



Inter-Parliamentary Union  
For democracy. For everyone.

# 138<sup>th</sup> IPU ASSEMBLY AND RELATED MEETINGS

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## Activities report by the President

### (a) On her activities since the 201<sup>st</sup> session of the Governing Council

I visited IPU Headquarters in Geneva three times since my election, and met with the Secretary General and the staff of the Secretariat to get to know the work of our team better, begin coordinating efforts and planning for the coming months.

Since I was elected IPU President on October 2017 I have been actively working to bring the vision for this new presidency forward. A main objective has been to push our commitments on climate change, women and youth empowerment; refugees and migration, as well as the promotion of multilateralism and parliamentary diplomacy, as a way of improving the international context of our time. This has been shown through my engagement at global and regional conferences such as COP23 in Bonn, the Fourth Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians in Ottawa, the Preparatory Stock-Taking Meeting for the Global Compact on Migration in Puerto Vallarta, the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO in Buenos Aires, the 26<sup>th</sup> Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum in Viet Nam, and the Third Annual Conference of Speakers of Arab Parliaments in Cairo, among others.

Also in my capacity as IPU President, I have travelled to Geneva three times to attend and chair very important meetings. I have also been to New York three times and I have tried to personally meet as many fellow parliamentarians and IPU associates as time has allowed in order to establish a closer and more efficient working relation.

My first official mission as IPU President was to the Parliamentary Meeting on the occasion of the UN Climate Change Conference (COP23) in Bonn, Germany, on 12 November 2017. I stressed that climate change was a common concern for all humankind and a direct result of human activity that affected not only ecosystems but human rights too.

I appealed to parliaments to take stronger and more concerted action to respond to climate change through effective implementation of the Paris Agreement. I also encouraged them to enhance international cooperation and partnerships to share information and experiences on a regional and global scale with a view to ensuring ratification of the Paris Agreement. I asserted that as legislators and overseers of government action we have a great task to deliver. In this regard, I made reference to the *Parliamentary Action Plan on Climate Change*, adopted by IPU Members, which seeks to ensure that the legislative response is appropriate and consistent with the goals set by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The aforementioned Action Plan complements the outcome document of the Meeting, which is a call to action for the global parliamentary community.

I also congratulated the actions already underway, evidenced by a study on global trends in climate change legislation and litigation published by the IPU, which states that more than 1,200 climate change-related laws have been developed worldwide. Lastly, I asked my fellow parliamentarians to find ways to strengthen oversight of the implementation of national and international commitments to enhance transparency and accountability, as well as to ensure consistency between climate legislations and other societal goals such as poverty reduction, disaster risk reduction and gender equality.

During the conference the participating parliamentarians were clear in terms of the urgency to modify the format of these conferences into more useful and practical spaces for creating proposals for the implementation of the Paris Agreement in their countries. A suggestion that was well received in light of this repeated request was to hold interactive workshops coordinated with the UNFCCC. Adding a practical component to our IPU Assemblies and inter-parliamentary activities would, undoubtedly, benefit our work at home where we could undertake clear and concrete actions. It is necessary that we make decisions and implement a new format for the COP 24 meeting taking place next December in Poland.

On the heels of that meeting I travelled to IPU Headquarters in Geneva on 13 November with Mr. Duarte Pacheco, the Chair of the Twelve Plus Group, for my first official meeting with the IPU Secretary General, his senior management team and programme managers. Over my two days there, I familiarized myself with the structure and work areas of the IPU, as well as with the people who work both in front and behind the scenes of the various dossiers. The different meetings with the Secretariat showed their commitment towards innovation and work for our organization, which made clear to me the enormous potential that the IPU has in its Secretariat and all the goals we could achieve together.

Furthermore, during my stay in Geneva, Mr. Pacheco and I met with Ms. Beatrice Fihn, Executive Director of the International Campaign for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), which had been awarded the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize. In our discussions with Ms. Fihn, we examined possible ways of mobilizing parliaments to promote the signature and ratification of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. We agreed to hold a presentation at the 138<sup>th</sup> Assembly and a workshop to advance on the ratification and implementation of the agreement, which will take place on 24 March.

