



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

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141st Assembly

1. Inaugural ceremony

The 141st IPU Assembly inaugural ceremony took place at the Sava Centre, Belgrade, on Sunday, 13 October 2019 at 7.30 p.m., with His Excellency Mr. Aleksandar Vučić, President of the Republic of Serbia, in attendance.

Ms. Maja Gojković, Speaker of the National Assembly of Serbia, welcomed the delegates to Serbia for the second IPU Assembly to be held in Belgrade; the first one having been held in 1963. As the IPU family continued to grow in a spirit of respect and trust, the gathering of its Members sent a message about the importance of inter-parliamentary cooperation and parliamentary diplomacy to overcome today's challenges and work for peace. It was up to parliamentarians, on behalf of the people they represented, to encourage their governments to follow suit in building bridges of cooperation.

The IPU had a long tradition and vast experience, coupled with the knowledge and the desire to adapt to modern challenges. Hence the importance of strengthening cooperation inside the Organization, as it had proved for decades to be a solid, firm foundation to parliaments across the globe in facing ever-changing challenges.

Serbia had been one of the first countries to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the 141st Assembly would give special emphasis to marking the 30th anniversary of the Convention. Gender equality and women's empowerment would also feature prominently, with dedicated sessions. Equal participation of women in society, political processes and the economy would undoubtedly make the world a better and more humane place.

Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, addressed the Assembly by video message. He welcomed the Assembly's focus on international law, universal health coverage, the climate emergency and the Sustainable Development Goals. The contribution of parliamentarians, as representatives of the people, was critical in advancing shared progress.

In facing today's challenges, the path to building a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world, where no one was left behind, would only be possible in a multipolar world with strong multilateral institutions and universal respect for international law.

Ms. Tatiana Valovaya, United Nations Under-Secretary-General, Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, representing the United Nations Secretary-General at the 141st Assembly, applauded the extent of the cooperation between the United Nations and the IPU at the national, regional and international levels, particularly in relation to sustainable development and climate change.

As the world celebrated 100 years of multilateralism in 2019 and the 75th anniversary of the United Nations in 2020, it needed, more than ever, parliamentarians who strongly supported modern multilateralism, who resisted the growing populism and nationalism emerging in many parts of the world. Parliaments could play an important role in restoring trust in today's societies. Governments and intergovernmental organizations alone could not effectively address the complex global challenges. Parliamentarians had a crucial role to play, by authorizing the resources and passing the legislation that translated global commitments into national and local action.

Only with the necessary legislation could all 17 of the Sustainable Development Goals be implemented. The IPU could work on developing a list of the minimal legislative recommendations for implementing each Goal – a sort of "legislative roadmap" to gain partnerships around the world. This, in turn, would help trigger finance for the goals by clearly showing a mature and focused SDG environment in each country.

Ms. Gabriela Cuevas Barron, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, said that IPU Assemblies were a unique opportunity to bring the global parliamentary community together, seeing past national differences to common experiences and challenges. Parliamentary diplomacy was about building bridges of dialogue, understanding and cooperation within and between nations. Parliamentarians had a duty to defend parliaments as open, representative, accountable and effective institutions – as a space in which all voices were heard and respected.

Promoting democracy meant promoting women's and youth's political empowerment, both of which were key items on the Assembly agenda, coinciding with the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and looking ahead to the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 2020.

The subject of the Assembly General Debate would be strengthening international law through parliamentary roles and mechanisms, which was very fitting in the 70th anniversary year of the Geneva Conventions. The General Debate would also focus on the contribution of regional cooperation. The tradition of regional parliamentary cooperation at the IPU was going from strength to strength. The aim was to empower parliamentarians to address the key issues of our time, including the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism and violent extremism, trade, health, climate change and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Members would be called upon to adopt a resolution on achieving universal health coverage by 2030. This would set in motion a parliamentary action plan that would give impetus to the vision recently articulated by the United Nations.

The Assembly was an opportunity to uphold multilateralism as it was originally intended – to represent the peoples of the world, advance their aspirations, and deliver progress and solutions.

Mr. Aleksandar Vučić, President of the Republic of Serbia, welcomed the parliamentarians and all participants to the 141st IPU Assembly. He confirmed the importance of the event and underlined the huge number of parliaments and MPs attending the Assembly. Historically speaking, the IPU was a very important multilateral organization. Parliaments were institutions where differences in views and stances could be negotiated and overcome. Sharing experiences was welcome but decision-making without interference was imperative. That was the path to be followed to achieve joint progress and should be a model in conflict resolution. The IPU Assembly was an occasion to follow the dreams of all the people in the world.

Mr. Aleksandar Vučić, President of the Republic of Serbia, declared the 141st IPU Assembly open.

2. Participation

Delegations from 149 Member Parliaments took part in the work of the Assembly:^{*}

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lesotho, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The following nine Associate Members also took part in the Assembly: the Arab Parliament, the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), the Interparliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States (IPA CIS), the Inter-Parliamentary Committee of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), the Latin American and Caribbean Parliament (PARLATINO), the Parliament of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) and the Parliamentary Assembly of La Francophonie (APF).

Observers included representatives of:

(i) the United Nations and related organizations: United Nations, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH),

^{*} For the complete list of IPU Members, see page 39

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN Women), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), World Health Organization (WHO); International Monetary Fund (IMF), International Organization for Migration (IOM), Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO);

(ii) parliamentary assemblies and associations: African Parliamentary Union (APU), Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union (AIPU), Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA), Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), Forum of Parliaments of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (FP-ICGLR), Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC), Interparliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy (IAO), Maghreb Consultative Council, Pan-African Parliament (PAP), Parliamentarians for Nuclear Nonproliferation and Disarmament (PNND), Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM), Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic Speaking Countries (TurkPA), Parliamentary Assembly of the Union of Belarus and Russia, Parliamentary Union of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation Member States (PUIC), Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum (SADC PF);

(iii) worldwide non-governmental organizations: the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria;

(iv) international political party federations: Liberal International (LI), Socialist International;

(v) other IPU partner organizations: International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), International IDEA.

Of the 1,729 delegates who attended the Assembly, 739 were members of parliament. Those parliamentarians included 63 Presiding Officers, 57 Deputy Presiding Officers, 227 women MPs (30.7%) and 129 (21.5%) young MPs.

3. Choice of an emergency item

On 14 October 2019, the President informed the Assembly that the following four requests for the inclusion of an emergency item had been proposed:

- *Resolution on addressing climate change* (India);
- *Protection of civilians and international security: Demanding an end to Turkey's offensive in Syria* (France, United Kingdom, Germany, Switzerland and Egypt);
- *Double standards of Western countries in combatting terrorism, especially in resolving the conflict in Syria* (Turkey);
- *Urgent call for the restoration of representative democratic order and for respect for democratic principles in Peru* (Peru).

Turkey expressed its opposition to the joint proposal from France, United Kingdom, Germany, Switzerland and Egypt. France expressed its opposition to the proposal from Turkey.

The Assembly proceeded with roll-call votes on the four items (see pages 50 to 53). The proposal put forward by India was adopted and added to the agenda as item 8.

4. Debates and decisions of the Assembly and its Standing Committees

- (a) General Debate: Strengthening international law: Parliamentary roles and mechanisms, and the contribution of regional cooperation (Item 3)

During the three days of deliberations, some 144 legislators from 110 Member Parliaments, including 52 Presiding Officers and 15 young parliamentarians, as well as representatives of 10 partner organizations, contributed to the General Debate. The proceedings of the Debate were webcast, and many of the good practices and recommendations that emerged were reflected in the outcome document. A keynote address was delivered by Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, member of The Elders, at the opening of the General Debate. In the course of the week, Mr. Gilles Carbonnier, Vice-President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), also addressed the plenary of the Assembly as special guests.

Ms. Maja Gojković, Speaker of the National Assembly of Serbia, stressed the duty of parliamentarians to appeal for the respect and advancement of order and the rule of law. The strength of the IPU came from advocating peace, fairness and justice in international relations. The parliamentarians of the world had been working together for 130 years to build a community of values, tolerance, dialogue and understanding.

Violations of international law were the cause of many issues across the globe, leading to violence and suffering. Justice and the law must be placed above the use of force; the twenty-first century had already seen too many examples of the devastating effect of privileging force over law and justice. The 141st Assembly was an opportunity to reaffirm the Members' commitment to the Geneva Conventions and international humanitarian law, which was especially important in light of the violations of human rights, especially those of women and children, in conflict.

She called for full compliance with the United Nations Charter and international treaties. In their legislative and oversight functions, parliamentarians must work for full implementation of instruments of international law. By adopting IPU resolutions and other documents, parliamentarians were establishing mechanisms to safeguard peace and security and build stable international relations.

Regional cooperation was crucial to preserving peace and security. The main hotspots in the world were regional, which was why conflict resolution must include regional stakeholders. All stakeholders must be involved in dialogue for it to be sustainable and generate a true compromise based on international law.

Ms. Gabriela Cuevas Barron, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, said that, in line with the heritage of the IPU, it was the duty of parliamentarians, today, to continue strengthening international law. They should take the opportunity to renew their commitment to creating a more inclusive, fairer planet that they could be proud to hand on to future generations.

Parliamentarians were the guarantors of peace and harmony. They had the mandate, and the huge responsibility, of promoting friendship, trust and love, instead of hate. They had been elected by the people to build bridges and relieve social and political tensions. They had been elected to allocate the necessary budgets to those efforts, to oversee the action of governments and ensure they met their commitments to prevent crimes against humanity and other atrocities.

International law was a creation of human emotional intelligence and a roadmap for peaceful coexistence. It was an ally and a legitimate tool to improve the lives of all. Parliamentarians should ensure that international legislation and standards were reflected in national legislation, undertaking legal and constitutional reform as required.

Regional cooperation was an essential component of strengthening the international legal order. Inter-governmental and inter-parliamentary work could make all the difference by contributing to peaceful, lasting dispute settlement.

Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, Member of The Elders, emphasized that he spoke in his own name. Although the international community widely acknowledged the Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, nuclear disarmament, international cooperation, and support for the United Nations and its Charter, the world was still experiencing disturbing global tensions and unpredictability. There were two existential threats to life on earth: climate change and nuclear weapons. He called on parliamentarians, as representatives of the people, to engage in constructive dialogue and act urgently on those two issues. Parliamentarians had the power of the purse and influence among the public, which they could use to good effect.

Regarding nuclear weapons, The Elders had four major proposals, called the "the Four Ds": (1) Doctrine: the nine nuclear-weapon States must make an unequivocal "No First Strike" declaration; (2) De-alerting: to take nuclear weapons off high-alert status; (3) Deployment: to recall the operationally deployed stockpile of nuclear weapons; and (4) Decreased numbers: to reduce the number of nuclear warheads. Parliaments must also support the relevant international commitments (e.g. the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Nuclear Weapon Ban Treaty and the Global Zero campaign). The field was wide open for action by parliaments as well as by the IPU. On the climate issue, in spite of the complexity and difficulties of the situation, the loud protest of young people showed that the trust between those who govern and those who were governed had broken down.

The twin threats of climate change and nuclear weapons, as well as other challenges of economic inequality, social injustice, discrimination and corruption, could be effectively confronted only if all sections of society believed they had a stake in the politics and governance of their countries. Parliaments were well positioned to contribute to the restoration of trust, the strengthening of international law, and further development of multilateral, regional cooperation.

Ms. Susan Kihika (Kenya), President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, said that international law drove peace among nations. Its purpose was also to protect individuals, especially the most vulnerable, from tyranny and suffering. The law must work for all, not against anyone.

Women's human rights were often curbed in the name of culture or tradition, but there was no justification for enshrining and condoning gender discrimination in law. International resolutions, declarations and treaties on gender equality helped lawmakers across the globe to make progress on this issue and must not be eroded or rolled back. Women should be included in the negotiation and formulation of regional treaties, including peace treaties, to deliver legitimate and lasting processes and outcomes. Parliamentarians must take decisive action to protect women's rights through regional and international cooperation and from their parliamentary seats.

Parliaments must take the lead in monitoring treaties and ensuring that international decisions positively affected women's rights in national law. Parliamentarians should explain to their constituents that decisions were for the common good to build trust in institutions. For decisions to be well understood, this required transparency, openness and institutions that were truly inclusive and representative of all sectors of society.

Mr. Melvin Bouva (Suriname), President of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians of the IPU, spoke of the loss of confidence among younger generations in their institutions. Everywhere on the planet, young men and women were suffering the consequences of the action, or inaction, of current and past generations. Parliaments must be more inclusive. More young women and men must be at the decision-making table in parliaments and governments as well as in peace efforts and talks, in the media and in public debates.

Parliamentarians should focus their efforts on being youth responsive in tackling the climate emergency, safeguarding human rights, advancing greater fairness and equality, and working for democracy and peace. Ultimately, this would deliver well-being for all, as called for by the young parliamentarians of the world at the Sixth IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians held in September 2019.

Parliamentarians shaped international law and had a duty to implement it. In so doing, they must meet the needs and defend the interests of youth, women, people with disabilities, migrants, sexual minorities and future generations.

Mr. Gilles Carbonnier, Vice-President of the ICRC, said that the universally ratified Geneva Conventions were one of the greatest achievements of inter-State cooperation. Striking a pragmatic balance between military necessity and the fundamental principle of humanity, international humanitarian law (IHL) remained an essential tool. When respected, IHL not only prevented unnecessary suffering, it also paved the way for long-term recovery, reconciliation and peace.

Parliamentarians could play a crucial role in addressing the key humanitarian challenge of our time: to ensure that IHL was respected by parties to conflict, thereby helping to mitigate and prevent the suffering of people affected by armed conflict. The IPU-ICRC handbook for parliamentarians on IHL offered guidance and tools to help countries accede to IHL treaties and conduct the legislative work required to ensure proper implementation and enforcement of those treaties domestically.

The ICRC proposed four action points for parliamentarians: (1) use their legislative powers to push through the ratification of IHL instruments and pass implementing legislation; (2) use their oversight responsibilities to ensure that military and security forces were properly trained in IHL and held accountable; (3) use their political leadership to raise greater public awareness of IHL; and (4) use their budgetary powers to provide the necessary resources for meaningful humanitarian action.

Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE, spoke of the changes in trade and technology that had brought opportunities and made people more inter-dependent and connected than ever, but were also being weaponized to spread hate, crime and disinformation. In today's world, cooperation was not a luxury, not an "opt-in" or "add-on" solution; it was a fact of life – whether tackling terrorism or climate change.

In strengthening international law, parliamentarians had the power to launch initiatives, cast deciding votes, and be the difference between legislation being passed or blocked. International law had noble aims and influenced us all, but it often stemmed from conferences and conventions, and was drafted and negotiated by diplomats, delegates and experts. Parliamentarians could bring it to life by ratifying treaties, integrating them into national legislation, assigning budgets and overseeing governments' commitments.

The importance of regional cooperation was being increasingly recognized in response to the rise of regional challenges, such as conflict, food security and economic growth. Different regions faced unique dynamics, and countries within those regions needed a platform to talk about common experiences and challenges, and to find regional solutions to regional challenges. Parliamentarians had a key role to play in making sure regional cooperation was not stand-alone but part of the wider multilateral order.

(b) Standing Committee on Peace and International Security

The Standing Committee held two sittings – on 15 and 16 October 2019 – with its President, Mr. J.I. Echániz (Spain), in the Chair.

On 15 October, the Committee examined two items on its agenda: the follow-up of the implementation of the 2014 resolution *Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: The contribution of parliaments*, and the theme of *Criminalization of money laundering*. Overall, 33 speakers took the floor during the ensuing debates.

On 16 October, the Committee held an expert hearing on the theme *Parliamentary strategies to strengthen peace and security against threats and conflicts resulting from climate-related disasters and their consequences*, the topic of a resolution to be adopted by the 142nd IPU Assembly in Geneva (Switzerland). Three expert speakers opened the hearing to present different perspectives: Mr. D. Messner (Director, Institute for Environment and Human Security, United Nations University), Ms. S. Gebreyes (Country Director, Lutheran World Federation), and Mr. G. Girardi (Senator, President of the Environment and National Assets Committee, Chile). The aim was to offer the Committee members a comprehensive insight into the topic. Following the experts' presentations, a total of 22 speakers, including one observer organization, took the floor.

The Bureau of the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security met on 15 October 2019. Eleven out of its 18 members were present. They discussed internal arrangements, the main ongoing topics on the peace and security agenda, and the Committee's work programme for the 142nd IPU Assembly.

On 15 October, the Committee held elections to its Bureau. Mr. M. Al-Ahbab (Qatar) and Mr. P. Dallier (France) were elected as new members of the Bureau.

The President of the Standing Committee, Mr. Echániz (Spain) presented the Committee's report on the panels and hearing to the Assembly at the latter's last sitting on 17 October.

(c) Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade

The Standing Committee held its sittings on 14 and 16 October. The sittings were chaired by the Committee President, Ms. V. Muzenda Tsitsi (Zimbabwe).

The Committee discussed the subject item of the next resolution, entitled *Mainstreaming digitalization and the circular economy to achieve the SDGs, particularly responsible consumption and production*. The theme and key issues for consideration and discussion were introduced by experts on the circular economy and digitalization: Mr. P. Jensen, Head of Secretariat, International Resource Panel; Mr. J. Kurbalija, Founding Director of DiploFoundation; and Mr. D. Spoiala, Senior Community Manager at the EU-AU Digital Economy Task Force. At the end of the debate, the co-Rapporteurs Mr. A. Gryffroy (Belgium), Mr. P. Mariru (Kenya) and Ms. S. Dinică (Romania) recalled the important interlinkages among these issues and stressed the need to exchange good practices and experiences. They would work on a draft resolution, incorporating the inputs provided during the debate.

The Committee reviewed the draft outcome document of the forthcoming Parliamentary Meeting at the 25th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 25), due to take place in Chile on 2 December 2019. The Parliamentary Meeting was being organized by the IPU in cooperation with the Chilean Senate. The co-Rapporteur of the Parliamentary Meeting, Mr. G. Girardi (Chile), introduced the document to the Committee. The Committee was subsequently given the opportunity to make comments and suggestions on it, and to share how their parliaments dealt with climate change. The Committee's feedback would be incorporated into the document by the co-Rapporteur and presented to the Parliamentary Meeting at COP 25.

The Committee also discussed follow-up on the 2014 IPU resolution, *Towards risk-resilient development: Taking into consideration demographic trends and natural constraints*. Expert contributions came from Ms. K. Madi, Director, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

(UNDRR) and Ms. A. Armitage, Regional Director for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The debate highlighted that, of the 28 action points identified in the resolution, 27 remained valid and required action.

The Committee held elections to the Bureau. Ms. S. Rehman (Pakistan) was elected to complete the first term of the former Bureau member from Pakistan. Mr. I. Sereewatthanawut (Thailand) was elected to complete the first term of the former Bureau member from Thailand. Mr. R. Marian (Republic of Moldova), Ms. M. Carvalho (Brazil) and Mr. B. Scotland (Guyana) were also elected as new members of the Bureau.

The Committee approved the Bureau's proposal to dedicate the Committee's sessions at the 142nd IPU Assembly to drafting the resolution.

The Committee was informed about the Executive Committee's decision to rename it the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development. This decision followed a consultation process to which the Committee Bureau had contributed.

The Committee report was presented to the Assembly at its last sitting on 17 October by the Committee President, Ms. Muzenda Tsitsi.

(d) Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights

The Standing Committee held sittings on 14 and 16 October 2019, with the Committee Vice-President, Ms. A. Gerken (Netherlands), in the Chair.

The Committee considered the draft resolution *Achieving universal health coverage by 2030: The role of parliaments in ensuring the right to health*. The resolution was introduced by the co-Rapporteurs, Mr. H. Millat (Bangladesh), Mr. C. Löhr (Switzerland), and Ms. M. Carvalho (Brazil).

Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), thanked the Committee for leading work on the resolution and making the initial draft even stronger. The Forum of Women Parliamentarians had also provided valuable input. Following the political declaration on universal health coverage adopted at the UN General Assembly in September, the IPU resolution was vital for translating that political commitment into concrete realities in all the countries of the world. The resolution rightly focused on promoting health and preventing disease through coordinated action across every sector. The WHO was committed to providing the support called for in the resolution and accelerating progress towards the health targets set out in the Sustainable Development Goals.

When examining the draft resolution, the Committee considered 116 amendments submitted by 21 parliaments [Canada, China, Congo, Cuba, Finland, France, Germany, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Italy, Mongolia, Norway, Philippines, Serbia, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, and United Kingdom]. Seven amendments were proposed by the Forum of Women Parliamentarians.

The revised draft resolution was adopted by consensus by the Committee at its final sitting. A reservation was expressed by the delegation of India on the words "indigenous peoples" in preambular paragraph 8.

The Committee Bureau met on 16 October. It considered proposals for the future work programme of the Committee. Three proposals for the subject item of the Committee's next resolution had been submitted before the deadline by Kenya, the Netherlands and the Russian Federation. Each proposal was presented by the corresponding delegation.

Following a recommendation by the Bureau, the Committee approved the proposal put forward by the Netherlands entitled *Legislation worldwide to combat online sexual child exploitation* as the subject of its next resolution. A preparatory debate would take place at the 142nd Assembly and the resolution would be finalized at the 143rd Assembly in October 2020.

The Committee approved the Bureau's recommendation to hold a panel discussion at the 142nd Assembly on the theme *The influence of the Internet on democracy*. Within this panel discussion, which follows on from the 2015 resolution on privacy in the digital era, the focus would be on challenges relating to elections, disinformation and hate speech.

The Committee also endorsed a Declaration to mark the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, following the recommendation of the Bureau.

The Committee elected Mr. E. Primakov (Russian Federation) as a member of the Bureau, representing the Eurasia Group.

The draft resolution on universal health coverage was presented by Ms. Gerkens (Netherlands) to the Assembly at its plenary sitting in the afternoon of 17 October and was adopted by consensus. The draft resolution included the reservation expressed by India on the words "indigenous peoples" in preambular paragraph 8. Dr. Tedros, WHO Director-General, addressed the Assembly to commend the adoption of the resolution and urge ongoing concrete parliamentary action to implement the resolution and work towards universal health coverage.

The Assembly endorsed the *Declaration on the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child* and viewed a video of a field visit organized with UNICEF to a child care facility in Belgrade that took place on 14 October.

(e) Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs

The Standing Committee met on 16 October for two panel discussions: the first on respect for international law in keeping with the UN Charter and other relevant resolutions, and the second on the 2019 IPU survey on the relationship between parliaments and the United Nations.

Thirty-eight delegations were present. There were 15 interventions, many raising specific country situations regarding respect for international law. The second panel raised concerns on the low response rate (only 50 of 179 IPU Members) to the 2019 survey, which would be repeated every two to three years to measure progress over time.

Three new members were elected to the Bureau of the Committee: Mr. A. Gryffroy (Belgium), Mr. R. Peña Flores (Costa Rica), and Ms. P. Tohmeena (Thailand).

(f) Debate on the emergency item
Addressing climate change

The debate on the emergency item was held in the morning of 15 October 2019, with Mr. V.C. Sotto III, the President of the Senate of the Philippines, in the Chair. In all, 11 speakers took the floor during the debate.

Participants were unanimous that climate change was indeed a matter of concern for all the people across the globe. The small islands were a "laboratory of climate change" and were getting stronger cyclones than ever. Certain countries – like Kiribati – risked being submerged. The IPU Members were urged to act together to make a difference. If the world did not act now, human beings would not survive. Parliaments had the responsibility and the mandate to determine the budgets to mitigate the effects of climate change, for instance by allotting more of the budget to renewable energy. The worst thing was to deny that climate change was a global problem, and both the developed and developing countries needed to take action as there was no "planet B".

Some countries renewed their pledge to protect the environment and natural resources and referred to some good practices to that effect. For example, Uganda had established a Standing Committee on Climate and Bangladesh had established a Special Climate Change Fund. Other representatives emphasized that developed and developing countries needed to act together to tackle climate change. Engaging and liaising with civil society and youth were equally important.

The Assembly referred the emergency item to a drafting committee made up of representatives of Belgium, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Netherlands, the Russian Federation, Seychelles, and the United Kingdom.

(g) Adoption of the resolution on the emergency item

In the afternoon of 16 October 2019, the plenary sitting of the Assembly unanimously adopted the resolution (see page 54).

5. Concluding sitting of the Assembly

At the concluding sitting on 17 October, Mr. M. Grujic (Serbia) presented the Assembly outcome document, the Belgrade Declaration, *Strengthening international law: Parliamentary roles and mechanisms, and the contribution of regional cooperation* (page 41). He highlighted the various courses of action that parliaments and parliamentarians could undertake in terms of shaping and implementing international law, enhancing the contribution of regional cooperation to international law, and delivering

on priority areas which required urgent attention – in particular in terms of climate change, human rights and humanitarian law, gender equality, and nuclear disarmament. While these commitments were not new, there was an urgent need for them to be strictly observed and effectively implemented. The world was on a slippery slope of increasing disregard for international agreements and the rule of law, and parliamentarians had the responsibility and a critical role to play in reversing this tide, so as to help build a peaceful and sustainable world. The Assembly then unanimously endorsed the Belgrade Declaration.

The Assembly adopted by consensus the resolution presented by the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights, *Achieving universal health coverage by 2030: The role of parliaments in ensuring the right to health* (text of resolution on page 45). India had previously expressed a reservation on the words "indigenous peoples" in preambular paragraph 8.

Welcoming the adoption of the landmark resolution, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) said that health was a political choice. World leaders were now making that choice and unifying around a common vision of a world in which all people could access the health services they needed without suffering financial hardship. The lack of access to affordable, quality health care was a brake on economic growth. It kept people trapped in the cycle of poverty, sapped productivity, and drained hope. Universal health coverage (UHC) was not just a moral imperative, it was a security and economic imperative too. The comprehensive resolution was a strong tool that addressed all of the major health challenges that countries faced. At its heart was the conviction that health was a human right, not a privilege. Its adoption marked the beginning of a new period of work for parliamentarians. They should enact legislation and allocate public financing for UHC, establish multisectoral cooperation across parliament to enable UHC, and ensure accountability for follow-through on political commitments made.

The Assembly then endorsed the parliamentary Declaration marking the 30th anniversary of the Convention of the Rights of the Child and recommitting to the Convention's core principles (page 44).

The Assembly noted the Reports of the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security, the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade, and the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs, and it approved the subject item of the resolution to be adopted at the 143rd IPU Assembly, together with the rapporteurs who would be working on this draft resolution (page 36). The Assembly also approved the proposed amendments to the IPU Statutes and Rules which aimed to strengthen existing sanctions for single-sex delegations, as well as to provide incentives to gender-balanced delegations by giving them more visibility during the Assembly.

On behalf of the Parliament of Rwanda, Ms. D. Mukabalisa, Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, warmly encouraged all IPU Members to attend the 143rd IPU Assembly, which would be taking place from 11 to 15 October 2020 in Kigali. A short video was shown.

At the conclusion of the Assembly, the representatives of the geopolitical groups took the floor: Mr. I. Khodjiev (Uzbekistan) on behalf of the Eurasia Group, Mr. J.F. Mudenda (Zimbabwe) on behalf of the African Group, Mr. A. Abdel-Aal (Egypt) on behalf of the Arab Group, Mr. H.A. Khan (Pakistan) on behalf of the Asia-Pacific Group, Ms. D. Solórzano (Venezuela) on behalf of the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean, and Mr. D. Pacheco (Portugal) on behalf of the Twelve Plus Group. They extended their deep appreciation to the people and national authorities of the Republic of Serbia for the warm hospitality and excellent organization of what had undoubtedly been a very successful IPU Assembly. They congratulated Ms. M. Gojkovic, Speaker of the National Assembly, for her personal leadership and outreach to all IPU Member Parliaments in the service of peace and understanding. They thanked the IPU President and Secretariat for their hard work and pledged their commitment to follow up on the important decisions that they had collectively taken.

In her concluding remarks, the IPU President provided an overview of the main highlights and outcomes of the Assembly, and reiterated the importance of parliamentary solidarity and robust parliamentary action in tackling the challenges of our world. She underscored the need for parliamentary diplomacy in building bridges of understanding and trust, and in preserving the integrity of the institution of parliament and securing the human rights of parliamentarians around the world.

