



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

Impact Report 2024



The IPU

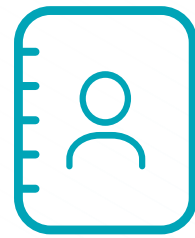
The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) is the global organization of national parliaments. It was founded in 1889 as the first political multilateral organization in the world, encouraging cooperation and dialogue between all nations.

Today, the IPU comprises 181 national Member Parliaments and 15 regional parliamentary bodies. It promotes peace, democracy and sustainable development. It helps parliaments become stronger, younger, greener, more gender-balanced and more innovative. It also defends the human rights of parliamentarians through a dedicated committee made up of members of parliament from around the world.

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2024 IN FIGURES



32,000

contacts
in the IPU's database



152

out of
190

national parliaments
have endorsed the IPU's
Common Principles for Support
to Parliaments.



956

human rights
cases examined
by the IPU (an increase of
25% compared with 2023)



181

Member Parliaments
and **15** Associate
Members



1,995

changemakers

have committed to the IPU's youth campaign
I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!



825,000 views
of the IPU's videos on YouTube
(an increase of 32% compared with 2023)



Average proportion
of women MPs at
IPU Assemblies

36.1%
(compared with 35.3% in 2023)



Average proportion
of young MPs at IPU Assemblies
(under 45 years old)

26.3%
(compared with 26.6% in 2023)



The IPU organized

78 events including

2 Assemblies + **38** national capacity-building activities

Foreword



Martin Chungong, IPU Secretary General, during the 148th IPU Assembly. © IPU/Lucien Fortunati

2024: Reaffirming the IPU's commitment to peace and security

Against a backdrop of unprecedented conflicts around the world in 2024, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) reaffirmed its foundational commitment to peace and security – the very values that spurred its creation in 1889 as the world's first political multilateral organization.

Recognizing the strain on the current international order, the IPU has intensified its efforts in parliamentary diplomacy, which is increasingly recognized as an indispensable complement to the work of the United Nations and other multilateral diplomatic bodies.

This report highlights the IPU's significant impacts and outcomes in 2024, with a focus on peace-building, international cooperation and a common thread of placing people at the centre of any initiatives.

Fostering parliamentary dialogue

The 148th and 149th IPU Assemblies, in Geneva, Switzerland, convened hundreds of parliamentarians from around the world, giving them an opportunity to reinforce their dedication to inter-parliamentary dialogue and finding common solutions to global problems.

The IPU provided crucial platforms for parliamentary diplomacy through bodies like the Task Force for the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine and the Committee on Middle East Questions.

Our efforts to support the normalization of relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan, alongside governmental peace initiatives, led to two constructive meetings between the Speakers of the two parliaments under the auspices of the IPU, with hopes for continued engagement in 2025.

These initiatives are grounded in the principles of human and common security, as outlined in a new IPU toolkit, *Human security and common security to build peace*, which promotes a people-centred approach encompassing food security and health security, among other concerns.

Navigating technological advances

Recognizing the rapid advancement of technology, the IPU emphasized the need for parliaments to be agile and forward-thinking to better deliver for the people they represent.

The 149th IPU Assembly adopted a landmark resolution on *The impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on democracy, human rights and the rule of law*, providing a blueprint for parliaments to harness AI responsibly while mitigating its risks through robust legal frameworks.

In parallel, the IPU developed and adopted a new *Charter on the Ethics of Science and Technology*, establishing a regulatory framework to ensure that science and technology benefit humanity, society and the environment.

To further support these efforts, the IPU launched several key publications during the year, including the *World e-Parliament Report 2024*, *Guidelines for AI in parliaments* and *Use cases for AI in parliaments*, designed to enhance parliamentary efficiency, productivity and democratic governance.

Addressing the urgency of climate change

On 30 June, the International Day of Parliamentarism, the IPU's first global perceptions poll of MPs revealed that climate change and war remain the top concerns for lawmakers around the world.

This finding underscored the importance of the IPU's enhanced presence at the UN Climate Conference, COP29, in Baku, Azerbaijan, which featured a more substantial Parliamentary Meeting within the actual site of the Conference, close to the negotiating process.

In the outcome document, parliamentarians agreed to encourage governments to increase investment in clean, renewable energy "through a gradual transition from fossil fuels and inefficient fossil fuel subsidies in a just, orderly and equitable manner".

At the Meeting, the IPU also launched *10 actions for stronger national climate commitments* and a *Parliamentary oversight of national climate commitments* toolkit to empower parliamentarians to strengthen their oversight of Nationally Determined Contributions and shape their countries' climate futures as the 10-year anniversary of the Paris Agreement approaches in 2025.

Strengthening the IPU's global reach

In 2024, the IPU continued to grow, with Jamaica rejoining the Organization and numerous partners engaging with us in person and on our digital platforms. This growing interest in the IPU among MPs and other stakeholders demonstrates our enduring relevance and ability to address the multifaceted challenges facing the world.

Looking ahead

With the global proportion of women MPs stalling at approximately 27%, and a backlash against women's rights in some parts of the world, we will turbocharge our efforts to promote gender equality in 2025, especially as we mark the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 40th anniversary of the IPU Forum of Women Parliamentarians.

As we look to the future, the IPU remains unwavering in its mission to support all parliamentarians and the wider parliamentary community in the pursuit of peace, democracy and a sustainable future for everyone.



Martin Chungong
Secretary General

PART 1

Strategic Objective 1: Building effective and empowered parliaments

For democracy to thrive, parliaments must function effectively, crafting legislation and budgets, representing constituents, and holding governments to account. The IPU supports members of parliaments (MPs) and parliamentary staff to work more effectively in multiple ways. We defend their right to work without fear of harassment or violence. We build parliamentary capacity by connecting MPs and staff with international experts and organizations. Finally, we leverage our rich collection of data, expertise, publications and research to set standards which empower parliaments worldwide.

Defending MPs' human rights

Despite a bumper election year, democracy remained under severe pressure in 2024, including a surge in the number of violations against MPs. The IPU's Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians (CHRP) examined 956 cases of violations of MPs' rights, up from 762 in 2023. These cases

include the suspension or abusive loss of parliamentary mandate, attacks on freedom of expression, threats and intimidation (including of family members), and even more extreme cases such as forced disappearances or assassinations disguised as suicides. CHRP case numbers have more than tripled from 311 in 2014.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Yemen account for the largest number of cases before the CHRP, but every region in the world is affected. The CHRP, which comprises 10 MPs from different regions of the world, raises awareness of parliamentarians' plights and engages with national authorities. In January, for example, these efforts helped to secure the release from prison of Zimbabwean MP Job Sikhala. See next page for more information.

956

human rights cases
examined by the
IPU in 2024



Zimbabwean opposition MP Job Sikhala was released from prison in January, following sustained pressure from the IPU and others.
© AFP/Jekesai Njikizana

IPU pressure helps to secure release of Zimbabwean MP

After 595 days in custody, Zimbabwean opposition MP Job Sikhala was released in January, following sustained pressure from the IPU and others. Arrested in June 2022, Sikhala had been held without trial in a high-security prison where he faced inhumane conditions including the denial of medical care.

The IPU condemned his detention, citing human rights violations, lack of due process, and arbitrary imprisonment, while an IPU-appointed trial observer with more than 40 years of legal experience called the detention a miscarriage of justice. Sikhala's imprisonment also resulted in the loss of his parliamentary seat, since he was unable to campaign in the August 2023 elections.

Sikhala's release followed several trial observation missions to Zimbabwe by the IPU and continued dialogue with the relevant authorities to ensure that his rights were respected.

In October, the IPU and UNESCO launched a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) on the protection and promotion of freedom of expression inside and outside parliaments. Intended for parliamentary staff, civil society, academics and others, some 3,000 people registered to take part in the course. The course was prepared by the Centre for Law and Democracy.

In November, a CHRP delegation visited Luxembourg to explore opportunities for collaboration on parliamentary human rights. Led by Swiss MP and CHRP member, Ms. Laurence Fehlmann Rielle, the delegation met with parliamentarians, the foreign ministry and representatives of the University of Luxembourg. Outcomes include the possible establishment of a monitoring mechanism to support the CHRP, discussion around the IPU's involvement in the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review, and possible academic collaboration.

See Part 2 – Policy Goal 3 for more information.

