



141st IPU Assembly

**Belgrade (Serbia)
13-17 October 2019**



Convocation

A/141/C.1
12 June 2019

Dear Madam President,
Dear Mr. President,

The 141st Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and related meetings will be held at the Sava Centre, Belgrade, Serbia, from Sunday, 13 to Thursday, 17 October 2019.

We are pleased to enclose detailed information on these meetings, including the agendas of the main IPU statutory bodies. We very much hope that your Parliament will be represented at the 141st Assembly and that the delegation, under your leadership, will take an active part in the proceedings.

Yours sincerely,

Gabriela CUEVAS BARRON
President

Martin CHUNGONG
Secretary General

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#IPU141

INFORMATION ON THE ASSEMBLY

AGENDA

1. Election of the President and Vice-Presidents of the 141st Assembly
2. Consideration of requests for the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda
3. General Debate on the theme *Strengthening international law: Parliamentary roles and mechanisms, and the contribution of regional cooperation*
4. *Achieving universal health coverage by 2030: The role of parliaments in ensuring the right to health*
(Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights)
5. Reports of the Standing Committees on Peace and International Security; Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade; and United Nations Affairs
6. Approval of the subject item for the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights at the 143rd IPU Assembly and appointment of the Rapporteurs
7. Amendments to the IPU Statutes and Rules

TIMETABLE

The Timetable of the Assembly and related meetings is set out in [Annex 1](#). The Inaugural Ceremony will take place on Sunday, 13 October, at 7.30 p.m., at the Sava Centre, Belgrade.

The Governing Council will convene on 14 and 17 October and will consider and take decisions on a host of matters relating to the functioning and activities of the IPU. The agenda of the 205th session of the IPU Governing Council is attached.

The Assembly will start its General Debate on 14 October with the high-level segment reserved for Speakers of Parliament. At its sittings on 16 and 17 October, the Assembly will adopt resolutions on the emergency item and on the subject item taken up by the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights. The Assembly is expected to conclude with an outcome document on the theme of the General Debate and complete its business by 6 p.m. on Thursday, 17 October 2019.

EMERGENCY ITEM

According to Assembly Rule 11.1 and Article 14.2 of the Statutes, any Member of the IPU may request the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda. If the Assembly so decides, the emergency item will be debated by the Assembly in the morning of Tuesday, 15 October. Provision has also been made for a drafting committee to meet in the afternoon that same day in order to prepare a draft resolution. The Assembly will then adopt a resolution on Wednesday, 16 October 2019.

All requests for inclusion of an emergency item must relate to a recent major situation of international concern, on which urgent action by the international community is required and on which it is appropriate for the IPU to express its opinion and mobilize a parliamentary response. All proposals for an emergency item should be accompanied by a brief explanatory memorandum and a draft resolution, which clearly define the scope of the subject covered by the request.

GOVERNING COUNCIL

The Governing Council is composed of three members from each parliament represented in the IPU. Each parliament's representation on the Governing Council must include both men and women. Single-gender delegations will be limited to two members (Governing Council Rule 1.2).

In conformity with Governing Council Rule 13, members of the Council may request the inclusion of supplementary items in the agenda. Such items must fall within the mandate of the Council which, according to Article 20 of the Statutes, determines and guides the activities of the IPU and controls their implementation.

Any requests for the inclusion of supplementary items will be immediately transmitted by the Secretariat to all Council members. After hearing the opinion of the Executive Committee, the Council shall decide on such a request by a majority of votes cast if the request is received by the Secretariat at least 15 days before the opening of the session; otherwise by a two-thirds majority.

STANDING COMMITTEES

All four Standing Committees will meet during the 141st IPU Assembly.

The Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights will discuss and adopt a resolution on the subject item *Achieving universal health coverage by 2030: The role of parliaments in ensuring the right to health*.

The other three Standing Committees will hold hearings and panel discussions on the basis of recommendations from their respective Bureaux. The agendas of the four Standing Committees are attached.

Member Parliaments are kindly reminded that Bureau members and other IPU office-holders should be included in the national delegations to the Assembly.

A meeting of the Chairpersons of the Geopolitical Groups and the Presidents of the Standing Committees with the IPU President, and the Secretary General, will take place on Sunday, 13 October from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The Secretaries of the Geopolitical Groups and Standing Committees are also invited to attend the meeting.

PARTICIPATION

IPU Member Parliaments may appoint a maximum of eight delegates, or 10 for parliaments of countries with a population of 100 million inhabitants or more (Article 10.2 of the Statutes). The number of additional MPs accompanying delegations as Advisers must not exceed two.