She expressed the IPU's deep concern regarding the situation in three Latin American countries – Ecuador, El Salvador and Peru – and offered the good offices of the IPU in order to promote inclusive dialogue and peaceful solutions. She called on all parties to fully abide by the rule of law, allow parliament to function without interference and avoid escalation through dialogue and consultation. As the global organization of national parliaments, the IPU reiterated its strong commitment to protect all parliaments and parliamentarians under threat.

The IPU President thanked Ms. Gojkovic, Speaker of the National Assembly of Serbia, for the excellent conditions they had provided for a very substantive Assembly, which without a doubt had generated a high level of participation, rich and fruitful discussions, and very substantive outcomes. It was now up to the IPU Member Parliaments to follow up on these outcomes through robust action.

In her closing remarks, Ms. Gojkovic thanked all delegations for their active contributions to the successful outcome of the Belgrade Assembly. Her country had been honoured to receive so many delegations from the world over, and to showcase Serbia's firm commitment to international law, world peace, and the well-being of the people. She had held bilateral meetings with many Speakers of parliament and heads of delegations who had come to Belgrade for the IPU Assembly, and she looked forward to further developing good and productive cooperation with them all. She also thanked the IPU Secretariat, the interpreters, and all the Serbian staff and volunteers who had worked so hard to provide the best possible conditions for the Assembly. She looked forward to working closely with the IPU in the implementation of the important outcomes of the Belgrade Assembly.

Thanking all the participants again for their support and active engagement, she declared the 141st IPU Assembly closed.

205th session of the Governing Council

1. Election of the President of the 141st IPU Assembly

At its first sitting on 14 October, the Governing Council proposed that Ms. Maja Gojković, Speaker of the National Assembly of Serbia, be elected President of the 141st IPU Assembly.

2. Financial situation

The Governing Council received a report on the financial situation of the IPU as at 30 June 2019 and an updated list of unpaid assessed contributions. It confirmed that the full membership rights of three Members (Honduras, Mauritania and Papua New Guinea) were now suspended due to arrears of three or more years of contributions. As at 12 October 2019, four Members (Comoros, Dominican Republic, Libya and Venezuela) and two Associate Members (Andean Parliament and Inter-Parliamentary Committee of the West African Economic and Monetary Union) had arrears of two full years and were subject to participation and/or voting sanctions. The Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on Finance, Ms. M. Kiener Nellen (Switzerland), noted that the Secretary General had made repeated efforts to follow up with all the Members subject to payment sanctions, but no payments had been forthcoming. Heads of geopolitical groups were encouraged to follow up on any arrears of the Members within their respective groups. She expressed her thanks to all those Members who paid their contributions regularly and on time.

Ms. Kiener Nellen reported that the current financial situation of the IPU was both stable and sound. The return on investments was currently 7.6 per cent for 2019, an excellent performance which would benefit the IPU's 2019 financial results. The Governing Council took note that the income and expenditure of the IPU were close to target for the first half of 2019 and were projected to remain within overall budget until the end of the year.

The Governing Council endorsed the recommendation by the Executive Committee to grant a request for financial assistance from the Parliamentary Solidarity Fund (PSF) from the Parliament of the Solomon Islands to attend a future IPU Assembly. The Council also noted that the rules and procedures for the PSF had been simplified by the Executive Committee in order to make them more flexible and effective in encouraging the affiliation of potential Member Parliaments. Parliaments that could potentially become eligible for future PSF support included those of Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Kiribati, Nauru, and Saint Kitts and Nevis.

The Governing Council further took note of the report on mobilization of voluntary funding prepared by the Secretariat.

3. 2020 draft consolidated budget

The Council was presented with the consolidated draft budget for 2020. Reporting on behalf of the Executive Committee, Ms. Kiener Nellen explained that the draft budget had been prepared under the supervision of the Sub-Committee on Finance and was in accordance with its guidance. The

Sub-Committee had met three times to discuss drafts of the budget, during which time it had studied detailed forecasts and analyses and received explanations from the Secretariat. Ms. Kiener Nellen thanked the Secretariat finance team for its work and for the high quality of the documents prepared.

The budget proposal was faithful to the IPU's Strategy for 2017–2021 and to the guidelines and decisions of the governing bodies. It included an allocation of CHF 300,000 towards the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, further funding for priority activities towards realizing the President's vision (CHF 140,000) as well as support to the Parliament of Rwanda towards its hosting of the 143rd Assembly in Kigali.

The IPU's scale of contributions in the budget proposal was patterned on the new scale of assessment of the United Nations as usual. The Parliament of China would become the IPU's largest contributor to the core budget in 2020 and would pay an increased contribution at the IPU's upper limit of 11.75 per cent. Simultaneously, several Members would see their IPU contributions fall from the level at which they had been assessed in 2019. The Executive Committee suggested that those Members may wish to consider making a voluntary donation to the IPU of the savings they would have made, in order to provide support to IPU programmes in 2020. The letters to be sent to those Members in December 2019, calling in their 2020 statutory contributions, would mention the amount of the reduction in their contribution and invite them to consider making a corresponding donation.

The Governing Council approved the 2020 budget.

4. Report of the IPU President

The Governing Council took note of the report of the President on her activities since the 204th session of the Governing Council (<https://www.ipu.org/file/8237/download>). She identified the following priorities: parliamentary engagement with United Nations processes and forums; IPU communication efforts on multilateralism; transparency and accountability practices; and mechanisms to implement and follow-up on IPU decisions and resolutions. Her report would be sent out to all the Member Parliaments and individual parliamentarians in the IPU Secretariat's mailing lists.

5. Report of the IPU Secretary General on the activities of the IPU since the 204th session of the Governing Council

The Governing Council took note of the interim report of the Secretary General on the activities of the IPU since the 204th session of the Council to implement the eight objectives set out in the IPU Strategy for 2017–2021 (<https://www.ipu.org/file/8235/download>). The Council furthermore supported the Secretary General's pursuit of coordination with the leadership of UN agencies and other partners, with a view to implementing the strategic objectives and decisions adopted by the IPU Membership.

The Governing Council endorsed the signing of a memorandum of understanding on cooperation with:

- the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement with a view to securing support and technical expertise for the IPU's activities on climate change, and
- the Parliamentary Assembly of La Francophonie.

The Governing Council also endorsed the proposal for the IPU to join the multilateral organizations constituency of Universal Health Coverage 2030 (UHC2030).

6. Cooperation with the United Nations system

The Governing Council took note of the checklist of joint UN-IPU activities carried out over the past six months and welcomed the growing cooperation between the two organizations. It endorsed the recommendation to give the IPU Secretariat a mandate to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the strategic partnership between the IPU and the United Nations on the understanding that the assessment would be an inclusive process, based on consultations with IPU Members and office holders as well as with key UN officials. The assessment, to be carried out by an independent consultant, would then feed into preparations for the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament in 2020 and the revision of the IPU Strategy.

7. Membership of the IPU and Observer status

The Governing Council endorsed the recommendation by the Executive Committee to upgrade the status of the Parliamentary Assembly of La Francophonie (APF) from permanent observer to that of Associate Member. It also encouraged the IPU to seek a similar status with the APF. The IPU and APF shared many areas of common interest and had been working together for many years. There was the opportunity to take the partnership even further, as evidenced by the new framework agreement that was endorsed and due for signature in the context of the Belgrade Assembly.

The Council also welcomed and approved the requests for observer status received from PARLASUR (MERCOSUR Parliament) and from the International Parliament for Tolerance and Peace. The Council reconfirmed the strategic objective of the IPU to enhance dialogue and cooperation with regional and other parliamentary organizations, with a view to capitalizing on the comparative advantages, building synergies and ensuring greater coherence in inter-parliamentary cooperation.

The Council was apprised of the situation of certain parliaments and endorsed the related recommendations made by the Executive Committee with regard to each of those parliaments. It endorsed the recommendation of the Executive Committee to dissolve the Working Group on Syria. In accordance with Article 5.2 of the IPU Statutes, it approved the request by the National Assembly of Venezuela to register a delegation of two parliamentarians with voting rights, given the fact that Venezuela's failure to pay its assessed contribution was due to conditions beyond parliament's control. It also held a lengthy discussion on the situation in Yemen, and the recommendations formulated by the Executive Committee on remaining in constant communication with all parties and continuing to monitor the situation closely were submitted to a roll-call vote with the following results: 104 in favour; 24 against; 39 abstentions. The recommendations were therefore approved by a majority.

As noted above, despite multiple efforts by the IPU Secretary General and the Chairs of the geopolitical groups concerned, Honduras, Mauritania and Papua New Guinea had not paid their arrears by the agreed deadline of 1 October. The three Parliaments would be included in the category of non-participating members.

8. Strengthening the work of the IPU

The Governing Council endorsed the Executive Committee's recommendation to change the name of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade to Standing Committee on Sustainable Development. While this change would take effect immediately, the composition of the Standing Committee would continue to be made up of 18 members (three per geopolitical group), with the addition of ex officio members, namely the President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians and the President of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians. The same provision would apply also to the other Standing Committees.

The Council endorsed the creation of the Working Group on Science and Technology on the understanding that proposals on the Group's working arrangements and activities should be discussed at the next IPU Assembly.

The Governing Council took note of the request to establish a Working Group on Political Sanctions. It decided to revert to the matter at the 142nd Assembly on the basis of a more detailed note on such a Group's rationale, mandate, composition and working arrangements. During the deliberations of the Council the delegations of the United Kingdom and Canada objected to the creation of the Group. The delegation of Australia agreed in principle with establishing this Working Group, but shared the view that the concept note supporting the proposal should be more detailed.

The Governing Council endorsed the Executive Committee's recommendation to review agreements signed between hosts and the IPU in order to stipulate that neither party may issue unilateral invitations. The intention was to avoid situations where participants who were not entitled to attend certain events were invited without the consent of the other co-organizers. The IPU should retain full responsibility for all events organized under its aegis.

9. Amendments to the IPU Statutes and Rules

The Governing Council adopted amendments submitted by the Gender Partnership Group which strengthened the existing sanctions for single-sex delegations and provided incentives to gender-balanced delegations.

The amendment submitted by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians concerning the application of the quorum had not been accepted by Executive Committee and was therefore not presented to the Council for a decision.

10. Recent specialized meetings

The Governing Council took note of the outcomes of the following specialized meetings:

Technical briefing: From commitment to action: Parliaments moving the UHC agenda forward; Second Regional Seminar for the Asia-Pacific Region Parliaments on Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (<https://www.ipu.org/event/technical-briefing-commitment-action-parliaments-moving-uhc-agenda-forward#event-sub-page-20234/>); Regional Seminar on Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals for the IPU's Twelve Plus Geopolitical Group (<https://www.ipu.org/file/7856/download>); IPU-UN Regional Conference for the countries of the Sahel Region: Parliamentary engagement in addressing terrorism and conditions conducive to terrorism in the Sahel region (<https://www.ipu.org/event/ipu-un-regional-conference-countries-sahel-region-parliamentary-engagement-in-addressing-terrorism-and-conditions-conducive-terrorism-in-sahel#event-sub-page-documents/>); Fourth Interregional Seminar on Parliamentary Capacity Building and the Further Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals: Stronger Inter-parliamentary Exchanges for a More Efficient Achievement of the SDGs (<https://www.ipu.org/event/fourth-interregional-seminar-parliamentary-capacity-building-and-further-implementation-sustainable-development-goals-stronger-inter>); Parliamentary engagement on human rights: Identifying good practices and new opportunities for action (<https://www.ipu.org/file/7623/download>); Parliamentary Forum at the 2019 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) and related meetings (<https://www.ipu.org/file/7764/download>); Fourth South Asian Speakers' Summit on Achieving the SDGs (<https://www.ipu.org/file/7633/download>); Sixth Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians (www.ipu.org/file/7696/download?token=Gf27RSML); Regional seminar on Engaging Parliaments of the Pacific Region in the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1540 (www.ipu.org/event/regional-seminar-parliaments-and-implementation-un-security-council-resolution-1540#event-sub-page-documents/); and IPU-UN Regional Conference for the Asia-Pacific Group on the role of parliamentarians in preventing and countering terrorism and addressing conditions conducive to terrorism in the Asia-Pacific region (<https://www.ipu.org/event/capacity-building-workshop-countering-terrorism-and-violent-extremism-asia-pacific-group#event-sub-page-documents/>).

11. Reports of plenary bodies and specialized committees

The Governing Council endorsed the recommendations contained in the reports on the activities of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians, the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians, the Committee on Middle East Questions, the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law, the Gender Partnership Group, the Advisory Group on Health, the Group of Facilitators for Cyprus, the Forum of Young Parliamentarians of the IPU, and the High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG). The Council endorsed the new appointments to these bodies.

The Council approved seven decisions concerning 229 parliamentarians submitted by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians (<https://www.ipu.org/file/8222/download>). The Council noted the reservations of the delegations of Uganda and Turkey concerning the cases in their respective countries, and those from Egypt, Jordan and Yemen relating to the case of Yemen.

A handbook for parliamentarians entitled *Eliminating Forced Labour* was launched. It had been jointly produced by the IPU and the International Labour Organization (ILO). ILO Director-General Mr. G. Ryder addressed the Council by video message.

12. Future inter-parliamentary meetings

The Council approved the list of future meetings and other activities to be funded by the IPU's regular budget and by external sources (see page 80).

While it reconfirmed that the 143rd Assembly would be held in Rwanda (October 2020), the Council endorsed the Executive Committee's recommendation to extend the deadline to the Parliament of Kenya to spring 2020 to confirm its availability to host the 144th IPU Assembly. The Executive Committee was not in favour of granting the Parliament of Kenya's request for extra financial assistance to hold that Assembly.

13. Elections to the Executive Committee

The Governing Council elected the following members to the Executive Committee for a four-year term ending in October 2023.

- Ms. E. Anyakun (Uganda) and Mr. J. Mudenda (Zimbabwe) from the African Group
- Mr. R. Rabbani (Pakistan) and Ms. P. Krairiksh (Thailand) from the Asia-Pacific Group
- Mr. A. Saidov (Uzbekistan) from the Eurasia Group
- Mr. J.P. Letelier (Chile) from the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean
- Ms. C. Widegren (Sweden) from the Twelve Plus Group.

The Council elected Mr. G. Chen (China) as the new Vice-President of the Executive Committee.

14. Elections to the Preparatory Committee for the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament

The Governing Council elected the following members to the Preparatory Committee for the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament:

- Mr. S. Chenine (Algeria) from the African Group
- Ms. Z. Greceanii (Republic of Moldova) from the Eurasia Group
- Ms. L. Rojas Hernández (Mexico), Mr. B. Llano (Paraguay) and Mr. C. Litardo (Ecuador) from the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean

Along with three representatives of the Executive Committee:

- Mr. J. Mudenda (Zimbabwe)
- Mr. J.P. Letelier (Chile)
- Ms. P. Krairiksh (Thailand).

282nd session of the Executive Committee

1. Debates and decisions

The Executive Committee held its 282nd session on 11, 12 and 16 October 2019 in Belgrade.

The President of the IPU chaired the meetings. The following members took part in the session:

Mr. K. Kosachev (Russian Federation); Mr. A. Abdel Aal (Egypt); Mr. Nguyen Van Giau (Viet Nam) on 11 and 12 October, replaced by Mr. Don Tuan Phong on 16 October; Mr. A. Lins (Brazil); Ms. S. Atallahjan (Canada), replacing Mr. D. McGuinty; Ms. M.I. Oliveira Valente (Angola); Mr. G. Chen (China); Mr. K. Jalali [Iran (Islamic Republic of)] on 11 and 12 October; Mr. M. Lusaka (Kenya); Mr. U. Leirstein (Norway), replacing Ms. H. Haukeland Liadal; Ms. A.D. Mergane Kanouté (Senegal); Mr. M. Grujic (Serbia); Ms. M. Kiener Nellen (Switzerland); Ms. Y. Ferrer Gómez (Cuba) on 16 October; Ms. A. Al-Basti (United Arab Emirates) in her capacity as Vice-President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians; and Mr. M. Bouva (Suriname) in his capacity as President of the Bureau of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians. Mr. G. Gali Ngothé (Chad) was absent.

The Executive Committee took note of the reports of both the President and the Secretary General. It highlighted the importance of scaling up IPU participation in the different UN forums. It believed that, insofar as possible, IPU office holders representing their geopolitical groups should represent the IPU at events in their respective regions. With a view to allowing members to plan better and free up time for IPU commitments, the Committee recommended that the Secretariat start preparing the calendar of regular UN events a year ahead of time.

The Executive Committee recommended remaining in regular contact with the United States Congress and continuing to exchange information with them and raise awareness of the IPU.

The Executive Committee heard a report from an independent consultant who was conducting an accountability, transparency and openness assessment of the IPU. The Executive Committee took note of the next step of the process, which would be to analyse the information gathered, identify potential gaps and make recommendations.

The Executive Committee recognized that innovations in recent years in terms of workshops, the Speakers' Dialogue, and implementation follow-up at IPU Assemblies had been successful, but that more remained to be done.

The IPU was doing important and useful work on the SDGs, such as the SDG self-assessment toolkit, which existed in multiple languages and was designed to allow parliaments to move beyond just talking to measuring and assessing their performance and progress. Since the SDG toolkit had been published in 2016, the IPU had come a long way and had more experience in the domain. The Executive Committee recommended updating the publication accordingly.

The Executive Committee took note of the situation of certain parliaments and made recommendations in terms of follow-up.

The Chairperson of the Working Group on Syria briefed the Executive Committee on the difficulties the Group was facing in fulfilling its mandate in the current climate. In order to ascertain the views of the Syrian delegation, he had approached the delegation during the Assembly and the general consensus was that there was no need to maintain the Working Group for the time being. The Executive Committee therefore recommended the dissolution of the Working Group.

The Executive Committee applauded the IPU's cooperation with the Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments (ASGP), as reaffirmed by the ASGP President, and supported his request to further involve the ASGP in the IPU's work, including the preparation of the third Global Parliamentary Report.

Regarding the 130th anniversary book, the Executive Committee encouraged Member Parliaments to send their contributions as soon as possible to the IPU Secretariat.

Following the decision to step up the IPU's engagement with economic issues, the Executive Committee took note of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade's recommendation to change its name to Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, in recognition of the role that economic policy, at various levels and broadly conceived, played in sustainable development. The Executive Committee recommended this change for the Council's approval.

In light of the increasing importance of science and technology in the lives of all, and in parliamentary life, the Executive Committee welcomed the proposal to establish a Working Group on Science and Technology. It requested that the Group's working arrangements and activities be developed for formal consideration at the next Assembly in Geneva.

Given the IPU's past statements against political sanctions and visa restrictions imposed on parliamentarians, the Executive Committee was largely in favour of setting up a working group to explore this matter under the principle of parliamentary solidarity. The Working Group's working arrangements, terms of reference and composition would be finalized in the coming months.

The Executive Committee was in agreement with the proposed amendment to the IPU Statutes and Rules submitted by the Gender Partnership Group whereby the existing sanctions for single-sex delegations were strengthened and incentives were provided to gender-balanced delegations.

The Executive Committee was not in favour of the proposed amendment to the IPU Statutes and Rules submitted by the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians concerning the application of the quorum.

The Executive Committee was informed of the responses received from Member Parliaments about their work in follow-up to IPU resolutions and other decisions, as well as of the results of a recent survey on national parliaments' engagement with the UN system, which had identified certain challenges that needed to be addressed. The Executive Committee also approved the hiring of an independent expert to evaluate the IPU's political project at the United Nations as a first step towards the formulation of concrete recommendations that could be fed into the preparatory process for the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament in 2020.

The Executive Committee recommended the election of seven members to replace those who were ending their term. The geopolitical groups were encouraged to designate their respective Vice-Presidents to sit on the Executive Committee.

2. Sub-Committee on Finance

The Sub-Committee on Finance had met on 10 October 2019 to prepare and facilitate the Committee's consideration of the financial situation of the IPU, the draft programme and budget for 2020 and the voluntary funding situation. The Sub-Committee advised the Executive Committee to recommend the 2020 budget to the Governing Council, having been closely involved in overseeing its preparation throughout the year.

The Sub-Committee on Finance had also analysed a request for financial assistance from the Parliamentary Solidarity Fund (PSF) from the Parliament of the Solomon Islands to attend a future IPU Assembly. The Sub-Committee agreed to submit a proposal to the Executive Committee that the PSF rules and procedures be simplified in order to make them more flexible and effective in encouraging the affiliation of new Member Parliaments.

The Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on Finance, Ms. Kiener Nellen (Switzerland), noted that the Secretary General had made every effort to follow up with all those Members and Associate Members subject to sanctions due to arrears of payment. Nevertheless, the full membership rights of three Members (Honduras, Mauritania and Papua New Guinea) were now suspended due to arrears of three or more years' contributions.

3. Questions relating to the IPU Secretariat

The Executive Committee was informed of staff movements and promotions. It also approved an amendment to Article IX, Regulation 9.1 of the IPU Staff Regulations on the age of retirement and its transitional provisions in order to align them with the rules of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund.

Forum and Bureau of Women Parliamentarians

The 30th session of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians took place on 13 October 2019. At the meeting, there were 157 participants, including 82 parliamentarians (72 women and 10 men) from 76 countries, and representatives from various international organizations.

The 30th session was opened by Ms. S. Kihika (Kenya), President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians. Ms. G. Čomić (MP and Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Serbia) was elected Chair of the 30th session of the Forum. She welcomed the participants and presented the programme of work. The IPU President, Ms. G. Cuevas Barron, also welcomed the members of the Forum. The IPU Secretary General, Mr. M. Chungong, was also in attendance.

As a contribution to the Assembly, the participants examined, from the point of view of gender equality, the draft resolution on the agenda of the 141st IPU Assembly, *Achieving universal health coverage by 2030: The role of parliaments in ensuring the right to health*. After a presentation of the draft resolution by two of its co-Rapporteurs, Mr. H. Millat (Bangladesh) and Ms. M. Carvalho (Brazil), the Forum divided in two groups to consider specific aspects of the draft resolution. One group discussed *Ensuring universal health coverage is responsive to the needs of women and girls* and the second group discussed *Lifting legal, social, economic and financial barriers for women's and girls' access to health-care services*. The Forum subsequently proposed amendments which the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights incorporated into the draft resolution.

The Forum marked the 40th anniversary of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Participants highlighted the important contribution that CEDAW had made to the work of parliaments in advancing gender equality. They underscored achievements as well as persisting challenges in implementing CEDAW, such as repealing discrimination in legislation, curbing gender stereotypes and effectively implementing existing gender-responsive legislation. Participants prioritized parliamentary action to eliminate discrimination against women in laws and policies in the areas of land ownership, employment, and nationality and citizenship. They also wanted them to address emerging areas of discrimination against women and girls, such as climate change, the situation of refugees and stateless persons, electoral violence against women candidates and women voters, street sexual harassment, and sexist speech. They called for accelerating the advancement of women's political participation and the protection of women and girls from gender-based violence. They also called for a better engagement of parliaments in the CEDAW review processes, in the 2020 Beijing +25 review, as well as in the initiative *Equality in law for women and girls by 2030: A multistakeholder strategy for accelerated action* launched by UN Women in partnership with the IPU and other stakeholders.

The Forum organized a Parity debate entitled *#NotInMyParliament: National and regional strategies* (see page 27).

The Bureau of Women Parliamentarians met on 13 and 17 October. It decided to mark in 2020 the forthcoming 25-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and to contribute a parliamentary perspective to the UN review process. That would include the annual IPU-UN Women parliamentary meeting to be held on the occasion of the Commission on the Status of Women which, in 2020, would mark Beijing +25.

The Forum elected the following regional representatives to the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians:

Eurasia Group

- Ms. L. Vasylenko (Ukraine) to fill the seat left vacant by Ms. S. Sardaryan (Armenia), who was no longer a parliamentarian, for a term ending in April 2022.

Ms. E. Anyakun (Uganda) and Ms. C. Widegren (Sweden) became ex officio members of the Bureau in their capacity as Executive Committee members for a term ending in October 2023.

Ms. G. Čović (Serbia) was elected President of the 30th session of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians and became an ex officio member of the Bureau for a term ending in October 2021.

Forum and Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians of the IPU

The Forum of Young Parliamentarians met on 14 October; 85 young parliamentarians were in attendance (38% women). The meeting was chaired by the President of the Forum, Mr. M. Bouva (Suriname).

The IPU President and Secretary General welcomed the participants and emphasized the success of the IPU youth movement since its inception and especially following the 2010 IPU resolution, *Youth participation in the democratic process*.

Of those registered to attend the 141st Assembly, 21.5 per cent were young MPs. More young men and women MPs were needed in all delegations to reach the minimum target of 25 per cent of young delegates at IPU Assemblies. The Forum elected Ms. R. Nikhil Khadse (India) as a new Board member.

Reporting country updates, the young MPs took stock of positive measures being taken around the world to enhance youth participation, including creating new caucuses of young parliamentarians, lowering the ages to vote and to run for office, and introducing legal provisions to cap electoral campaign financing in some countries.

Reviewing recent IPU youth empowerment activities, the young parliamentarians commended the new training hubs and the mentorship café which took place during the Sixth Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians in Paraguay in September 2019 and called for such initiatives to continue at the global and national levels. Looking ahead, they welcomed the news that the Seventh Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians would take place in Georgia in late spring 2020.

With regard to the agenda of the 141st Assembly, the participants called for greater youth responsiveness in efforts to uphold international law and human rights. They shared experiences of addressing health issues relevant to youth in the pursuit of universal health coverage.

In preparation for the 142nd Assembly, the Forum appointed Mr. O. Al-Tabtabaee (Kuwait) and Ms. M. Tiendrébéogo (Burkina Faso) to prepare youth overview reports on the themes of the future draft resolutions, respectively on *Parliamentary strategies to strengthen peace and security against threats and conflicts resulting from climate-related disasters and their consequences*, and *Mainstreaming digitalization and the circular economy to achieve the SDGs, particularly responsible consumption and production*.

The Board of the Forum also met on 14 October and its members agreed that the theme of the Seventh Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians should focus on sharing experiences of youth policies and supporting gender equality in view of the Beijing +25 review in 2020.

Subsidiary bodies of the Governing Council

1. Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians

Ms. A. Jerkov (Serbia), President, Ms. D. Solórzano (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), Vice-President, Mr. F. Pinedo (Argentina), Mr. D. Carter (New Zealand), Mr. J. Kim (Republic of Korea) and Mr. A. Caroni (Switzerland) took part in the Committee's 160th session, held from 12 to 16 October 2019. Mr. A. Alaradi (Bahrain), Mr. N. Bako-Arifari (Benin), Ms. L. Dumont (France) and Ms. J. Mukoda-Zabwe (Uganda) were unable to attend.

The Committee submitted seven decisions to the Governing Council for adoption concerning 229 parliamentarians from the following countries: Brazil, Libya, Mongolia, Uganda, Turkey, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), and Yemen.

During the session, the Committee held eight hearings and informal meetings with delegations and complainants to reinforce its understanding of the cases before it and to convey its concerns. The Committee had on its agenda 15 cases concerning the situation of 305 members of parliament in 10 countries. Of the cases examined, 32 per cent were from the Americas, 24 per cent from Africa, 24 per cent from the Middle East and North Africa, 19 per cent from Europe and one per cent from Asia. 83 per cent of the cases concerned opposition members of parliament and 21 per cent concerned women. Of the cases, 56 per cent were presented for the first time, which was a new record. The violations most frequently examined by the Committee during the session were: undue suspension and loss of parliamentary mandate; lack of due process in proceedings against members of parliament; torture, ill-treatment and other acts of violence; threats or acts of intimidation; and violations of freedom of expression.

2. Committee on Middle East Questions

The Committee held two sittings, on 15 and 16 October 2019. The Committee's President, Ms. S. Ataullahjan (Canada), Mr. H. Julien-Laferrière (France), Ms. A.P. Boateng (Ghana), Mr. A. Al-Ahmad (Palestine), Mr. A.A. Jama (Somalia), and Mr. M. Al Mehrzi (United Arab Emirates) attended both sittings. A delegate from Lesotho represented Ms. M. Mokitimi (Lesotho) in the sitting on 16 October. Although the quorum had not been met during the sittings of the Committee, the members agreed to carry on the discussions, knowing that none of the decisions would be binding.

