



# 141<sup>st</sup> IPU Assembly

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



**General Debate: *Strengthening international law: Parliamentary roles and mechanisms, and the contribution of regional cooperation***

## Opening remarks

**Mr. Melvin Bouva, President of the Board of the  
Forum of Young Parliamentarians of the IPU**

Madam President,  
Mr. Secretary General,  
Madam President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians,  
Distinguished guests,  
Dear colleagues,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am honoured to address this plenary for the first time as President of the IPU Forum of Young Parliamentarians and to infuse the voice of youth into this important debate.

Dear colleagues,

The younger generations are losing confidence in our institutions. Everywhere on the planet, young men and women are suffering the consequences of the action, or inaction, of current and past generations.

We should collectively and individually focus our efforts on being youth responsive: youth responsive in tackling the climate emergency, youth responsive in safeguarding the enjoyment of human rights by all, youth responsive in advancing greater fairness and equality for all, youth responsive in working for peace. And, ultimately, youth responsive in delivering well-being for all, as called for by the young parliamentarians of the world at the Sixth IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians held last month.

In a changing world, democracy must evolve. One crucial way to make our institutions more youth responsive is to make parliaments more inclusive. We need more young women and men to be at the decision-making table in our parliaments and governments as well as in peace efforts and talks, in the media and in public debates such as the one starting now in our Assembly.

As MPs, we shape international law and we have a duty to implement it. In doing so, we have a duty to meet the needs and defend the interests of youth, women, people with disabilities, migrants, sexual minorities and future generations.

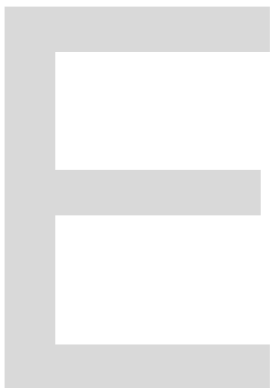
In shaping and implementing international law we should set aside partisan views and act as courageous and empathetic human beings for today and tomorrow.

After this Assembly, I hope that we will all do so. Because we have no time to lose! The planet is in danger, democracy too.

Let us take this opportunity to recommit ourselves to fully honouring the principles and ambitions of international law and to championing human rights and international climate justice.

Let us take this opportunity to unite our forces, despite our differences, for a peaceful, inclusive and sustainable world.

Thank you.



**#IPU141**