In keeping with the decision taken by the IPU governing bodies in March 2018, Members "*...may register one additional delegate if at least one young parliamentarian (below 45 years of age) is part of the delegation on condition that the delegation is composed of both sexes and the Member is not in arrears in the payment of its assessed contributions*" (Article 10.3 of the Statutes).

All Member Parliaments are encouraged to strive for gender parity and political balance in the composition of their delegations. Any delegation which, for three consecutive sessions of the Assembly, is composed exclusively of parliamentarians of the same sex will automatically be reduced by one person. Please note that the Forum of Women Parliamentarians will meet on Sunday, 13 October. The meeting is **open to both women and men parliamentarians** who are attending the 141st Assembly. The draft agenda is attached.

Geopolitical groups are kindly requested to schedule their meetings on Saturday, 12 October, or at another time which does not conflict with the meeting of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians.

The Forum of Young Parliamentarians of the IPU will meet on 14 October 2019. Among other things, the Forum will formulate and provide input to the deliberations of the Assembly. The draft agenda of the Forum's meeting is attached.

In addition to the Secretaries General who will attend the regular session of the Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments (ASGP), Members are encouraged to include professional parliamentary staff (IPU focal points) in their delegations, with a view to ensuring adequate support during and in follow-up to the Assembly (in particular in terms of **meeting the statutory obligation by Members to prepare and disseminate reports on action undertaken on IPU decisions and resolutions**).

IPU Members whose arrears equal or exceed the amount of the contributions due from them for the preceding two full years will not be represented by more than two delegates at meetings of the IPU (Article 5.2 of the Statutes), nor will they be entitled to vote.

Associate Members may participate in the Assembly and its Standing Committees with the same rights as Members, with the exception of the right to vote and to present candidates for elective office.

International organizations and other bodies invited by the Governing Council to be represented at the Assembly as permanent Observers are reminded that they are entitled to register a maximum of two delegates.

The Plenary Hall, where the meetings of the Assembly and Governing Council will take place, has limited seating capacity. Depending on actual attendance at the 141st Assembly, the Secretariat will endeavour to allocate an adequate number of seats for all delegations. At a minimum, each national parliamentary delegation will be allocated a sufficient number of seats required for a possible vote by the Assembly or Governing Council.

STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee of the Assembly is composed of the President of the Assembly, the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Vice-President of the Executive Committee. The Presidents of the Standing Committees may take part in the work of the Steering Committee in an advisory capacity.

The Steering Committee, assisted by the IPU Secretary General, is mandated to take all appropriate measures to ensure the effective organization and smooth running of the Assembly proceedings. The first sitting of the Steering Committee will take place in the early morning of Monday, 14 October 2019.

VACANCIES TO BE FILLED DURING THE 141st ASSEMBLY

A provisional list of vacancies for IPU bodies will be posted on the IPU website prior to the opening of the Assembly.

Member Parliaments are invited to consider submitting candidatures for the main committees and bodies of the IPU (www.ipu.org/about-us/structure/assembly). Candidates should have the expertise, as far as possible, in the areas of work of the given bodies, and should be supported by their respective parliament in carrying out their functions as IPU office-holders. New Members of the IPU and Members currently not holding IPU offices are encouraged to submit candidatures.

When submitting candidatures, delegations are requested also to return the form in [Annex 2](#), accompanied by a brief CV of the candidate.

PREPARATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS AND SELECTION OF AGENDA ITEMS

The deadlines pertaining to the preparation of the resolution for the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights are the following:

1 July 2019	Deadline for the rapporteurs to submit the draft resolution and explanatory memorandum to the IPU Secretariat.
18 July 2019	IPU Secretariat distributes the draft resolution and explanatory memorandum to IPU Members.
27 September 2019	Deadline for IPU Members to submit proposals for amendments to the draft resolution.
13-17 October 2019	141 st PU Assembly Finalization and adoption of the resolution.

All Members can contribute to the drafting of resolutions by submitting a brief written input (Standing Committee Rule 13.1). The deadline for written input to the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights has expired (20 April 2019). Members are encouraged to submit input for the draft resolutions to be adopted at the 142nd IPU Assembly (April 2020) by the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security on *Parliamentary strategies to strengthen peace and security in the face of challenges and conflicts resulting from climate-related disasters and their consequences*; and by the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade on *Mainstreaming digitalization and the circular economy to achieve the SDGs, responsible consumption and production*. Written input to these draft resolutions is welcome by 1 November 2019.