As per usual practice, the Committee members examined the current situation in the region, particularly in Israel and Palestine, Libya, Syria and, at length, Yemen. The members were informed about the recent legislative elections that took place on 17 September 2019 in Israel and about the upcoming elections in Palestine. The Palestinian delegate invited the IPU and any other interested parties to participate in the elections as observers.

The Committee was very pleased to have had the opportunity to hear from the Libyan and the Yemeni delegations and it felt satisfied with the ensuing fruitful discussions. In this regard, it wished to clearly highlight that there was only one Parliament in Yemen, which represented the Yemeni people and worked in line with the constitution of the country. The Committee thanked the delegation of Yemen for their comprehensive presentation. Regarding Libya, the delegation expounded the fact that the country was deeply divided but that the House of Representatives of Libya was doing its best to hold parliamentary sessions, despite security concerns. The Committee welcomed both presentations and stressed that its main focus remained the humanitarian situation in Libya and in Yemen.

Regarding Syria, the Committee members were saddened by recent developments and enquired about the status of the IPU Working Group on Syria. As the work of the group had been stalled for some time, the members discussed the possibility of undertaking a mission to Syria to gain a better understanding of the situation on the ground.

The members agreed to hold a round table in the coming months to discuss the role and the mandate of the Committee in depth, in addition to other matters that would be agreed upon. Lastly, the members remained eager to undertake a visit to the region and hoped that it could take place soon after the convening of the 21st Knesset. Both Israel (in writing) and Palestine welcomed such a mission.

3. Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law

The Committee met on 14 October 2019. Representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) attended.

The Committee discussed cooperation with the ICRC and strategies to enhance the contribution of parliaments to implementing international humanitarian law (IHL), particularly in the context of the 70th anniversary of the four Geneva Conventions of 1949. To bolster engagement, the Committee recommended that Members:

- Disseminate in their respective parliaments the IPU-ICRC handbook for parliamentarians on international humanitarian law produced in 2016;
- Support the translation of the handbook into national languages by providing financial support to the ICRC to produce new language versions. Organize a launch event or debate on the issue in their parliament;
- Reach out to ICRC representatives in their respective countries for support, information and engagement;
- Review their national legislation to assess its conformity with IHL.

The Committee also recommended that the IPU and the ICRC consider organizing regional workshops or training on parliamentary committees dealing with IHL, which would explore the interaction between parliaments and national humanitarian law committees. It furthermore recommended the collection of best practices.

Follow-up to the emergency item resolution, *Ending the grave human crisis, persecution and violent attacks on the Rohingya as a threat to international peace and security and ensuring their unconditional and safe return to their homeland in Myanmar*, adopted at the 137th IPU Assembly in St. Petersburg, was discussed. To address the sensitive context, including the root causes of the crisis, the Committee recommended adopting a practical approach and engaging with the Parliament of Myanmar to organize a workshop in Myanmar on the role of parliament and peacebuilding.

The Committee discussed current refugee-related crises and where its engagement could contribute meaningfully to overall efforts. Three countries were discussed, as a result of exchanges between the IPU President and the UNHCR High Commissioner: Yemen, Syria and South Sudan. The Committee acknowledged the importance of monitoring and closely following developments in the three countries, focusing on the humanitarian perspective, as per its mandate. At the same time, the Committee recommended organizing on-site missions to the respective countries, possibly starting with South Sudan.

The Committee discussed follow-up to and work on the Global Compact on Refugees. It recommended that the IPU put forward a pledge (below) reflecting ongoing and planned work.

IPU Pledge to the Global Refugee Forum:

The Inter-Parliamentary Union pledges to:

- *raise parliaments' awareness, at each IPU Assembly, of progress and challenges in developing comprehensive refugee responses*
- *engage with MPs, and in particular young parliamentarians and women parliamentarians, and support them in taking action in support of refugees and host countries*
- *collect, with UNHCR, good parliamentary practices and disseminate them among the parliamentary community*
- *organize, with UNHCR, training and capacity-building initiatives for MPs in legislative work in complement to national pledges.*

The Committee also discussed progress on the UNHCR #IBelong campaign on statelessness and recommended that the IPU put forward a pledge (below).

IPU Pledge to the #IBelong Campaign:

The Inter-Parliamentary Union pledges to:

- *raise political awareness of parliaments of, monitor progress on and draw attention to legislative and other reforms to address statelessness at each IPU Assembly*
- *engage young parliamentarians and women parliamentarians in efforts to address statelessness, in particular in addressing gender-based discrimination in nationality laws.*
- *provide support to parliaments involved in reforming nationality laws to prevent statelessness and addressing discrimination in law.*

The Committee noted that one of its members had been absent for two consecutive sessions without justification. In accordance with the Rules, the member would be notified that her seat would now be declared vacant. Elections would be held at the next Assembly.

4. Gender Partnership Group

The Group held its 43rd session on 12 and 16 October 2019. In attendance were Mr. K. Lusaka (Kenya), Mr. K. Kosachev (Russian Federation), Ms. A. Al-Basti (United Arab Emirates), and Ms. A.D. Mergane Kanouté (Senegal) in the absence of Ms. H. Haukeland Liadal (Norway).

As per its mandate, the Group reviewed the composition of delegations at the 141st IPU Assembly. As at 16 October 2019, 30.7 per cent of the delegates at the Assembly were women (see page 76). That was well below the 2016 record of 32.9 per cent, which was reached only once again in 2018. The Group commended the gender-balanced delegations attending the 141st Assembly. In Belgrade, in 30 delegations out of 149 (20.1%), women accounted for 40 to 60 per cent of delegates (see list on page 77).

Of the 149 delegations present, 134 were composed of at least two delegates, of which 15 were composed exclusively of men (11.3%). No delegation of two or more members was composed entirely of women. The 15 single-sex delegations were from the parliaments of the following States: Belgium, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Côte d'Ivoire, Guatemala, Latvia, Lesotho, Libya, Liechtenstein, Micronesia (Federated States of), Morocco, Poland, Turkmenistan and Yemen. In addition, there were 17 single-member delegations attending the Assembly. Overall, 9 delegations were subjected to sanctions.

Considering the persistently large number of single-sex delegations at the IPU Assemblies, the Group submitted in advance of the 141st Assembly amendments to the current IPU Statutes and Rules reinforcing existing sanctions for single-sex delegations by further reducing voting rights and implementing sanctions after two Assemblies. The amendments would be adopted at the 141st Assembly. The Group also stressed the importance of ensuring geopolitical groups' compliance with existing gender quotas in the IPU bodies, especially in the Executive Committee.

The Group welcomed the forthcoming launch of the IPU *Guidelines for the elimination of sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliament* and agreed to continue developing a dedicated framework against sexism and sexual harassment at the Assemblies and other IPU-organized meetings. It adopted a roadmap which included identifying existing gaps and opportunities; fostering a better understanding of the problem; and pursuing adequate institutional responses. It expressed its wish to engage delegations, the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, and other IPU bodies and stakeholders in those endeavours.

As per its mandate, the Group also discussed how to support parliaments with few or no women members. On 16 October, the Group met with two delegations in whose Parliaments women accounted for less than five per cent of members: the delegation of the Maldives and the delegation of Oman, which the Group had already met at the 140th Assembly in Doha.

In the Maldives the challenges to women's political participation were culture, gender stereotypes and the difficulty of raising funds for outreach to a spread-out constituency – the country encompassed 26 atolls and 1,200 islands. In such conditions, combining family responsibilities and political life was particularly challenging for women. At the 2019 elections, the percentage of women members of parliament decreased from 5.9 per cent to 4.6 per cent. However, women were playing a very active role in parliament and in politics more generally. Of the four women members of parliament, one was the Deputy Speaker and the current Secretary General was also a woman. Women made up 36 per cent of ministerial portfolios representing different coalition parties. At present, there was a draft bill to reserve 30 per cent of seats for women at the local level. Previous attempts to introduce quotas had been unsuccessful.

The Group was very encouraged by the commitment that the delegation showed to enhancing women's participation in parliament. It offered the IPU's support for the introduction of measures and the organization of activities that could help strengthen women's participation in politics, particularly in parliament.

The delegation of Oman included representatives from the Consultative Council and the State Council. The Parliament of Oman (the Majles) was a bicameral parliament, made up of 170 members: 85 at the State Council and 85 at the Consultative Council. There were currently 14 women appointed to the State Council (16.5%) and one woman elected to the Consultative Council (1.2%). The Omani

delegation was optimistic that more women would be elected to the Consultative Council in the late October 2019 elections. They said that the women candidates (43 in total) were supported by civil society organizations in order to enhance their chances of being elected. Also, women were increasingly involved in politics at the local level.

The Group indicated that it would continue to monitor the situation and offered its support through awareness-raising and other types of support to enhance women's political participation in Oman.

5. Advisory Group on Health

The Advisory Group met on 15 October with nine out of 12 members in attendance. Also present were the IPU's technical partners from the World Health Organization (WHO), the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH), UNAIDS, and the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Representatives of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) were also in attendance.

The Advisory Group discussed the findings from the field visit of 14 October during which the participants examined the health situation of young people in Serbia, as well as the HIV response in the country. The Group's recommendations were informed by a visit to the Institute for Student's Health in Belgrade, as well as the productive discussions with WHO officials in Serbia, non-governmental organizations, and representatives of the Institute of Public Health.

The Advisory Group was impressed by the provision of free health care to students in a targeted and needs-responsive way, as well as the example of best practice in voluntary confidential counselling and testing provided by the Institute's HIV Centre. They were the result of good cooperation among stakeholders, including hospitals and public health institutes, non-governmental organizations, and international organizations; as well as of work at the grassroots level to reach key populations.

The Advisory Group members were encouraged to learn that health insurance coverage in Serbia was as high as 96 per cent and also that people not covered by health insurance had access to free anti-retroviral therapy for HIV/AIDS.

However, it was noted with concern that there remained knowledge gaps among people regarding sexual and reproductive health and rights, in particular among ethnic minorities. The sustainability of programmes was also a big challenge. The Advisory Group encouraged the Parliament of Serbia to build strong political will to mobilize the necessary resources to support HIV programmes for key populations as well as measures for health prevention. It was also recommended that the Parliament of Serbia gather further data on the health status of young people, including teenage pregnancies, and that it make robust efforts in monitoring the effectiveness of governmental action in the area of health prevention, adolescents' health, and HIV/AIDS.

The Advisory Group also expressed concern over the negative effects of existing legislation criminalizing sex workers and clients, and urged the Parliament of Serbia to take steps to repeal that legislation. Criminalization led to stigma and discrimination, thus posing barriers to access to health for vulnerable groups. The Group stood ready to support the Parliament of Serbia in that important work.

The Advisory Group also discussed follow-up to the IPU resolution on universal health coverage that was expected to be adopted at the 141st Assembly. The Group agreed to put in place an accountability framework supported by the IPU Secretariat to monitor implementation of the resolution. The framework would be finalized the following month, and it would be rolled out at the 142nd IPU Assembly.

The Advisory Group asked the IPU Secretariat to explore the possibility of holding a side event at the 142nd IPU Assembly, as well as of visiting WHO headquarters in Geneva.

The Advisory Group elected a new Chairperson, Ms. G. Katuta (Zambia), as well as a new Vice-Chairperson, Mr. J.I. Echániz (Spain), for a one-year term.

6. Group of Facilitators for Cyprus

The Group of Facilitators met on 13 October 2019. The meeting was attended by Ms. L. Quartapelle Procopio (Italy), a facilitator, two members of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Cyprus and six representatives of the Turkish-Cypriot political parties.

The parties expressed their perseverance to reach a solution based on a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation. They also expressed their will to resume negotiations aimed at resolving the Cyprus problem in accordance with relevant United Nations resolutions and the values and principles of the European Union. They underlined that a functional and viable solution would benefit all Cypriots.

7. High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG)

The HLAG held one sitting on 13 October 2019, for the first time in its new composition. Mr. R. Lopatka (Austria); Mr. F. Chen (China); Mr. A. Abdel-Aal (Egypt); Mr. F. Merino (El Salvador); Mr. R. del Picchia (France); Mr. K. Jalali (Islamic Republic of Iran); Mr. G. Migliore (Italy); Ms. J. Oduol (Kenya); Ms. M. Mensah-Williams (Namibia); Ms. S. Marri (Pakistan); Ms. M. Kiener Nellen (Switzerland); and Ms. A. Al-Qubaisi (United Arab Emirates) attended the meeting. Ms. A. Husin (Malaysia), Mr. O. Tinni (Niger), and Ms. I. Passada (Uruguay) were represented by members of their national delegations. The Bureau of Women Parliamentarians' ex officio member of the HLAG was also present.

Mr. Lopatka (Austria) and Ms. Oduol (Kenya) were elected as Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, respectively.

The HLAG heard the reports on the three IPU-UN Regional Conferences that had taken place throughout the year. The Conferences for the MENA region, the Sahel region and the Asia-Pacific region had respectively taken place in: Luxor, Egypt, in February 2019; Niamey, Niger, in June 2019; and Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in October 2019. These three Regional Conferences had been a crucial opportunity for parliamentarians from the regions to share their experiences and challenges in transposing international resolutions into national legislation. They further served as a platform to exchange best practices and foster cooperation in the regions. Following the Conference for the MENA region, the House of Representatives of Egypt had set up a special parliamentary commission on counter-terrorism, prevention of violent extremism and hate speech. The HLAG very much welcomed that direct impact of the Conference and recommended that all parliaments follow in Egypt's footsteps. The National Assembly of Niger had also been inspired by the Regional Conference for the Sahel region to create a regional parliamentary network, which complemented the parliamentary committee on counter-terrorism created earlier in the year within the structure of the G5 Sahel.

The HLAG was informed that the IPU Secretary General, the Under-Secretary-General of the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism and the Executive Director of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime had signed a trilateral agreement in May 2019. The Chairperson of the HLAG, Ms. Al-Qubaisi had been in attendance. The IPU had also on that occasion signed the agreement admitting it into the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact, a UN mechanism to strengthen a common approach to and coordination and coherence in counter-terrorism and prevention of violent extremism.

The secretariat of the IPU-UN Joint Programme on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism further presented the Programme's financial report and indicated that the United Nations had fulfilled its commitment by allocating USD 2.1 million to the Programme for the first two years, renewable. The IPU Members were encouraged to make contributions in order to help the IPU fulfil its financial commitment. The Parliaments of Bangladesh, Benin, China, and the United Arab Emirates were recognized for their in-kind and/or cash contributions to the Programme.

Lastly, the HLAG was presented with a roadmap of future activities, including the web-based platform, national workshops, regional conferences, and the IPU-UN Global Parliamentary Summit on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism. The HLAG members welcomed these activities and their impact-oriented approach.

Other activities and events

1. Speakers' Dialogue on governance

The Speakers' Dialogue on governance followed up on the first such initiative held in Doha. It was chaired by the IPU President, Ms. G. Cuevas Barron, who explained that the purpose of such dialogues was to provide a space for Speakers of Parliament to share experiences and strategize together on issues of common concern. The results of such dialogues would feed into preparations for the 2020 Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament.

Some 20 Speakers of Parliament participated in the session. The debate focused on two main themes: *Development and the economy* and *Security and human rights*. Discussions on development and the economy were launched by Mr. J. Clarken (Chief Executive, Oxfam, Ireland) and Mr. C. Chauvel (Global Lead, Inclusive Processes and Institutions, UNDP).

There was a convergence of views between panel presentations and remarks from participants. To address inequality and poverty, the economic model that favoured shareholders and special interests at the expense of the vast majority of the people, leading to increasing inequalities of income, wealth and knowledge, needed to be changed. Existing economic structures and frameworks would need to be reviewed to ensure that they secured a better redistribution of wealth. At the heart of change was parliament's power of the purse in the adoption and oversight of implementation of national budgets and taxation policies, which all needed to be carefully reviewed, reformed and used to tackle inequality and address the needs of those most affected by poverty, especially women and people with special needs. Cooperation between countries was also at the heart of progress for the most vulnerable and could ensure that advances and progress benefited as many people as possible, beyond borders. That would also require strong political will and engagement with citizens. The development of new forms of inclusive decision-making processes, such as parallel parliaments, was discussed.

The second theme, on security and human rights, was introduced by Mr. S. Tharour (former UN Under-Secretary-General and MP from India) and Mr. M. Miedico (Special Advisor to the Under-Secretary-General, UN Counter-Terrorism Office). The presentations and ensuing debates all highlighted that there should not be any dichotomy between security and human rights. The fight against terrorism would only work and be sustainable if the human rights of all were respected. Security objectives and initiatives must never be used to undermine human rights. Action to address security concerns and counter-terrorism would require the strong engagement of parliaments, especially in terms of oversight and control. The rule of law should always prevail. Prevention measures were also highlighted as key – the promotion of dialogue, tolerance and education were at the core of sustainable responses to terrorism. As Nobel Peace Award winner Malala Yousafzai said: "With guns you can kill terrorists, with education you will kill terrorism".

Participants also highlighted the importance of adopting a broader understanding of security – the notion of human security, which included protecting people from daily insecurity linked to poverty, disease, violence etc.. There again, in that fight, political will was key. Members of parliament needed to meet the challenge by remaining vigilant and controlling effectively government action, building bridges and facilitating dialogue, reaching out and strengthening links with citizens.

2. Meeting of the Presidents of the Geopolitical Groups and the Presidents of the Standing Committees

In the morning of 13 October, the President and the Secretary General of the IPU met with the Presidents of the Geopolitical Groups and the Presidents of the four Standing Committees. The President briefed participants on the implementation of her vision for the Organization, including in terms of marking its 130th anniversary and developing a transparency strategy. The Secretary General presented a reflection paper on ways to build support for the IPU's political project at the United Nations.

The Presidents of the Geopolitical Groups and the Presidents of the Standing Committees reported on their activities since the last Assembly, with a focus on mainstreaming IPU resolutions and decisions into the work of their respective groups and regional parliamentary organizations, and working with the IPU on organizing regional activities to reach out in a more targeted manner to the parliaments in their regions and expand IPU membership. They also highlighted recent innovations and good practices in the working procedures of the Standing Committees.

The President of the Twelve Plus Group said that one way to render the work of the Standing Committee Bureaux more efficient was to appoint substitutes for the various Bureau members in anticipation of situations in which they were unable to attend IPU Assemblies – the Group was considering amendments to the IPU Statutes and Rules to that effect. The President of the African Group was committed to working with the parliaments in his region on translating the President's vision into reality and following up on IPU resolutions and decisions. The recent IPU resolution on humanitarian support to the countries affected by Cyclone Idai, for example, was already delivering results in terms of the support received from all regions – financial, in kind, technical expertise for reconstruction, etc. The President of the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean presented the initiatives to increase the number of IPU activities taking place in the region, and urged the IPU to take a strong position of solidarity with the Parliaments of Peru, Ecuador and El Salvador affected by the political crises in the countries.

The IPU President referred to some of the efforts under way to further innovate at the IPU: practical workshops for parliamentarians designed to provide them with useful tools and information for their work; exhibitions and knowledge fairs to complement the general debates at IPU Assemblies; regular sessions with Speakers of parliament to build dialogue and cooperation; a greater focus on transparency and accountability in the work of the IPU; and better use of modern communication tools. More needed to be done, however, and she was counting on the proactive support of all the Geopolitical Groups and the Standing Committees.

The Secretary of the Assembly briefed the participants on the results of the 2019 review of follow-up by Members to IPU resolutions and decisions, highlighting the good practices that had been identified and encouraging further reflection on ways to improve the reporting exercise. Participants considered that more regular exchanges between the Standing Committees and the Geopolitical Groups were important, as they could help enhance engagement by Member Parliaments in the implementation and review process.

Participants examined the calendar of future IPU activities and identified events that still required a host. They agreed to discuss the matter with the other members of their respective groups, with a view to filling any remaining gaps as soon as possible.

3. Open session of the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law: *Placing humanity first: The Geneva Conventions – Protecting people in armed conflict for 70 years*

The Committee's open session on 16 October, entitled *Placing humanity first: The Geneva Conventions – Protecting people in armed conflict for 70 years*, marked the 70th anniversary of the Conventions. The debate began with statements by Mr. B. Charlier (International Committee of the Red Cross), Ms. J. Lusenge (human and women's rights activist, Democratic Republic of the Congo) and Ms. D. Verduzco (International Commission on Missing Persons). The session reviewed the core principles and objectives of the Geneva Conventions, developed in the aftermath of the Second World War. The Conventions had been born from the strong resolve of States to never see such destruction repeated, and from their agreement that, even during armed conflict, there remained limits to what nations, communities and individuals could inflict on each other.

The Conventions were among the very few universally ratified international treaties and reflected not only law but also universal values of ethical behaviour. They preserved the core of common humanity. The current challenges to compliance with international humanitarian law (IHL) were particularly linked to non-State actors and the growing difficulty in distinguishing between civilians and fighters.

The discussions then turned to specific aspects of IHL, namely combating gender-based violence and addressing the question of missing persons. Participants heard accounts of situations where women and girls were given as rewards in war, young women were sexually enslaved or raped, and children were killed or enrolled in armed conflict. Action needed to be taken on impunity and reparation. To find solutions, one must also look at the environment in which the atrocities took place, such as trafficking, weapons dealing, and private or foreign interests.

The issue of missing persons was also at the heart of IHL. Efforts should focus not only on finding the missing but also on supporting their families. People might go missing in connection with conflict, disasters, enforced disappearances, etc. The question of missing persons should be approached from both a humanitarian and a human rights law perspective.

Overall, the main challenge was not the lack of legal frameworks but implementation. The existing frameworks remained very relevant. Progress would require awareness-raising, dissemination of laws to all key stakeholders, and political will.

4. Parity debate: *#NotInMyParliament: National and regional strategies*

On 16 October the Forum of Women Parliamentarians organized a parity debate with 66 participants, including 35 MPs (22 women MPs, 13 men MPs) from 19 countries and representatives of four regional parliamentary assemblies.

The debate aimed at promoting an equal participation of men and women in a discussion focused on addressing sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliament.

The participants welcomed the new IPU *Guidelines for the elimination of sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliament*, to be launched on 25 November 2019 on the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. The Guidelines offered advice and practical information on how to devise and implement comprehensive, inclusive and gender-sensitive policies and complaint-handling mechanisms to prevent gender-based abuses in parliament.

Participants shared examples of action taken by parliaments in different parts of the world to combat such abuses occurring in parliaments against women parliamentarians and parliamentary staff. They also explored the role of regional parliamentary assemblies as catalysts for the development of comprehensive national and global strategies to tackle sexism, sexual harassment and violence in parliaments.

The discussion highlighted striking and widespread examples of acts of sexism, harassment and gender-based violence against both MPs and parliamentary staff. The participants raised many challenges posed by such acts which were often entrenched and tolerated within society and parliamentary institutional culture; were based on gender stereotypes that needed to be changed; and were perpetuated by strong barriers to reporting.

The participants called for urgent action by parliaments to strengthen their internal policies and mechanisms to prevent sexism, harassment and gender-based violence. That implied devising and implementing independent and confidential systems for reporting and investigating complaints which must lead to rigorously applied disciplinary sanctions in cases of proven harassment and violence. Education, training and other measures to raise awareness were also recommended to create a safe and inclusive working environment. Gender-responsive support and services for the victims must be provided as well. Assessing the situation and having data were key prerequisites to ensuring political support and determining the most appropriate course of action. Participants called for surveys to be conducted, at both regional and national levels, in line with the approach applied by the IPU.

They encouraged the IPU to continue carrying out regional studies on sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliaments. They also called for a wide dissemination of the IPU Guidelines as well as their proper implementation in all parliaments.

5. Workshop *Leaving no one behind in political representation: Gender and youth quotas*

The workshop on 15 October was attended by 64 participants: 46 women and 18 men.

The workshop focused on the participation of both women and young people in parliament. Building on IPU data and research, it highlighted the under-representation of these two groups in parliament, recalling that globally only 24 per cent of parliamentarians were women and only 2 per cent of legislators were under 30.

Electoral quotas that were ambitious, well designed and strictly enforced had proven to enhance the participation of both groups.

Participants explored different types of quotas, including legislated candidate quotas, reserved seats and party quotas, and their impact on women's participation in parliament in various countries. They emphasized the role of the women's movement in advancing progress in women's political participation as well as the importance of supportive measures in addition to electoral quotas, including capacity-building for candidates.

Participants noted that good practices aimed at reaching parity in parliament were expanding as more countries introduced 50/50 provisions in electoral law. They explored the concrete example of the introduction of a 50/50 provision for parliamentary membership in the United Arab Emirates. They noted that the new provision had been supported by a series of actions to empower women politically.

Participants also noted that only a few countries had introduced youth representation quotas with varying targets. The Forum of Young Parliamentarians of the IPU had called for unified targets and encouraged parliaments to take measures to reach a proportion of young men and women legislators in line with the proportion of young men and women in the population. Ongoing efforts in Mexico were presented to the participants as an example of good practice to promote youth political participation and empowerment.

6. Workshop United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: 30 years on, achievements and challenges

The IPU and the National Assembly of Serbia, with the support of UNICEF, organized a workshop on 15 October 2019 to mark the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The aim was to take stock of the implementation of the Convention, to acknowledge the achievements, and in particular to emphasize the persistent challenges to its implementation despite coming into force 30 years ago. The ambition was also to focus on the issue of child migration, which posed a challenge to children's full enjoyment of their rights.

Children continued to suffer all sorts of harm, whether as a result of violence, forced labour, trafficking or a lack of food or decent education. Child migration was a particularly worrying phenomenon. According to UNICEF, in 2016 more than 12 million children worldwide were refugees or asylum seekers, and some 23 million children were displaced within their own country – 16 million as a result of conflict and 7 million as a result of natural disasters. The figures were disturbing, especially given children's particular vulnerability in difficult circumstances and the increased risk of suffering and exploitation when they were seeking a safe refuge.

The workshop was attended by the Speaker of the National Assembly of Serbia, Ms. M. Gojković; the IPU President, Ms. G. Cuevas Barron; and the Director of the UNICEF Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia, Ms. A. Khan; as well as Mr. G. Bregović, musician and UNICEF regional ambassador.

The discussions were enriched by contributions from several speakers: Ms. A. Khan; Ms. A. Mergane Kanouté, member of the National Assembly of Senegal; Professor C. Lumina, member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child; Ms. S. Aqtash, a young Afghan refugee in Belgrade; Ms. J. Besedić, programme officer from Save the Children; and Ms. G. Potton, a representative of the Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation.

The participants acknowledged that the Convention had made governments more aware of the need to address children's rights and to put in place laws and programmes to improve their lives. However, they deplored that some rights continued to be violated, while lamenting the violence to which children were subjected. Despite the Convention's undeniable efficacy, challenges compromised its lasting impact, particularly the low level of implementation and the lack of dedicated resources.

The participants then turned to the issue of child migration. They highlighted the problems inherent therein, namely: the lack of a legal framework, the lack of access to services, systematic administrative detention and the lack of resources for child protection.

They called for greater involvement of parliamentarians, whose functions could make a decisive contribution to promoting children's rights generally, and more specifically in handling child migration.

The workshop concluded by endorsing a declaration calling on parliamentarians to:

- uphold and protect the rights and guiding principles enshrined in the Convention;
- ensure that countries secured and deployed adequate resources to implement programmes for children;
- advocate for the protection of all children;
- support children to learn about and take action on their rights and the Sustainable Development Goals, including in schools and through participatory processes.

7. Workshop on SDG 8: Achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all: The economic challenge of our time

The objective of the half-day workshop on 16 October 2019 was to give parliamentarians the opportunity to discuss the importance of achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all. It was opened by Ms. G. Cuevas Barron, President of the IPU, and consisted of two panels, the first moderated by Ms. A. Tolley, Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives of New Zealand, and the second by Ms. M.N. Mensah-Williams, Speaker of the National Council of Namibia.

Panel 1 – Full employment: The challenge of job creation in the twenty-first century

Some of the factors that accounted for unemployment and job insecurity today were explored, including austerity policies, rising debt levels, and income and wealth inequality. The panel was composed of Ms. S. Dasgupta, Chief of the Employment and Labour Market Policies Branch of the International

Labour Organization (ILO), Ms. A. Byhovskaya, Representative of the International Trade Union Confederation at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Mr. S. Johnson, Chairperson of the Committee on Labour and Social Welfare of the Senate of Kenya, and Mr. A. Gryffroy, member of the Senate of Belgium.