More on defending MPs' human rights

- The IPU began a study on the intimidation of MPs by the public, including both a desk review and a forthcoming global survey.
- As a follow-up to the IPU-African Parliamentary Union study on sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliament in Africa, published in 2021, reforms are under way for a new internal policy against abuse and harassment in the South African parliament, drawing on advice from the IPU.
- At the two IPU Assemblies in Geneva, the IPU organized an information stand for participants to learn about contributing to the satisfactory resolution of human rights cases affecting MPs.
- Between May and November, the IPU's Human Rights Programme conducted a global study on parliamentary support for parliamentarians at risk. Some 54% of parliaments that responded said they are directly involved in following up on IPU decisions on parliamentarians' human rights.
- In July 2024, the IPU organized an online briefing for members of ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights. The briefing identified key trends and situations, enabling a more robust and coordinated support system for parliamentarians in danger throughout the region.
- The IPU's ongoing engagement on human rights stimulated support and statements by partners, including the Parliamentarians for Global Action in support of MPs in Bangladesh and Nicaragua, and the NGO Race and Equality in Nicaragua.
- In follow-up to the CHRP's recommendations, the New Zealand Parliament passed a motion condemning human rights violations in Myanmar and urging the release of arbitrarily detained prisoners.

Building strong parliaments

As the deadline approaches for achievement of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and many targets appear to slip out of reach, the IPU supported parliaments to deliver more effectively. It built institutional capacity, supporting action on national and global policy priorities, while developing and sharing standards and guidelines too.

West Africa – where a spate of coups d'état has resulted in several transitional governments – was a special focus for the IPU, which offered its support for a speedy return to constitutional order in the countries affected. At the 148th IPU Assembly in Geneva, delegations from the region exchanged insights and experiences. The IPU subsequently organized training courses in Burkina Faso and Gabon on constitutions, peacebuilding and inclusive governance. In January, IPU Secretary General Martin Chungong met with the authorities in charge of Gabon's transition, following a similar engagement with the leaders of Burkina Faso, Guinea and Mali in 2023. **See Part 2 – Policy Goal 2 for more information.**

IPU support inspired legislation on gender equality in Burkina Faso, Namibia, Sierra Leone and the United Republic of Tanzania. Global debates at IPU Assemblies and conferences on gender equality, including on equal care, have led to national-level action. In early 2024, online workshops and training courses for MPs from the Arab region, Africa and Asia highlighted the importance of equal care in advancing gender equality. These initiatives show the power of international platforms such as the IPU Assemblies to bring overlooked issues onto local agendas.

The IPU's parliamentary data platform, Parline, was upgraded with powerful new tools, offering more accessibility, transparency and an increased breadth of parliamentary data. These improvements – including a new Data Catalogue – ensuring that Parline remains a trusted and verified reference for comparative studies of national parliaments, including detailed data on SDG indicators 5.5.1 and 16.7.1a. In 2024, 284,000 new users visited Parline, amounting to more than a million page views.

Throughout the year, the IPU celebrated 10 years of the Common Principles for Support to Parliaments, a model to help guide parliamentary development which has been endorsed by 152 national parliaments to date. For more than a decade, these Principles have provided a benchmark for designing, implementing and assessing parliamentary development. They show how the benefits of IPU support are often felt over a period of many years.

“I want to thank the IPU for supporting our joint efforts to spread the good word on the SDGs and to make them useful for all stakeholders.”

*Ermina Salkičević-Dizdarević, MP,
Bosnia and Herzegovina*

The 10-year anniversary offered a valuable opportunity to assess the Common Principles and their impact. For example, Zambia's National Assembly has structured its House Business Committee to align with Principle 4: Parliamentary support is inclusive of all political tendencies. The Committee, which determines the parliamentary agenda, includes presiding officers and party whips from both the ruling and opposition parties, as well as independent MPs, thus fostering a more balanced and representative decision-making process.



Celebrating 10 years of the Common Principles for Support to Parliaments. © IPU/Pierre Albouy

More on building strong parliaments

- The IPU provided capacity development on specific themes for MPs around the world, including on MP's rights, gender equality, climate change, peace and security, science and technology, and more.
- It also supported self-assessments and related capacity-building. With IPU support, for example, the National Assembly of Djibouti organized multiple activities based on the IPU's Indicators for Democratic Parliaments. Published initially in 2022, the Indicators contain roughly 200 indicators to enable self-assessment.
- The Parliament of Albania also used the Indicators for Democratic Parliaments to formulate its own standards framework, focusing specifically on Target 3 (transparent parliament) and Target 6 (participatory parliament).
- Colombia, Ecuador and Mongolia all carried out self-assessments on gender equality using the IPU's toolkit and methodology. A human rights self-assessment in Benin led to three recommendations for IPU support.
- In Laos, Myanmar, Namibia and Sierra Leone, the IPU supported MPs to work more effectively. Three global webinars were organized on audit reports.
- Together with UNDP, the IPU assisted the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina to advance the SDGs. A key contribution was to initiate a self-assessment that evaluated the Parliament's capacity to drive sustainable development in the country, identifying strengths, gaps and opportunities for greater impact.

Strategic Objective 2: Promoting inclusive and representative parliaments

Representation and inclusion are essential for strong, legitimate parliaments, enabling them to understand and effectively represent their constituents. For decades, the IPU has championed inclusive and representative parliaments by advancing gender equality and youth participation. Our data and research on women and youth in parliament serve as authoritative sources for media and academia. We track developments, identify best practices, publish cutting-edge research, and facilitate knowledge-sharing among parliaments to promote greater inclusion. Additionally, we emphasize the impact of parliamentary action on vulnerable groups, particularly in relation to the SDGs, health and climate change.

Gender equality

With more than half the world's electorate going to the polls in 2024, hopes were high that parliaments would become more gender equal. By the end of 2024, however, women held just 27% of parliamentary seats, a disappointing 0.1 percentage point increase since the start of the year. The IPU's *Women in parliament in 2023* report was widely referenced in 2024 in global media, international organizations and academia.

Despite the lack of progress in gender equality, and with IPU support, there were some notable successes:

Mongolia strengthened its quota system, raising women's parliamentary representation to a record 25.4% of seats, up from 17.3% in 2020.



IPU President Dr. Tulia Ackson during the 149th IPU Assembly.
© IPU/Antoine Tardy

In Namibia, a March by-election meant that the country's Parliament reached parity for the first time ever. To sustain such progress, an IPU parliamentary workshop helped MPs explore how best to promote women's participation in the 2024 general legislative elections, including through a gender analysis of the Namibian Electoral Act.



The Colombian Congress set an example in 2024 by being the first parliament to organize a second self-assessment on gender sensitivity to monitor progress since the first which took place in 2019. © UN Women Colombia/Juan Arias



Martin Chungong (left), Secretary General of the IPU, received one of the 2024 Vital Voices Solidarity Awards, an awards programme that recognizes remarkable male advocates of gender equality. Seen here with the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund, Dr. Natalia Kanem (right).

By March, 65 parliaments had announced gender-sensitive reforms in line with the IPU's 2012 Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments, including Burkina Faso, Namibia and Sierra Leone.

With support from the IPU, the Parliament of the United Republic of Tanzania established gender-based violence as an electoral offence, becoming the first country in Africa to do so.

These examples show how IPU standards are having a demonstrable impact around the world.

More on gender equality

- In January and February, the IPU organized two webinars to enhance the understanding of links between health and climate, especially for vulnerable groups. Attended by 85 participants, the webinars explained how parliaments can ensure that health and climate policies are fair and inclusive.
- The IPU supported women's caucuses in Mongolia, Türkiye and elsewhere. It supported the women's female parliamentary caucus in Sierra Leone in designing its strategic plan. In Burkina Faso, women parliamentarians expressed an interest in creating a network for the promotion of women's participation in politics, with support from the IPU.
- IPU roundtables connected parliamentarians with young activists and leaders from UN Women's Generation Equality campaign. Strengthening links between parliaments and civil society, the meetings aimed to increase young women's political participation and combat violence against women in public life.
- Together with PMNCH, the IPU produced a guide on *Strengthening the parliamentary response to the health needs of vulnerable and marginalized women, children and adolescents*, explaining how parliaments can mainstream equity issues into health.
- In Ghana, the IPU worked with the WHO and Parliament of Ghana to pilot an online course on health taxes in support of universal health coverage. In Zambia, during one of the driest agricultural seasons for over 40 years, the IPU organized a two-day training course for parliamentary research staff to explain how climate change is contributing to the rise in child marriages and other harmful practices against women and young girls.
- The IPU and partners promoted young women's political participation and shared measures to eliminate violence against women under the European Union-funded WYDE project, including briefings on International Youth Day in August and again in December on zero tolerance for violence against women in politics.
- The IPU launched a new podcast series, *IPU on air*, with the first three episodes focusing on sexual and reproductive health and rights, gender equality and the health of migrants. The podcasts feature parliamentarians, experts and activists. The series is available on the IPU website and on streaming platforms.