In accordance with the Standing Committees' Rules, proposals for subject items should be submitted up to one day prior to the meeting of the respective Standing Committee Bureau. As such, Members wishing to do so should submit to the IPU Secretariat their proposals for the subject item to be taken up by the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights by 15 October 2019 at the latest.

These will serve as the basis for consultations by the respective Standing Committee Bureau before a final decision is taken by the Standing Committee. When considering the proposals for subject items to be discussed at future Assemblies, the Bureau may recommend one of the proposals, combine two or more of them dealing with the same subject or related subjects into a single item, put forward another subject item or decide to submit more than one proposal to the Standing Committee.

GENERAL DEBATE (Item 3 of the agenda)

The General Debate at the 141st Assembly will focus on the theme of *Strengthening international law: Parliamentary roles and mechanisms, and the contribution of regional cooperation*. A concept note on this theme is enclosed.

In March 2018, the Governing Council and the Assembly approved statutory amendments including with regard to speaking time and rights in the General debate.

Amended Assembly Rule 22 reads "*Two representatives of each delegation may speak during the General Debate. They shall share the speaking time **as they deem fit. An additional MP from each delegation may address the General debate, provided he/she is a young parliamentarian.***"

All young MPs (MPs under the age of 45) registered as third speakers will appear at the end of the Speakers' list (on a separate list D) and will be invited to deliver their addresses at the end of the General Debate.

Speaking time will be determined based on the number of registered speakers, based on the following general guidelines:

List A	High-level segment (Presiding Officers)	7 minutes
List B	First speakers from delegations	6 minutes
List C	Second speakers from delegations	Time remaining (up to a total of 7 minutes for two speakers)
List D	Young parliamentarians	2 minutes.

Registration of speakers will take place at the desk situated just outside the main entrance to the Plenary Hall (Hall 1/0) on the ground floor of the Sava Centre. This desk will open 24 hours before the beginning of the first plenary sitting of the Assembly, on Sunday, 13 October at 11 a.m.

Members may also send the names of their speaker(s) in advance to the IPU Secretariat by e-mail or fax, using the attached Speakers pre-registration form ([Annex 3](#)). As per established practice, the order of speakers will be determined by a public drawing of lots at 5 p.m. on Sunday, 13 October 2019.

VICE-PRESIDENTS OF THE ASSEMBLY

According to Assembly Rule 7.3, all delegations from Member Parliaments are entitled to designate one of their members as a Vice-President of the Assembly. Some of the Vice-Presidents will be called upon to replace the President of the Assembly during a sitting or part of a sitting.

Upon arrival at the IPU Registration Desk, delegations are invited to indicate the name of the parliamentarian nominated as a Vice-President of the Assembly. Alternatively, names may be communicated to the Documents Submission and Control Service (Hall 3/1, on the first floor of the Sava Centre), by 12 noon on Monday, 14 October 2019.

ALLOCATION OF VOTES

A provisional table showing the votes allocated to delegations to the 141st Assembly is contained in [Annex 4](#).

Member Parliaments are kindly requested to check the figures against their country name and, if necessary, inform the IPU Secretariat in Geneva in writing of any modifications required, preferably ahead of the Assembly. The final table showing the allocation of votes at the Assembly will be distributed at the opening of the session.

LANGUAGES, SPEECHES AND DOCUMENTATION

The IPU Secretariat will provide simultaneous interpretation in the IPU Assembly's working languages (Arabic, English, French and Spanish) at the meetings of all statutory bodies.

Five other interpretation channels have been reserved for Chinese, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian and Serbian at sittings of the Assembly and the Governing Council, and for some sittings of the Standing Committees. These booths are provided free of charge and may be used by the interpretation teams for these languages.

The number of additional booths available in the Plenary Hall is limited. The related costs incurred must be borne by the requesting party. All such requests will be handled on a first-come, first-served basis.

Delegates may deliver their speech in another language provided that they arrange for it to be interpreted into one of the IPU's official languages (English and French) by a person designated by them, who will be given access to an interpretation booth. To allow for all necessary arrangements to be made in good time, delegations should contact well in advance the Chief Interpreter (Ms. F. Steinig-Huang) or the English booth interpreters assigned to the meeting at which the speech will be delivered. Moreover, eight copies of the translation of the speech into one of the IPU's official languages should be given to the Chief Interpreter or to the English booth for distribution to the other interpreters.

Official statements delivered in the General Debate are published on the Assembly webpage and form part of the official records of the Assembly. All delegations are therefore encouraged to send their statements to speeches@ipu.org. Due to technical limitations, only speeches in English, French and Spanish will be posted.