There was a need to explore the potential of different job sectors and define policies to promote full and productive employment, since growth did not always lead to job creation. A lot of money was not channelled into the real economy. Countries found themselves in a situation in which growth was low while public debts and inequalities were rising significantly. New forms of vulnerability were emerging in the labour sector and affecting young workers in particular. According to experts, flexible employment conditions and fixed-term contracts did not bring long-term stability. Macro policies could have a significant impact on employment creation.

A comprehensive legislative framework should be developed in line with core labour standards that addressed the specificities of vulnerable groups (e.g. people with disabilities, older people, women, migrants) and issues such as wages, artificial intelligence and robotics. Participants also discussed work redistribution models, reduced working weeks, and more time for training and family duties on a lower salary. These models could also be implemented without economic growth. Climate change was having an impact on employment, and the green economy could create new opportunities.

Panel 2 – Decent jobs: The need for proactive labour legislation and other social policies

The panel was composed of Ms. S. Dasgupta, Chief of the ILO Employment and Labour Market Policies Branch, Ms. A. Byhovskaya, Representative of the International Trade Union Confederation at the OECD, Mr. T. Mansmann, member of the Committee of Labour and Social Affairs of the German Bundestag, and Mr. S. Patra, member of the Council of State of India.

Participants discussed how contractual conditions and social protection floors could be strengthened for all workers, including in the "gig economy"; how all workers could be guaranteed a living wage, including through minimum wage legislation; and how the informal sector could be better regulated so workers enjoyed basic rights and protections.

A decent job meant not just having a productive job but also living with dignity, enjoying basic rights and protections (the right to collective bargaining, a living wage, a healthy work environment, a degree of job security) and social benefits such as income support during unemployment and retirement.

According to the World Social Protection Report 2017–19, only 45 per cent of the global population was effectively covered by at least one social benefit. Proper legislation and policies were required to protect workers and promote job creation. International core labour standards, such as the right to join a trade union, should be adopted and guaranteed by all countries.

Discussions also focused on gender gaps and the importance of developing more legislation on paternity leave, equal pay and maternity protection.

8. Side event *Reaching the hard-to-reach: How to make UHC a reality for all?*

The session was opened by Ms. P. Bayr (Austria), member of the IPU Advisory Group on Health, who moderated the event. She stressed the importance of the IPU resolution, *Achieving universal health coverage by 2030: The role of parliaments in ensuring the right to health*, that would be adopted at the 141st IPU Assembly.

A presentation by Mr. D. Clarke, Team Leader for UHC and Health Systems Law at the World Health Organization (WHO), highlighted the role of legislation in establishing an enabling environment for universal health coverage (UHC). UHC laws needed to cut across all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with special emphasis placed on SDG 16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions to advance transparency, accountability and the rule of law.

Women, children and adolescents constituted two thirds of the world population but were often among the groups that had limited financial resources to access the health-care services they needed. Ms. F. Bustreo, Chair of the Governance and Nomination Committee of the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH), emphasized the need to prioritize those groups in UHC by ensuring the full protection of human rights, promoting equity in health planning, and allocating adequate resources to the interventions targeting those most in need.

Parliamentarians from France, Zambia and Cuba presented best practices in their countries in extending health coverage and reaching vulnerable and marginalized populations, including legislative provisions to ensure the principle of equality translated into universal coverage, community outreach, and adequate training of the health workforce.

However, the discussion highlighted that challenges remained in relation to limited financial resources, inadequate health infrastructure, and migratory flows, among others. Laws could also pose barriers to access to health services, as criminalization could lead to stigma and discrimination.

Mr. I. Askew, Director of the WHO Department of Reproductive Health and Research, and Mr. D. Imbago Jácome, PMNCH Adolescents and Youth Constituency Board Member, closed the event by stressing the importance of putting the hardest-to-reach populations first and of engaging youth in policymaking and implementation.

9. Preliminary consultation on the 2021 Global Parliamentary Report: *Parliament in a changing world*

The interactive session on the 2021 Global Parliamentary Report (GPR), jointly organized by the IPU, the Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments (ASGP) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was held on 17 October. It brought together around 50 MPs, Secretaries General and senior parliamentary staff. The parliamentary consultation was moderated by Ms. A. Gerken (Netherlands).

Mr. A. Richardson, IPU Secretariat, briefly presented the key objectives of the GPR, which was published jointly by the IPU and UNDP. The two preceding GPRs were entitled: *The changing nature of parliamentary representation* (2012) and *Parliamentary oversight: Parliament's power to hold government to account* (2017).

Mr. C. Chauvel (Global Lead, UNDP) noted that the GPR was a flagship publication and served as a global reference on the issues the two reports covered. Many changes in parliamentary procedures and the implementation of recommendations and good practices had been inspired by the reports.

Regarding the theme of the next GPR, planned to be published in 2021, several stages of consultations had been organized, resulting in a shortlist of three potential themes that were discussed at the joint session:

- The rise of participatory and direct democracy: Challenges and opportunities for parliaments;
- Parliamentary legislative power: Who makes the laws?
- Violence and intimidation against parliamentarians: A threat to democracy.

The general view was that all three themes were very important for parliaments and were interrelated. The participants noted that it was a shortlist of key challenges their parliaments faced and that it was all about making parliaments more effective. Out of the three themes, most participants expressed their preference for the one on participatory and direct democracy to be the focus of the next GPR.

About 20 participants took part in the discussion. They emphasized the importance of finding effective ways to closely involve citizens in parliamentary decision-making. There was a gap between MPs and citizens which was a threat to democracy and needed to be bridged. The discussion underlined that parliaments saw a need for recommendations and good practice examples on new processes and effective mechanisms for civic participation. Further analysis was needed of the opportunities and potential risks of participatory democracy, such as the capture of the process by well-funded lobby groups, or not reaching the part of the population that did not have internet access. Many participants in the session pointed out the significance of involving young people and of education for constructive citizens' involvement.

Mr. Richardson and Mr. Chauvel underlined that the 2021 GPR would be developed through a consultative and inclusive process, involving regular consultations with parliaments. Ms. Gerken encouraged parliaments to contribute to the research to ensure that the report was grounded in parliamentary experience and resulted in concrete recommendations that could strengthen parliaments.

10. Exhibitions

During the Assembly, several exhibitions were available to delegates:

Exhibition entitled *1889–2019: Celebrating 130 years of the IPU*: Delegates were invited to view the exhibition which was set up in the main lobby of the Sava Centre. It told the story of the IPU, linking its past with its present impact, in six chapters spread over a series of panels.

Exhibition entitled *The 52nd Conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union*: Delegates were invited to view an exhibition on the Conference hosted by the Yugoslav National Group of the IPU in 1963 in Belgrade. It was on display on the first floor of the Sava Centre.

Exhibition entitled *Women in War*: An ICRC exhibition on the various and complex roles of women in conflict. Women as fighters, humanitarians, mothers, daughters, labourers, community leaders and survivors. The exhibition marked the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions, and was on display near the main entrance to the Amphitheatre of the Sava Centre.

11. Future Policy Award ceremony

The 2019 Future Policy Award ceremony took place on 16 October 2019. The Award – organized in partnership with the World Future Council, the United Nations Development Programme and other organizations – was part of the IPU's efforts to empower youth and enhance youth political participation. The IPU was involved in both the research for the award and the evaluation of the nominees, with the IPU President and the President of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians sitting on the jury.

The Award ceremony was moderated by youth leader Ms. K. Basu and involved representatives from the European Students' Union and the All-Africa Students Union. Eight impactful policies empowering youth were recognized. In the category *Civic Engagement and Political Participation for Sustainable Development and Peace*, the Council of Europe's Co-Management of the Youth Sector received the bronze award, the Constitution of Nepal won the silver prize, and Estonia's 2014–2020 Youth Field Development Plan was awarded gold.

In the category *Youth Economic Empowerment for Decent and Sustainable Jobs*, bronze went to South Africa's Expanded Public Works Programme, silver to Scotland's 2014–2021 Developing the Young Workforce policy, and gold to Rwanda's YouthConnekt Initiative.

Two Future Policy Vision Awards were also granted: to the city of Los Angeles' (USA) Green New Deal and to Senegal's 2015–2020 National Strategy for the Promotion of Green Jobs.

More information about the winning policies: https://www.worldfuturecouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/fpa-brochure-2019-youth_english_v07_web.pdf

12. Field visit to Belgrade care homes for children

On 16 October 2019, about 20 MPs from various IPU geopolitical groups attended the field visit co-organized by the IPU and UNICEF to the Centre for Foster Care and Adoption, the Small-Group Home for Children with Disabilities (family-type residential unit) and the Shelter for Emergency Placement of Small Children.

Participants were welcomed and briefed by Ms. M. Novakovic, Director of the Centre for Foster Care and Adoption, and Mr. Z. Milacic, Director of the *Zvecanska* Centre for Protection of Infants, Children and Youth. MPs learnt about the work of the centres and about the ongoing de-institutionalization reform in Serbia. This process included developing alternative family-based care options with a focus on foster care and high-quality residential care for children with complex disabilities. MPs had the opportunity to ask questions of the centres' representatives, as well as to meet and interact with children and carers.

13. Field visit of the IPU Advisory Group on Health to the Institute for Student's Health in Belgrade

The field visit was organized on 14 October 2019 in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO). The Advisory Group heard a presentation from the WHO Country Office in Serbia on the health system and the current health situation in the country. The Group also had the opportunity to talk to representatives of the Institute of Public Health and civil society organizations working in the field of HIV prevention and health promotion. Special emphasis was placed on barriers to access to health care, in particular the stigma and discrimination faced by people living with HIV/AIDS, as well as on the need for sustainable programmes targeting key groups.

Representatives of the Institute for Student's Health in Belgrade provided information on the history of the Institute and their activities to target the specific needs of young people. They also presented the work of the Institute's HIV Centre, which provides an example of best practice in voluntary confidential counselling and HIV/AIDS testing. The Advisory Group visited several departments of the Institute, including the HIV Centre.

14. Launch of the handbook *Eliminating Forced Labour*

On 17 October, the Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO), Mr. G. Ryder, addressed the Governing Council by video message in the context of the launch of the ILO-IPU handbook for parliamentarians, *Eliminating Forced Labour*. He applauded the long-standing collaboration between the ILO and the IPU on decent work and social justice. He stressed that parliamentarians, as legislators, were uniquely placed to give life to the international labour standards set by the ILO, by ratifying the instruments and overseeing their application. In 2018 and 2019 alone, thanks largely to parliamentarians, 62 countries had ratified at least one new ILO instrument, totalling 98 new ratifications.

With 25 million people worldwide still subjected to forced labour, over 17 per cent of whom were children, he called on parliamentarians to help achieve Target 8.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals to eradicate forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking and child labour by 2030. The new handbook outlined the measures and actions that parliamentarians could take: enacting legislation; adopting budgets; overseeing government actions; and ratifying and implementing the 2014 Forced Labour Protocol, which contained provisions aimed at preventing forced labour, protecting victims and ensuring access to justice and remedies.

Elections and appointments

1. Executive Committee

The Governing Council elected the following seven members to the Executive Committee for a four-year term ending in October 2023:

African Group

- Ms. E. Anyakun (Uganda)
- Mr. J. Mudenda (Zimbabwe)

Asia-Pacific Group

- Mr. R. Rabbani (Pakistan)
- Ms. P. Krairiksh (Thailand)

Eurasia Group

- Mr. A. Saidov (Uzbekistan)

Group of Latin America and the Caribbean

- Mr. J.P. Letelier (Chile)

Twelve Plus Group

- Ms. C. Widegren (Sweden).

Mr. G. Chen (China) was elected Vice-President of the Executive Committee.

2. Sub-Committee on Finance

The Executive Committee appointed the following members for a term ending in October 2021:

African Group

- Ms. A.D. Mergane Kanouté (Senegal)

Asia-Pacific Group

- (To be advised by the Group)

Eurasia Group

- Mr. A. Saidov (Uzbekistan)

Group of Latin America and the Caribbean

- (To be advised by the Group).

3. Preparatory Committee for the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament

The Governing Council approved the following nominations to the Preparatory Committee:

African Group

- Mr. S. Chenine (Algeria)

Eurasia Group

- Ms. Z. Greceanii (Republic of Moldova)

Group of Latin America and the Caribbean

- Ms. L. Rojas (Mexico)
- Mr. B. Llano (Paraguay)
- Mr. C. Litardo (Ecuador)

Along with three representatives of the Executive Committee:

- Mr. J. Mudenda (Zimbabwe)
- Mr. J.P. Letelier (Chile)
- Ms. P. Krairiksh (Thailand).

4. Bureau of Women Parliamentarians

The Forum of Women Parliamentarians elected the following regional representatives to the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians:

Eurasia Group

- Ms. L. Vasylenko (Ukraine) to fill the seat left vacant by Ms. S. Sardaryan (Armenia), who is no longer a parliamentarian, for a term ending in April 2022.
- Ms. E. Anyakun (Uganda) and Ms. C. Widegren (Sweden) became ex officio members of the Bureau in their capacity as Executive Committee members for a term ending in October 2023.
- Ms. G. Čomić (Serbia) was elected President of the 30th session of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians and became an ex officio member of the Bureau for a term ending in October 2021.

5. Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians of the IPU

The Forum elected the following member to its Board to complete the two-year term ending in April 2021:

Asia-Pacific Group:

- Ms. R. Nikhil Khadse (India).

6. Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians

The Governing Council elected the following member for a five-year term ending in October 2024:

- Ms. A. Reynoso (Mexico).

7. Committee on Middle East Questions

The Governing Council elected the following three members for a four-year term ending in October 2023:

- Ms. I. Al Madhy (Iraq)
- Ms. H. Martins (Portugal)
- Ms. F. Benbadis (Algeria).

8. Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law

The Governing Council elected the following four members for a four-year term ending in October 2023:

African Group:

- Ms. M. Ndiaye (Senegal)

Arab Group:

- Ms. J. Salma (Bahrain)

Asia-Pacific Group:

- Mr. S. Patra (India)

Twelve Plus Group:

- Mr. C. Lacroix (Belgium).

9. High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG)

The Governing Council elected the following members for a four-year term ending in October 2023:

African Group:

- Mr. S. Chiheb (Algeria)

Eurasia Group:

- Ms. A. Karapetyan (Armenia)
- Mr. K. Kosachev (Russian Federation)

Twelve Plus Group:

- Ms. A. Vadai (Hungary).

Mr. R. Lopatka (Austria) and Ms. J. Oduol (Kenya) were elected as Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Group.

10. Group of Facilitators for Cyprus

The Governing Council elected Mr. M. Mijatovic (Serbia) as Facilitator.

11. Internal Auditors for the 2020 accounts

The Governing Council appointed the following Internal Auditor for the 2020 accounts:

- Mr. A. Gryffroy (Belgium).

12. Bureaux of the Standing Committees

The Standing Committees elected the following members for a two-year term (renewable) in their respective Bureaux ending in October 2021:

Standing Committee on Peace and International Security

Arab Group:

- M. M. Al-Ahbabi (Qatar) – first term

Twelve Plus Group:

- Mr. P. Dallier (France) – first term

Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade

Asia-Pacific Group:

- Ms. S. Rehman (Pakistan) – to complete the first term of the former Bureau member from Pakistan. This first term ends in April 2021.
- Mr. I. Sereewatthanawut (Thailand) – to complete the first term of the former Bureau member from Thailand, who is no longer a parliamentarian. This first term ends in March 2020.

Eurasia Group:

- Mr. R. Marian (Republic of Moldova) – first term

Group of Latin America and the Caribbean:

- Ms. M. Carvalho (Brazil) – first term
- Mr. B. Scotland (Guyana) – first term

Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights

Eurasia Group:

- Mr. E. Primakov (Russian Federation) – first term

Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs

Asia-Pacific Group:

- Ms. P. Tohmeena (Thailand), to complete the second term of the former Bureau member from Thailand, who is no longer a parliamentarian. This second term ends in October 2020.

Twelve Plus Group:

- Mr. A. Gryffroy (Belgium) – first term.

Group of Latin America and the Caribbean:

- Mr. R. Peña Flores (Costa Rica) – first term.

13. Rapporteurs to the 143rd Assembly

As co-Rapporteurs for the subject item *Legislation worldwide to combat online sexual child exploitation*, the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights appointed:

- Ms. A. Gerken (Netherlands)
- Ms. J. Oduol (Kenya)
- Thailand (*name to be confirmed*).

Media and communications

Media coverage

The IPU communications team issued three press releases during the 141st Assembly. The releases were sent to one thousand international media outlets worldwide in English, French, Spanish and Arabic. The communications team organized opening and closing press conferences with the Serbian Parliament hosts with the participation of the Speaker of the National Assembly of Serbia, the IPU President and the IPU Secretary General. The Director-General of the World Health Organization was a special guest at the closing press conference to accompany the adoption of the parliamentary resolution on universal health coverage.

Coverage was wide and global; there were articles on many different subjects, from climate change and health to gender equality, as well as the political issues reflecting the diversity of topics that are discussed at an IPU Assembly.

Social media

The IPU's social media accounts saw huge surges in numbers and engagement thanks to hashtags such as #IPU141 and #IPU130years, a pledging booth, strategic posting and retweeting, and daily stories on Instagram. The IPU's Instagram account was boosted significantly as a result, with a 30 per cent increase in followers over five days – reaching 1,300 followers by the end of the Assembly.

The total number of followers on Twitter increased dramatically – by over 1,300 – to reach more than 24,000 followers, including many MPs. The Facebook account made steady progress too, with an additional 110 followers to make a total of 3,143 followers.

One of the most popular @IPUparliament tweets, with 4,204 engagements, including 1,815 retweets and 1,943 likes, was: "The 141st IPU Assembly is officially open! Thank you, Serbian National Assembly and Speaker Maja Gojković for hosting it. Welcome speeches from Speaker @majgoj Serbian President @avucic UN SG @antoniouterres UNOG DG @UN_Valovaya and @IPUPresident Gabriela Cuevas."



From the a small group of MPs from 9 countries at the first IPU conference in Paris in 1889 to over 179 members and over 800 MPs at the #IPU141 Assembly in Belgrade in 2019, the IPU is the oldest and largest parliamentary family in the world #IPU130years.



MartinChungong and 2 others

7:07 PM · Oct 14, 2019 · [Twitter Web App](#)

[View Tweet activity](#)

47 Retweets 121 Likes

Another tweet that broke records in terms of engagement was: "From a small group of MPs from 9 countries at the first IPU conference in Paris in 1889 to over 179 members and over 800 MPs at the #IPU141 Assembly in Belgrade in 2019, the IPU is the oldest and largest parliamentary family in the world #IPU130years." The tweet received 2,314 engagements, including 1,900 media engagements, 46 retweets and 118 likes, as well as a number of comments.

Photography

The Serbian Parliament provided three official photographers for the Assembly, who were extremely dynamic, professional and productive. They covered all the meetings intensively as well as special segments, side events and a number of bilateral meetings with IPU leadership. Hundreds of new pictures were posted on a daily basis to the IPU Flickr account, which helped to boost traffic to the website and IPU digital platforms.

Exhibition

The IPU's 130th anniversary exhibition was moved from the Serbian Parliament, where it had been displayed over the summer, to the Sava Centre, where it was placed in a prominent position.

Video

The communications team interviewed dozens of MPs to prepare short videos on the highlights of the Assembly, the first of which is available at <https://www.ipu.org/news/news-in-brief/2019-10/ipu141-video-highlights>.

The team also conducted short interviews on the Sustainable Development Goals.

Pledging booth: "A mug for your mugshot"

An IPU pledging booth was set up with IPU anniversary backdrop wallpaper and professional lighting to encourage delegates to personally commit to various issues on the occasion of the IPU's 130th anniversary. Eight pledging cards with short, simple messages linked to the IPU's key strategic objectives – including gender equality, empowering youth, leaving no one behind, human rights, and health for all – were made available. To encourage delegates to pledge, various incentives were offered: 130 free anniversary mugs for the first 130 parliamentarians to pledge, anniversary silicon bracelets, and special anniversary cookies made by the Bahraini Parliament.

The communications team also set up a touch screen to showcase the new website and encourage members to sign up to the IPU bulletin. As a result, the IPU subscriber list gained 160 new subscribers in five days.



Membership of the Inter-Parliamentary Union*

Members (179)

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras,** Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania,** Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Palestine, Panama, Papua New Guinea,** Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe

Associate Members (13)

Andean Parliament, Arab Parliament, Central American Parliament (PARLACEN), East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), European Parliament, Interparliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States (IPA CIS), Inter-Parliamentary Committee of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), Latin American and Caribbean Parliament (PARLATINO), Parliament of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Parliament of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC), Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC), Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) and Parliamentary Assembly of La Francophonie (APF)

* As at the close of the 141st Assembly.

** Non-participating Members (all rights suspended).

Agenda, resolutions and other texts of the 141st Assembly

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
8. Emergency item: *Addressing climate change*

Belgrade Declaration

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

*Endorsed by the 141st IPU Assembly
(Belgrade, 17 October 2019)*

We, Members of Parliament from over 140 countries and 25 regional and other parliamentary organizations, gathering in Belgrade, Serbia, at the 141st Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), mark the IPU's 130th anniversary, uphold its dedication to peace, and underscore that international law is the bedrock of a world order based on solidarity and cooperation.

We firmly support the Purposes and Principles enshrined in Articles 1 and 2 of the Charter of the United Nations and acknowledge that a better world for our peoples is possible only within an international order based on the rule of law.

We express our support for strong and effective multilateral institutions, with the United Nations at their core, designed to find solutions to common challenges; settle disputes between States; ensure accountability for genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity; combat impunity; and verify that States abide by their international commitments. We also pledge our support for regional cooperation which helps to enhance the international legal order and enables the full implementation of our shared commitments.

Today, the world is witnessing grave breaches of international humanitarian law, as well as repeated violations of the basic rules, principles and fundamental tenets of international law, such as respect for the territorial integrity and political independence of States, refraining from the threat or use of force, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, and the duty of States to uphold international human rights law. Non-compliance with climate, trade and disarmament agreements are also violations of international law with vast repercussions on development, well-being and global security.

We deplore all action that is not in compliance with international law, and we stand together to drive and promote changes that will transform the vision for a better world into reality, making sure that our people can lead a life free from want and free from fear.

Our debate has identified several avenues for parliamentary action in shaping and implementing international law, and to this end enhancing the contribution of regional cooperation.

Shaping and implementing international law

It is ultimately up to parliaments to enact relevant legislation and ensure its implementation. Soft law and customary law can help shape international norms and reinforce a predictable and rules-based international order. In light of their legislative, budgetary and oversight functions, parliaments must be more forthcoming in translating international treaties and other legally binding instruments into legal and political systems and national realities.

As parliaments and parliamentarians, we must:

- At the national level, hold parliamentary debates on treaties, conventions and other legally binding international instruments in the early stages of their negotiation, and aim to ensure increased parliamentary scrutiny of the national mandate for the negotiation of such instruments.
- Ensure that international law is transposed into domestic legislation and that this legislation is implemented by developing effective and evidence-based policies and programmes, allocating the necessary budgets and rigorously overseeing their successful implementation.
- Where required, undertake legislative and constitutional reforms to ensure that adequate legal frameworks are in place to incorporate international law into domestic legislation smoothly (e.g. through automatic incorporation) and effectively (e.g. by attributing higher hierarchical status).
- Engage in a regular review of national implementation of international commitments, in particular in terms of examining and contributing to national reports prepared for submission to the international treaty bodies.

- Consider the establishment of ad hoc parliamentary committees mandated to systematically assess the compatibility between domestic legislation and international law.
- Follow major global processes and provide a parliamentary perspective to the national negotiating mandate, including in terms of ensuring that before entering into new international commitments parliament has had the opportunity to formulate its views (including through parliamentary reports).
- Exercise early warning of potential conflict locally and nationally and take adequate action to avoid escalation, help build bridges of dialogue and cooperation, and ensure that the State duly complies with international law obligations in relation to genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity, including ethnic cleansing, as well as other gross violations of international human rights law.
- Make every effort to guarantee the independence of the judiciary and adopt laws, policies and budgets aimed at strengthening the capacity of domestic courts to adjudicate on cases involving norms of international law.
- Help build public awareness and societal engagement in support of international law, and ensure that human rights and humanitarian law are included in the curricula of all learning institutions.
- Engage with civil society organizations and encourage them to contribute, through parliamentary processes as well, to the strengthening of, and compliance with, international law.

Delivering on priority areas

While acknowledging the wide variety of international instruments which our countries have signed up to over the years, we have identified a number of priority areas which require our urgent attention. These include:

- Robustly tackling the climate emergency, ratifying and implementing the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Firmly respecting and promoting international human rights law, as well as international humanitarian law and international criminal law.
- On the 30th anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, solemnly recommitting ourselves to fully implementing its provisions and those of its optional protocols.
- Redoubling our efforts to achieve gender equality and the political empowerment of women, in keeping with the provisions of the Beijing Platform for Action and Security Council resolution 1325, and taking urgent action for the full implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women – starting from within our own parliaments.
- As the Geneva Conventions turn 70, strengthening the observance of international humanitarian law and facilitating humanitarian action through relevant norms and effective funding.
- Ensuring that military and security forces are properly trained in international humanitarian law, and that they are held accountable for their actions.
- Delivering on our commitments in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, and securing the abolition of weapons of mass destruction.
- Supporting international efforts towards the gradual elimination of nuclear weapons, in particular by explicitly committing to the "No First Strike" principle, reducing the number of nuclear weapons on high alert and those that are operationally deployed, and decreasing the number of existing nuclear warheads – which are more than enough to destroy the planet several times over.
- Ensuring the ratification and effective implementation at national level of international humanitarian law and human rights instruments as a critical step in ensuring that those entitled to protection actually benefit from it.
- Establishing an effective institutional infrastructure to ensure compliance with international human rights standards, including by setting up national human rights institutions and strengthening cooperation between those institutions and our respective parliaments.
- Making sure that the voice of young people is heard in decision-making, including by creating the necessary platforms and adopting concrete measure for youth participation.
- Combating impunity for international crimes, including through cooperation with international tribunals and the International Criminal Court, in keeping with national law.

The contribution of regional cooperation

Regional cooperation is an essential component in strengthening the international legal order, contributing to peaceful settlement of disputes and advancing sustainable peace. After centuries of bloody conflict, culminating in the Second World War with its over 80 million fatalities, former adversaries in Europe created a European Coal and Steel Community, which went on to become the European Union and what is today a community of over 520 million citizens who enjoy unprecedented peace, freedom and prosperity. Regional cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean brought about the Treaty of Tlatelolco of 1967, which for the first time in history established an entire continent as a nuclear-weapon-free zone. In Africa, regional and sub-regional cooperation, in particular through the African Union, has been a driver of political stability and economic development. The vast majority of regional organizations have corresponding parliamentary assemblies and unions which complement the inter-governmental components and aim to promote greater understanding and cooperation within and among regions.

We aim to further enhance the contribution of regional cooperation to international law, including by:

- Actively supporting regional initiatives that aim to promote political dialogue and joint projects which can foster trust and understanding.
- Making use of the tools provided by parliamentary diplomacy to tackle unresolved issues and help build bridges in times of crisis.
- Identifying and disseminating good practices for regional cooperation and formulating proposals for concrete joint action.
- Within our respective regional parliamentary organizations, putting in place mechanisms to help monitor implementation of regional and international commitments.
- Reviewing and strengthening transparency and accountability mechanisms at the level of regional and global organizations.
- Building strategic partnerships at the regional and sub-regional levels to enhance the observance of universal values and norms, while also taking into consideration regional specificities.
- Sharing good practices and enhancing dialogue and cooperation between regional parliamentary organizations and our world organization, the IPU.
- Supporting the IPU as the global umbrella body of parliamentary organizations in its efforts to enhance the coherence and effectiveness of inter-parliamentary cooperation, including in the context of preparations for the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament in 2020.