For those parliaments which are falling behind on gender equality, the IPU took a more proactive approach. In countries such as Bhutan, Nigeria, Oman and Sri Lanka, where women hold less than 10% of parliamentary seats, it organized hearings to explore opportunities for improvement.

With support from the IPU and UN Women, Colombia set a global example by organizing its second self-assessment on gender sensitivity. This follow-up to its initial 2019 assessment aligns with a recommendation in the Kigali Declaration on *Gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments as drivers of change for a more resilient and peaceful world*, adopted at the 145th IPU Assembly in Rwanda in October 2022.

A troubling rollback of women's reproductive rights in some countries prompted the IPU to expand its work in the health sector, by mobilizing parliamentary engagement on women's, children's and adolescents' health. In July, the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH), a health alliance of nearly 1,500 organizations, dedicated a Board session to this issue. The IPU Secretary General's seat on the Board reflects the importance of these rights at the IPU.

In a significant victory, following IPU advocacy and support, the National Assembly of the Gambia rejected an attempt to reverse the country's 2015 ban on female genital mutilation (FGM). Had the *2024 Women's (Amendment) Bill* been passed, the Gambia would have become the first country in the world to reverse a ban on FGM.

See Part 2 – Policy Goal 4 for more information.

65

parliaments have become more gender-sensitive, drawing on the IPU's *Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments*.

Youth representation

The IPU's *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign continued to gain momentum, welcoming 419 new changemakers and expanding to 10 new countries in 2024. To date, nearly 1,700 changemakers have signed up, including over 750 MPs and 60 Speakers of Parliament.

Beyond the campaign, the IPU's work on youth in parliament continues to have a far-reaching impact. IPU data on youth is frequently cited by academic journals, media outlets and the United Nations.

One milestone in 2024 was the Tenth Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians, held in Yerevan, Armenia, in September. Attended by almost 150 young MPs from over 50 countries, the Conference focused on *Avoiding lost generations: Preserving education and employment in all circumstances*. Young parliamentarians reaffirmed their commitment to ensuring access to education and employment, particularly in times of crisis.

At the 149th IPU Assembly, the Forum of Young Parliamentarians celebrated its 10th anniversary with video tributes from former leaders and testimonies from young MPs. The Forum also hosted its first open session on youth partnerships, at which 80 participants explored ways to increase youth engagement in politics.

“The Forum has helped connect me with like-minded youth leaders around the world, inspiring collaborative solutions and expanding my legislative horizon.”

Mr. O. Alao-Akala, MP from Nigeria.



The Tenth Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians was hosted by the Parliament of Armenia in Yerevan in the presence of the Armenian President and Prime Minister. © Parliament of Armenia

Finally, the IPU lowered the age threshold for a young parliamentarian from under 45 to under 40, reflecting global trends as more parliaments adopt lower age limits to enhance youth representation. The change ensures that IPU remains a global leader in promoting youth participation.

More on youth representation

- The IPU organized a youth empowerment webinar series, focusing on issues such as the role of young MPs in conflict prevention and peacebuilding, as well as on young women's political participation.
- The IPU accelerated its capacity-building support for young parliamentarians through workshops for exiled MPs from Myanmar and for MPs from Burkina Faso's Transitional Legislative Assembly (TLA). Burkina Faso's TLA now has a youth caucus thanks to IPU influence.
- Also partly influenced by the IPU, Ecuador now has a law which creates a quota stipulating that 25% of candidates for national elections must be youth.

IPU encourages parliamentary engagement with religion and belief

While religious tensions can threaten peace and security, interfaith dialogue can play a key role in promoting peaceful coexistence when it is grounded in support of fundamental rights and freedoms. Parliaments have a vital role to play in this process, which is why the IPU continues to foster dialogue between parliamentarians and faith-based organizations.

At the 148th IPU Assembly, MPs from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds discussed interfaith relations, together with international experts and civil society representatives. The conversation followed the First Parliamentary Conference on Interfaith Dialogue, organized by the IPU and the Parliament of Morocco in June 2023.

The IPU also participated in interfaith and intercultural dialogues at the United Nations, the 6th World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue, and at the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In November, the IPU launched a four-part webinar series for parliamentarians, *From theory to action: Parliamentarians against hatred based on religion or belief*. The webinar series is being organized by the IPU together with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the International Panel of Parliamentarians on Freedom of Religion or Belief (IPPFoRB).

Preparations are underway for the Second Parliamentary Conference on Interfaith Dialogue, scheduled for June 2025, a jubilee year, in Rome, co-organized with the Italian Parliament and with the support of Religions for Peace.

1 Strategic Objective 3:

Supporting resilient and innovative parliaments

For parliaments to deliver for their people effectively, they must have the capacity to adapt, innovate, and seize the opportunities presented by emerging technologies, while also managing the risks of artificial intelligence and the challenges of climate change. The IPU's Centre for Innovation in Parliament supports parliaments in harnessing new technologies, adopting modern ways of working, and understanding best practices, including by sharing knowledge between parliaments. In a context of widespread disinformation, we promote policymaking based on fact and scientific evidence. Using research, data and knowledge, therefore, we strengthen parliaments' ability to adapt, evolve, and remain resilient in the face of external shocks, including climate change.

Artificial intelligence, science and technology

In 2024, the use and application of artificial intelligence (AI) expanded exponentially around the world, improving productivity but fuelling misinformation too. That made it a central focus for the IPU, which consolidated its position as a thought leader and key source of guidelines and insights on AI regulation and parliamentary use.

Throughout 2024, the IPU actively worked on AI with more than a dozen parliaments. Consistent with the IPU philosophy of helping parliaments to shape their own development, the work focused on helping legislatures to assess what AI

could mean for their institutions, what governance may be needed, and the practical applications of this technology.

In March, the IPU published *Using generative AI in parliaments*, providing initial guidance on the adoption and use of AI. It was developed with input from the parliaments of Austria, Chile, Greece, Ireland and Italy.

One highlight of the year was a landmark resolution in October at the 149th IPU Assembly on the impact of AI on democracy, human rights and the rule of law. It urged parliaments to adopt or maintain strong legal frameworks for the responsible creation, deployment and use of AI technology, adding momentum to the establishment of global standards and frameworks.

The IPU then published its *Guidelines for AI in parliaments*, offering a comprehensive framework for parliaments to understand and implement AI responsibly and effectively. The Guidelines emphasize the need to use AI for enhancing human capability rather than replacing it, especially in democratic deliberation and decision-making.

The Guidelines are complemented by a first set of use cases for AI in parliaments, describing the ways in which parliaments can use AI in their day-to-day work. More than 60 use cases from eight parliaments have now been published.

More than 800 people from 130 different countries registered for the December launch of the Guidelines, highlighting the demand for IPU knowledge and insights on AI.

800

people registered to participate in the launch of the IPU's Guidelines for AI in parliaments



The IPU Working Group on Science and Technology at the 149th IPU Assembly. © IPU/Pierre Albouy

The 149th IPU Assembly also adopted a Charter on the Ethics of Science and Technology, offering a framework of principles to guide legislation and decision-making. The Charter places

humans at the centre of developments in science and technology. It also helps to bridge any potential gaps between scientific innovation and human rights.

More on AI, science and technology

- In April, the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies hosted experts from 12 parliaments to continue building communities of parliamentary expertise who will support the IPU's Centre for Innovation in Parliament.
- At the 9th UN Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals (STI Forum), the IPU inaugurated a parliamentary side event

featuring a presentation of the draft IPU Charter on Science and Technology and inviting comments from stakeholders.