We also met with the Assistant UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. Volker Türk, with whom we analysed the need for the IPU to develop more active fieldwork in order to address the legislative challenges in terms of nationality laws. At the meeting, I asked Mr. Türk for his support in ensuring that the High Commissioner would attend the 138<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly and we agreed to conduct a workshop during the Assembly to analyse the Zero Draft of the Global Compact on Refugees. Both are already confirmed for the Assembly inauguration on 25 March. We also talked about the need to conduct more field missions and UNHCR proposed different places such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan and Zambia. This subject needs very close follow up with the IHL Committee and we need to ascertain if other committees are involved.

On 17 November I travelled to Ottawa to address the Fourth IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians. This Conference, held under the theme *A place for all: Young parliamentarians as drivers of inclusion*, was intended to design strategies to promote inclusion of the youth and reduce the social, economic and political generational gap. Discussions centered on three main themes: the political participation of young people; migration and social integration; and inclusive growth. The Conference was the biggest rallying event for young men and women MPs from around the world. Through the exchange of experiences and good practices of the different parliaments, the aim was to unite young politicians around a vision for a future that leaves no one behind. The host – Canada – represented hope for so many people – young and old – of different origins and backgrounds, and could not be more apt.

I had the opportunity to address my fellow young parliamentarians. I shared my knowledge as a young politician whose career started at the age of 15, to convey not only my understanding for the difficult circumstances youth face nowadays, but also to highlight the importance and the great responsibility that we have, as parliamentarians, to adequately represent the young citizens of our countries. The IPU is constantly working to raise the voice of the youth and ensure that their interests and concerns are heard and articulated. With statistics showing that half of the world's populations is 30 years old or younger, while only 1.9 per cent of parliamentarians are of that age, globally, it becomes clear that in order to avoid this democratic deficit we need to change the way of doing politics, of representing citizens and of creating open and inclusive policies.

In order to encourage young people into the political arena, politics itself needs to undergo profound transformation. Politics needs innovation, transparency and better communications. The reality is that the world is changing rapidly and we need to change with it. I appealed to parliamentarians to reflect on our responsibility to create opportunities for the young populations to fulfill their potential to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In order to do so, I asserted we must guarantee their access to decision-making processes in parallel with adjusting our national policies to the fast-pacing changes of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Lastly, during the Conference, I met with the IPU Secretary General, who I informed that I would be in New York the last week of November. I requested a meeting with the Secretariat staff working in the New York IPU Office. During that time, Canadian MP David McGuinty proposed that the Executive Committee should hold an extraordinary meeting to work on planning exercises and better strategies to achieve our goals in terms of having a more modern and active organization.

Another priority in our parliamentary agenda is migration. This is a concern very close to my heart which is why I was particularly delighted to address, on 4 December, the Preparatory Stock-Taking Meeting on the Global Compact on Migration in Puerto Vallarta in my native Mexico. The IPU delegation of parliamentarians included representatives from Africa, Europe and Latin America. Hon. Margaret Mensah Williams, Chairperson of the National Council of Namibia and President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, and José Ignacio Echaniz, a member of the Chamber of Deputies of Spain, contributed by highlighting the role parliamentarians must play to achieve a safe, orderly and regular migration at the national, regional and global levels.

Also, I took the opportunity to have a meeting with the Director General of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Ambassador William Lacy Swing, and I extended to him an invitation to address our Assembly in March. He accepted in that moment and expressed his satisfaction over future cooperation between the IPU and the IOM with regard to the Global Compact on Migration.

During my participation in the Retrospection Session during the Stock-Taking Meeting, I acknowledged the different realities and experiences across the globe, which is why we often encounter difficulties to achieve consensus on the migration policy agenda. However, I encouraged participants to look away from our differences and find common denominators from which to build diverse and feasible resolutions that can ultimately lead to national policies in line with international objectives. Particularly, as parliamentarians and the closest representatives to our people, we know first-hand how societies are evolving as a result of migration flows. Therefore, we are charged with the task of ensuring that international standards are respected at home for the benefit of the people. A clear example are migrant children, a topic we have been working on to design protection schemes for children and adolescent's migrating alone.