Declaration to mark the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

*Endorsed by the 141st IPU Assembly
(Belgrade, 17 October 2019)*

Recognizing that in the 30 years since the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (the Convention), the lives of millions of children have been improved through its implementation; that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Convention are inextricably linked and mutually reinforcing; that the twenty-first century has brought forth new challenges; and that there is a pressing need and urgency to accelerate progress and intensify action to ensure that every child enjoys every right, we, parliamentarians, re-affirm our commitment to:

- Upholding and protecting the rights and guiding principles enshrined in the Convention: non-discrimination; the best interests of the child as a primary consideration in all actions concerning children; the child's inherent right to life, survival and development; and the child's right to express his or her views freely in all matters affecting the child, with those views being given due weight;
- Ensuring that our respective countries secure and deploy adequate resources so that all children, including refugee, migrant and internally displaced children, have access to health care services, education and protection from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation;
- Advocating for the protection of all children against all forms of violence, exploitation and abuse, including refugee and migrant children, and, using our role as leaders of public opinion, to break the silence on taboos and to change attitudes, traditions or practices that can be harmful to children;
- Ensuring that national SDGs monitoring frameworks include child-focused indicators;
- Supporting children to learn about and take action on their rights and the SDGs, including in schools and through participatory processes.

We hereby recognize that taking concrete, actionable and time-bound steps towards the full implementation of the Convention, including through policies, laws and budgets in our respective national contexts, constitutes the best and most robust investment we can make to fulfil the promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – for children and young people, and for peace, human security and sustainable development.

Achieving universal health coverage by 2030: The role of parliaments in ensuring the right to health

Resolution adopted by consensus by the 141st IPU Assembly
(Belgrade, 17 October 2019)*

The 141st Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Recalling that, as affirmed in the Constitution of the World Health Organization (WHO), "the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition", and that the right to health is protected by the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights as well as other widely ratified international instruments, including the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,

Recalling also the 2012 IPU resolution, *Access to health as a basic right: The role of parliaments in addressing key challenges to securing the health of women and children*, and the 2017 addendum to that resolution, and expressing appreciation for the national and international efforts that have been made to advance the right to health for all,

Underlining that the world's governments have set achieving universal health coverage (UHC) by 2030 as a target of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (in particular Goal 3, target 8), and welcoming coordination mechanisms such as the Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All and multi-stakeholder platforms, including UHC2030,

Welcoming the Political Declaration adopted at the seventy-fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly High-Level Meeting on universal health coverage, and recalling important commitments and goals set in the area of Financing for Development for the world's governments in the context of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda,

Acknowledging the important role of parliaments and parliamentarians in advancing the UHC agenda, and the need for meaningful collaboration with public authorities, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, private sector entities and all relevant stakeholders in order to achieve UHC,

Noting that, although major progress has been made towards UHC, half the world's population still lacks access to necessary health services, that 100 million people are pushed into extreme poverty each year because of health expenses, and that 800 million people spend at least 10 per cent or more of their household budget on health-care expenses,

Noting also that UHC means national health policies and programmes in which all individuals and communities have access to the full spectrum of essential, available, accessible, acceptable, affordable and quality health services, from health promotion to prevention, diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation and palliative care, at the time of need, which are delivered in a respectful and equitable manner and without causing financial hardship,

Recognizing that UHC must ensure that services are provided on an equal and non-discriminatory basis and that no one is left behind, in particular the vulnerable, disadvantaged, stigmatized or marginalized, children, youth, women, the elderly, indigenous peoples, people living with disabilities (especially women and children), people with rare or neglected diseases, migrants, refugees, people on the move, rural populations, especially rural women, and people affected by mental health conditions or pre-existing medical conditions, and especially noting that the impact is compounded when an individual suffers multiple or intersecting forms of discrimination,

Expressing concern that women, children, adolescents, the elderly, and people living with disabilities bear the greatest burden of ill health and preventable deaths, and often have limited financial resources to pay for essential health care, thus placing them at an economic disadvantage and higher risk of poverty,

* The delegation of India expressed a reservation on the words "indigenous peoples" in preambular paragraph 8.

Noting with concern that women generally bear higher out-of-pocket health-care-related expenses than men, and so are adversely affected by limitations or non-coverage of services under UHC that are unique to women, such as for reproductive and maternal health,

Recognizing that primary health care, including immunization campaigns, is the most inclusive, effective and efficient approach to enhancing people's physical and mental health and well-being, and that such health care is also the cornerstone of a sustainable health system capable of UHC, and welcoming the intergovernmental commitment in the 2018 Declaration of Astana to strengthen primary health-care systems as an essential step towards achieving the SDGs,

Insisting on the importance of people-centred health services that are equitable, well-resourced, accessible, integrated and supported by a skilled workforce, as well as of patient safety and quality health care as core components of health-system governance in order to fully empower people to improve and protect their own health,

Noting the importance of continued commitment and progress towards the implementation of the WHO Global Strategy on Human Resources for Health: Workforce 2030, as well as the implementation of the outcomes of the United Nations High-Level Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth in supporting human resource requirements as a building block for strong health systems and the foundation for achieving UHC,

Underlining the constitutional dimension of the right to health and the importance of allocating specific percentages and portions of national budgets to health, as a cornerstone to achieving comprehensive sustainable development,

Underlining also that investment in UHC is an investment in human capital that generates jobs, increases growth and reduces inequalities, including gender inequality, and recalling the importance of sustainable, adequate health funding,

Being mindful that progress towards UHC also requires the political, social, economic, environmental and climate determinants of health to be addressed,

Noting that the increasing number of complex emergencies is hindering the achievement of UHC, and that it is vital to ensure coordinated and inclusive approaches through national and international cooperation, following the humanitarian imperative and humanitarian principles to safeguard UHC in emergencies,

Expressing its concern at the increasing number of refugees around the world, taking into account that providing health care for refugees can be a great burden for host countries, some of which are hosting millions of them, and recognizing the responsibility of the international community to take solid steps in providing refugees with UHC,

Conscious of the connection between global health security and UHC, and of the need to continue delivering essential health care in emergency and fragile situations, especially as regards women in armed conflicts, and determined to take action to prevent epidemics and the spread of disease by advocating and supporting countries' compliance with the International Health Regulations (2005) and to ensure their respective strong core capacities in public health to prevent, detect and respond to public health risks, particularly during health emergencies,

Recognizing that the achievement of UHC is intrinsic to achieving healthy lives and well-being for all, at all ages, and that it requires strong and sustained political commitment at all levels,

1. *Reaffirms* that the devotion of maximum available resources to the progressive realization of UHC is possible and achievable for all countries even in challenging settings, and calls on parliaments and parliamentarians to take all applicable legal and policy measures in order to help their respective governments to achieve UHC by 2030 and to ensure quality, affordable and accessible health care;
2. *Urges* parliaments to put in place a robust legal framework for UHC, to ensure effective implementation of UHC legislation in reality, and to ensure that the right of everyone to public health and medical care is guaranteed for all in law and in practice, without discrimination;

3. *Also urges* States to work closely with their national parliament, supported by the IPU, to raise further awareness among parliaments and parliamentarians about UHC and fully engage them in the process, so as to sustain political support towards achieving UHC by 2030;
4. *Further urges* parliaments to work for UHC to be established henceforth as a feature of national development plans and policies, health being at once a prerequisite for and a factor in countries' sustainable development;
5. *Calls on* States to ensure that national health policies and programmes are gender-sensitive, results-based and consistent with international human rights standards, including the principles of respect for autonomy and informed consent, and are developed through an inclusive and participatory process, and urges parliaments to remove legal or other barriers preventing access to health services, including by strengthening primary health care and human resources, such as by supporting dual vocational training;
6. *Calls for* priority to be given to the availability, accessibility, affordability, acceptability and quality of health-care services, including essential services for women, children, adolescents and groups in vulnerable positions, particularly at the primary-health-care level, in particular by promoting policies that acknowledge and support the work of community health providers, most of whom are women, so that they can effectively provide essential health services, especially in rural areas;
7. *Encourages* States to implement prevention and education programmes to promote the health literacy of their citizens and to address behaviour-related health concerns, such as alcohol and tobacco use, occupational health and safety, obesity and sexually transmitted diseases;
8. *Urges* States – in order to meet a broad-based request from citizens to be accompanied towards the end of their lives in a dignified and as painless a manner as possible – to include palliative care and pain relief in their basic health-care services;
9. *Calls on* parliaments to strengthen health systems so as to reduce maternal, newborn, child and adolescent mortality and morbidity by strengthening sexual, reproductive, maternal, newborn and adolescent health and nutrition services, promoting in particular breastfeeding, systematic immunization campaigns and early childhood development interventions, as well as by providing information on and access to the broadest possible range of safe, effective, affordable and acceptable modern methods of family planning;
10. *Urges* parliaments to ensure that health-sector interventions for protecting sexual and reproductive health and rights, especially for adolescents, are combined with promotive, early detection, preventive and educational measures in other sectors, in particular with respect to promoting gender equality and combating child, early and forced marriage, early and unintended pregnancies, and gender-based violence, including female genital mutilation or other forms of gender-based violence;
11. *Also urges* parliaments to respond to the specific health needs of women and girls, including awareness, prevention and early detection of cervical cancer, breast cancer and HIV-AIDS; provision of support and services to young girls during puberty; as well as adequate support and services to survivors of gender-based violence;
12. *Calls on* parliaments to ensure that national policies to implement UHC address malnutrition in all its forms, with special attention to the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and children during the first 1,000 days;
13. *Also calls on* parliaments to promote and foster access to essential, affordable, safe, effective and good-quality medicines, medical devices, contraceptives, vaccines, diagnostics and other technologies, without discrimination, to combat counterfeit and falsified medicines, and to support innovation, research and development in medicines and vaccines for communicable and non-communicable diseases;
14. *Urges* parliaments to promote the immunization programmes of their respective governments, as the most effective preventive measure against infectious diseases, and to enact measures that will tighten patient safety regulations during the clinical testing of new vaccines to allay public fears of vaccination;

15. *Underlines* the need for early diagnosis, support, accessible and quality health information and affordable health services for people living with disabilities or chronic physical and mental health conditions, and for efforts to empower and include them to be scaled up;
16. *Encourages* a partnership-based approach to achieving UHC on a whole-of-government and whole-of-society basis, and invites parliaments to raise public awareness of UHC and engage communities and all relevant stakeholders in the development of plans and strategies that respond to their realities;
17. *Underlines* the need for a systematic approach to issues of gender, equity and human rights in health budgeting and planning and health-related decision-making processes, the informed participation of individuals and communities, particularly women, and health information systems which generate reliable evidence on health needs to ensure sound policy choices;
18. *Urges* parliaments to insist on the establishment of robust national indicators and disaggregated data for measuring progress on UHC, and calls for regular reporting and accurate use of disaggregated data to remove gender-based discrimination in the implementation of UHC;
19. *Calls on* parliaments to consider the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development and to allocate adequate domestic resources for the progressive realization of UHC through sustainable health financing, including through increased budgets where needed, as well as through measures to promote efficiency, equity, quality, cost containment and a stable basis for funding, mindful of the nominal minimum target for domestic resources identified by WHO as equivalent to 5 per cent of GDP;
20. *Urges* States to allocate more resources for the recruitment of new doctors and health-care staff, undertaking positive action in the relevant international forums aimed at easing the overly hard budget constraints implemented during the past decade;
21. *Calls on* parliaments to ensure that training for human resources is on a par with the reliability of health facilities' equipment in order to bridge the gap sometimes observed between human resources and adequate health infrastructure;
22. *Also calls on* parliaments to ensure financial protection in order to reduce out-of-pocket payments for health services and to eliminate financial barriers that prevent access to health;
23. *Requests* parliaments in developed countries providing official development assistance to work towards increasing their country's assistance for health, including for research and development, while reminding developed countries of their commitment according to the United Nations General Assembly Resolution to contribute at least 0.7 percent of their GDI to official development assistance, and urges parliaments to ensure that governments and international funding partners align their financial support with health systems, plans and priorities designed to achieve UHC in recipient countries;
24. *Calls on* parliaments to use all generic parliamentary functions to hold their respective national governments accountable for the effective implementation of their UHC commitments, monitor the impact of UHC policies and programmes, and encourage governments to take corrective action where necessary, and urges parliaments to establish mechanisms to follow up on the implementation of this resolution;
25. *Underlines* the transformational potential of technology-based health innovations and new models of health care to accelerate progress towards achieving UHC, especially in low- and middle-income countries;
26. *Calls on* public authorities, especially health institutions, to observe strict ethical standards of care and, along with other national and international entities, to ensure continued health-care services and treatment for victims of armed conflict, fragile contexts, or health and other emergencies, such as natural disasters;

27. *Strongly urges* States and all parties to armed conflict to ensure health care and to develop effective measures to prevent and address acts of violence, attacks and threats against medical personnel and humanitarian personnel exclusively engaged in medical duties, their means of transport and equipment, as well as health centres, hospitals and other medical facilities and also schools and training centres in armed conflict, in accordance with the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols and United Nations Security Council resolution 2286 on the protection of health care in armed conflict, bearing in mind that such attacks render efforts to build up health systems impossible;
28. *Calls on* the relevant authorities of the international community to create an effective mechanism for all countries to share the joint responsibility of providing refugees with adequate health services and achieving UHC for refugees wherever possible;
29. *Also calls on* parliaments to take all possible measures to ensure global health security by preventing the spread of diseases and other public health events, particularly through systematic immunization campaigns, as well as strengthening surveillance and response systems, and to advocate for the implementation of the International Health Regulations (2005) and for the allocation of appropriate resources to meet countries' obligations and address critical gaps in their respective public-health core capacities to prevent, detect and respond to public health risks;
30. *Urges* that antibiotic resistance be included as a global indicator or an intermediate goal in the SDGs, recognizing that antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is a serious and pressing global health threat and that measures designed to counteract antibiotic resistance are an important aspect of protection against threats to human health and of ensuring access to necessary medicines, calls for full implementation of the Interagency Coordination Group recommendations, and calls on the Tripartite agencies and the United Nations Environment Programme to step up their work on AMR, especially to support countries to implement their national action plans;
31. *Also urges* parliaments to address the political, social, economic, environmental and climate determinants of health as enablers and prerequisites for sustainable development, and to promote a multisectoral approach to health;
32. *Requests* parliaments to facilitate and support the learning and sharing of UHC experiences, best practices, challenges and lessons learned across IPU Member Parliaments and their parliamentarians;
33. *Also requests* the agencies of the United Nations system, in particular WHO, to provide countries with coordinated, multifaceted support aimed at achieving UHC, to collaborate in monitoring the achievement of UHC, considering WHO's mandate to evaluate health indicators, and to boost the capacity of parliaments and parliamentarians to develop and monitor national UHC policies through the establishment of strong, learning health-care systems;
34. *Further requests* parliaments and parliamentarians to work for States' implementation of the recommendations of the meetings on achieving UHC, particularly those of the United Nations High-Level Meeting on universal health coverage held in September 2019, and calls on the IPU to provide its Members with all the tools required for the follow-up and evaluation of those recommendations.

Addressing climate change

Results of the roll-call vote on the request of the delegation of India for the inclusion of an emergency item

Results

Affirmative votes	809	Total of affirmative and negative votes ...	1,173
Negative votes	364	Two-thirds majority	782
Abstentions	191		

Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.
Afghanistan	Absent			Gambia (The)	Absent			Pakistan			21
Albania	Absent			Georgia	Absent			Palestine		11	
Algeria	16			Germany		19		Panama	Absent		
Andorra	Absent			Ghana	7		7	Paraguay	10		
Angola	14			Greece		13		Peru	14		
Argentina	Absent			Guatemala	Absent			Philippines	20		
Armenia			10	Guinea	Absent			Poland			15
Australia		14		Guyana	Absent			Portugal		10	
Austria		12		Haiti	Absent			Qatar	11		
Azerbaijan	12			Hungary			13	Republic of Korea	Absent		
Bahrain	11			Iceland		10		Republic of Moldova	Absent		
Bangladesh	20			India	23			Romania			14
Belarus	Absent			Indonesia	22			Russian Federation	20		
Belgium		13		Iran (Islamic Republic of)	19			Rwanda			
Benin	Absent			Iraq		15		San Marino	10		
Bhutan	10			Ireland	Absent			Saudi Arabia			14
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	12			Italy		17		Senegal	Absent		
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Absent			Japan	20			Serbia	12		
Brazil	22			Jordan		12		Seychelles	10		
Bulgaria	Absent			Kazakhstan	10			Sierra Leone	Absent		
Burkina Faso	13			Kenya	15			Singapore	12		
Burundi	12			Kuwait	Absent			Slovakia	Absent		
Cabo Verde	10			Lao People's Dem. Republic	Absent			Slovenia			11
Cambodia	13			Latvia		11		Somalia	13		
Cameroon	Absent			Lesotho	Absent			South Africa	17		
Canada		15		Liechtenstein		8		Spain			15
Central African Republic	12			Lithuania		11		Sri Lanka	Absent		
Chile	10		3	Madagascar	Absent			Suriname	10		
China	23			Malawi	Absent			Sweden		13	
Congo	Absent			Malaysia	14			Switzerland		12	
Costa Rica	10			Maldives	Absent			Syrian Arab Rep.			13
Côte d'Ivoire	Absent			Mali	Absent			Thailand	18		
Croatia	Absent			Malta	Absent			Timor-Leste	10		
Cuba	Absent			Mexico	20			Tonga	8		
Cyprus		10		Micronesia (Fed. States of)	8			Tunisia	Absent		
Czech Republic		13		Monaco		10		Turkey	19		
DR of the Congo	Absent			Mongolia	Absent			Turkmenistan	12		
Denmark		12		Montenegro	Absent			Uganda	Absent		
Djibouti	Absent			Morocco	13			Ukraine	10		7
Egypt		19		Myanmar	17			United Arab Emirates	11		
El Salvador	12			Namibia	11			United Kingdom		18	
Equatorial Guinea	11			Nepal	Absent			Uruguay	11		
Estonia			11	Netherlands		13		Uzbekistan	Absent		
Eswatini	Absent			New Zealand		11		Venezuela (Bolivarian Rep. of)			15
Ethiopia	Absent			Nicaragua	8			Viet Nam	19		
Fiji	Absent			Niger	13			Yemen			11
Finland		12		Nigeria	20			Zambia	13		
France		18		North Macedonia	Absent			Zimbabwe	13		
Gabon	11			Norway		12					
				Oman			11				

N.B. This list does not include delegations present at the session which were not entitled to vote pursuant to the provisions of Articles 5.2 and 5.3 of the Statutes.

Protection of civilians and international security: Demanding an end to Turkey's offensive in Syria

Results of the roll-call vote on the request of the delegations of France, United Kingdom, Germany, Switzerland and Egypt for the inclusion of an emergency item

Results

Affirmative votes.....	677	Total of affirmative and negative votes ..	750
Negative votes	73	Two-thirds majority.....	500
Abstentions	614		

Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.
Afghanistan	Absent			Gambia (The)	Absent			Pakistan		21	
Albania	Absent			Georgia	Absent			Palestine	11		
Algeria			16	Germany	19			Panama	Absent		
Andorra	Absent			Ghana	14			Paraguay			10
Angola			14	Greece	13			Peru			14
Argentina	Absent			Guatemala	Absent			Philippines			20
Armenia	10			Guinea	Absent			Poland	10		5
Australia	14			Guyana	Absent			Portugal	10		
Austria	12			Haiti	Absent			Qatar			11
Azerbaijan		12		Hungary	13			Republic of Korea	Absent		
Bahrain	11			Iceland	10			Republic of Moldova	Absent		
Bangladesh			20	India			23	Romania	14		
Belarus	Absent			Indonesia	22			Russian Federation			20
Belgium	13			Iran (Islamic Republic of)	19			Rwanda			12
Benin	Absent			Iraq	15			San Marino	10		
Bhutan			10	Ireland	Absent			Saudi Arabia	14		
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)			12	Italy	17			Senegal	Absent		
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Absent			Japan			20	Serbia			12
Brazil			22	Jordan	12			Seychelles			10
Bulgaria	Absent			Kazakhstan			10	Sierra Leone	Absent		
Burkina Faso			13	Kenya			15	Singapore			12
Burundi			12	Kuwait	Absent			Slovakia	Absent		
Cabo Verde			10	Lao People's Dem. Republic	Absent			Slovenia	11		
Cambodia			13	Latvia	11			Somalia			13
Cameroon	Absent			Lesotho	Absent			South Africa			17
Canada	15			Liechtenstein	8			Spain	15		
Central African Republic	12			Lithuania	11			Sri Lanka	Absent		
Chile	3	3	7	Madagascar	Absent			Suriname			10
China			23	Malawi	Absent			Sweden	13		
Congo	Absent			Malaysia			14	Switzerland	12		
Costa Rica			10	Maldives	Absent			Syrian Arab Rep.	13		
Côte d'Ivoire	Absent			Mali	Absent			Thailand			18
Croatia	Absent			Malta	Absent			Timor-Leste	10		
Cuba	Absent			Mexico	20			Tonga			8
Cyprus	10			Micronesia (Fed. States of)			8	Tunisia	Absent		
Czech Republic	13			Monaco	10			Turkey	2	17	
DR of the Congo	Absent			Mongolia	Absent			Turkmenistan			12
Denmark	12			Montenegro	Absent			Uganda	Absent		
Djibouti	Absent			Morocco	13			Ukraine	7		10
Egypt	19			Myanmar			17	United Arab Emirates	11		
El Salvador			12	Namibia			11	United Kingdom	18		
Equatorial Guinea			11	Nepal	Absent			Uruguay			11
Estonia	11			Netherlands	13			Uzbekistan	Absent		
Eswatini	Absent			New Zealand	11			Venezuela (Bolivarian Rep. of)	15		
Ethiopia	Absent			Nicaragua			8	Viet Nam			19
Fiji	Absent			Niger			13	Yemen	11		
Finland	12			Nigeria		20		Zambia			13
France	18			North Macedonia	Absent			Zimbabwe			13
Gabon	11			Norway	12						
				Oman	11						

N.B. This list does not include delegations present at the session which were not entitled to vote pursuant to the provisions of Articles 5.2 and 5.3 of the Statutes.

Double standards of western countries in combatting terrorism, especially in resolving the conflict in Syria

Results of the roll-call vote on the request of the delegation of Turkey for the inclusion of an emergency item

Results

Affirmative votes	156	Total of affirmative and negative votes ...	646
Negative votes	490	Two-thirds majority	431
Abstentions	718		

Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.
Afghanistan		Absent		Gambia (The)		Absent		Pakistan	21		
Albania		Absent		Georgia		Absent		Palestine		11	
Algeria			16	Germany		19		Panama		Absent	
Andorra		Absent		Ghana			14	Paraguay			10
Angola			14	Greece		13		Peru			14
Argentina		Absent		Guatemala		Absent		Philippines			20
Armenia		10		Guinea		Absent		Poland	5		10
Australia		14		Guyana		Absent		Portugal		10	
Austria		12		Haiti		Absent		Qatar			11
Azerbaijan	12			Hungary		13		Republic of Korea		Absent	
Bahrain		11		Iceland		10		Republic of Moldova		Absent	
Bangladesh			20	India			23	Romania		14	
Belarus		Absent		Indonesia	22			Russian Federation	20		
Belgium		13		Iran (Islamic Republic of)		19		Rwanda			12
Benin		Absent		Iraq		15		San Marino			10
Bhutan			10	Ireland		Absent		Saudi Arabia		14	
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)			12	Italy		17		Senegal		Absent	
Bosnia and Herzegovina		Absent		Japan			20	Serbia			12
Brazil			22	Jordan		12		Seychelles			10
Bulgaria		Absent		Kazakhstan			10	Sierra Leone		Absent	
Burkina Faso			13	Kenya			15	Singapore			12
Burundi			12	Kuwait		Absent		Slovakia		Absent	
Cabo Verde			10	Lao People's Dem. Republic		Absent		Slovenia		11	
Cambodia			13	Latvia		11		Somalia			13
Cameroon		Absent		Lesotho		Absent		South Africa			17
Canada		15		Liechtenstein		8		Spain		15	
Central African Republic			12	Lithuania		11		Sri Lanka		Absent	
Chile		6	7	Madagascar		Absent		Suriname			10
China	23			Malawi		Absent		Sweden		13	
Congo		Absent		Malaysia	14			Switzerland		12	
Costa Rica			10	Maldives		Absent		Syrian Arab Rep.		13	
Côte d'Ivoire		Absent		Mali		Absent		Thailand			18
Croatia		Absent		Malta		Absent		Timor-Leste			10
Cuba		Absent		Mexico			20	Tonga			8
Cyprus		10		Micronesia (Fed. States of)			8	Tunisia		Absent	
Czech Republic		13		Monaco		10		Turkey	19		
DR of the Congo		Absent		Mongolia		Absent		Turkmenistan			12
Denmark		12		Montenegro		Absent		Uganda		Absent	
Djibouti		Absent		Morocco			13	Ukraine			17
Egypt		19		Myanmar			17	United Arab Emirates			11
El Salvador			12	Namibia			11	United Kingdom		18	
Equatorial Guinea			11	Nepal		Absent		Uruguay			11
Estonia			11	Netherlands		13		Uzbekistan		Absent	
Eswatini		Absent		New Zealand		11		Venezuela (Bolivarian Rep. of)			15
Ethiopia		Absent		Nicaragua			8	Viet Nam			19
Fiji		Absent		Niger			13	Yemen			11
Finland		12		Nigeria	20			Zambia			13
France		18		North Macedonia		Absent		Zimbabwe			13
Gabon			11	Norway		12					
				Oman			11				

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Urgent call for the restoration of representative democratic order and for respect for democratic principles in Peru

Results of the roll-call vote on the request of the delegation of Peru for the inclusion of an emergency item

R e s u l t s

Affirmative votes.....	174	Total of affirmative and negative votes ..	593
Negative votes	419	Two-thirds majority.....	395
Abstentions	771		

Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.
Afghanistan		<i>Absent</i>		Gambia (The)		<i>Absent</i>		Pakistan			21
Albania		<i>Absent</i>		Georgia		<i>Absent</i>		Palestine		11	
Algeria			16	Germany		19		Panama		<i>Absent</i>	
Andorra		<i>Absent</i>		Ghana	10		4	Paraguay	10		
Angola			14	Greece		13		Peru	14		
Argentina		<i>Absent</i>		Guatemala		<i>Absent</i>		Philippines	20		
Armenia			10	Guinea		<i>Absent</i>		Poland			15
Australia		14		Guyana		<i>Absent</i>		Portugal		10	
Austria		12		Haiti		<i>Absent</i>		Qatar			11
Azerbaijan			12	Hungary		13		Republic of Korea		<i>Absent</i>	
Bahrain			11	Iceland		10		Republic of Moldova		<i>Absent</i>	
Bangladesh			20	India			23	Romania		14	
Belarus		<i>Absent</i>		Indonesia			22	Russian Federation			20
Belgium		13		Iran (Islamic Republic of)			19	Rwanda			12
Benin		<i>Absent</i>		Iraq		15		San Marino			10
Bhutan			10	Ireland		<i>Absent</i>		Saudi Arabia		14	
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)			12	Italy		17		Senegal		<i>Absent</i>	
Bosnia and Herzegovina		<i>Absent</i>		Japan			20	Serbia			12
Brazil	22			Jordan		12		Seychelles			10
Bulgaria		<i>Absent</i>		Kazakhstan			10	Sierra Leone		<i>Absent</i>	
Burkina Faso			13	Kenya			15	Singapore			12
Burundi			12	Kuwait		<i>Absent</i>		Slovakia		<i>Absent</i>	
Cabo Verde			10	Lao People's Dem. Republic		<i>Absent</i>		Slovenia		11	
Cambodia			13	Latvia		11		Somalia			13
Cameroon		<i>Absent</i>		Lesotho		<i>Absent</i>		South Africa			17
Canada		15		Liechtenstein		8		Spain		15	
Central African Republic			12	Lithuania		11		Sri Lanka		<i>Absent</i>	
Chile	13			Madagascar		<i>Absent</i>		Suriname	10		
China			23	Malawi		<i>Absent</i>		Sweden		13	
Congo		<i>Absent</i>		Malaysia			14	Switzerland			12
Costa Rica	10			Maldives		<i>Absent</i>		Syrian Arab Rep.			13
Côte d'Ivoire		<i>Absent</i>		Mali		<i>Absent</i>		Thailand			18
Croatia		<i>Absent</i>		Malta		<i>Absent</i>		Timor-Leste			10
Cuba		<i>Absent</i>		Mexico	10		10	Tonga			8
Cyprus		10		Micronesia (Fed. States of)	8			Tunisia		<i>Absent</i>	
Czech Republic		13		Monaco		10		Turkey			19
DR of the Congo		<i>Absent</i>		Mongolia		<i>Absent</i>		Turkmenistan			12
Denmark		12		Montenegro		<i>Absent</i>		Uganda		<i>Absent</i>	
Djibouti		<i>Absent</i>		Morocco			13	Ukraine			17
Egypt		19		Myanmar			17	United Arab Emirates			11
El Salvador	12			Namibia			11	United Kingdom		18	
Equatorial Guinea			11	Nepal		<i>Absent</i>		Uruguay			11
Estonia			11	Netherlands		13		Uzbekistan		<i>Absent</i>	
Eswatini		<i>Absent</i>		New Zealand		11		Venezuela (Bolivarian Rep. of)	15		
Ethiopia		<i>Absent</i>		Nicaragua			8	Viet Nam			19
Fiji		<i>Absent</i>		Niger			13	Yemen			11
Finland		12		Nigeria	20			Zambia			13
France		18		North Macedonia		<i>Absent</i>		Zimbabwe			13
Gabon			11	Norway		12					
				Oman			11				