- The IPU Working Group on Science and Technology launched two surveys in 2024, the first for parliamentary staff on *Parliamentary engagement with the scientific community* and the second for parliamentarians on *Understanding parliamentarians' use of scientific research*.

World e-Parliament Report provides fresh stimulus for the digital transformation

The **2024 edition of the IPU World e-Parliament Report** introduced the IPU Digital Maturity Index, based on survey contributions by parliaments. By providing a benchmark on digitalization, the Index allows parliaments to assess their progress relative to their peers. It thus provides parliaments with extra stimulus to accelerate their digital transformation.

The report also highlighted the increasing digital divide between parliaments in rich and poor countries, which can have implications for the quality of democracy.

This is the eighth edition of the biennial IPU report. The findings are based on survey responses from 115 parliamentary chambers in 86 countries and supranational parliaments. It was launched on the sidelines of the 149th IPU Assembly in October.

Climate change

With the climate crisis accelerating, the IPU continued to drive climate action in 2024 through its *Parliaments for the Planet* campaign, mobilizing parliaments and parliamentarians to become greener faster, and to legislate for the planet.

The IPU promoted its *10 actions for greener parliaments* at key events throughout the year, complemented by a series of some 70 videos showcasing how parliaments around the world are adopting more sustainable practices.

At the end of the year, as countries prepared to submit their national climate commitments, known as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), the IPU published a second guide in its 10 actions series, *10 actions for stronger national climate commitments*. This guide is essential for ensuring that countries meet their obligations under the Paris Agreement, which aims to limit global warming to 1.5°C.

In total, the two publications have been downloaded over 4,000 times and the IPU's climate videos have been watched more than 200,000 times around the world.

A subsequent toolkit, *Parliamentary oversight of national climate commitments*, complemented the guide on NDCs.



At COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, the IPU and the Azerbaijan Parliament convened some 300 parliamentarians from 60 countries. The outcome document of that meeting urges parliaments to advance their climate goals through legislation, financing, transitioning to renewable energy, adaptation, and support for vulnerable communities. This was the second time that the IPU had held a Parliamentary Meeting in the heart of a COP rather than on the sidelines. It highlights the increasing recognition of the importance of engaging parliaments in global climate negotiations.

In Thailand, the IPU and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) supported an ad hoc group of parliamentarians and civil society representatives to draft and review a citizen-led Clean Air Act, which aims to tackle air pollution. With IPU-UNEP support ensuring both ambition and impact, the bill was accepted almost unanimously by Thailand's House of Representatives in January. Thailand's Senate is due to review the bill in early 2025. **See Part 2 – Policy Goal 1 for more information.**

In October, the IPU partnered with the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and UNEP to convene more than 20 parliamentarians from small island developing States (SIDS) and least developed countries in a workshop to share insights on how to ensure ambitious and actionable NDCs.

“This workshop has been a reminder of why I became an MP”

Waven William, MP, Seychelles

More on climate change

- The IPU organized multiple online climate events for parliamentarians. These included a webinar for nearly 80 participants on climate parliamentary committees as well as a webinar with the Grantham Research Institute to explain framework laws and national climate action.
- In May, the IPU organized a regional seminar for Caribbean parliamentarians to exchange best practices by SIDS on climate action.
- Ahead of COP29, a webinar for 60 participants in September looked at how to unlock climate finance, a key theme in Baku.
- A joint IPU and UN-Habitat roundtable at the 12th World Urban Forum in Cairo brought together parliamentarians from countries such as Egypt, France, Ghana, Norway, Qatar, South Africa, Thailand, and Yemen to share examples of sustainable urban development.
- Inspired by the IPU's *10 actions for greener parliaments*, the Parliament of Cambodia installed solar panels and substituted fossil-fuelled cleaning vehicles with electric sweepers. The Senate's building now produces fertilizers from its waste and uses them in its gardens, which have been converted into one of Phnom Penh's most extensive areas of vegetation.
- Norway's Parliament, the Storting, reported to the IPU that it had amended and strengthened its Climate Change Act, tightening the country's commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The updated legislation targets emission reductions of at least 55% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels. Likewise, to transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy, the Norwegian Parliament has decided that all new cars sold in the country by 2025 must be zero-emission.
- The Australian Parliament has also taken steps to reduce its carbon footprint, such as installing solar panels and improving water efficiency.



Simon Stiell, Executive Secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, addresses MPs from around the world at the IPU's Parliamentary Meeting at COP29. © Parliament of Azerbaijan

Strategic Objective 4:

Catalysing collective parliamentary action

The IPU connects parliaments worldwide, fostering inter-parliamentary dialogue and amplifying the voice of parliaments on the world stage. Every year, the IPU hosts dozens of regional and global events, including its flagship statutory Assemblies twice a year, bringing together hundreds of parliamentarians into a parliament of parliaments. By building capacity through the exchange of information, knowledge and best practices, the IPU also helps parliaments to implement their countries' international commitments at the national level. And by integrating parliaments into key global processes related to UN, World Trade Organization and G20 processes, the IPU ensures that parliaments play an active role in shaping global policy.

Parliamentary diplomacy to build peace

The IPU was founded on the principle that parliamentary dialogue and diplomacy are essential for building peace and understanding. As war continued to devastate lives in Gaza, Sudan, Ukraine, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and elsewhere, the 148th IPU Assembly reaffirmed this mission.

The Assembly adopted the Geneva Declaration on *Parliamentary diplomacy: Building bridges for peace and understanding*, reaffirming the role of parliaments in fostering dialogue and resolving conflicts. The IPU can claim that it is the first text to formally articulate the meaning of "parliamentary diplomacy" as a complement to other forms of diplomacy at the governmental level.

With a strong focus on peace and security in 2024, the 148th IPU Assembly also adopted a resolution on *Addressing the social and humanitarian impact of autonomous weapon systems and artificial intelligence*. It urged parliaments to regulate autonomous weapons systems (AWS) and ensure compliance with international law. In doing so, the parliaments added their voices to global momentum for international agreements on AWS and the governance of AI.

78

global, regional and national
events organized by
the IPU in 2024



IPU Secretary General Martin Chungong addresses the UN Security Council in September 2024. © United Nations



Prince Mired of Jordan, Special Envoy on the Universalization of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, surrounded by MPs from around the world under the Broken Chair in Geneva during the 149th IPU Assembly. © IPU/Marc Bader

In May, following the IPU Secretary General's visits to both countries, the IPU facilitated a second round of high-level parliamentary talks between Armenia and Azerbaijan, highlighting the critical role of parliamentary diplomacy in reconciliation efforts. Both sides committed to continue the dialogue as part of the broader peace process. **See Part 2 – Policy Goal 6 for more information**

Meanwhile, Israeli and Palestinian delegations sat at the same table thanks to the IPU Committee on Middle East Questions. The IPU's Science for Peace Schools project also supports efforts by the two sides to find common interests – for example on agriculture and water management – and to implement them together, albeit at a small scale.

In a similar spirit, the IPU's Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine, consisting of eight MPs from around the world, held several sessions to explore avenues for peace including the subject of Ukrainian children in the Russian Federation.

August marked 40 years since China's National People's Congress (NPC) joined the IPU. To commemorate the occasion, the NPC and the IPU co-hosted an event at the annual Interregional Seminar on the Achievement of the SDGs for Parliaments of Developing Countries. The event was attended by almost 160 parliamentarians from 18 developing countries. IPU President Dr. Tulia Ackson and IPU Secretary General Martin Chungong were welcomed to the event by Chinese President Xi Jinping.

In September, the IPU launched a new toolkit, *Human security and common security to build peace*, providing parliamentarians with innovative approaches to security that underline the importance of other forms of security such as food and health security. The toolkit was released on 17 September 2024 during a virtual event, *Peace and democracy: Can Ballots Replace Bullets?* that aimed to bridge the International Day of Democracy (15 September) and International Day of Peace (21 September).

An expert hearing at the 149th IPU Assembly discussed a forthcoming resolution on *The role of parliaments in advancing a two-State solution in Palestine* for negotiation and possible adoption at the 150th Assembly. The resolution is being drafted

by an extended team of MPs representing all continents of the world, underlining the global impact of the war in Gaza and the wider region.