On a side note, the IPU has been addressing migration in recent years in a number of ways. One very successful example was the resolution adopted on "The role of parliamentarians in protecting the rights of children, unaccompanied migrant children, and in preventing their exploitation in situations of war and conflict". The General Debate during the 133<sup>rd</sup> Assembly on October 2015 was devoted to *The imperative for a fairer, smarter and more humane migration*. In mid-November 2017, the IPU co-organized with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean an international conference in Valetta, Malta, on promoting better regional cooperation on migration in the Mediterranean. The IPU was represented at that event by Mr. Jorge Laçao, Vice-President of the Portuguese Parliament and Vice-President of the IPU Portuguese delegation. Mr. Laçao knows first-hand about the perils of the crossing of the sea in search of a better life and the sacrifices that millions of men, women and children are forced to make.

Beyond those cold facts and statistics lie real human stories of poverty, marginalization, violence and persecution. Mr. Maçao, representing the IPU, urged parliamentarians to change their discourse from one of economic pragmatism to one of realism, and to shape public opinion away from a perspective of national threat towards one of humanitarian implications. In February 2018, the subject was further discussed at the Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations and will be taken up again at the 138<sup>th</sup> Assembly.

As I had previously informed the Secretary General, I travelled to New York last November on account of a personal working agenda. I met with Mr. Jan Eliasson, former UN Deputy Secretary-General, and Mr. Alan Stoga, founder of the Tällberg Foundation, to discuss how the IPU could have an approach that favours leadership programmes for young parliamentarians.

I deemed it important to meet with the IPU team in New York. During that week, I was only invited to a lunch with the Ambassadors who are particularly close to the IPU's work and goals ("Friends of IPU"). I had brought to the attention of the Secretary General well in advance the fact that it was impossible for me to take part in said gathering, due to other commitments I had previously arranged.

To my surprise, I was not invited to the signing of the MoU between the IPU and the UNDP taking place that week in New York and where the Secretary General took part representing IPU without any previous notification to myself. I was also not invited to a work meeting scheduled with UN Deputy Secretary-General, Amina Mohammed despite the fact that the 2016 General Assembly Resolution

calls for an exchange between UN-IPU “senior leadership”. In light of these events, I requested a personal meeting with Ms. Mohammed as a way of introducing myself. Our discussions delved into the IPU’s willingness to work in a coordinated manner with the United Nations, in particular regarding the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the agenda of empowerment for women and youth, which is of tremendous importance for our parliaments, as well as our countries.

I participated in the Parliamentary Conference on the World Trade Organization on the occasion of the 11<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference in Buenos Aires, Argentina on 9-10 December 2018. The event had been organized with the National Congress of Argentina. The Parliamentary Conference provided the ideal forum for MPs to have meaningful exchanges with government negotiators to enhance trade policies in the interest of the people.

I pointed to the paradox between the enormous international flows of tradable goods and services and the barriers and protectionist measures that were being set up to curb those flows. Such trends go against the spirit of globalization and undermine prosperity and developments for some countries. I therefore stressed that parliamentarians have a responsibility to respond to the needs of their people, starting by promoting a clear understanding of the advantages of free trade and dispelling the myth that free trade is in any way linked to unemployment globally.

I urged MPs to look for ways to achieve greater effectiveness in the debates and actions carried out in the WTO, and to generate discussions that lead us to a global trade that is much more just and equitable. I also encouraged parliamentarians to give greater transparency and closeness to all the procedures and dialogues that take place between governments, parliaments and civil society in commercial matters. We must reflect on how we can build greater capacities among parliamentarians, particularly in technical matters, regarding the commercial and financial agenda, as to be able to conduct informed discussions and decisions related to the WTO from the parliamentary perspective.

Moreover, on this occasion, I met with the Minister of Foreign Relations of Argentina, Mr. Jorge Faurie, to formalize the commitment of his country to host the 140<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly in the city of Buenos Aires. He also delivered a letter of commitment stating that all IPU Member countries can participate in this Assembly, consistent with the fundamental values of unity and inclusion of our organization.

As IPU President, I was invited by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees to participate in the High Commissioner’s Dialogue on Protection Challenges: Towards a Global Compact on Refugees, which took me to Geneva on 12-13 December. I co-chaired a thematic session on Reception and Admission with Mr. Volker Türk, Assistant High Commissioner, and later delivered conclusions of the meeting with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. Filippo Grandi.