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Addressing climate change

Resolution adopted unanimously by the 141st IPU Assembly (Belgrade, 16 October 2019)

The 141st Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Aware of the role and importance of democratic governance for peace and development resonating in the vision and mission of the IPU, a global organization of 179 Member Parliaments, and recalling the commitments on climate change made by the IPU at its 139th and 140th Assemblies,

Acknowledging that global warming of anthropogenic origin is one of the major challenges facing the global community today,

Recalling the commitments made by the global community in the Paris Agreement, which builds on previous international cooperation regarding various facets of climate change in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, Agenda 21, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Kyoto Protocol, the Cancun Agreements, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, the Warsaw Outcomes, the SAMOA Pathway, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

Also recalling the commitment of the Parties to the UNFCCC to tackle the challenge of global warming on the basis of equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities,

Acknowledging that the Paris Agreement recognizes that sustainable lifestyles and sustainable patterns of consumption and production, with developed country Parties taking the lead, play an important role in addressing climate change,

Recalling that the Paris Agreement notes the importance of ensuring the integrity of all ecosystems, including oceans, and the protection of biodiversity, recognized by some cultures as Mother Earth, and the importance for some of the concept of "climate justice",

Also recalling the commitment of the Paris Agreement to holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2° C above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5° C above pre-industrial levels, recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change,

Acknowledging the implications of various reports based on the best available science that the consequences of even limited global warming of 1.5° C are likely to be extensive, serious and damaging, but could be mitigated considerably by immediate and focused action and active international collaboration and cooperation through multilateral processes,

Recalling that the foremost priority for developing countries continues to be their rapid progress along the path of sustainable development to ensure the well-being of the majority of the population of the world, consistent with the commitment in the Paris Agreement to achieve sustainable development,

Appreciating the work being done under the Marrakech Task Force on Sustainable Lifestyles and by other regional groupings on sustainable consumption and production,

Applauding the efforts and initiatives of those local communities, the business and financial sectors, academic and research institutions, children and youth, media and governments in promoting an innovative mix of traditional and modern sustainable lifestyles at the individual and collective levels as their respective contributions to live within Earth's boundaries,

Recalling the IPU's commitment in the Hanoi Declaration of 2015 to advance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 and to ensure that parliaments hold governments to account in implementing effective measures to achieve these Goals while leaving no one behind,

1. *Urges* all Parties to implement the Paris Agreement in letter and spirit, and to invest in mitigation and adaptation resolutely and speedily, in keeping also with the provisions of the UNFCCC and the protocols and agreements under its aegis;

2. *Urges* countries to take strong and effective mitigation action, as per the Paris Agreement, that would enable the achievement of the temperature goals, and notes, inter alia, that any shortfall in mitigation would tremendously enhance the burden of adaptation for vulnerable communities, populations, regions and countries;
3. *Calls on* the developed country Parties to the Paris Agreement to implement in letter and spirit their commitments under the Convention to provide finance, technology and capacity-building assistance to developing countries;
4. *Stresses* the need for the enhancement of urgent action for adaptation in developing countries to preserve and enhance their natural resources, which are the source of livelihoods and well-being for millions;
5. *Urges* all Parties to move forward expeditiously towards the effective implementation of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage;
6. *Calls on* national parliaments to urge their governments to take a leading role in effective measures to counter global warming, raise awareness and provide extensive education on the causes and impact of climate change, and to actively encourage the adoption of sustainable lifestyles and sustainable patterns of consumption and production;
7. *Also calls on* national parliaments to urge their governments, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, to support the development of comprehensive national resilience mechanisms, strengthen disaster risk reduction and prevention, enhance disaster preparedness for effective responses, and invest in risk-reduction measures and societal resilience for disasters including, inter alia, desertification, deforestation, sand storms and mass flooding;
8. *Calls on* all parliamentarians to work with their governments in partnership with all stakeholders to implement the Paris Agreement by moving towards rapid implementation of the SDGs, thereby contributing to the enhancement of resilience and adaptation to climate change, and in particular calls on all parliamentarians to engage with youth to hear their voices and solutions to combat climate change and to open a dialogue with the younger generation;
9. *Strongly appeals* for a significant shift and enhancement in financial, technological and capacity-building assistance for developing countries towards adaptation rather than mitigation.

Report of the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security

*Noted by the 141st IPU Assembly
(Belgrade, 17 October 2019)*

The Standing Committee on Peace and International Security held two sittings on 15 and 16 October 2019 with its President, Mr. J.I. Echániz (Spain), in the Chair.

On 15 October, the Committee examined two items on its agenda: the follow-up of the implementation of the 2014 resolution *Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: The contribution of parliaments* and the theme of *Criminalization of money laundering*.

Panel discussion on implementation and follow-up of the 2014 resolution *Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: The contribution of parliaments*

The Committee members were shown a video on the Regional Seminar on Engaging Parliaments of the Pacific Region in the Implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 held in Wellington in September 2019 and organized by the House of Representatives of New Zealand and the IPU. The President recalled that the monitoring of resolution 1540 was recommended in the 2014 IPU resolution under review. It was an action MPs could take to advance toward a nuclear-weapons-free world.

The President introduced the Moderator of the session, Mr. A. Ware (Global Coordinator, Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament – PNND). Mr. Ware recalled the purpose of the resolution and the key role of parliaments and parliamentarians in addressing nuclear risks and building the legislative and political framework needed to achieve a nuclear-weapons-free world. He referred to the Parliamentary action plan for nuclear-risk reduction and the *Move the nuclear weapons money* campaign which promoted cuts to nuclear weapons budgets, ending investments in nuclear weapons, and reallocating those budgets and investments to climate protection and sustainable development. He also reported on key nuclear policy developments since 2014 including the erosion of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF Treaty). He introduced the two speakers: Ms. E. Whyte Gómez (Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Costa-Rica to the UN Office in Geneva) who presided over the United Nations Conference which negotiated the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), and Ms. E.G. Tudor (Chief, Public Information Section, Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization – CTBTO).

The speakers gave introductory presentations on the objectives, purposes and progress of the treaties at stake. International legal frameworks, standards and rules were extremely important. Political leadership, dialogue and cooperation was needed to agree on specific disarmament programmes. Parliamentarians as legislators had a key role both in ratifying international instruments and taking legal initiatives. The goodwill of all concerned had to be mobilized to ensure the treaties entered into force. Parliamentarians, as representatives of the people, were invited to take action to raise awareness on the subject among the media and civil society, as well as through dialogue with other parliaments and parliamentary groupings.

More specifically, Ms. Whyte Gómez said that parliamentarians needed to contribute to solve everyday problems and address global issues of importance such as nuclear weapons which were incompatible with human life. Human scourges, such as slavery or colonialism, had been rectified after decades and centuries by prohibition and changes of attitude. Change took time but could happen with political will. Ms. Tudor praised the IPU and the Standing Committee for promoting the entry into force of the CTBT and made a plea to parliamentarians to keep the treaty in mind and spread the message, especially to the eight remaining Annex II countries. The CTBT must urgently enter into force as it was the most concrete and credible element to build a solid and lasting framework that would ultimately achieve the common goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. She updated participants on the latest developments regarding the CTBT and explained the transparent, effective, and non-discriminatory verification regime which operated around the globe and which relied on a global International Monitoring System (IMS) that could detect any nuclear explosion.

Eighteen speakers took the floor to outline parliamentary actions taken to implement the 2014 IPU resolution. Emphasis was placed on the need for dialogue, confidence-building, conflict resolution and adherence to the law in order to make further progress on nuclear disarmament. The challenges faced in the establishment of nuclear-weapons-free zones were addressed. The importance of collective work on disarmament and on nuclear energy used for peaceful purposes were also touched upon.

Panel discussion on the theme of *Criminalization of money laundering*

The President introduced the topic by recalling that money laundering had huge economic and social consequences. Money laundering undermined human development, international security and national economies. National strategies to combat money laundering must take into account the global nature of the problem, focus on criminal laws prohibiting money laundering, on penalties for those convicted, on confiscation and forfeiture mechanisms, and laws that would allow for international cooperation around information sharing, extradition and mutual legal assistance. He introduced the experts: Ms. J. Jolic (Head of Unit, Economic Crime and Cooperation Division, Council of Europe) and Mr. A. Odat (MP, Head of the Legal Committee and Vice-President of the Human Rights Council, Jordan).

The experts stressed the need for cooperation to harmonize legal frameworks as shortcomings with basic legislation persisted. One of the main issues was the differences in the definition and criminalization of predicate offences. There should be transnational cooperation in cases when predicate offences were committed in one country and laundering occurred in another country. States must find common denominators on outstanding issues.

Ms. Jolic explained that when it came to money laundering, many jurisdictions could prosecute only individuals and not legal entities, which was a problem. Parliament's role in combatting money laundering was not only a question of legislation. Parliaments must follow more closely what was happening in their jurisdictions and what governments were doing. They must be more active when it came to parliamentary oversight of and follow-up on how governments dealt with money laundering and terrorist financing. Mr. Odat mentioned that the impact of money laundering did not stop at national borders and that it was a crime often linked to other crimes such as drug trafficking, human trafficking and trafficking in weapons. Legal frameworks that would bridge existing gaps in the fight against such crimes must be adopted.

Fifteen speakers took the floor. Most spoke about the provisions of their anti-money laundering laws and the challenges they were facing. Legislative frameworks were needed to cope with the new technical methods money launderers used to commit their crimes. Parliamentary cooperation in that field must be strengthened. Issues such as illegal casinos, off-shore accounts, fiscal secrecy, shadow-banking, cryptocurrencies, virtual currencies, and virtual service providers were addressed. Those issues must be tackled and legislation appropriately amended.

Expert hearing on the theme *Parliamentary strategies to strengthen peace and security against threats and conflicts resulting from climate-related disasters and their consequences.*

On 16 October, the Committee held an expert hearing on the theme *Parliamentary strategies to strengthen peace and security against threats and conflicts resulting from climate-related disasters and their consequences*, the topic of a resolution that was expected to be adopted by the 142nd IPU Assembly.

The hearing opened with the statements of three experts: Mr. D. Messner (Director, Institute for Environment and Human Security, United Nations University – UNU-EHS), Ms. S. Gebreyes (Country Director, Lutheran World Federation – LWF), and Mr. G. Girardi (Senator, President of the Environment and National Assets Committee, Chile).

Mr. Messner emphasized that, so far, climate change was interpreted as an environmental challenge, but it was now clear that it was also related to security and that it destabilized societies. With 3° to 4° C global warming there would be water scarcity in many more areas in the world and nations would run into serious security problems. Climate change would increase the number of failed States which would incite conflicts. From a security perspective, climate change – for example, water scarcity and food problems – would first impact human security which would destabilize countries and subregions and lead to cross-country conflicts. Climate change could undermine the global order. To avoid that, a global answer was needed: climate change could be a uniting force and bring all nations together in the fight against that threat. Climate protection must be scaled up and long term road maps must be established to avoid disruption and to create an attractive future for countries.

Ms. Gebreyes spoke from the humanitarian point of view, providing a testimony of the situation in Ethiopia. The increasing unpredictability of the rains, the frequency and intensity of the droughts, had devastating impact on rural communities and stripped farmers and pastoralists of their coping mechanisms. They were not able to build resilience, were forced to displace and migrate. Inter-communal competition over scarce resources escalated to an unprecedented scale in the country. In coping with the situation, the humanitarian community was struggling to provide adequate support, in particular as humanitarian funding was solely for life-saving activities often not allowing humanitarian actors to link the humanitarian, development and peace/security aspects of crises. More flexible funding would permit early recovery and resilience-building type of activities to help affected households and communities construct better and establish social cohesion. Developing countries needed support, including financial and technical support, to adapt themselves to the changing climate. A binding legal framework should be developed to protect internally displaced people.

Mr. Girardi defined climate change as a major challenge which had brought the world to the brink of a new era and new civilization. Changes in the past had led to rapid changes in evolution. Presently everything was moving fast and was leading to disruptions in society. Institutions would become increasingly irrelevant, especially in face of data gathering and artificial intelligence. Major platforms which were capturing data and making use of artificial intelligence were not necessarily interested in fostering peace and combatting climate change. Global warming and steering democracy would depend on the way in which technology would be managed. The planet must reduce carbon emissions yet the current consumption model only had them continue to increase. COP25 would align science and politics. In Chile, for example, the Congress of the Future brought together philosophers, scientists, parliamentarians to discuss important issues. There was also the example of the parliamentary committee on future sciences made up of parliamentarians, scientists and academics who could vote and submit bills.

After hearing the experts' presentations, a total of 22 speakers took the floor. A prominent theme in the interventions was the need to join forces and to implement the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda. Several parliamentarians shared examples of national practices such as moving towards a circular economy, resorting to the state of emergency, regular oversight of government activities in implementing decisions on the climate, capacity building of relevant departments, and the creation of early warning systems for drought. Parliamentarians, in their budgetary role, must put resources into the fight against climate change rather than into the military. Delegations agreed that the exchange of good practices and experiences should be strengthened, promoted and showcased in order to ensure a consistent legislative response to climate change across the board and the implementation of national commitments. All that mentioned would create strong links between stakeholders.

In conclusion, the two co-Rapporteurs took the floor to explain their preliminary views on the topic and thanked the experts and the various speakers for providing them with food for thought. They agreed that the role of women and the youth dimension should not be forgotten, and that the climate-security nexus should be the main focus. The current generation was the last one to be able do something about those issues, there was no planet B and there was no time to lose when it came to intensifying the common struggle.

The report on the work of the Committee was presented to the Assembly at its last sitting on 17 October by the President of the Standing Committee, Mr. Echániz (Spain).

The Bureau of the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security met on 15 October 2019 with its President, Mr. Echániz (Spain), in the Chair. Eleven out of 18 members were present.

During the meeting, the Bureau discussed its workplan. It was decided to devote all the time allocated for the 142nd Assembly to negotiating the resolution. For future activities in between Assemblies, the bureau took note of an invitation to organize a study visit and a Bureau meeting in Jordan. The Pakistani and Ukrainian members informed the Bureau that they would be interested in organizing such study visits in their own parliaments. The Bureau members were also informed of the Geneva Peace Week which would take place from 4 to 8 November 2019. The proposals were subsequently approved by the Standing Committee at the end of its last plenary sitting on 17 October.

Elections took place on 15 October 2018. The Twelve Plus Group proposed Mr. P. Dallier (France) and the Arab Group proposed Mr. M. Al-Ahbab (Qatar) to fill the vacant posts. Both candidatures were endorsed.

Report of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade

*Noted by the 141st IPU Assembly
(Belgrade, 17 October 2019)*

The Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade held its sittings on 14 and 16 October. Both sittings were chaired by the Committee President, Ms. V. Muzenda Tsitsi (Zimbabwe).

Debate on the theme *Mainstreaming digitalization and the circular economy to achieve the SDGs, particularly responsible consumption and production*

The debate was organized on the theme of the Standing Committee's forthcoming resolution which should be adopted at the 142nd Assembly. The purpose of the debate was to provide the Committee with an opportunity to share views on ways to mainstream digitalization and the circular economy to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to make suggestions for parliamentary actions to be included in the resolution.

The theme and key issues for consideration and discussion were introduced by experts on the circular economy and digitalization: Mr. P. Jensen, Head of Secretariat, International Resource Panel; Mr. J. Kurbalija, Founding Director of DiploFoundation; and Mr. D. Spoiala, Senior Community Manager at the EU-AU Digital Economy Task Force. They stressed that resources were currently being used at an unsustainable rate, resulting in environmental degradation, loss of biodiversity and increased risk of conflict, to name just a few consequences. The world needed to be put on a more sustainable path, which would reduce the use of resources and increase resource efficiency.

Digitalization and artificial intelligence had the potential to help address these issues. The EU-Africa Digital for Development (D4D) initiative promoted technology transfers that would help developing countries leapfrog the development gap. However, issues related to data protection and privacy remained largely unregulated and required urgent attention by parliaments everywhere. The SDGs created horizontal links between issues and should be better utilized in policymaking at all levels, particularly given the fact that digitalization had so far not led to greater fairness and equality.

A total of 18 delegates took the floor to share their views and comments and the good practices their countries had put in place to promote the circular economy and digitalization. Participants stressed the importance of parliaments making good use of their law-making function to strengthen relevant frameworks. In the area of the circular economy, laws were urgently needed to encourage reusing and repairing while recycling should be a last resort. Parliaments should also insist on the provision of better data and facts on issues such as digitalization, the circular economy and the SDGs, as well as on establishing clear standards.

To conclude the debate, the co-Rapporteurs Mr. A. Gryffroy (Belgium), Mr. P. Mariru (Kenya) and Ms. S. Dinică (Romania) recalled the important interlinkages among these issues and stressed the need to exchange good practices and experiences. They would work on a draft resolution incorporating the inputs provided during the debate.

Parliamentary contribution to the 2019 United Nations Climate Change Conference

The Standing Committee discussed the preliminary draft outcome document of the Parliamentary Meeting at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 25) to take place on 2 December in Santiago (Chile). The session started with a briefing by the Rapporteur to the Parliamentary Meeting in Santiago, Mr. G. Girardi (Chile).

Mr. Girardi stressed the need for urgent action and the fact that COP 25 may be the last chance for governments to make progress on climate change. The preliminary draft outcome document stressed the need to place science at the core of policymaking at all levels and in all parliamentary discussions. Multilateralism and parliamentary diplomacy had a strong role in ensuring cooperation among countries and progress in combatting climate change. In Mr. Girardi's view, policy- and decision-making was still operating according to the norms of the twentieth century while they should be future-oriented and look at the needs of future generations. He briefed the Committee about the Congreso Futuro in Chile and its efforts to promote a future-oriented approach to governance.

Altogether, five delegations took the floor in the debate. They stressed the fact that climate change was indeed recognized as an emergency in their countries and that parliaments were taking steps to support government plans with legislation. It was increasingly recognized that climate change had a strong negative impact on health, agriculture, disasters and other areas, costing countries a substantial chunk of their GDP on an annual basis.

After responding to delegates' questions, Mr. Girardi thanked all the delegates for their contributions to the draft outcome document and invited others to send their amendments in writing. The revised draft outcome document would be shared with all delegates through the IPU website at the end of November 2019.

Follow-up to the IPU resolution *Towards risk-resilient development: Taking into consideration demographic trends and natural constraints*

The panel discussion enjoyed expert contributions from Ms. K. Madi, Director, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), and Ms. A. Armitage, Regional Director for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

Ms. Madi informed the Committee that disasters cost the global economy 520 billion US dollars annually and that climate change had played a role in doubling the number of disasters in the last decade. The IPU resolution outlined 28 recommendations, 27 of which remained valid and linked very closely to the Sendai Framework. Ms. Madi urged parliamentarians to push for the development of national and local strategies on disaster risk reduction that would have a people-centred approach. So far, only 91 countries had reported to the United Nations that they had such mechanisms.

Ms. Armitage stressed that data showed that slowing population growth was not a shortcut to stopping climate change or reducing resource use and the human footprint on the environment. What was required was to achieve sustainable patterns of production and consumption as well as vastly reduce waste. The IPU resolution called for the integration of population factors and sexual and reproductive health in disaster risk reduction, which was an area where a fair amount of progress had been made. The resolution also made a strong call for better data and better maps, which was indeed a key prerequisite for helping people avoid risk and minimize disaster. This was an area of major emphasis globally, nationally, and for UNFPA.

In the ensuing debate, 13 delegates took the floor. They highlighted the need for better financing of disaster risk reduction through domestic resources and official development assistance. A concern was expressed that many donors did not meet their commitments and that, as a result, communities in developing countries continued to suffer a high disaster burden. Population movements significantly reduced the ability of countries to adequately prepare for and respond to disasters, particularly in conflict areas. Sharing experiences and good practices among countries was very beneficial and useful, particularly given the fast pace of climate change and increasingly strong impact of disasters.

Elections to the Bureau, work plan for the 142nd IPU Assembly and any other business

The Committee elected the following new Bureau members: Ms. M. Carvalho (Brazil) and Mr. B. Scotland (Guyana) from GRULAC; Mr. R. Marian (Moldova) from Eurasia; and Mr. I. Sereewatthanawut (Thailand) and Ms. S. Rehman (Pakistan) from Asia-Pacific. The representatives of Asia-Pacific would complete their respective countries' Bureau term.

The Committee approved the Bureau's proposal to dedicate the Committee's sittings at the 142nd IPU Assembly to drafting the resolution.

The Committee was informed about the Executive Committee's decision to rename it Standing Committee on Sustainable Development. This decision followed a consultation process to which the Committee Bureau had contributed.

Report of the Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs

*Noted by the 141st IPU Assembly
(Belgrade, 17 October 2019)*

With both Committee President and Vice-President unable to attend, Mr. P. Katjavivi (Namibia) chaired the session as the most senior member of the Committee Bureau.

After the formal adoption of the agenda and summary records of the previous Committee session (140th Assembly, Doha), Mr. Katjavivi introduced the first panel entitled *Respect for international law in keeping with the UN Charter and other relevant resolutions*.

The panel featured Mr. T. Biersteker (Professor, Graduate Institute of Geneva); Mr. A. Aljowaily (Ambassador of Egypt to Serbia); Ms. A. Theologou (Cyprus); and Mr. F.H. Naek (Pakistan). Thirty-eight delegations were present and 15 interventions were heard from the floor.

The discussion focused primarily on the question of whether sanctions were a useful tool to uphold international law, as well as on key bodies of international law such as the Security Council and international tribunals such as the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice.

After discussing the reasons why international sanctions might be imposed (i.e. to coerce behaviour change, to constrain a government's range of action, or simply as a warning against illegal behaviour), as well as the type of sanctions (i.e. economic and military; targeted or broad), it was noted that sanctions were effective in only about 20 per cent of situations and that in many cases they could actually make things worse. The effectiveness of sanctions depended in part on their timing and scope in each specific situation. What was certain was that the only kind of sanctions that were legitimate under international law were those imposed by the Security Council.

Besides their effectiveness, the other main question about sanctions had to do with the risk of politicization. As the Security Council's membership did not reflect the contemporary geopolitical balance of power, the decision on whether to impose sanctions did not necessarily reflect the will of the international community. The Permanent Five Members (P5) of the Security Council could use their veto power to block sanctions against them or their closest allies which explained somewhat why sanctions had only been imposed on weaker nations. That in turn gave rise to a "double standard" that called into question the whole sanctions regime.

Yet the sanctions regime remained one of the few ways to impose international law short of the threat or use of force. To the extent that international sanctions could work, governments and parliaments needed to strengthen their capacities to apply such sanctions through their respective jurisdictions. A host of administrative and legal capacities needed to be in place in each country to implement sanctions effectively by closing all possible loopholes and bringing to justice anyone who did not apply the law.

Sanctions should never be static but must be adapted to the changing circumstances on the ground ("a living regime"). In almost all cases targeted sanctions were more effective at hurting those who were responsible for breaking international law or who violate human rights than comprehensive sanctions that hurt a whole country indiscriminately. Sanctions should only be considered after all tools of diplomacy had been exhausted.

There was much vigorous debate amongst participants with many raising specific bilateral issues unique to their countries.

The second panel of the session revolved around the findings of the *2019 IPU survey on the relationship between parliaments and the United Nations*. Mr. A. Motter (Senior Advisor for economic and social affairs, IPU), presented the findings of that first ever assessment of the extent to which parliaments could influence UN decision-making processes and oversee their governments' positions at the UN. Ms. M. Kiener Nellen (Switzerland, member of the IPU Executive Committee) was the main discussant. Mr. Katjavivi, provided his observations as well before opening the floor to comments or questions. About thirteen delegations remained in the room for the segment and only four interventions were heard from the floor.

The survey's results were found to be somewhat disappointing. They were presented to the Committee as it was the IPU body mandated to help open the doors of the UN to national parliaments. The most worrying result was the low participation rate of just 50 parliaments out of 179 IPU Members. What could this mean: that many parliaments had no interest in following UN processes or simply that they had limited capacities to fill out the survey?

Overall the survey showed that:

- There was a big gap between the authority parliaments had to oversee UN affairs and their capacity or political will to actually exercise that authority.
- The bulk of parliaments were unfamiliar with key UN negotiation and reform processes.
- The participation of parliaments in UN meetings could be less effective than expected if parliamentarians were subject to government control.
- Many parliaments were unable to oversee their country's budget allocation to the UN system.
- The relationship between parliaments and the UN System in the field was generally tenuous.

Reporting on a meeting of the IPU Executive Committee where the survey had been discussed earlier in the day, Ms. Kiener Nellen said the survey had exposed a serious gap in the relationship between parliaments and the UN but also, most likely, the weakness of internal parliamentary services responsible for completing such surveys in consultation with members. Beyond that, it was also quite possible that parliaments were more interested in responding to surveys that touched on substantive policy questions (e.g. the SDGs) than on process questions such as the institutional relationship with the UN.

The Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments (ASGP) should be enlisted in future survey exercises to ensure a much higher response rate. Survey findings needed to inform the whole house, from the Executive Committee down to the Standing Committees and the IPU Geopolitical Groups. There was support for that particular survey of parliamentary engagement with the UN to be repeated every two or three years as a way of assessing progress overtime.

As one participant put it, "we need a UN of peoples, not of States", and the IPU must continue with its effort of bringing the views of parliamentarians to the UN so as to complement the limited views of the government of the day, which did not include the perspective of opposition parties.

In response to one participant's question about the proposed UN Parliamentary Assembly (UNPA), which some considered a more powerful tool of participation in UN processes and of oversight, it was noted that the governments that "owned" the UN would never agree to be subjected to the interference and scrutiny of such a body. In addition, the modalities whereby a UN Parliamentary Assembly would be constituted were far from clear. The IPU approach, which aimed to build on existing structures by strengthening the hand of national parliaments in international processes, was the only viable one.

At the conclusion of the second panel discussion the Committee Secretary, Ms. P. Torsney (Head, Office of the Permanent Observer of the IPU to the United Nations), reported on the next two main processes on the IPU radar at the UN: a new resolution of the General Assembly on interaction between the UN, national parliaments and the IPU, due around May 2020, and the 75th UN anniversary summit in September. All parliaments would be called upon to support those processes in due course.

The Chair announced three nominations to fill vacancies on the Committee Bureau, as follows: Mr. A. Gryffroy (Belgium), Mr. R. Peña Flores (Costa Rica), and Ms. P. Tohmeena (Thailand). The nominations were confirmed by acclamation.

Following this, Mr. Katjavivi brought the meeting to a close.

