



IGC Fifth Anniversary: 5 years, 5 days of celebration.

Monday 29 June 2020, 15:00 – 16:30 CET

Champions & Alumni event: Five years of commitment, collaboration & impact and identifying what new norms need to be championed

Suggested talking points for Mr. Martin Chungong

Secretary-General, Inter-Parliamentary Union

Chair of the IGC Global Board

Welcome remarks

Dear International Gender Champions and Alumni,
Dear colleagues,
Dear friends,

Welcome to all of you joining us today to celebrate the Fifth Anniversary of the International Gender Champions network. I am Martin Chungong, Secretary-General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and Chair of the IGC Global Board.

This is a week of celebration. Today's speakers will elaborate more on our collective achievements since IGC's foundation in 2015 but **I would like to thank each and every one of you for your exemplary dedication to on common cause.**

Mr. Chungong may wish to make a toast to the above remarks.

With our personal commitments and with our collaboration – whether through Impact Groups or other initiatives – we have transformed our policies, institutions and programmatic work. We are changing mindsets, culture and norms.

However, Covid-19 has deepened social and economic inequalities and as we witness backlash against the advancement of women's rights, we are reminded that **there is no place for complacency.**

The post-Covid-19 world should be one that is grounded on fairer and more resilient societies. Recent events such as the death of George Floyd served as a much-needed reminder of the **harmful consequences of exclusion and discrimination**, not only on marginalized communities but also on society as a whole. The IGC stands in solidarity with the global fight against racism and supports the peaceful struggle against all and intersecting forms of discrimination.

I trust that today, as we celebrate our achievements, we will also be able to identify gaps and opportunities for the network, as it continues to expand, deepen its impact and **champion new norms.** The road to achieving gender equality is a long and winding one, which we have pictured thanks to our visual storyteller. But if we are to climb over those mountain peaks we need to redouble our efforts and find more effective ways to travel it faster and I am sure we can do that better together.

In the years to come, we need to truly live up to and embody IGC's values of respect, fairness and diversity. Creating a safe space for all voices to be heard and participate in a truly inclusive and respectful manner is more important than ever, so as to leverage everyone's talent and creativity, and to achieve better outcomes for everyone, in all of our diversity. This includes the need to move away from detrimental binary stereotypes, recognize different gender identities and act against discriminatory behaviour in all its forms.

We hope that the Gender Champions Challenge, which we will launch today, will serve as a mechanism for us all to make this a personal and institutional priority, and open up a space for meaningful conversations within our organisations and amongst peers in the coming months.

I also call on you to help us expand our reach to under-represented regional groups so we can be truly representative and drive more meaningful impact.

On a final point, I wish to highlight the importance of ensuring the sustainability of our initiative. I think we can all recognize the essential role of the IGC Secretariat in convening us and supporting us to achieve our mission. Many of you have contributed to the IGC's success over the past years, and we

are particularly grateful for the generous financial contribution of Switzerland. However, to ensure the long-term sustainability of the initiative and showcase the diversity of our supporters, it is necessary for us to **broaden the donor base**.

Over the next few weeks and months, members of the Global Board will be reaching out to you to seek contributions, which can be either in-kind or direct. The IGC Secretariat also stands ready to discuss this further with you. I trust that many of us will be able support the important work of the initiative to the extent that we can!

Thank you very much and happy 5-year anniversary, dear Champions!