During this occasion I stressed that the people, their human rights and dignity must always be at the centre of our discussions, actions and decisions as legislators. Particularly, when it comes to migrants, refugees, asylum-seekers or displaced people, they often become invisible and their rights are rendered vulnerable. Therefore, as law-makers, policy-makers and as representatives of the people in our countries, we have a fundamental role in the shaping and implementation of international agreements, particularly the Global Compacts on Refugees and on Migrants. As I have stressed before, we must actively engage in our duty to translate these international commitments into national agendas and policies. No one should be left behind.

During my trip to Geneva I also met with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr. Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein, to whom I reaffirmed our commitment to protect and defend the human rights of parliamentarians, a responsibility we treasure at the IPU. I also extended an invitation to him to participate in our next Assembly in March and requested his support for carrying out workshops that could provide in-depth information and tools to allow parliamentarians to improve the policy frameworks on human rights in every country

Furthermore, Mr. Konstantin Kosachev, Vice-President of the Executive Committee and I held a meeting with the Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Mr. Michael Møller. We discussed existing cooperation and explored further avenues for the future, particularly regarding the SDGs. We proposed to organize a workshop for the Chairs of Foreign Affairs and Finance Committees of all IPU Member Parliaments to offer practical information for better implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In each meeting I took the opportunity to invite each one of them to deliver keynote addresses in our upcoming Assembly, and they all gladly accepted.

Together with the Vice-President of the Executive Committee, Mr. K. Kosachev, I attended a working lunch with the Secretary General, his Senior Adviser and Chief of Staff on 13 December 2017. We discussed a number of issues, including convening a possible enlarged extraordinary session of the Executive Committee in early 2018 to which the presidents of the various geopolitical groups would be invited for their input. The session would serve as an induction for the new members, an introduction to the President and her vision and would benefit from the input of and relay of information from the geopolitical groups. Later that day, I visited IPU Headquarters in Geneva and shared some lighter moments with the Secretary General and his staff as they celebrated the festive end-of-year season.

My first mission in the New Year took me to Hanoi, Viet Nam, on 18 January 2018 for the 26<sup>th</sup> session of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum. The theme of the event, *Parliamentary partnership: Peace, innovation and sustainable development*, struck a chord. I underscored the close relationship between the IPU and the National Assembly, which had culminated in the landmark Hanoi Declaration at the 132<sup>nd</sup> IPU Assembly in March 2015, *The SDGs: Turning words into actions*. During my speech at the inauguration I asserted that if we, as parliamentarians, wish to make a change, we must begin by changing our communities, and that in this endeavour partnership is key. In this sense, I urged them to join efforts towards achieving lasting peace and sustainable development for the benefit and well-being of the people. Additionally, I highlighted the current importance of the Asia-Pacific region, as it holds 60 per cent of the global GDP, and possesses a remarkable potential for innovation, technology and a great capacity to address challenges like climate change, sustainable development, migration, displacement and refugees, inequalities and terrorism.

During my stay in Hanoi, together with Mr. Kosachev, we held a meeting with the Secretary General, Mr. Martin Chungong, to look over pending issues facing the organization. It is important that the Secretariat supports the Presidency in order to guarantee a more productive agenda during international events. In this sense, working closely and keeping communications channels open will improve our coordination concerning events and meetings.

I held a meeting with Mr. Trần Đại Quang, President of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. Also present at the meeting were Mr. K. Kosachev, Vice-President of the Executive Committee and Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Council of the Russian Federation, as well as the IPU Secretary General and Mr. Saber Chowdhury, former IPU President. In this context, I highlighted that Viet Nam is an example among the "leading nations in terms of economic growth, inclusive development and a strong voice on the issue of free trade."

Additionally, I pointed out that regional cooperation is essential to address the priorities of the international community and that participation in the APPF meeting provides an opportunity to give renewed impetus to the collaboration between that mechanism and the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

I also had a meeting with Mrs. Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan, President of the National Assembly of Viet Nam. We both agreed on the need to work together, because in order to succeed in the implementation of the SDGs, it is essential to align particular interests and strategies on how to proceed.