IPU Budget for 2020

*Approved by the IPU Governing Council at its 205th session
(Belgrade, 14 October 2019)*

	2019 Approved Budget	2020 Approved Budget		
		Regular Budget	Other Sources	All Funds
REVENUES				
Assessed contributions	10,515,200	10,959,200		10,959,200
Working Capital Fund (IPSAS)	232,000	230,000		230,000
Working Capital Fund (liquid)	190,000	222,000		222,000
Staff assessment	1,099,700	1,205,800		1,205,800
Interest	100,000	100,000		100,000
Programme support costs	0	375,200	(375,200)	0
Other revenue	16,000	16,000		16,000
Voluntary contributions	4,034,400		5,065,000	5,065,000
TOTAL REVENUES	16,187,300	13,108,200	4,689,800	17,798,000
EXPENDITURES				
Strategic Objectives				
1. Build strong, democratic parliaments	2,146,400	1,350,100	983,000	2,333,100
2. Advance gender equality and respect for women's rights	1,174,300	516,100	827,900	1,344,000
3. Protect and promote human rights	1,544,100	1,042,600	559,800	1,602,400
4. Contribute to peacebuilding, conflict prevention and security	1,102,700	198,700	1,246,400	1,445,100
5. Promote inter-parliamentary dialogue and cooperation	3,437,600	3,849,700		3,849,700
6. Promote youth empowerment	344,700	84,500	267,100	351,600
7. Mobilize parliaments around the global development agenda	1,002,700	156,100	1,159,200	1,315,300
8. Bridge the democracy gap in international relations	927,100	955,300		955,300
Subtotal	11,679,600	8,153,100	5,043,400	13,196,500
Enablers				
Effective internal governance and oversight	934,300	1,006,500	21,600	1,028,100
Visibility, advocacy and communications	1,097,200	1,052,000		1,052,000
Gender mainstreaming and a rights-based approach	10,000	10,000		10,000
A properly resourced and efficient Secretariat	2,658,900	2,779,000		2,779,000
Subtotal	4,700,400	4,847,500	21,600	4,869,100
Other charges	106,000	107,600		107,600
Eliminations	(298,700)		(375,200)	(375,200)
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	16,187,300	13,108,200	4,689,800	17,798,000

Approved 2020 capital budget

Item	2020
1. Replacement of computers	35,000
2. Furniture	15,000
4. Website development	100,000
Total capital expenditures	150,000

Approved programme and budget for 2020

Scale of contributions for 2020 based on the UN scale of assessment

*Approved by the IPU Governing Council at its 205th session
(Belgrade, 14 October 2019)*

Country Name	UN 2019–2021	Approved 2020 scale	
	Per cent	Per cent	CHF
Afghanistan	0.007%	0.110%	12,100
Albania	0.008%	0.110%	12,100
Algeria	0.138%	0.270%	29,600
Andorra	0.005%	0.110%	12,100
Angola	0.010%	0.110%	12,100
Argentina	0.915%	1.110%	121,600
Armenia	0.007%	0.110%	12,100
Australia	2.210%	2.440%	267,400
Austria	0.677%	0.860%	94,300
Azerbaijan	0.049%	0.160%	17,500
Bahrain	0.050%	0.160%	17,500
Bangladesh	0.010%	0.110%	12,100
Belarus	0.049%	0.160%	17,500
Belgium	0.821%	1.010%	110,700
Benin	0.003%	0.100%	11,000
Bhutan	0.001%	0.100%	11,000
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	0.016%	0.120%	13,200
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0.012%	0.120%	13,200
Botswana	0.014%	0.120%	13,200
Brazil	2.948%	3.170%	347,400
Bulgaria	0.046%	0.160%	17,500
Burkina Faso	0.003%	0.100%	11,000
Burundi	0.001%	0.100%	11,000
Cabo Verde	0.001%	0.100%	11,000
Cambodia	0.006%	0.110%	12,100
Cameroon	0.013%	0.120%	13,200
Canada	2.734%	2.960%	324,400
Central African Republic	0.001%	0.100%	11,000
Chad	0.004%	0.100%	11,000
Chile	0.407%	0.570%	62,500
China	12.005%	11.750%	1,284,500
Colombia	0.288%	0.440%	48,200
Comoros	0.001%	0.100%	11,000
Congo	0.006%	0.110%	12,100
Costa Rica	0.062%	0.180%	19,700
Côte d'Ivoire	0.013%	0.120%	13,200
Croatia	0.077%	0.200%	21,900
Cuba	0.080%	0.200%	21,900
Cyprus	0.036%	0.150%	16,400
Czech Republic	0.311%	0.460%	50,400
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	0.006%	0.110%	12,100
Democratic Republic of the Congo	0.010%	0.110%	12,100
Denmark	0.554%	0.730%	80,000
Djibouti	0.001%	0.100%	11,000
Dominican Republic	0.053%	0.170%	18,600
Ecuador	0.080%	0.200%	21,900
Egypt	0.186%	0.320%	35,100
El Salvador	0.012%	0.120%	13,200
Equatorial Guinea	0.016%	0.120%	13,200

Country Name	UN 2019–2021	Approved 2020 scale	
	Per cent	Per cent	CHF
Estonia	0.039%	0.150%	16,400
Eswatini	0.002%	0.100%	11,000
Ethiopia	0.010%	0.110%	12,100
Fiji	0.003%	0.100%	11,000
Finland	0.421%	0.580%	63,600
France	4.427%	4.620%	506,300
Gabon	0.015%	0.120%	13,200
Gambia	0.001%	0.100%	11,000
Georgia	0.008%	0.110%	12,100
Germany	6.090%	6.220%	681,700
Ghana	0.015%	0.120%	13,200
Greece	0.366%	0.520%	57,000
Guatemala	0.036%	0.150%	16,400
Guinea	0.003%	0.100%	11,000
Guinea-Bissau	0.001%	0.100%	11,000
Guyana	0.002%	0.100%	11,000
Haiti	0.003%	0.100%	11,000
Honduras	0.009%	0.110%	12,100
Hungary	0.206%	0.350%	38,400
Iceland	0.028%	0.140%	15,300
India	0.834%	1.030%	112,900
Indonesia	0.543%	0.720%	78,900
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	0.398%	0.560%	61,400
Iraq	0.129%	0.260%	28,500
Ireland	0.371%	0.530%	58,100
Israel	0.490%	0.660%	72,300
Italy	3.307%	3.530%	386,900
Japan	8.564%	8.560%	938,100
Jordan	0.021%	0.130%	14,200
Kazakhstan	0.178%	0.310%	34,000
Kenya	0.024%	0.130%	14,200
Kuwait	0.252%	0.400%	43,800
Kyrgyzstan	0.002%	0.100%	11,000
Lao People's Democratic Republic	0.005%	0.110%	12,100
Latvia	0.047%	0.160%	17,500
Lebanon	0.047%	0.160%	17,500
Lesotho	0.001%	0.100%	11,000
Libya	0.030%	0.140%	15,300
Liechtenstein	0.009%	0.110%	12,100
Lithuania	0.071%	0.190%	20,800
Luxembourg	0.067%	0.180%	19,700
Madagascar	0.004%	0.100%	11,000
Malawi	0.002%	0.100%	11,000
Malaysia	0.341%	0.500%	54,800
Maldives	0.004%	0.100%	11,000
Mali	0.004%	0.100%	11,000
Malta	0.017%	0.120%	13,200
Marshall Islands	0.001%	0.100%	11,000
Mauritania	0.002%	0.100%	11,000
Mauritius	0.011%	0.110%	12,100
Mexico	1.292%	1.500%	164,400
Micronesia (Federated States of)	0.001%	0.100%	11,000
Monaco	0.011%	0.110%	12,100
Mongolia	0.005%	0.110%	12,100
Montenegro	0.004%	0.100%	11,000
Morocco	0.055%	0.170%	18,600
Mozambique	0.004%	0.100%	11,000

Country Name	UN 2019–2021	Approved 2020 scale	
	Per cent	Per cent	CHF
Myanmar	0.010%	0.110%	12,100
Namibia	0.009%	0.110%	12,100
Nepal	0.007%	0.110%	12,100
Netherlands	1.356%	1.570%	172,100
New Zealand	0.291%	0.440%	48,200
Nicaragua	0.005%	0.110%	12,100
Niger	0.002%	0.100%	11,000
Nigeria	0.250%	0.390%	42,700
North Macedonia	0.007%	0.110%	12,100
Norway	0.754%	0.940%	103,000
Oman	0.115%	0.240%	26,300
Pakistan	0.115%	0.240%	26,300
Palau	0.001%	0.100%	11,000
Palestine		0.100%	11,000
Panama	0.045%	0.160%	17,500
Papua New Guinea	0.010%	0.110%	12,100
Paraguay	0.016%	0.120%	13,200
Peru	0.152%	0.280%	30,700
Philippines	0.205%	0.340%	37,300
Poland	0.802%	0.990%	108,500
Portugal	0.350%	0.510%	55,900
Qatar	0.282%	0.430%	47,100
Republic of Korea	2.267%	2.500%	274,000
Republic of Moldova	0.003%	0.100%	11,000
Romania	0.198%	0.340%	37,300
Russian Federation	2.405%	2.630%	288,200
Rwanda	0.003%	0.100%	11,000
Saint Lucia	0.001%	0.100%	11,000
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	0.001%	0.100%	11,000
Samoa	0.001%	0.100%	11,000
San Marino	0.002%	0.100%	11,000
Sao Tome and Principe	0.001%	0.100%	11,000
Saudi Arabia	1.172%	1.380%	151,200
Senegal	0.007%	0.110%	12,100
Serbia	0.028%	0.140%	15,300
Seychelles	0.002%	0.100%	11,000
Sierra Leone	0.001%	0.100%	11,000
Singapore	0.485%	0.650%	71,200
Slovakia	0.153%	0.280%	30,700
Slovenia	0.076%	0.190%	20,800
Somalia	0.001%	0.100%	11,000
South Africa	0.272%	0.420%	46,000
South Sudan	0.006%	0.110%	12,100
Spain	2.146%	2.370%	259,700
Sri Lanka	0.044%	0.160%	17,500
Sudan	0.010%	0.110%	12,100
Suriname	0.005%	0.110%	12,100
Sweden	0.906%	1.100%	120,600
Switzerland	1.151%	1.360%	149,000
Syrian Arab Republic	0.011%	0.110%	12,100
Tajikistan	0.004%	0.100%	11,000
Thailand	0.307%	0.460%	50,400
Timor-Leste	0.002%	0.100%	11,000
Togo	0.002%	0.100%	11,000
Tonga	0.001%	0.100%	11,000
Trinidad and Tobago	0.040%	0.150%	16,400
Tunisia	0.025%	0.130%	14,200

Country Name	UN 2019–2021	Approved 2020 scale	
	Per cent	Per cent	CHF
Turkey	1.371%	1.590%	174,300
Turkmenistan	0.033%	0.140%	15,300
Tuvalu	0.001%	0.100%	11,000
Uganda	0.008%	0.110%	12,100
Ukraine	0.057%	0.170%	18,600
United Arab Emirates	0.616%	0.800%	87,700
United Kingdom	4.567%	4.760%	521,700
United Republic of Tanzania	0.010%	0.110%	12,100
Uruguay	0.087%	0.210%	23,000
Uzbekistan	0.032%	0.140%	15,300
Vanuatu	0.001%	0.100%	11,000
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	0.728%	0.910%	99,700
Viet Nam	0.077%	0.200%	21,900
Yemen	0.010%	0.110%	12,100
Zambia	0.009%	0.110%	12,100
Zimbabwe	0.005%	0.110%	12,100

Member or associate member	UN 2019–2021	Approved 2020 scale	
	Per cent	Per cent	CHF
Andean Parliament		0.020%	2,200
Arab Parliament		0.010%	1,100
Central American Parliament		0.010%	1,100
East African Legislative Assembly		0.010%	1,100
European Parliament		0.060%	6,600
Interparliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States		0.020%	2,200
Inter-Parliamentary Committee of the West African Economic and Monetary Union		0.010%	1,100
Latin American and Caribbean Parliament		0.020%	2,200
Parliament of the CEMAC		0.010%	1,100
Parliament of the ECOWAS		0.010%	1,100
Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation		0.030%	3,300
Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe		0.040%	4,400
Total		100%	10,959,200

Cooperation with the United Nations system

List of activities undertaken undertaken by the IPU between
15 March and 15 September 2019

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 205th session
(Belgrade, 17 October 2019)*

Democracy and human rights

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the IPU continued their project of assistance to the Parliament of Myanmar. The two organizations also continued their collaboration in support of the Parliament of Tunisia.

From 24 to 26 June in Geneva, the IPU and the Office of the UN High Commission for Human Rights (OHCHR) organized a seminar for members of parliamentary human rights committees entitled *Parliamentary engagement on human rights: Identifying good practices and new opportunities for action*. The event discussed parliamentary engagement on human rights and parliamentary involvement in the work of UN human rights mechanisms. In line with the interest shown in this event and the need for sustained support to members of parliamentary human rights committees, a similar meeting will be organized at global or regional level in the first half of 2020.

The IPU and the International Labour Organization (ILO) have finalized the draft of the Handbook for Parliamentarians no. 30, entitled *Eliminating Forced Labour*, which will be launched soon.

Initial planning for a third issue of the IPU-UNDP Global Parliamentary Report (GPR) began in the course of the summer. The new GPR should be published toward the end of 2020.

Gender equality

Together with the OHCHR, UN Women, International Gender Champions and a number of Permanent Missions to the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG), the IPU organized a special event entitled *Legislating for gender equality: Eliminating gender-based discrimination and violence by 2030* on 26 June in Geneva. The event was a side event of the session of the Human Rights Council and was attended by many MPs participating in the work of the Council as part of their national delegations.

Jointly with UN Women, the IPU and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) organized a side event on the occasion of the UN Human Rights Council on addressing violence against women in parliament, entitled *#NotInMyParliament—Sexism, Harassment and Violence against Women Parliamentarians*.

In honour of the 40th anniversary of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), on 8 July the IPU and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) organized a public event in Geneva entitled *The CEDAW Convention: 40 Years of Promoting and Empowering Women*. The event served to raise awareness on the work of the CEDAW Committee in its efforts to ensure the eradication of inequality and bias towards women.

In late July, the IPU and UN Women Colombia provided support to the Parliament of Colombia in assessing its level of gender-sensitivity using the IPU self-assessment toolkit for parliaments, entitled *Evaluating the gender sensitivity of parliaments*. The assessment took place in a workshop on gender-sensitive parliaments entitled *Congreso en Igualdad*, with the aim of building a gender-responsive parliamentary action plan in Colombia.

A General Assembly resolution was adopted in August which explicitly invites the IPU to contribute to a special meeting of the UN in September 2020 marking the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration on women.

The IPU President joined the President of the UN General Assembly's Group of Gender Equality Leaders at a panel discussion held on 15 July. This participation resulted in a substantive contribution to key recommendations of the panel discussion, in particular to step up efforts to enhance women's political participation and end violence against women in politics.

The IPU has also continued to promote the role of parliaments in implementing CEDAW. IPU Member Parliaments have been kept regularly informed and invited to contribute to their country review by the CEDAW Committee. A growing number of parliaments have indicated their commitment to following up on the Committee's recommendations to enhance CEDAW compliance nationally.

Youth empowerment

The IPU partnered with the UNDP, the ILO and the UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth in co-organizing the 2019 Future Policy Award with the World Future Council. The IPU contributed throughout the Award process – to the nomination, research, media and assessment stages. A Jury Call involving these UN bodies as well as other experts included the IPU President and the President of the IPU Forum of Young Parliamentarians.

On 9 and 10 September, the IPU and the Parliament of Paraguay organized the Sixth Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians in Asunción on the theme *Achieving the SDGs and empowering youth through well-being*. Representatives from the UNDP, UN Women, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank served as panellists and contributed to the debates.

An IPU delegation of young parliamentarians took part in the 2019 UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Youth Forum in April. Entitled *Youth: Empowered, Included and Equal*, the Forum brought together participants to discuss inclusion as a vehicle of youth empowerment and progress in achieving the SDGs. A member of the Board of the IPU Forum of Young Parliamentarians served as a panellist in an interactive session to discuss the role of youth and young MPs in advancing implementation of the SDGs.

International peace and security

On 8 May in Geneva, the executive heads of the IPU, the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding to cement their cooperation in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism. The signing ceremony was attended by the UNOG Director-General, Mr. Michael Møller, and the Speaker of the United Arab Emirates Parliament and Chair of the IPU High-level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism, Dr Amal Al Qubaisi.

This trilateral agreement represents an acknowledgment of the important role of parliaments and parliamentarians in ensuring the success of UN activities and resolutions on counter-terrorism. For the first time, a Joint Secretariat was established between the two UN agencies and the IPU, with its own budget and team, which constitutes a new model of cooperation between international organizations. The agreement also allowed the IPU to become an observer member of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact – an agreement between 36 UN entities that aims to improve coordination in the global efforts to counter terrorism.

As part of the capacity-building activities of the IPU-UN Joint Programme on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism, in June 2019 the three partners held the second regional conference for the Sahel countries on counter-terrorism and violent extremism in Niamey, Niger, which focused on parliamentary engagement in addressing terrorism and conditions conducive to terrorism in the Sahel region. A third regional conference is scheduled to take place from 20 September to 3 October in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, for the Asia-Pacific region. The primary objective of these regional conferences is to build a real in-depth understanding of the root causes, concerns and challenges of terrorism and counter-terrorism at the national and regional levels.

In the framework of the Joint Programme, the IPU, UNODC and UNOCT developed the SHERLOC Legal Databases, which gather comprehensive counter-terrorism legislation, case law, bibliography, strategies and treaties.

On 23 July, ECOSOC adopted a resolution, *Technical assistance provided by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime related to counter-terrorism*, explicitly acknowledging "the important role that parliaments can play in preventing and countering terrorism and addressing conditions conducive to terrorism, and recognizing also the relevance of the partnership established between the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Office of Counter-Terrorism in that regard".

On 19 and 20 September, the IPU, with support from the UN Office of Disarmament Affairs (ODA) and the 1540 Committee Group of experts, organized a parliamentary seminar in Wellington, New Zealand, to promote the effective implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 on the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) to non-State actors. The seminar, co-hosted by the Parliament of New Zealand, gathered parliamentarians from the Pacific region with a view to strengthening their capacity to assess risks related to WMDs and to take measures required to reduce those risks.

The IPU and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) began working on a promotion campaign to encourage parliaments to have the treaty signed and ratified so that it can finally be enforced. Follow-up to the campaign will take place during a panel discussion that will be organized by the IPU Standing Committee on Peace and International Security during the 141st IPU Assembly in Belgrade, Serbia.

The IPU cooperated with the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in facilitating a panel discussion during the 140th Assembly in Doha, Qatar, on national implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention as a means to address threats arising from non-State actors. Another side event of this kind should also take place during the 141st Assembly in Belgrade.

Sustainable development

Much of the work during this period focused on preparations for the 8–18 July session of the High-level Political Forum for Sustainable Development (HLPF). The IPU surveyed the parliaments of the countries participating in Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) whose final reports were presented at the main HLPF session. During the session, a half-day Parliamentary Forum was held as a special event to draw more attention to the role of parliaments in the 2030 Agenda. The forum, chaired by the IPU President, replaced a smaller side event held in previous years and will continue to be a fixture of future sessions. Over 140 MPs from 50 countries were in attendance.

During the HLPF the IPU organized a number of other events: a workshop with UNDP on assessing parliaments' capacities to institutionalize the SDGs; an event on parliamentary indicators for SDG 16 (the governance goal); and another event, with UNHCR, on statelessness. The IPU President spoke at a number of other HLPF events, such as an official panel discussion on SDG 16, a special event of the President of the General Assembly on women's empowerment, and an event of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on sexual abuse of children. The IPU Secretary General spoke at a side event of the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (on parliamentary indicators for SDG 16), was a presenter at a special ECOSOC event (*What is democracy? Stepping up engagement around goal 16*), and participated in a meeting on the role of parliaments in the 2030 Agenda hosted by the Mission of Germany. The IPU President delivered an official statement to the main session of the HLPF.

In view of the heads of State session of the HLPF on 24 and 25 September, known as the SDG Summit, the Office of the Permanent Observer of the IPU to the United Nations in New York followed closely the negotiation of the Summit's Declaration with a view to having parliaments reflected in the document (unsuccessfully). The office worked closely with the Ambassador of El Salvador as the lead facilitator for the Summit, together with the President of the General Assembly, to focus one of the special dialogue sessions of the Summit on the role of parliament. As a result, the President of the IPU has been invited to speak at the Leadership Dialogue on localizing the SDGs, alongside a number of heads of State and government.

The modalities resolution for the High-level Meeting on universal health coverage (HLM) scheduled for 26 September explicitly invites the IPU to contribute to this event. In the lead-up to the HLM, the IPU participated in a preparatory multi-stakeholder hearing in May. The IPU Secretary General sat on one of the panels of the hearing and several MPs participated in the floor debate. The IPU also coordinated with the organizers of the meeting to provide a parliamentary presence on one of its panels.

The Chair of the IPU Advisory Group on Health and co-rapporteur of the IPU resolution *Achieving universal health coverage by 2030: The role of parliaments in ensuring the right to health* addressed the WHO Executive Board, which was held in Geneva from 24 January to 1 February. On 23 and 24 May, in conjunction with the World Health Assembly, the IPU and the WHO organized a technical briefing for parliamentarians entitled *From commitment to action: Parliaments moving the universal health coverage agenda forward* and a parliamentary seminar on universal health coverage. The IPU Secretary General also delivered an official statement to the World Health Assembly. On 10 and 11 July, the IPU participated as an alternate member of the new intergovernmental constituency in a meeting of the Board of the Partnership for Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health (PMNCH), which is managed by the WHO.

On 10 and 11 September, the IPU collaborated with the WHO, UNICEF, PMNCH, Countdown to 2030, and the African Population and Health Research Centre (APHRC) to organize a regional workshop, *Reducing inequalities in reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health in sub-Saharan Africa: From evidence to policy and accountability*, held in Nairobi, Kenya.

As a member of the Steering Committee of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (GPEDC), the IPU participated in the Senior-Level Meeting of the GPEDC that was held on 13 and 14 July in connection with the HLPF session, and in particular to contribute to the review of SDG 17. About 40 MPs participated in this meeting, in which the results of a monitoring exercise on development cooperation were presented. Work on a new guidance note for parliamentarians on development cooperation continued during this period. The note will be published as a joint IPU-UNDP publication in the last quarter of 2019.

As a member of the Advisory Group of the UN Development Cooperation Forum (DCF), the IPU provided input on the DCF's new strategy for the 2020–21 cycle. This also included early planning for a new policy brief and a DCF symposium in the first quarter of 2020.

As part of a Memorandum of Understanding with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the IPU and UNEP jointly organized three national workshops on promoting parliamentary engagement on climate change in Zimbabwe (8 March), Burundi (22 March) and Zambia (22 July).

The IPU also supported an interactive session with parliamentarians in the context of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in May, *Opportunities for Engagement of Parliamentarians in a New Landscape of Risk-informed Sustainable Development*.

In order to promote greater awareness about the SDGs and foster parliamentary cooperation, between March and September 2019 the IPU organized four regional and interregional events, namely: the Second Regional Seminar for the Asia-Pacific Region Parliaments on Achieving the SDGs (Mongolia, 27 and 28 May), the Regional Seminar on Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals for the IPU's Twelve Plus Geopolitical Group (Portugal, 5 and 6 June), the Fourth Interregional Seminar on Parliamentary Capacity-Building and the Further Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (China, 12–14 June) and the Fourth South Asian Speakers' Summit on Achieving the SDGs (Maldives, 1 and 2 September). Various UN representatives have been invited to participate as speakers in sessions mainly focusing on: governance, education, health, sustainable agriculture, equality at work, nutrition and climate change. They were affiliated to the following agencies: United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP); UNDP Pacific Office in Fiji; UNESCO Beijing Cluster Office; United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Mongolia; UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) for Northeast Asia; WHO Regional Office for Europe; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), UNDP Maldives and UNDP HQ.

An initial discussion took place between IPU and the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS) with regard to the joint organization of a parliamentary forum ahead of the Fifth Conference on the Least Developed Countries to take place in Doha, Qatar, in March 2021.

International trade and the global economy

The IPU and the European Parliament prepared for a parliamentary session on 9 October in the context of the 2019 Public Forum at the WTO (Geneva, 8–11 October), which this year focused on the overall theme of *Trading forward: Adapting to a changing world*. The autumn session of the Steering Committee of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO was also to be held at IPU Headquarters on 7 October, allowing for an interactive debate with WTO officials, as well as for an in-depth examination of preparations for the WTO Parliamentary Conference next year, which is expected to take place in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan, in the context of the WTO Ministerial Meeting in June 2020.

After a very successful G20 Parliamentary Forum and Speakers' Summit in Buenos Aires in late 2018, the IPU lent its support to the Japanese Diet in the organization of the G20 Speakers' Summit for 2019, which will take place in Tokyo on 4 November. Discussions are also under way with the President of the Shura Council of Saudi Arabia, the country chairing the G20 in 2020, in view of further enhancing the parliamentary dimension of the G20. Although not related to the United Nations *per se*, IPU engagement with the G20 process is part of its overall objective of strengthening the role of parliaments in global governance and hence bridging the democracy gap in international relations.

Senior-level interaction

On 12 July, the IPU Secretary General met with the High Representative for the UN Alliance of Civilizations (AOC), Mr. Miguel Angel Moratinos, to discuss cooperation for a high-level conference on inter-faith and inter-ethnic dialogue that the IPU will organize in cooperation with the UN in the Russian Federation in May 2022 (pursuant to the May 2018 General Assembly resolution on interaction between the United Nations, parliaments and the IPU). The IPU Secretary General took the opportunity to renew his commitment to the Group of Friends of the AOC.

On 17 July, the IPU President met with the Deputy Secretary-General of the UN, Ms. Amina Mohammed, to update her on preparations for the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament and other major processes under way at the IPU. On the same day, the IPU Secretary General met with the UNDP Administrator Mr. Achim Steiner, to discuss joint cooperation in the area of governance and parliamentary strengthening, particularly in the light of internal changes at the UNDP that call for a new IPU focal point to be established.

On 18 July, the IPU President and the IPU Secretary General had a first meeting with the incoming President of the General Assembly at its 74th session, Ambassador Tijjani Muhammad Bande (Nigeria). The meeting paved the way for preparations for the joint Parliamentary Hearing at the UN in February 2020 and a new General Assembly resolution on interaction between the United Nations, parliaments and the IPU in the spring of 2020. The IPU President also briefed Ambassador Bande on preparations for the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament in August 2020 and expressed the wish that he might be able to attend.

The President of the 73rd General Assembly, Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa, was the guest of honour at a reception offered by the IPU President on 17 July in conjunction with an exhibit at UN Headquarters (New York) marking the 130th anniversary of the IPU.

The Head of the Office of the Permanent Observer of the IPU to the United Nations met with Mr. Robert Piper, the Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the newly reconstituted UN Development Coordination Office, to further review how Resident Coordinators and UN Country Offices may interact with parliaments in the field.

Report of the Committee on Middle East Questions

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 205th session
(Belgrade, 17 October 2019)*

The Committee held two sittings, on 15 and 16 October 2019. The Committee's President, Ms. S. Ataullahjan (Canada); Mr. H. Julien-Laferrière (France); Ms. A.P. Boateng (Ghana); Mr. A. Al-Ahmad (Palestine); Mr. A.A. Jama (Somalia); and Mr. M. Al Mehrzi (United Arab Emirates) attended both sittings. A delegate from Lesotho represented Ms. M. Mokitimi (Lesotho) in the sitting on 16 October.

Although the quorum had not been met during the sittings of the Committee, the members agreed to carry on the discussions, knowing that none of the decisions would be binding.

The Committee examined the current situation in the region, particularly in Israel and Palestine, Libya, Syria, and Yemen. Members were informed about the dissolution of the Knesset and the recent legislative elections that had taken place on 17 September, just six months after the previous legislative elections, which were held in April 2019, following the dissolution of the Knesset in December 2018. During the election campaign, Prime Minister Netanyahu had vowed to annex part of the Jordan Valley and northern Dead Sea if he returned to office, as well as all Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank. Certain members of the Committee emphasized that such actions could create great instability in the region and put an end to the two-State solution, and peace in general. Furthermore, the Palestinian delegate informed the Committee members that legislative elections would be taking place soon. He invited the IPU and any other interested parties to participate in these elections as observers. He then called on the international community to respect international law with regards to the Israeli-Palestinian situation as a whole, in particular during these elections.

Additionally, the members heard a presentation from the Yemeni delegation attending the 141st IPU Assembly, led by Mr. S. Al Barkani. The Committee members recognized that there was only one Parliament in Yemen, working in line with the constitution of the country. They applauded the initiative of Mr. S. Al Barkani to benefit from the IPU as a platform for dialogue, to organize a meeting with parliamentarians from Sana'a in Geneva. Mr. S. Al Barkani reassured the Committee that he and his colleagues stood ready to contribute to making that meeting happen in any way possible, including financially. They further requested technical support from the IPU in order to enhance the work of the Parliament and through it, alleviate the suffering of the Yemeni people. The Committee welcomed the request and stressed that its main focus remained the humanitarian situation in the country. Regarding Libya, the Committee also heard a presentation from the head of the delegation, Mr. F. Salim. He gave an overview of the situation on the ground, and responding to questions from the members, expounded

on the fact that the country was currently deeply divided but that the House of Representatives of Libya was doing its best to hold parliamentary sessions. Unfortunately, due to security reasons it had been very difficult to hold sessions in the country but an initiative to hold a parliamentary session in Egypt was underway. Some 100 parliamentarians were expected to attend this session.