More on parliamentary diplomacy

- In April, the IPU connected parliamentarians with the Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation at a parliamentary workshop on disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.
- Together with the Parliament of Thailand and WHO, the IPU co-organized a Regional Conference for Parliaments of the Asia-Pacific region to discuss global health security. The meeting also highlighted the links between health security and universal health coverage, as well as the importance of including vulnerable and marginalized communities.
- In May 2024, IPU President Dr. Tulia Ackson took part in the official opening of the International Atomic Energy Agency's International Conference on Nuclear Security, also discussing on a panel the role of parliamentarians in global nuclear security. This was also a theme discussed by the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security at the 149th IPU Assembly in October.
- Panels and workshops at the 149th Assembly also covered humanitarian disarmament and prevention of conflict over natural resources. Senior experts joined the top-level debates at both Assemblies in 2024, including the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, and the Special Envoy on Universalization of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention.
- In December, the IPU held a webinar on *The Arms Trade Treaty at 10: Parliamentary engagement for a world free from armed violence*. Some 85 participants attended remotely, renewing their commitment to the Treaty.
- In January, the IPU took part in a UN Office for Disarmament Affairs event to highlight and promote the role of parliamentarians in implementing UN Security Council resolution 1540 and related treaties and conventions, including the Chemical Weapons Convention.
- Throughout the year, the IPU organized panels to support UN treaties for comprehensive disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.
- The IPU's High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism met on the sidelines of the IPU's two Assemblies.

Engaging with the United Nations and other multilateral bodies

Amid deepening global divisions, the IPU continued to strengthen parliamentary engagement with the UN, helping parliaments to implement UN treaties and agreements while advancing the SDGs. In doing so, the IPU empowers parliaments to play a stronger role in shaping national and international policies.

In February, the IPU's annual Parliamentary Hearing at the UN, organized with the President of the UN General Assembly, placed peace and security at the heart of discussions on [Putting an end to conflicts: Prescriptions for a peaceful future](#).

In March, during the UN Commission on the Status of Women, the IPU co-organized a meeting with UN Women on gender-sensitive parliaments, addressing poverty alleviation, taxation, access to credit, and gender budgeting.

In May, at the World Health Assembly (WHA), the IPU and WHO organized a parliamentary dialogue on the role of parliamentarians in global health, emphasizing the need for greater parliamentary involvement in global health forums. Based on the event's success, IPU Secretary General Martin Chungong and WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus committed to making this an annual event at the WHA.

In September, the IPU welcomed the UN General Assembly's adoption of the Pact for the Future, a landmark initiative to reboot multilateralism and address 21st-century challenges. The Pact explicitly confirms the UN's intention to strengthen its relationship with parliaments and the IPU.

The IPU strengthened parliamentary engagement with the UN's Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in October by contributing to the development of General Recommendation 40 (GR40). This directive provides guidance on achieving gender parity in leadership roles. Of 25 countries reviewed by the CEDAW in 2024, some 10 included MPs in their delegations, highlighting the growing parliamentary engagement with CEDAW.

In November, the IPU and the Brazilian Parliament organized the 10th G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit (P20) in Brasilia, where Speakers from G20 countries discussed how parliaments can support the implementation of G20 decisions. IPU President Dr. Tulia Ackson delivered the opening and closing remarks.

Olympics inspire sustainability at regional seminar in Paris

The Olympic Games were a central theme at a two-day seminar on the 2030 Agenda and Paris Agreement. The seminar was hosted in Paris by the IPU and the French Senate for 60 parliamentarians, mostly from the IPU's Twelve Plus geopolitical group.

The January seminar's first day focused on the ecological transition, equal opportunities, and innovation in governance. On the second day, MPs discussed the Olympics' commitment to sustainability, with input from key stakeholders such as the Games' Organizing Committee and the City of Paris.

Participants identified ways to cut the Games' carbon footprint by 50%, emphasizing minimal new construction, maximizing legacy and limiting waste. The event concluded with visits to the future Athletes' Village and Olympic Aquatic Centre, showcasing the Games's long-term regional benefits.

The Twelve Plus Group is an IPU geopolitical grouping of primarily European parliaments and Australia, Canada and New Zealand, whose Members typically focus on the promotion of human rights, sustainable development and international cooperation.

More on engaging with the United Nations and other multilateral organizations

- In February, on the eve of the 13th WTO Ministerial Conference, the IPU, European Parliament, and Federal National Council of the United Arab Emirates convened more than 200 MPs for a Parliamentary Conference in Abu Dhabi.
- The parliaments of the Central African Republic and Djibouti were supported to engage with the 2024 CEDAW Committee review of their respective countries. The support included online briefings before and after the review, as well as facilitation for an MP to engage in dialogue with the Committee directly.
- Beyond parliamentary events and MPs' participation in national delegations to the UN, the year also featured high-level engagement with UN officials.
- The IPU organized briefings between parliamentarians and ambassadors and UN officials on the International Court of Justice and the UN Peacebuilding Commission.
- In May, the IPU and Indonesian Parliament co-organized a parliamentary meeting on the sidelines of the 10th World Water Forum in Bali, Indonesia. The event gathered nearly 150 participants from 43 countries to explore the role of parliaments in sustainable water management. The Indonesian Parliament later set up a parliamentary caucus on water.
- Throughout the year, IPU Member Parliaments actively contributed to high-level UN forums such as the ECOSOC Youth Forum, the STI Forum, and the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). The HLPF also featured a special event for parliamentarians and presented the findings of SDG progress reviews (voluntary national reviews, VNRs) with contributions from several parliaments.



The Third Regional Seminar on achieving the SDGs for the IPU's Twelve Plus Group was held in Paris in January 2024, hosted by the French Senate. © Senate of France

Strategic Objective 5: Strengthening the IPU's accountability

Transparency and accountability are key pillars for parliamentary democracies and the IPU. The IPU encourages accountability among its Member Parliaments and within its Secretariat, which operates in Geneva, New York and Vienna. The Working Group on Transparency, Accountability and Openness oversees measures to enhance transparency and strengthen the IPU's governance. Annual surveys encourage parliamentary follow-up to IPU outcomes and initiatives, while communications bolster the IPU Strategy, reaching out to the 46,000 MPs and beyond.

Continually reforming the IPU

One of the reasons why the IPU has thrived for over 135 years is by constantly reforming and improving how it works. In late 2024, after a two-year process and extensive consultations, the IPU's governing bodies adopted several amendments to the IPU's constitution in the form of its Statutes and Rules. The changes will modernize the IPU, correct inconsistencies and reflect actual practices.

Key updates included lowering the age below which parliamentarians are considered "young" from 45 to 40, reflecting the IPU's commitment to better represent youth demographics in parliamentary bodies. The changes also enhance gender equality, enshrine more accountability and transparency practices, and clarify how the IPU's governing bodies and office-holders function.

New policies and governance framework

In line with its own recommendations, the IPU is implementing new internal policies to protect itself from abuse and violence. The Working Group on Transparency, Accountability and Openness continued to implement recommendations from the April 2020 Transparency Report, most of which have now been adopted.

In March, the 148th IPU Assembly adopted two significant instruments: the *Policy to prevent and address harassment, including sexual harassment, at IPU Assemblies and other IPU events* as well as a *Code of Conduct for IPU Governance Officials*. The Working Group is currently developing a policy on whistleblower protection. The harassment policy has been widely shared, IPU staff have been trained on the new policy and a mandatory online training course has been rolled out.



The new anti-harrasment policy is publicized at all IPU meetings. © IPU/Pierre Albouy



The IPU Human Rights stand at the 149th IPU Assembly in Geneva. © IPU/Pierre Albouy

Member follow-up to IPU initiatives

IPU outcomes, such as Assembly resolutions, seminars, publications and campaigns, can prompt parliaments to take national action such as debates or incorporating them into legislative and oversight processes. These outcomes can inspire political action, influence MPs and public opinion, and add issues to parliamentary agendas. The impact of IPU outcomes relies on how effectively Member Parliaments implement these goals into policies and parliamentary practice.

Each year, selected Member Parliaments engage in a survey to provide information and examples of best practices and follow-up to IPU initiatives. For the second consecutive year, participation levels increased in the annual IPU survey. Out of 37 parliaments required to respond, approximately 81% replied in 2024, an increase from 71% in 2023, demonstrating growing engagement and accountability.

IPU poll of MPs: Climate change and conflict ranked first concerns

In the IPU's first-ever global parliamentary perceptions poll, respondents ranked climate change (43%) and war (27%) as the top two issues facing the world. When asked about challenges in their own countries, climate change (29%) remained the primary concern, followed by social and economic inequality (20%) and weakening democracies (13%).

Of the 800 MPs and former MPs, staff and other stakeholders who responded, some 75% said they felt safe working in parliaments and nearly 60% of current MPs expressed an intention to seek re-election. Just 40% said they would recommend politics as a career.

The IPU plans to conduct the perceptions poll each year to monitor evolving trends.

Communications and digital transformation

The IPU 2022-2026 Communications Strategy is advancing despite a fragmented, polarized and rapidly shifting media landscape, compounded by AI technology. Its main goal is to establish the IPU as the global platform for, about and between parliaments by enhancing its digital presence as a trusted and verified source of information, promoting positive stories about parliaments, and engaging directly with the 46,000 parliamentarians and other stakeholders.

At the end of 2024, notable successes include a hike in web traffic of 30% year on year, reaching nearly half a million visitors a year; a 32% increase in views of the IPU's videos on YouTube (close to 825,000 views) and strong engagement on platforms where the IPU has invested significantly, especially Instagram (+680%) and LinkedIn (+38%).

The IPU continues to expand its central database of MPs by harvesting contacts from multiple events and adding new chambers after elections. By the end of the year, the IPU's database contained over 32,000 contacts, compared to some 24,000 at the end of 2023. This extensive database now allows the IPU to target its communications more directly to specific communities of interest. This critical mass of the database also allowed the IPU to conduct its first perceptions poll of the global parliamentary community. See below for more information.

Thanks to a proactive approach when it comes to media, the IPU has experienced consistent growth in coverage by mainstream media outlets. In 2024, 27,456 media outlets referenced the IPU, reflecting a 4% increase compared to 2023, which had already recorded a 15% increase over 2022.

Also, as part of the organization's digital transformation, in 2024 the IT team focused on strengthening cybersecurity and training new staff, optimizing the advantages of SharePoint through the creation of intranet sites, and maintaining IT infrastructure.



Strong media presence at the 148th IPU Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland. © IPU/Pierre Albouy



POLICY GOAL 1 – CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change is a global crisis that claims lives, devastates communities, and threatens the stability and security of societies and ecosystems worldwide. That is why climate action is the IPU's top priority for the 2022-2026 strategic period. To drive meaningful change, the IPU works with UN partners, including the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Together, we support parliaments to advance implementation of the Paris Agreement and other climate commitments. We also support parliaments in their efforts to accelerate climate adaptation and strengthen resilience against climate change and other environmental issues.

The IPU connects Thailand with international expertise on clean air

As a rapidly developing economy, Thailand must tread a delicate path balancing economic growth and environmental protection. The south-east Asian country had solid growth for many decades, but air pollution – particularly in cities such as Chiang Mai and Bangkok – has become a serious issue.

Thailand's distinctive Constitution allows the public to submit legislation for parliamentary debate, and in January 2022, some civil society organizations took advantage of this opportunity to draft the first version of a Clean Air Bill and submit it to the Parliament.

That led the Cabinet and others to submit their own drafts, so that there were eventually seven different versions of the Bill. To consolidate these proposals, Thailand's House of Representatives established an ad hoc committee to draft a final, consolidated version that integrated the best elements from each of the earlier drafts. The 39-member committee included MPs, civil society representatives, medical professionals, and stakeholders from the private sector.



The National Assembly of Thailand. © Secretariat of the House of Representatives of Thailand

The IPU supports parliaments by connecting them with international experts and organizations, building their knowledge and understanding. And so, when the IPU heard about the Clean Air Bill in Thailand, it saw an opportunity to support the process.

IPU Secretary General Martin Chungong reached out to Thailand's Speaker of Parliament, offering to connect the Parliament with global expertise and – when the offer was accepted – the IPU worked with the UNEP to organize a workshop.

The closed-door session brought together nine people from the ad hoc committee, namely four MPs, two civil society representatives, two academics and one government official. They heard from UNEP about legislative best practices and emerging trends in the region and beyond, while a representative from WHO explained the issue from a health and human rights perspective, emphasizing the urgent need for clean air policies.

To drive further public engagement, the IPU then organized a global webinar in late September, underscoring the possibilities for citizens to participate in legislative processes.

IPU climate support

In line with national efforts to reach net zero by 2032, Thailand's Parliament has also developed its own Green Parliament Master Plan, which is based on the IPU's *10 actions for greener parliaments*, a key resource produced for the IPU's climate campaign *Parliaments for the Planet*.

At time of writing in early 2025, therefore, Thailand's Parliament is looking to reduce its emissions in line with international commitments. Its Senate is scheduled to review the Clean Air Bill in the coming weeks.



POLICY GOAL 2 – DEMOCRACY AND STRONG PARLIAMENTS

The IPU believes that democracy is the most effective form of governance to deliver for the people's needs.

Strong legislative frameworks are essential to this process. Strong parliaments are therefore not just the cornerstones of democracy, they are also essential drivers of development. They represent the people, pass laws, adopt budgets and hold governments to account. As the global organization of parliaments, the IPU helps parliaments to become more effective, accountable, transparent, responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative.

In West Africa, the IPU works with transitional parliaments for a return to constitutional order

Recent coups d'état in West and Central Africa may have had different root causes and characteristics. But they share certain common features, including a subsequent stated commitment to restoring constitutional order.

And so, while some regional organizations have suspended countries from their membership for deviating from democratic norms, the IPU has taken a different approach. Holding the countries accountable for that return to constitutional order, the IPU, while condemning the coups, is also choosing to engage with the countries in question, supporting their transition.

Following in-country missions to four of the countries concerned by regime change in the region, in March, at the 148th IPU Assembly, the IPU Secretary General hosted a closed meeting for delegation leaders from all countries in the region with transitional parliaments in place – Burkina Faso, Chad, Gabon, Guinea and Mali – to hear updates on their situations and discuss potential IPU support.

While the IPU insists on a rapid return to constitutional order, it recognizes that each of the coups has its roots in some very complex socio-economic and security challenges. The IPU provides a safe forum for open discussions, while IPU support for MPs helps parliaments in the region to operate more effectively.

In Gabon, the IPU, together with International IDEA, organized a three-day workshop in June, building MP capacity for contributing to a new constitution. When presented with a draft of the new constitution, the parliament made nearly 800 amendments, the majority of which were inspired by the workshop, according to one Gabonese parliamentarian.

In Burkina Faso, the IPU organized a workshop in August for 130 MPs and staff to discuss action on human rights, gender and youth, as well as insecurity and terrorist attacks. Participants discussed the role of parliaments in conflict prevention, the importance of communication to restore trust between MPs and the public, the benefits of having more women in parliament, and recommendations on human rights arising from the UN's Universal Periodic Review.

Delegation leaders from the transitional parliaments of the region met together for a second time at the 149th Assembly in October. Taking stock of developments since the last meeting, they welcomed IPU support, noting that many other international organizations focused solely on elections rather than on underlying economic and security issues, as well as building sound governance institutions.

Engagement has been a powerful incentive, then. As the IPU works with parliamentarians to get their parliaments and constitutions back on track, this engagement allows the IPU to keep pace with the different rhythms of transition and to continue the search for solutions.

Another form of engagement during the year came with the award of the 2024 Cremer-Passy Prize, named after the IPU's founders, to Dr. Haroun Kabadi, President of Chad's Transitional National Council, in recognition of his exceptional work in promoting peace and security and a return to constitutional order.



Dr. Haroun Kabadi during the IPU's Fourth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament in 2015. © IPU

At the time of writing, another conference for the leaders of transitional parliaments is planned in Gabon in early 2025, while the IPU is also discussing possible support to Guinea and Chad.



The delegation from Chad accepts the 2024 Cremer-Passy Prize on behalf of Dr. Haroun Kabadi, President of the Transitional National Council of Chad. © IPU/Pierre Albouy



POLICY GOAL 3 – HUMAN RIGHTS

While parliamentarians continue to face abuse, mistreatment or even death simply for doing their jobs, IPU data shows that the problem is growing. This is especially true for outspoken opposition MPs, who make up most cases, many of which relate to denials of their freedom of expression. To support these MPs and, by extension, democracy itself, the IPU defends and promotes their rights through its dedicated Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

Luxembourg engages with the IPU's Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians

Defending human rights is never easy and protecting MPs can be a particular challenge, as it often involves publicly criticizing governments that perpetrate abuses. Engaging in constructive dialogue on this issue is difficult, as many governments refuse to cooperate. The IPU's Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians is constantly registering more cases, which are probably just the tip of an iceberg of MPs in danger around the world.