E-mailing the speech (**a minimum of three hours before it is to be made**), will also help to ensure a high quality of simultaneous interpretation into the other working languages.

Documentation pertaining to the work of the Assembly, Governing Council, Standing Committees and other IPU bodies, as well as other events taking place during the 141st Assembly, will be available on the IPU website at: www.ipu.org/event/141st-assembly-and-related-meetings, as well as on the Assembly App.

In keeping with the decision by the IPU Governing Council to reduce the carbon footprint of the Organization and continue to curb paper waste, only a very limited number of documentation sets will be printed for the various sittings of the Assembly.

ASSEMBLY APP

The 141st Assembly App will be available for downloading free of charge, in September 2019. A short users' manual in English and French will be posted on the website. The App is intended to allow the online consultation of official IPU documents as part of the IPU's paper smart policy and to facilitate delegates' participation in IPU Assemblies.

MEETINGS OF OTHER BODIES

The following IPU bodies will also meet during the Assembly:

- Executive Committee (12, 13 and 16 October, *in camera*);
- Sub-Committee on Finance (10 October, *in camera*);
- Forum of Women Parliamentarians (13 and 16 October, *public sittings*);
- Forum of Young Parliamentarians of the IPU (14 October, *public sitting*);
- Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians of the IPU (14 October, *in camera*);
- Bureau of Women Parliamentarians (13 and 17 October, *in camera*);
- Gender Partnership Group (12 and 16 October, *in camera*);
- Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians (12 to 16 October, *in camera*);
- Committee on Middle East Questions (13 and 15 October, *in camera*);
- Group of Facilitators for Cyprus (13 October, *closed meeting*);
- Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL) (14 October, *in camera*; and 16 October, *public sitting*);
- High-level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (16 October, *in camera*);
- Advisory Group on Health (15 October, *in camera*).

The Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments (ASGP) will also meet at the Sava Centre during the Assembly. It will be convened by its President.

RESULTS OF THE ASSEMBLY

All delegations will receive one printed copy of the *Results* of the 141st Assembly. In addition, the document will become accessible on the IPU website two weeks after the close of the Assembly, when a complete electronic version can be downloaded in PDF format.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Further information concerning the Assembly will be provided in the Assembly Guidebook that will be distributed to delegations upon registration in Belgrade. Delegates will also find the Assembly Journal every day in all meeting rooms and at the Registration and Information Desk, as well as on the IPU website and on the Assembly App. The Journal provides the latest updates on the programme of meetings and other important information.

REGISTRATION

All delegations are requested to respect the registration deadline of 1 October 2019.

They should use the IPU online registration system. [Annex 5](#) provides instructions on how to use the system, which will be operational as of 15 June 2019. It is recommended that only one person be designated as the delegation coordinator and have access to the system.

In the event of difficulties, delegations may contact the IPU Registration service at postbox@ipu.org. If for any reason a Parliament is unable to register online, the composition of its delegation may be transmitted either by e-mail or fax (+41 22 919 41 60).

The Registration and Information Service will be open at the Sava Centre as of Thursday, 10 October 2019 from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and from Friday, 11 to Wednesday, 16 October from 8 a.m. to 6.30 p.m., as well as on Thursday, 17 October from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Important:

As part of the online registration procedure, **delegates are requested to provide their individual e-mail addresses and Committee assignments**. By doing so, they tacitly accept to be added to the IPU's mailing list and will receive regular updates on the work of the IPU. This information will also serve as the basis for an IPU database to facilitate networking among MPs. The IPU is committed to respecting the privacy of the people it engages with. More information about how IPU uses its data here: www.ipu.org/privacy-statement.

The General Information document provided by the host Parliament contains detailed information concerning **visa applications**.

DELEGATES' STAY IN BELGRADE

For all logistical matters relating to delegates' stay in Belgrade, such as welcome service, hotel reservations, etc., delegations are invited to use the website set up by the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia for the 141st Assembly at: www.serbia141ipu.rs.

The General Information document, sent with the invitation by the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, contains details on delegates' stay in Belgrade. Additional information, including options for online hotel reservations, is also available on the host Parliament's website. Requests for hotel reservations should be made as soon as possible. Delegations are reminded that, in keeping with IPU practice, the costs of international travel and hotel accommodation are to be borne by their respective institutions.

Additional information and assistance can be readily obtained from the 141st Assembly Secretariat of the National Assembly of Serbia at:

Telephone	:	+381 11 3026 193, +381 64 8420 326 (cell phone)
E-mail	:	ipu@parlament.rs
Website	:	www.serbia141ipu.rs