 21 to 26 May 2018. The WHA, which meets every May in Geneva, is the decision-making body of the World Health Organization (WHO) – it is attended by delegations from all Members of WHO, with a view to reviewing the work of WHO, setting new health goals and assigning new tasks to the WHO. As reflected in the provisional agenda ([http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf\\_files/WHA71/A71\\_1-en.pdf](http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA71/A71_1-en.pdf)), participation in the WHA presents an opportunity for parliamentarians to engage with a comprehensive range of key global health policy and regulatory issues as well as to strengthen relations with health actors at a multilateral level.

For a few years now, the IPU has worked on strengthening the relationship between parliaments and the WHO, and in particular increasing the participation of parliamentarians in the WHA. The Director-General of WHO, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, has urged Ministers of Health attending the WHA to consider reaching out to their parliaments with a view to MPs participating in their national delegations. In this context, the WHO will organize a briefing session during the 71<sup>st</sup> WHA on *The role of Parliamentarians in achieving universal health coverage and global health security as two sides of the same coin*. This event will take place on 25 May 2018 from 12.30 to 2.15 p.m. at the Palais des Nations in Geneva. Interpretation will be provided in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

Among other things, the briefing will provide MPs with the opportunity to exchange with health experts ways and means of contributing effectively to the global health agenda. Parliamentarians will be able to discuss the role of legislatures in promoting universal health coverage in order to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Participants will also have the chance to consider potential ways to strengthen cooperation with relevant health actors.

I encourage interested parliamentarians to contact their national Ministry of Health in order to examine the possibility of joining the national delegation to the 71<sup>st</sup> WHA.

I am looking forward to welcoming members of your parliament to this important event.

Yours sincerely,

Martin Chungong  
Secretary General