In 2024, however, the Committee received an invitation from a parliament wanting to learn more about its work. With that goal in mind, Ms. Laurence Fehlmann Rielle, a Swiss MP and member of the IPU Committee, travelled to Luxembourg in November.

An official reception set the stage for meaningful dialogue, facilitating connections not only between the IPU and individual members of parliament, but also with national institutions such as the Luxembourg parliamentary research team, the foreign ministry, university academics and the media.

Stakeholders showed a real interest in understanding the IPU's work in support of parliamentarians in danger and in exploring ways in which they could contribute. In doing so, Luxembourg has taken a rare and very positive stance.

The commitment goes beyond symbolic gestures. Luxembourg's Parliament is exploring the possibility of establishing a monitoring mechanism to track violations of MPs' human rights around the world. By providing concrete and systematic support for at-risk MPs, the initiative would position Luxembourg as a leading advocate within the IPU and protector of parliamentary democracy worldwide.

Finally, while the IPU has a wealth of data, knowledge and information, it lacks capacity for in-depth analysis. A potential partnership with the University of Luxembourg could make good use of this information, providing vital insights for policy and advocacy on MPs' human rights. A major academic human rights event in late 2025, co-organized with the University of Luxembourg, is in the pipeline, likely covering parliamentary solidarity, the protection of MPs and the unique role of the IPU.

Parliamentary solidarity

The Luxembourg visit was a reminder of how parliamentary solidarity has a vital role to play, connecting parliamentarians all around the world. When MPs and parliaments stand up for their parliamentary colleagues around the world, they are defending human rights and democracy.

By reinforcing parliamentary oversight, strengthening diplomatic action and enabling academic research, Luxembourg is positioning itself as a staunch defender of MPs around the world and strengthening the work of the IPU.



Luxembourg hosts the IPU's Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians for a visit in November 2024. © Luxembourg Parliament



An anti-FGM protester holds a placard outside the National Assembly in Banjul, Gambia. © AFP/Muhamadou Bittaye



POLICY GOAL 4 – GENDER EQUALITY

Although the proportion of women MPs is growing, most parliaments remain male-dominated, and women MPs are often under-represented in leadership positions. Even when men and women are represented in equal numbers, however, they might still face very unequal treatment or opportunities. Many women MPs still face discrimination and gender-based violence, for example. Convinced of the links between gender equality and strong, representative democracies, the IPU focuses on promoting more women in parliament as well as ensuring that parliaments better protect women's rights. Banning female genital mutilation (FGM) is a good example of how parliaments can have a direct impact on women's rights.

The IPU supports the Gambian Parliament's successful efforts to protect women from FGM.

Progress can often feel like two steps forward, one step back. This was nearly the case in the Gambia with female genital mutilation (FGM), a traditional but abusive practice, until – with IPU support – Gambian MPs rejected an effort to make the practice legal again.

FGM had been illegal in the Gambia since 2015, carrying penalties of up to three years in prison and fines. After years of community mobilization and awareness building, the 2015 law had been a major achievement. However, enforcement remained weak, with just one conviction since the law's approval and as many as three out of four girls still at risk.

As if to illustrate the challenges, a draft law was introduced to repeal the ban. Would MPs show the leadership required to protect their women and children?

As the vote approached, the IPU worked with the UNFPA, UN Women and Gambian NGOs to facilitate a study tour to Cairo, connecting Gambian MPs with international experts, religious leaders and parliamentarians. The study tour provided vital insights into Egyptian strategies against FGM, including legislative frameworks and community-based interventions.

The study group also looked at the scientific background of FGM, its medicalization and ethical concerns, as well as the negative consequences. Discussions highlighted the vital role of political leadership in eliminating this dangerous practice.

The ban remains in place

In July, after months of intense public debate and IPU lobbying, the Gambia's MPs voted against each clause, rejecting the bill decisively. The Speaker of the National Assembly described the vote as an unprecedented rejection, and the decision was met with relief worldwide. While some countries face immense pressure to reverse any progress on sexual and reproductive health, the Gambia's Parliament voted to keep the FGM ban in place.

Gambian women, civil society organizations and their allies demonstrated immense courage, facing threats and harassment. Women MPs risked physical attacks in their determination to protect the rights of women and girls to live free from the threat of violence based on gender.

The fragility of progress towards ending FGM cannot be overstated. FGM continues to impact infants and young girls, causing severe physical and psychological harm.

For now, though, the Gambian Parliament has sent a strong message that it wishes to protect its women and girls from FGM, in line with its international commitments on human rights. With support from the IPU and others, Gambian parliamentarians have taken a vital stand against FGM in their country.



POLICY GOAL 5 – YOUTH PARTICIPATION

Young people will feel the impact of today's decisions more than any other generation and yet they are often excluded from the decision-making process. According to IPU data, individuals under 30 account for less than 3% of all MPs, despite making up nearly 50% of the global population. This is a serious gap in our democracies. For over a decade, the IPU has been supporting parliaments to be more responsive to their countries' youth. Its global campaign – *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* – offers six ways to boost the representation of young people in parliament.

With IPU training, young MPs represent Zambia's youth more effectively

Zambia may have one of the youngest populations in Africa, with an estimated 70% of its people under the age of 40, but this demographic is not reflected in the country's Parliament, where just 17.4% of members are in this age group.

To help close this gap – and in line with its *I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!* campaign – the IPU has been supporting young MPs in Zambia since 2022, advising the Zambia Youth Parliamentary Caucus and training young MPs.

In August, an IPU team travelled to Zambia to conduct a two-day training session for 17 young MPs and five parliamentary staff. The programme covered leadership, mentorship and communications, equipping participants with some of the necessary tools to be more effective political leaders.

Through a series of practical and interactive sessions, for example, the young MPs looked at different leadership qualities and styles, assertiveness and influence, and the value of mentorship – for both mentors and mentees. Working with presentations, videos and group discussions, they also refined their skills in authentic communications, persuasion, navigating difficult interviews, and storytelling.

Social media, the parliamentarians said, helps them to engage with their country's youth, connect with others around the world, and even to share their impact stories. They also noted drawbacks such as cyberbullying, online abuse, harassment, misrepresentation and disinformation.

During group discussions, MPs reflected on both challenges and opportunities, sharing their personal experiences and insights. Despite coming from different political parties, the young MPs worked well together, finding common ground particularly in their shared experiences of verbal violence and online threats during the 2021 election.

The IPU training will help the young MPs to become more effective politicians and make Zambia's Parliament more responsive to its youthful population. In the post-training survey, 100% of the participants said they were satisfied with the course.



An IPU team travelled to Zambia to conduct a two-day training session for 17 young MPs. © Parliament of Zambia



POLICY GOAL 6 – PEACE AND SECURITY

The IPU has been connecting MPs with one another since its establishment in 1889, promoting dialogue and diplomacy to support the resolution of international differences and to prevent armed conflict. While countries themselves must take responsibility for their decisions, the IPU provides an invaluable channel for parliamentarians from different countries to engage in dialogue, sometimes in an informal fashion. Such dialogue provides an opportunity for warring parties to identify the joint interests that might signal an end to fighting.

The IPU connects parliamentarians from Armenia and Azerbaijan

Conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan has claimed thousands of casualties over many decades and, at the time of writing, tensions remain high. Against this backdrop, the IPU hosted parliamentary leaders from both countries twice in 2024, underscoring its commitment to parliamentary diplomacy as a tool for peace.

Promoting dialogue between parliaments is central to the IPU's mandate on peace and security. In today's world, where conflicts dominate the headlines, the value of talking around the same table cannot be overstated.

This is especially true for parliamentarians, who have the power to de-escalate tensions and shape narratives. As representatives of the people, they play a key role in building trust, fostering reconciliation, and ultimately ratifying and implementing peace agreements.

After discussions with both parties on the sidelines of the 147th IPU Assembly in Luanda in October 2023, IPU Secretary General Martin Chungong travelled to Armenia and Azerbaijan in January.

