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years of  
empowering  
parliamentarians

## Speech by the IPU Secretary General, Martin Chungong,

130<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the  
Establishment of the IPU and  
of the IPU Membership of the  
Hungarian National Assembly

Mr. Speaker,  
Madam Vice-President of the IPU group,  
Madam President, dear Gabriela,  
Honorary parliamentarians and colleagues,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am privileged to be here in Budapest with you today on this wonderful occasion to celebrate the IPU's 130<sup>th</sup> birthday anniversary with one of the funding most active members of the Hungarian National Assembly.

My gratitude goes to the Speaker of the Hungarian National Assembly, H.E. Mr. László Kövér, and Mr. Mihály Balla, President of the Hungarian National Group for initiating and hosting this meeting to celebrate the close relationship between the IPU and the Hungarian National Assembly.

As Madame President mentioned, this year, as part of our 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations, we are pleased to honour the founding members of the IPU of which as I have just said Hungary was one. What began as an association of individual parliamentarians in 1889 has been transformed into a constantly growing organization of national parliaments, reflecting the global demand for democracy.

It has been said by previous speakers. The IPU was founded in 1889 by politicians for peace who believed that parliamentary diplomacy and dialogue were more effective ways of settling disputes than war and fighting. Indeed many of them, at least a dozen, went on to win the Nobel Peace Prize.

And what was true in 1889 is still very much true today. We have been acting as 'honest brokers' for 130 years by bringing opposing sides around the table for example in brokering talks between East and West during the Cold War, and more recently when we facilitated the first bilateral meeting between parliamentarians from North and South Korea in 2018. IPU has been steadfast in its effort to contribute to peace and security.

I will echo the reference of the Speaker and take this opportunity to remember one of the actual Hungarian founders of the Union, one of those politicians for peace Count Albert Apponyi you mentioned Mr. Speaker. Count Apponyi played a leading part in

the IPU, as a regular participant of IPU conferences for forty years, as well as a member of the IPU Executive Committee from 1922-1925.

I can confirm that The Count very much contributed to extending the influence and the field of action of the IPU by proposing that not only regular parliamentary institutions attend the Union but also other consultative bodies. He was of course thinking of the Russian дума as you said which joined the IPU in 1906. But this initiative also bore other fruit in the shape of the Muraviev Manifesto which summoned the First Hague Peace Conference in 1899 which covered arbitration, arms control, and the laws of war. The first conference established the Permanent Court of Arbitration, which still functions today.

Allow me to conclude by citing a few words from the opening of the first Budapest IPU conference in 1896 by way of showing that our Hungarian friends were already famous for their hosting skills!

Speaker has just mentioned, as Belgium had hosted the IPU conference the year before, it fell to Monsieur le Chevalier Descamps, the President of the previous Conference to address the opening session.

In his opening remarks, he said: "The members of the 15 parliaments represented here are happy to pay homage to the Hungarian Parliament which counts so many illustrious members of our Union, and to this beautiful and heroic land..."

He then goes on to say "We could not chose a more fitting place for the expansion of our aspirations than this ancient Hungarian land, on the one hand, so attached to its own national life, and on the other hand open to everything that can favour the progress of international life..."

With that, I would like to thank you again, Mr Speaker, Madam Vice-President, friends and colleagues for your hospitality and for taking this initiative to celebrate our 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary.