



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

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**Delivered at the Parliamentary Forum in the context
of the G20 Leaders' Summit**

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I would like to thank the Parliament of Argentina, in particular Ms. Gabriela Michetti, President of the Senate, Mr. Federico Pinedo, President Pro Tempore of the Senate, and Mr. Emilio Monzó, President of the Chamber of Deputies, for their warm hospitality and excellent conditions provided for the Parliamentary Forum and Speakers' Summit in the context of the G20 here in beautiful Buenos Aires. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Argentina on its 2018 G20 presidency.

After Canada, the Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia and Mexico between 2010 and 2013, this is the fifth time that representatives of parliaments meet to provide a parliamentary perspective to the G20. This could not have come at a better time.

The G20 was born ten years ago when the world was facing a major financial and economic crisis, and it was the resolute joint action of the major economies of the world from both developed and developing countries that helped to avert a dangerous global recession. Our world today is in a different situation, yet it is still a world in crisis. We need to mobilize the political will to find the common purpose of action to identify and implement lasting solutions, before it is too late. This can only be done with the full engagement of our national parliaments.

To give you just one example: just a few weeks ago the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change issued a most alarming report, according to which our planet is slowly but surely approaching the point of no return. Unless we take urgent and resolute action to change our lifestyles and adapt our economies so as to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees, we will no longer have a sustainable planet to pass on to future generations. As G20 nations, we have a major responsibility in this regard and needless to say, parliaments are called upon to play a critically important role in this regard - drafting legislation, adopting budgets and holding government to account for the timely and effective implementation of the Paris Agreement.

For several years now the IPU has been playing role as a global parliamentary convener: bringing together MPs from the select parliamentary committees on the occasion of the annual Climate Change Conferences, identifying and sharing good practices and model legislation, forging and following up on a parliamentary plan of action on climate change, and bringing a parliamentary voice to the relevant international deliberations in the field. We feel very strongly that, in order to **bridge the democracy gap in international relations and ensure greater transparency and accountability in global governance**, parliaments and parliamentarians need to be involved in the main international processes. We do that, for example, through the Annual Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations, the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO – convened jointly with the European Parliament, and through the specialized parliamentary meetings which accompany the main UN processes not just on climate change – but also in the areas of human rights, gender equality, migration, health and sustainable development.

Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear Colleagues,

At our meetings this week, we will have the opportunity to **make our own assessment**, as parliamentarians, of the actions and results achieved at the G20. Beyond the assessment, it would be equally important to formulate perspectives for the years ahead.

As a first consideration, we need to **recognize that our actions relating to the G20 are not as dynamic as they should be**. Proof of this is the irregular way in which parliamentary meetings are organized in the context of the G20. The last parliamentary consultation of this type dates back to 2013, 5 years ago, when important decisions were taken at the various G20 meetings, decisions to which we certainly **did not contribute in any way**.

The theme of the upcoming G20 Summit of Heads of State and Government is most relevant: *Building consensus for fair and sustainable development*. We can **join this consensus** and play our part – through our legislative, budgetary and oversight functions – in accomplishing this objective. We know that we can therefore **make a real contribution to** ensuring socio-political stability and economic and financial growth: drivers of the well-being of our populations.

As parliamentarians and representatives of the people, it is our duty to respond to the needs of our peoples. We know that in many ways globalization has been a tremendous force for progress and growth, lifting millions of people out of poverty. At the same time, we need to recognize and address the growing inequalities that affect so many people around the world.

The G20 makes up 85% of global GDP and 75% of world trade. But, although the G20 constitutes two thirds of the world population, **how much of that population that we represent really enjoys this impressive wealth?** The 2030 Agenda for Development and the Sustainable Development Goals represent for us all a clear roadmap to ensure peace, social justice and well-being, making sure that **no one is left behind**. The SDGs therefore need to represent the foundation of our day-to-day work as parliamentarians, and I believe that in many ways we are taking resolute action in this direction.

We know that we have been so far unable to forge a truly inclusive financial system. We know that we need to **promote a fair and equitable international trading system, based on free and fair trade for the benefit of all**. We know that it must help to foment global economic growth and sustainable economic development, create jobs and ensure well-being. We live in an inter-connected world, and **multilateralism remains our best option** to achieve sustainable development for all. Despite the worrying trend towards protectionism and isolationism, we need to do a better job in communicating and delivering on the benefits of shared global solutions to the global issues of our time.

Closer to home, we must also acknowledge the **growing disaffection** of our populations vis-à-vis politics, and the **loss of confidence** of our people in their institutions of governance. As lawmakers and political leaders, we have a responsibility to lead by example and make sure that our parliaments are indeed open, inclusive, representative, effective and accountable. To win back the trust of our citizens, we need to combat corruption, help give a voice to the disenfranchised, and show that our parliaments are sensitive to the needs and expectations of citizens – including the most vulnerable.

And of course, we know that we all need to do more for gender equality and **women's economic empowerment and independence**, which would, in turn, can go a long way towards **poverty reduction**. The **consensus** that the next G20 Summit of Heads of State and Government is aiming to build should inspire **further gender-responsive development policies** of a nature to remove barriers for women's economic empowerment. As parliamentarians, we should ensure that we strongly support this initiative by creating an enabling legislative environment and ensuring sufficient resources are allocated for the implementation of related policies and programmes.

Ladies in gentlemen,

May this meeting mark a new beginning for a series of regular parliamentary meetings in the context of the G20 Summit of Heads of State and Government. The IPU stands ready to support this initiative.

I thank you for your attention.