During his visit, he met with key political figures, including the heads of State and Government, Speakers of Parliament, foreign ministers, and other key figures in both countries.

A key outcome from the visit, therefore, was a commitment from both Speakers of Parliament to meet face-to-face under the auspices of the IPU, an impartial convener providing a neutral space for dialogue.

Two months later, in March, on the eve of the IPU's 148th Assembly in Geneva, IPU President Tulia Ackson and IPU Secretary General Martin Chungong welcomed senior parliamentary delegations from both countries to IPU headquarters, both led by their respective Speakers.

In a private room for the meeting, the Secretary General introduced the participants, then both he and the IPU President left the room, where the Speakers discussed in private for two hours. At the end of the meeting, both sides agreed to continue their dialogue and support the normalization of relations between their countries.

A second follow-up meeting took place in May 2024, also in Geneva. The Speakers continued their discussions on their respective parliaments' support of the peace negotiations going on between Armenia and Azerbaijan at government level.

A third meeting has not yet taken place and tensions remain high between the two countries. But by opening up space for dialogue, the IPU has provided, for the first time in history, the opportunity for the Speakers of the countries to search for common ground, reinforcing the IPU's desire to complement – and contribute to – any existing inter-governmental peace talks.

Both parliaments remain active within the IPU. The Armenian Parliament hosted the Tenth IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians in Yerevan in September, while Azerbaijan's Parliament co-organized the IPU Parliamentary Meeting at COP29 in Baku, which brought together more than 300 MPs and experts.



The IPU offered its good offices to the Speakers of the Parliaments of Armenia and Azerbaijan on two occasions in 2024. © IPU/Lucien Fortunati



POLICY GOAL 7 – SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR ALL

With just a few years remaining to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the urgency to mobilize parliaments has never been greater. As legislative bodies, parliaments play a crucial role in shaping policies, ensuring oversight and allocating budgets to drive progress on global development. Their actions are essential in reducing social and economic inequalities, improving public health and addressing the impacts of climate change, ensuring that sustainable development remains a priority worldwide.

IPU works with Malawi on health for women, children and adolescents

In Malawi, IPU support to national parliaments on sexual and reproductive health and rights, particularly for vulnerable and marginalized populations, helps to ensure that “no one is left behind”.

In 2024, the IPU organized workshops for MPs in Malawi, giving them the knowledge and understanding to shape their countries’ healthcare and public health through legislation, oversight, budgeting and representation.

Malawi has made good progress on maternal and child mortality rates in recent decades, but women, children and adolescents still face a range of barriers when accessing sexual and reproductive health and rights. These include underfunding – which severely affects the availability of equipment and medicine – social norms and some legal obstacles too, all of which exacerbate maternal mortality, teenage pregnancies and dropout rates from school.

In April, the first workshop brought together MPs, health ministry officials and civil society organizations to explore government budgets. By building knowledge and understanding, the workshop equipped participants with the tools to demand more funding for sexual and reproductive health.

The second workshop in May explored policy and legal frameworks, assessing the gaps in legislation and identifying reforms to strengthen access to sexual and reproductive health services in the country.

By connecting the stakeholders in this way – where structured communication channels had previously not existed – the workshops enabled important conversations about the need to remove the social and psychological barriers to sexual and reproductive health and rights, including social attitudes, taboos and misinformation.

Both workshops built on research by the IPU and the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health, which underscored the need for evidence-based approaches to build the capacities of national parliaments to address the health needs of vulnerable and marginalized women, children and adolescents.

Malawi remains heavily reliant on external funding for its health services and, over the longer term, stronger budget commitments may be required. Participants also highlighted the fact that other crises – such as climate change and poverty – often divert attention and resources from vital health issues such as sexual and reproductive health and rights.

By making these rights more visible within Malawi’s Parliament and the country more broadly, the workshops will have made parliamentarians more responsive to the needs of marginalized and vulnerable groups within the population.

The first opportunity for meaningful change may come in the next parliamentary budget sessions, scheduled for early 2025.



A health centre in Lilongwe, Malawi. © AFP/Amos Gumulira

Towards universal membership

Member Parliaments (181)

Afghanistan**, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, 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 (The), Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti,* Honduras*, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, 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, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Türkiye, 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 (15)

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), MERCOSUR Parliament (PARLASUR), Pan-African Parliament, 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).

* Non-participating Members (all rights suspended)

** Members participating in the work of the IPU in a non-voting observer capacity

Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments

The Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments (ASGP) brings together Secretaries General and other senior office holders in charge of parliamentary services. It studies the law, procedure, practice and working methods of different parliaments and proposes measures for improvement and for securing cooperation between the services of different parliaments. It is a consultative body of the IPU, and the ASGP President reports annually to the IPU Executive Committee on the ASGP's activities. The ASGP assists the IPU on subjects within the scope of the Association and regularly organizes joint IPU-ASGP sessions at IPU Assemblies. Studies carried out by the IPU relating to parliamentary law and practices are routinely shared with the ASGP and benefit from its input.

In 2024, the IPU and ASGP organized a joint workshop on parliamentary Committees of the Future at the 149th IPU Assembly to share experiences and good practices on these innovative mechanisms of anticipatory governance, and continued to collaborate on other research projects. In ASGP meetings, Secretaries General shared their experience on a range of topics on which IPU is active, including combating gender-based violence in parliament, citizen participation in the work of parliament, and the use of AI in parliaments, among others. These fruitful exchanges are an important means of sharing good practices and informing thinking within the IPU, ASGP and national parliaments.

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How the IPU is funded

The IPU's work to promote peace, democracy and sustainable development is financed primarily by our Member Parliaments and Associate Members. We also receive a regular flow of voluntary contributions from governments, development agencies, UN bodies and foundations. Several donors have concluded multi-year funding agreements that were active during 2024. These include the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, the European Union, DFATD Canada, Irish Aid, International IDEA and the parliaments of China, Micronesia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates,

as well as the Arab Parliament and the Julie-Ann Wrigley Foundation/Arizona State University. Partnerships with the UN family, particularly UNDP, WHO, UN-OHRLS, UN-OHCHR, UNHCR and UN Women, deliver support to a number of activities and country-level programmes. The Republic of Korea continued to offer support in terms of secondment of senior research staff to the IPU. The IPU remains committed to looking for more voluntary funding to help meet its strategic objectives.

IPU publications in 2024

Guidelines

- [Use cases for AI in parliaments](#) (EN | FR)
- [Guidelines for AI in parliaments](#) (EN | FR)
- [10 actions for stronger national climate commitments](#) (EN | FR | AR | ES)

Issue briefs

- [Using generative AI in parliaments](#) (EN | FR | AR | ES)

Reports

- [Celebrating 10 years of the Common Principles for Support to Parliaments](#) (EN | FR)
- [Impact Report 2023](#) (EN | FR | AR | ES)
- [World e-Parliament Report 2024](#) (EN | FR | AR | ES)
- [Women in parliament in 2023](#) (EN | FR | ES)

Toolkits

- [Parliamentary oversight of national climate commitments](#) (EN | FR)
- [Human security and common security to build peace](#) (EN | FR)

Infographics

- [Violations of the human rights of MPs in 2024](#) (EN | FR | AR | ES | RU)
- [Highlights of women in parliament in 2023](#) (EN | FR | ES)
- [Youth participation in national parliaments 2023](#) (EN | FR)

10 actions

- [10 actions for stronger national climate commitments](#) (EN | FR | ES | AR)

IPU collections

The IPU has seven collections primarily meant for parliamentarians and policymakers. All IPU publications are available [here](#).

Guidelines are aimed to turn attention from analysis to solutions. They support and better equip parliaments in efforts to put their own houses in order.

Handbooks are an in-depth look at a theme designed for legislators involved in preparing laws and policies. They contain best practice, examples from other countries, definitions of key concepts, background information and advice for implementation.

Infographics are usually in the form of maps to highlight visually a particular theme.

Issue briefs are designed to raise awareness on a particular issue. They give an overview of a particular theme with statistics, tables, graphs, facts and figures.

Reference publications are designed as guidelines to help support parliamentary development.

Reports generally go into detail on a particular strategic theme to report on progress or setbacks. They contain new data and are published either annually or periodically.

Toolkits allow parliaments to self-evaluate what they have, what's missing and what action they need to take in a particular area.

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