We also met with the General Secretary of the Communist Party, Mr. Nguyen Phu Trọng, and attended the award ceremony where former President Chowdhury and the IPU Secretary General were decorated by the authorities of Viet Nam.

As agreed with the Secretary General during my visit to Geneva in December, the 277<sup>th</sup> (extraordinary) session of the Executive Committee took place at IPU Headquarters on 3 and 4 February 2018 and the Chairs of the geopolitical groups were also invited. It was practically the first time the IPU had a meeting of this nature which was very intense and productive. Over two days of fruitful discussions, I got to know the members – new and longstanding – better and presented to them my vision for the organization. In particular, I shared with them my deep commitment towards building a Presidency close to the parliamentarians and the geopolitical groups, with the purpose of consolidating the IPU as the most relevant inter-parliamentary organization with an active role within the global agenda. Mainly, I conveyed my intention to make the IPU a more transparent, efficient, inclusive and communicative organization, that works at the service of its Member Parliaments, and whose work translates into benefits for the people in our communities.

At that meeting I presented the IPU President's vision for the organization, with the theme "Let's change the world, it starts from our community", where I had the opportunity to elaborate on four main topics: 1) the IPU Community, our organization; 2) our most important community: our colleagues, the parliamentarians; 3) our immediate communities: our parliaments, our countries, and 4) the IPU and the global community.

I also had the opportunity to briefly present the amendments to the IPU Statutes and Rules which I submitted last December. The amendments cover basically five issues that I believe must be subjected to a thorough evaluation namely: a) matters related to the legal commitments of the IPU and their approval procedure; b) responsibilities and prerogatives of the Presidency; c) communication, transparency and accountability; d) the Triennial Strategy and e) official languages; in order to make my vision a reality and bring the IPU firmly into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Moreover, we had the presentation of an external perspective by three external consultants: on one hand, the views of Mr. Alan Stoga, Chairman of the Board of the Tällberg Foundation; on the other, Mr. Patrick Noack and Maddalena Campioni, of The Global Future. This was a novelty at that meeting and provided a welcome breath of fresh air.

On the heels of that Executive Committee meeting, on 5 February 2018 I opened the first meeting of the newly established High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism. In my opening remarks, I emphasized the sensitive nature of terrorism, to which no country was immune. I applauded the initiative, which sought to create synergies between the United Nations and the IPU, and encouraged the Group to be as inclusive and open as possible. The Group elected its Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson (both of whom are women) and agreed on its Terms of Reference. It decided to examine the root causes of terrorism and the regional specificities of terrorism in its future work, as well as to develop a database of counter-terrorism laws to share good practices.

In the same vein, I travelled to Cairo to attend the Third Annual Conference of Speakers of Arab Parliaments on 10 February. One of the main issues on the agenda was terrorism, which I stated had no religion and no language other than hate. Terrorism had no borders or nationalities and threatened freedom and life itself. I condemned the association made between terrorism and Islam, which was a religion of peace. As a global threat, terrorism must be tackled by the global community in a coordinated manner. I told the Arab Speakers about the High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism, which had held its first meeting some days previously. Additionally, I emphasized the responsibility of parliaments to ensure that solid laws are in place and enforced to deal with terrorism, money laundering, human trafficking and other related crimes.

During my visit, I held several meetings with different delegations with the purpose of learning and better understanding their priorities and concerns in the region. I met with H.E. Meshal bin Fahmi Al-Salami, Speaker of the Arab Parliament, and with H.E. Ahmed Aboul-Gheit, Secretary General of the Arab League.

During the meetings, I did everything possible to send the information and photographs to the IPU. It is necessary to improve our communication channels so that all events and relevant information can be promptly updated and published on the IPU website.

On 22 and 23 February, I presided over the annual Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations. The theme of the event, *Towards a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration: A parliamentary perspective*, was particularly relevant given the fact that the Global Compact on Migration will be launched in 2018. On this occasion I shared my perspective regarding parliamentary action. As a common element of human history, international migration remains a distinctive feature of contemporary society. Today people facing harsh circumstances, such as poverty, disaster risks, violence and conflicts are forced to look for any chance to find better living conditions. This often entails taking dangerous journeys compounded by stigmatization and discrimination upon reaching their destination. Sadly, the vicious circle of vulnerability and human rights violations does not end here, as I have previously mentioned.