The Committee was saddened about the recent developments in Syria and enquired about the status of the IPU Working Group on Syria. As the work of the group had been stalled for quite some time, the members discussed the possibility of undertaking a mission to Syria in order to gain a better understanding of the situation on the ground.

While recognizing the security limitations, the members of the Committee encouraged the Libyan and the Yemeni delegations to make every effort to attend IPU events and activities with plural delegations. Overall, the members welcomed the opportunity to discuss the situations in Libya, Syria and Yemen at length. Nevertheless, they regretted that Israel could not attend this meeting as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict remained at the heart of the issues in the Middle East and had a strong impact on issues throughout the region.

In reviewing the mandate of the Committee on Middle East Questions within the IPU Strategy, the Committee members concurred that while the United Nations Security Council had a legal mandate for its decisions, the Committee had a moral responsibility for the situations in the Middle East. In this regard, parliamentarians, in particular the members of the Committee, should push for dialogue and trust building so that peace could prevail.

With regards to the round table, it was agreed that the IPU Secretariat would prepare a concept note with several suggested themes and objectives, in addition to discussions about the role and the mandate of the Committee. The Committee members would then share their feedback electronically. The members further wished to see the Science for Peace Schools implemented in the coming months as they had been informed that funding was being secured for the first Schools. Fundraising for the following Schools was still underway.

Lastly, the Committee members remained eager to undertake a visit to the region and hoped that it could take place soon after the convening of the 21st Knesset. Both Israel* and Palestine welcomed such a mission.

Report of the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 205th session
(Belgrade, 17 October 2019)*

1. The Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL Committee) met on Monday, 14 October 2019. Representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) also attended.

Cooperation with the ICRC

2. The year 2019 marks the 70th anniversary of the four Geneva Conventions of 1949. The IHL Committee discussed preparations for its open debate at the 141st Assembly, which would focus on the Geneva Conventions, with a special emphasis on gender-based violence and missing persons. The Committee also welcomed the IPU's display of the ICRC exhibit *Women in War*.

3. The IHL Committee also discussed cooperation with the ICRC and strategies to enhance the contribution of parliaments to implementation of international humanitarian law (IHL). To bolster engagement, it recommended that Members:

- Disseminate in their respective parliaments the IPU-ICRC handbook for parliamentarians on international humanitarian law produced in 2016.

* Information shared in a written communication.

- Support the translation of the handbook into national languages. The handbook exists in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Spanish and Russian. The Committee recommends that financial support be provided to the ICRC for the production of new language versions, to ensure the document is translated properly.
- Organize a launch event or debate on the issue in their parliament.
- Reach out to ICRC representatives in their respective countries for support, information and engagement.
- Review their national legislation to assess its conformity with IHL.

4. The IHL Committee also recommended that the IPU and the ICRC consider organizing regional workshops or training on parliamentary committees dealing with IHL, which would explore the interaction between parliaments and national humanitarian law committees. It furthermore recommended that parliamentary best practices be shared so as to encourage action by parliaments in this area.

Follow-up to the emergency item resolution adopted at the 137th IPU Assembly

5. The emergency item resolution, *Ending the grave human crisis, persecution and violent attacks on the Rohingya as a threat to international peace and security and ensuring their unconditional and safe return to their homeland in Myanmar*, adopted at the 137th IPU Assembly in St. Petersburg, called on the IHL Committee "to explore appropriate and practical measures to be undertaken by the global parliamentary community to address the situation of the Rohingya people and provide a peaceful and sustainable solution to the crisis".

6. The Committee discussed follow-up to the resolution. It received a briefing from UNHCR on recent developments regarding refugees in Bangladesh and the situation in Myanmar. To address the sensitive context, including the root causes of the crisis, it recommends adopting a practical approach and engaging with the Parliament to organize a workshop in Myanmar on the role of Parliament and peacebuilding. The Committee looks forward to constructive engagement with the Parliament.

Cooperation with UNHCR

7. The Committee welcomed the ongoing, close cooperation with UNHCR. The IPU President and the President of the IHL Committee had attended the UNHCR Executive Committee in Geneva, where they had raised the importance of parliamentary engagement.

8. The Committee also welcomed the holding of the regional conference on refugees for African Parliaments, organized by the IPU with UNHCR support, and hosted by the Pan-African Parliament. The Conference is due to take place from 11 to 13 November in Midrand, South Africa. The Committee encourages strong participation by the parliaments of the region in this important event.

9. The Committee further discussed current refugee-related crises and where the Committee's engagement could contribute meaningfully to overall efforts. Three countries were discussed, as a result of exchanges between the IPU President and the UNHCR High Commissioner: Yemen, Syria and South Sudan. The Committee acknowledged the importance of monitoring and closely following developments in the three countries, focusing on the humanitarian perspective, as per its mandate. At the same time, the Committee recommended organizing on-site missions to the respective countries, possibly starting with South Sudan.

10. The Committee then went on to discuss the Global Refugee Forum, which will be held in mid December 2019 in Geneva. To support follow-up to and work on the Global Compact on Refugees, the Committee recommended that the IPU put forward a pledge reflecting ongoing and planned work. The pledge focuses on raising MPs' awareness and providing them with technical support.

The proposed text reads as follows:

The Inter-Parliamentary Union pledges to:

- *raise parliaments' awareness, at each IPU Assembly, of progress and challenges in developing comprehensive refugee responses*
- *engage with MPs, and in particular young parliamentarians and women parliamentarians, and support them in taking action in support of refugees and host countries*
- *collect, with UNHCR, good parliamentary practices and disseminate them among the parliamentary community*
- *organize, with UNHCR, training and capacity-building initiatives for MPs in legislative work in complement to national pledges.*

11. The Committee discussed progress on the UNHCR #IBelong campaign on statelessness. It welcomed the recent initiative taken by Iran to allow for the passing of nationality from mother to child, which will contribute to preventing statelessness. It encouraged other countries that have gender-based discrimination in nationality laws to open a debate on the matter. The Committee recommended that the IPU put forward a pledge reflecting ongoing and planned work. The pledge focuses on raising MPs' awareness and providing them with technical support.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union pledges to:

- raise political awareness of parliaments of, monitor progress on and draw attention to legislative and other reforms to address statelessness at each IPU Assembly
- engage young parliamentarians and women parliamentarians in efforts to address statelessness, in particular in addressing gender-based discrimination in nationality laws
- provide support to parliaments involved in reforming nationality laws to prevent statelessness and addressing discrimination in law.

Committee membership

12. The Committee noted that one of its members had been absent for two consecutive sessions without justification. In accordance with the Rules, this member will be notified that her seat will now be declared vacant. Elections will be held at the next Assembly.

Report of the High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG)

*Noted by the Governing Council at its 205th session
(Belgrade, 17 October 2019)*

The High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG) met on Sunday, 13 October, for the first time in its new composition. Mr. R. Lopatka (Austria), Mr. F. Chen (China), Mr. A. Abdel-Aal (Egypt), Mr. F. Merino (El Salvador), Mr. R. del Picchia (France), Mr. K. Jalali (Islamic Republic of Iran), Mr. G. Migliore (Italy), Ms. J. Oduol (Kenya), Ms. M. Mensah-Williams (Namibia), Ms. S. Marri (Pakistan), Ms. M. Kiener Nellen (Switzerland), and Ms. A. Alqubaisi (United Arab Emirates) attended the meeting. Ms. A. Husin (Malaysia), Mr. O. Tinni (Niger), and Ms. I. Passada (Uruguay) were represented by members of their national delegations. The Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, *ex officio* member of the Group was also present.

Mr. R. Lopatka (Austria) and Ms. J. Oduol (Kenya) were elected by consensus as Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, respectively.

The IPU Secretary General and the Group Chairperson delivered opening remarks, underlining the important work of the HLAG given that terrorism was one of the major challenges facing the world today. Parliaments had a crucial role to play in the prevention of terrorism and violent extremism by transposing international resolutions into national law, that is developing related legislation, and adopting the necessary budgets to implement national and regional strategies and plans of action.

Introducing the item on the trilateral agreement between the IPU, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), the Chairperson lauded the signing of the agreement as a first. The members further welcomed the membership of the IPU in the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact and the recognition of the IPU-UN Joint Programme by the UN Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED).

The delegates of host parliaments presented reports on the IPU-UN Regional Conferences that had taken place in their respective countries. The Speaker of the House of Representatives of Egypt, which had held the first IPU-UN Regional Conference for the countries of the MENA region in February 2019, indicated that the Egyptian Parliament had been encouraged by the Conference to set up a special parliamentary commission on counter-terrorism, the prevention of violent extremism and hate speech. The HLAG very much welcomed this positive outcome and recommended that all parliaments follow in their footsteps. The National Assembly of Niger had hosted the second IPU-UN Regional Conference for the countries of the Sahel region in June 2019. The participants had also been inspired to create a regional parliamentary network, which complemented the parliamentary committee on counter-terrorism that they had created earlier in the year within the structure of the G5 Sahel. That committee mainly focused on development and assistance to victims. Lastly, the House of Representatives of Malaysia

had hosted the latest IPU-UN Regional Conference for the Asia-Pacific region in October 2019. The conference had been a crucial opportunity for the countries in the region to discuss challenges and exchange experiences and good practices, in particular in terms of border security management.

Furthermore, the Group heard an update on the financial situation of the IPU-UN Joint Programme. Mr. M. Miedico, Special Adviser to the UNOCT Under-Secretary-General, was pleased to report that, as requested by the HLAG members, the United Nations, his office in particular, was contributing to more than 50 per cent of the total budget of the Programme. Indeed, the UNOCT had allocated USD 2.1 million for the first two years of the Programme, renewable. The Group applauded this strong commitment from the United Nations and the Chairperson invited all IPU Members to help the IPU fulfil its financial commitment by making contributions. In this regard, the parliaments of Bangladesh, Benin, China, and the United Arab Emirates were recognized for their in-kind and/or cash contributions to the Programme.

Lastly, the members of the Group were presented with a roadmap of future activities. Ambassador M. Omar, Senior Adviser to the IPU Secretary General, and Mr. M. Miedico, Special Adviser to the UNOCT Under-Secretary-General, presented the web-based platform that had been due to be launched in early 2019 but had been delayed due to lack of funding. The platform would be a depository for national and regional legislation, plans of actions and strategies, as well as a forum for exchange between parliamentarians.

Ambassador M. Omar and Mr. M. Miedico further highlighted that the short-term objective was to hold national workshops in order to strengthen the impact on the ground. Indeed, several national parliaments had already requested the support of the Programme to improve their counter-terrorism and prevention of violent extremism legislation and to help with the implementation and enforcement of these laws. In this regard, priority for national workshops would be given to those countries with the most urgent situations. The IPU-UN Joint Programme would continue to hold regional conferences, the next ones being in Eurasia, GRULAC, and the Twelve Plus regions. Additionally, the Group heard about the IPU-UN Global Parliamentary Summit on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism. The Summit, which was due to take place in 2020, would be the culmination of the national and regional activities of the Programme and would be attended by high-level personalities, such as Mr. A. Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General. Parliaments interested in hosting the summit were invited to make themselves known to Ambassador M. Omar and Mr. M. Miedico. Toolkits and annual reports would also be developed in line with the approved activities of the Programme.

The members of the HLAG welcomed the list of future activities and looked forward to more impact-oriented conferences and workshops.

Statistics of the Gender Partnership Group

Status of participation of women delegates at the 141st Assembly of the IPU (at 18 October 2019)

Composition of delegations of IPU members at the last eight IPU statutory meetings (March 2016 - present)

Meeting	Total delegates	Total/percentage of women delegates		Total delegations	Total/percentage of all-male delegations (2 or more)		Total all-female delegations (2 or more)	Total single-sex delegations (2 or more)	Total single-member delegations (male and female)
		Total	Percentage		Total	Percentage			
Belgrade (10/19)	739	227	30.7	149	15	11.3	0	15	17
Doha (04/19)	721	219	30.3	147	16	11.8	0	16	12
Geneva (10/18)	751	247	32.9	149	17	12.1	4	21	9
Geneva (03/18)	745	227	30.5	148	18	12.7	3	21	6
St. Petersburg (10/17)	829	249	30.0	155	17	11.8	1	18	11
Dhaka (04/17)	612	193	31.5	126	11	9.6	1	12	12
Geneva (10/16)	693	228	32.9	141	15	11.5	3	18	11
Lusaka (03/16)	636	190	29.9	126	19	15.8	0	19	6

Single-sex, multi-member delegations of IPU members present in Belgrade (status on 18 October 2019)

N°	Country	Belgrade 10/19			Doha 04/19			Geneva 10/18			Geneva 03/18			St. Petersburg 17			Dhaka 17			Geneva 16			Lusaka 16		
		Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	total	Women MPs	Men MPs	total	Women MPs	Men MPs	total	Women MPs	Men MPs	total	Women MPs	Men MPs	total
1	Belgium	0	2	2	2	3	5	1	2	3	3	4	7	3	4	7	1	6	7	2	4	6	1	4	5
2	Benin	0	3	3	1	3	4	1	2	3	1	3	4	1	5	6	absent			1	5	6	0	1	1
3	Bosnia & Herzegovina	0	2	2	absent			absent			0	4	4	0	2	2	absent			0	2	2	absent		
4	Bulgaria	0	2	2	1	0	1	1	1	2	2	1	3	2	2	4	absent			0	2	2	0	2	2
5	Côte d'Ivoire	0	3	3	1	8	9	1	2	3	0	3	3	1	2	3	absent			absent			1	4	5
6	Guatemala	0	3	3	1	3	4	1	2	3	0	1	1	1	2	3	0	2	2	2	0	2	absent		
7	Latvia	0	2	2	1	3	4	1	1	2	1	2	3	2	3	5	1	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3
8	Lesotho	0	2	2	1	3	4	2	3	5	1	1	2	1	5	6	0	2	2	1	3	4	1	3	4
9	Libya	0	2	2	1	1	2	absent			absent			absent			absent			absent			0	1	1
10	Liechtenstein	0	2	2	0	2	2	0	2	2	0	2	2	0	2	2	absent			1	1	2	1	1	2
11	Micronesia	0	5	5	0	3	3	0	2	2	0	4	4	0	4	4	absent			0	3	3	0	3	3
12	Morocco	0	7	7	0	7	7	0	4	4	0	8	8	0	8	8	1	4	5	0	4	4	1	7	8
13	Poland	0	3	3	0	4	4	3	3	6	2	2	4	absent			2	2	4	1	4	5	2	2	4
14	Turkmenistan	0	2	2	2	1	3	1	1	2	absent			4	4	8	not affiliated			not affiliated			not affiliated		
15	Yemen	0	8	8	absent			0	5	5	0	7	7	absent			absent			0	8	8	absent		

Single-member delegations of IPU members present in Belgrade (status on 18 October 2019)

N°	Country	Belgrade 10/19			Doha 04/19			Geneva 10/18			Geneva 03/18			St. Petersburg 17			Dhaka 17			Geneva 16			Lusaka 16			
		Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	Total	Women MPs	Men MPs	total	Women MPs	Men MPs	total	Women MPs	Men MPs	total	Women MPs	Men MPs	total	Women MPs	Men MPs	total	
1	Belarus	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	5	6	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	2
2	Congo	1	0	1	1	1	2	0	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	3	absent			0	1	1	absent			
3	Costa Rica	0	1	1	1	2	3	absent			1	0	1	0	1	1	absent			0	1	1	absent			
4	Georgia	0	1	1	0	6	6	1	2	3	1	5	6	absent			1	3	4	absent			absent			
5	Guinea	0	1	1	absent			2	2	4	0	2	2	0	2	2	1	1	2	0	4	4	1	1	2	
6	Guyana	0	1	1	absent			absent			1	2	3	0	3	3	0	2	2	absent			absent			
7	Haiti	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	2	2	absent			0	4	4	absent			0	1	1	0	2	2	
8	Malta	0	1	1	0	3	3	1	1	2	0	2	2	0	3	3	0	1	1	absent			0	2	2	
9	Nicaragua	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	absent			1	0	1	absent			
10	Panama	1	0	1	1	2	3	absent			0	2	2	1	5	6	1	1	2	absent			0	1	1	
11	Paraguay	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	2	2	0	1	1	0	1	1	absent			absent			absent			
12	Portugal	0	1	1	2	5	7	3	4	7	2	4	6	3	5	8	1	4	5	3	5	8	2	4	6	
13	Republic of Moldova	0	1	1	0	1	1	2	0	2	2	0	2	1	1	2	absent			absent			absent			
14	Slovakia	0	1	1	absent			absent			absent			1	2	3	absent			absent			absent			
15	Sri Lanka	0	1	1	2	3	5	0	5	5	1	4	5	1	3	4	1	4	5	1	4	5	1	4	5	
16	Tonga	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	absent			absent			absent			absent			absent			
17	Tunisia	0	1	1	0	4	4	2	2	4	2	1	3	1	1	2	absent			2	1	3	1	0	1	

43rd session of the Gender Partnership Group**Delegations with 40 to 60 per cent of women parliamentarians**

The countries are ordered according to the percentage of women parliamentarians in their delegations at the 141st IPU Assembly. There are a total of 30 gender-balanced delegations out of 149 delegations (20.1 per cent) of IPU members attending the 141st IPU Assembly (as at 18 October 2019).

Countries with 40 to 49.9 per cent women parliamentarians (8):

- Albania (40%)
- Cyprus (40%)
- Denmark (40%)
- Madagascar (40%)

- Malawi (40%)
- Malaysia (40%)
- Mongolia (40%)
- Russian Federation (45%)

Countries with 50 per cent women parliamentarians (15):

- Andorra
- Armenia
- Australia
- Bahrain
- Cameroon
- Canada
- Central African Republic
- Comoros
- Dominican Republic
- Equatorial Guinea
- Estonia
- Lithuania
- Monaco
- Uruguay
- Venezuela

Countries with 51 to 60 per cent women parliamentarians (7):

- Kenya (56%)
- Hungary (57%)
- Uganda (57%)
- Serbia (58%)
- Namibia (60%)
- Senegal (60%)
- Sweden (60%)

Amendments to the IPU Statutes and Rules

Adopted by the IPU Governing Council at its 205th session and by the 141st IPU Assembly (Belgrade, 17 October 2019)

(a) Statutes

Amend Article 10.4 as follows:

10.4 Any delegation that for ~~three~~**two** consecutive sessions of the Assembly is composed exclusively of parliamentarians of the same sex shall automatically be reduced by one person.

Amend Article 15.2(c) as follows:

15.2(c) Any delegation that for ~~three~~**two** consecutive sessions is composed exclusively of parliamentarians of the same sex shall have a minimum of eight votes (instead of 10 for mixed delegations) at the Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. For delegations entitled to a certain number of additional votes, the overall calculation will be made on the basis of eight votes instead of 10.

(b) Rules of the Governing Council

Amend Rule 1.2 as follows:

1.2 Each Member of the IPU shall be represented on the Governing Council by three parliamentarians, provided that its representation includes both men and women. Single-gender delegations will be limited to ~~two~~**one** members.

Vote at the Governing Council

Results of the roll-call vote on the recommendation of the Executive Committee regarding the follow-up actions in Yemen

Results

Affirmative votes.....	104	Total of affirmative and negative votes ..	128
Negative votes	24	Majority	64
Abstentions	39		

Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.	Country	Yes	No	Abst.
Afghanistan		2		Gambia (The)	Absent			Pakistan	Absent		
Albania	Absent			Georgia	Absent			Palestine		2	
Algeria	3			Germany	1			Panama	Absent		
Andorra	Absent			Ghana	3			Paraguay	Absent		
Angola	Absent			Greece			1	Peru	1		
Argentina	Absent			Guatemala	Absent			Philippines	Absent		
Armenia	Absent			Guinea	1			Poland	Absent		
Australia	3			Guyana	1			Portugal	1		
Austria	Absent			Haiti	Absent			Qatar			2
Azerbaijan	Absent			Hungary	3			Republic of Korea	Absent		
Bahrain		3		Iceland	Absent			Republic of Moldova	Absent		
Bangladesh	Absent			India			3	Romania	Absent		
Belarus	Absent			Indonesia	Absent			Russian Federation	Absent		
Belgium	Absent			Iran (Islamic Republic of)	1			Rwanda	3		
Benin	2			Iraq	Absent			San Marino		2	
Bhutan			2	Ireland	Absent			Saudi Arabia		2	
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Absent			Italy	1			Senegal	3		
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Absent			Japan	Absent			Serbia			3
Brazil	Absent			Jordan		3		Seychelles	3		
Bulgaria	Absent			Kazakhstan	Absent			Sierra Leone	Absent		
Burkina Faso			2	Kenya	2			Singapore			3
Burundi	3			Kuwait	Absent			Slovakia	Absent		
Cabo Verde	Absent			Lao People's Dem. Republic	Absent			Slovenia	Absent		
Cambodia			3	Latvia	2			Somalia		2	
Cameroon	Absent			Lesotho	Absent			South Africa	3		
Canada	3			Liechtenstein	Absent			Spain	Absent		
Central African Republic	Absent			Lithuania	Absent			Sri Lanka	Absent		
Chile	3			Madagascar	Absent			Suriname	3		
China			3	Malawi			3	Sweden	3		
Congo	1			Malaysia	Absent			Switzerland	2		
Costa Rica	Absent			Maldives	Absent			Syrian Arab Rep.			3
Côte d'Ivoire	2			Mali	Absent			Thailand	1		
Croatia	Absent			Malta	Absent			Timor-Leste	3		
Cuba	Absent			Mexico	1			Tonga	Absent		
Cyprus	Absent			Micronesia (Fed. States of)	Absent			Tunisia			1
Czech Republic	1			Monaco	Absent			Turkey			3
DR of the Congo	3			Mongolia	1			Turkmenistan	Absent		
Denmark	2			Montenegro	Absent			Uganda			3
Djibouti		2		Morocco	Absent			Ukraine	Absent		
Egypt		3		Myanmar	Absent			United Arab Emirates		3	
El Salvador			1	Namibia	3			United Kingdom	3		
Equatorial Guinea			1	Nepal	Absent			Uruguay	2		
Estonia	Absent			Netherlands	2			Uzbekistan	2		
Eswatini	Absent			New Zealand	3			Venezuela (Bolivarian Rep. of)			1
Ethiopia	Absent			Nicaragua			1	Viet Nam	3		
Fiji	2			Niger	2			Yemen		2	
Finland	2			Nigeria	Absent			Zambia	3		
France	3			North Macedonia	Absent			Zimbabwe	3		
Gabon	2			Norway	Absent						
				Oman	Absent						

N.B. This list does not include delegations present at the session which were not entitled to vote pursuant to the provisions of Articles 5.2 and 5.3 of the Statutes.

Calendar of future meetings and other activities

*Approved by the IPU Governing Council at its 205th session
(Belgrade, 17 October 2019)*

Speakers' Summit in the context of the G20	TOKYO (Japan) 4 November 2019
Regional conference on refugee protection in Africa, co-organized by the Pan-African Parliament, UNHCR and the IPU	MIDRAND (South Africa) 11–13 November 2019
Second meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments	GENEVA (Switzerland) 18–19 November 2019
Regional seminar on Parliament's contribution to the work of the World Trade Organization (WTO) for the parliaments of Latin America and the Caribbean	BUENOS AIRES (Argentina) 21–22 November 2019
Executive Education Parliamentary Leadership Seminar, organized by the IPU and the School of Government and Public Transformation at Tecnológico de Monterrey	MEXICO CITY (Mexico) 25–28 November 2019
Information seminar on the structure and functioning of the IPU for Spanish-speaking participants	SAN JOSÉ (Costa Rica) 27–28 November 2019
Parliamentary meeting on the occasion of the 25 th UN Climate Change Conference (COP 25)	SANTIAGO (Chile) 2 December 2019
Second regional seminar on achieving the SDGs for the parliaments of the Caribbean	PORT OF SPAIN (Trinidad and Tobago) 5–6 December 2019
Workshop on comprehensive disarmament	2019 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Third roundtable convened by the Committee on Middle East Questions 2019	2019 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Annual Parliamentary Hearing at the UN	NEW YORK February 2020 (Dates to be confirmed)
Regional seminar on the SDGs for Asia-Pacific parliaments	Pakistan 2–3 March 2020 (Venue to be decided)
45 th session of the Steering Committee of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO	BRUSSELS (Belgium) European Parliament February/March 2020 (Dates to be confirmed)
Annual parliamentary meeting at the 64 th Commission on the Status of Women	NEW YORK March 2020 (Dates to be confirmed)

142 nd Assembly and related meetings	GENEVA (Switzerland) 16–20 April 2020
Meeting of the chairs of parliamentary health and budget committees on the occasion of the World Health Assembly	GENEVA (Switzerland) May 2020
Technical Briefing during the World Health Assembly	GENEVA (Switzerland) May 2020
Seventh Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians	TBILISI (Georgia) End May 2020
Third regional seminar on achieving the SDGs for the Twelve Plus Group	PARIS (France) June 2020 (Dates to be confirmed)
Information seminar on the structure and functioning of the IPU for French-speaking participants	GENEVA (IPU Headquarters) May/June 2020 (Dates to be confirmed)
Third meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament	2020 Venue and date to be confirmed
Parliamentary Conference on the occasion of the WTO Ministerial Conference	NUR-SULTAN (Kazakhstan) June 2020 (Dates to be confirmed)
13 th Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament	VIENNA (Austria) 17–18 August 2020
Fourth and final meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament	VIENNA (Austria) 18 August 2020
Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament	VIENNA (Austria) 19–21 August 2020
143 rd Assembly and related meetings	KIGALI (Rwanda) 11–15 October 2020
Sub-regional seminar on the SDGs and gender for Central Asian countries	ASHGABAT (Turkmenistan) 2020 (Dates to be confirmed)
Interregional seminar on the SDGs	BEIJING (China) 2020 (Dates to be confirmed)
Regional workshop on the parliament's contribution to the work of the World Trade Organization (WTO) for African English-speaking parliaments, organized by the WTO, the IPU and the European Parliament	GABORONE (Botswana) 2020 (Dates to be confirmed)
International or regional workshop for members of parliamentary human rights committees	GENEVA (Switzerland) or LONDON (United Kingdom) 2020 (Dates to be confirmed)

Speakers' Summit on the occasion of the G20	Saudi Arabia 2020 Venue and date to be confirmed
46 th session of the Steering Committee of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO	2020 Venue and dates to be confirmed
First global parliamentary summit on countering terrorism and violent extremism	2020 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Capacity-building regional workshop on countering terrorism and violent extremism for the GRULAC Group	2020 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Capacity-building regional workshop on countering terrorism and violent extremism for the African Group	2020 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Regional seminar on children's rights	2020 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Second regional seminar on the SDGs for Arab parliaments	2020 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Second regional seminar on achieving the SDGs for African parliaments	2020 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Global conference on gender equality	2020 Venue and dates to be confirmed
Capacity-building workshop on counter-terrorism and violent extremism for the Eurasian Group	2020 Venue and dates to be confirmed
144 th Assembly and related meetings	NAIROBI (Kenya) March 2021 (Dates to be confirmed)
World Conference on Inter-Religious and Inter-Ethnic Dialogue	MOSCOW (Russian Federation) May 2022

Agenda of the 142nd Assembly

(Geneva, 16–20 April 2020)

1. Election of the President and Vice-Presidents of the 142nd Assembly
2. Consideration of requests for the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda
3. General Debate
4. *Parliamentary strategies to strengthen peace and security against threats and conflicts resulting from climate-related disasters and their consequences*
(Standing Committee on Peace and International Security)
5. *Mainstreaming digitalization and the circular economy to achieve the SDGs, particularly responsible consumption and production*
(Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade)
6. Reports of the Standing Committees
7. Approval of the subject items for the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security and for the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade for the 144th Assembly and appointment of the Rapporteurs
8. Amendments to the IPU Statutes and Rules