It is clear that no State can deal with the phenomenon of migration and human displacement on its own, which is why I welcomed the Zero Draft of the Global Compact on Migration issued recently by the two co-Facilitators, Ambassador Juan José Gómez Camacho from Mexico and Ambassador Jürg Lauber from Switzerland. I confirmed the IPU's support to the initiative and to keeping this matter high on our agenda and on the parliaments' agendas. Citing the outcome document of the General Debate at the 133<sup>rd</sup> Assembly, I reiterated that "migrants are not numbers; but human beings. As rights-bearers, they are to be treated with dignity and with respect for their human rights, regardless of their motive for leaving their homes or their status as regular or irregular migrants".

In the sidelines of the Hearing, on 21 February, together with the Secretary General and the staff at the IPU Office in New York, we looked over the details of the Annual Inter-Parliamentary Hearing.

On 22 February we met with UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, and discussed the status of IPU-UN cooperation and explored avenues for further engagement. I underscored the critical role and responsibility of parliaments in achieving the SDGs, particularly concerning the processes of ratification, adjustment of the national legislation, budget or finance allocation and accountability to make the SDGs feasible at a local level that ultimately resonates at the global level. I also emphasized that MPs could bring a legislative perspective to major UN processes. I also took the opportunity to invite the Secretary General Guterres to our 139<sup>th</sup> Assembly, to which he replied favorably.

The biannual resolution *on the Interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the Inter-Parliamentary Union* being a priority on the agenda, we met with Mexican Ambassador Juan José Gómez Camacho to work on the draft together with the IPU Secretariat. At that meeting we agreed to deliver a less inertial and bureaucratic resolution, and a more modern and effective one that truly reflects our mandate and commitment as MPs to promote democracy and human rights worldwide. Namely, the role the IPU plays in defending the human rights of parliamentarians and the tireless work devoted to achieving gender equality and greater opportunities for the youth. By doing so, I explained, we aim to have a simpler, more practical and modern document for parliamentarians that can allow for closer cooperation, implementation and monitoring. We finally agreed that the Mexican Mission to the United Nations would submit a proposal to IPU Members for their analysis, deliberation and decision prior to the beginning of the process with the other Embassies.

In the context of the Hearing, the IPU Presidency and the Secretariat invited the delegations to a cocktail. The event was attended by Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary-General; Miroslav Lajcak, President of the UN General Assembly; Amina Mohammed, Deputy UN Secretary-General; Juan José Gómez Camacho, Mexican Ambassador to the United Nations, Jürg Lauber, Swiss Ambassador to the United Nations and other prominent personalities from the UN system and diplomatic affairs. I had the opportunity of giving a speech where I stressed the importance of cooperation among institutions and how parliamentarians should promote the protection of migrants, eradicate discrimination and develop better conditions for them.

During my stay in New York, I also had the opportunity to meet with more than 20 delegations that attended the Hearing, which I hope can become a daily practice of the IPU Presidency. I am truly committed to having a closer relation with my fellow parliamentarians with a view to better understanding the concerns and proposals of all Members and taking substantial and concrete actions towards the improvement not only of our organization but of the current state of international relations and the SDGs. I look forward to the months to come and the work we are about to develop.

On 12 - 14 March I was in New York on the occasion of the Parliamentary Meeting at the 62<sup>nd</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women. We held our Parliamentary Meeting under the theme "Parliaments deliver for rural women and girls". I also participated in different IPU-sponsored side events, on "Violence Against Women In Politics" and "Gender Quotas and Youth Quotas". I also met with Ana Maria Menendez Senior Adviser on Policy to the Secretary General and held a press conference stressing stagnation of women's participation and means to redress this situation, also referring to the IPU report on *Women in parliament in 2017: The year in perspective*.

I will participate at the inauguration of the World Water Forum on Brasilia on 19 March where I will also have a meeting with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Aloysio Nunes and will attend a lunch offered by Brazilian President Michel Temer. On the context of the World Water Forum I will take part at a parliamentary event on 18 March organized by the Brazilian Congress, the Organization of American States (OAS) and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).