



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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Outcome Document

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We, over 170 young parliamentarians, came together at the Eighth IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians to reaffirm our commitment to the global effort to address climate change. Our average age was approximately 37 years and some 40% of us were women MPs. Although we came from almost 60 different countries, we were united in our commitment to work together, as a global community, to protect our planet. We were joined by representatives from international and regional organizations, youth organizations and start-ups, academics and inspirational leaders.

We came together to acknowledge that climate change is a global challenge like no other. It transcends borders. Whether our countries are the biggest emitters of greenhouse gases or the smallest, it affects us all. It is a global problem by its very nature and requires an internationally coordinated response.

In this spirit, we gathered in Sharm el-Sheikh to mobilize action. Less than three months after the adoption of the *Nusa Dua Declaration* by IPU Member Parliaments,¹ we reiterated the urgency for parliaments to prioritize climate action. The recent findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) show that global temperatures have risen about 1.1 degrees Celsius in the last 150 years or so, and that the goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees, or even 2 degrees, will be unreachable unless there are immediate reductions in emissions.² We are rapidly running out of time and we must redouble our efforts to match the scale of the problem. There is no “Planet B” if we fail. Although the costs of achieving emission targets are significant, they pale in comparison to the environmental, human and economic costs of inaction.

Climate change as a result of human activity is not new. Although we, the younger generation, did not create this problem, it is us who have to fix it, in cooperation with other generations. If we do not, it is us, and future generations, who will be most impacted. Our voices and solutions are therefore indispensable to solving this crisis for the good of all.

The link between climate change and human rights is clear. We have the same right to a healthy planet as generations before us. We have the right to development through sustainable pathways in line with national visions and aspirations, but these rights are being violated or called into question. Livelihoods are being destroyed by a warming planet, the loss of biodiversity, droughts and extreme weather events. The result will be more suffering, more vulnerability, more displacement and a greater likelihood of conflicts. Rising sea-levels threaten the very existence of communities in low-lying countries, river deltas and on the coast. Those of us coming of age at this tipping-point moment must be the generation that brings about climate justice and breaks the chain of environmental deterioration to move towards a more sustainable path, leaving no one behind.

¹ <https://www.ipu.org/file/14184/download>

² <https://www.ipcc.ch/2021/08/09/ar6-wg1-20210809-pr/>

Climate change has also become synonymous with youth rights. Young people in all their diversity are already leading the global agenda to promote climate action in the context of sustainable development pathways and in taking politicians to task. We, young parliamentarians, are ideally placed to channel their voices and solutions into public policy. We have a special role to ensure that youth are effectively included in decision-making institutions. Examples of ways to bridge youth to policy could include:

- Proactively engaging with youth and their civil society groups in our communities and beyond to better understand their concerns and possible solutions.
- Ensuring that youth groups, including student associations, youth parliaments and non-governmental organizations, are included in the formal work of parliament and are contributing to proceedings, including at committee level.
- Directly taking part in citizen engagement initiatives which involve youth. This can include through social media, in-person citizen assemblies, and others.

Climate change also affects the achievement of the goals of sustainable development, poverty eradication, gender equality and women's rights. It risks exacerbating inequalities between men and women and vulnerabilities including those among women and girls. We call for climate action to be approached through a socially inclusive and gender-sensitive and responsive lens to result in climate-related legislation and policies that take into account and address the specific needs and interests of women and girls. Research indicates that countries with greater representation of women in parliament are more likely to adopt stronger climate policies.³ Increased women's participation is therefore not only important for women's rights, but also to strengthen our collective efforts to meet our climate targets.

In addition to being representatives of our communities, we parliamentarians have the tools of legislation, government oversight and budgetary approval to influence change. We encourage the use of all such tools to take bold action. Examples of concrete measures we can advance include:

- Adopting laws that support climate change mitigation and adaptation, the transition to a green economy, and the implementation of commitments and pledges made through the Paris Agreement.
- Increasing the use of tools such as green budgeting and climate-related impact assessments, and making better evidence-based decisions that recognize how policies intersect with climate change efforts.
- Integrating the needs and interests of women and youth into climate policy and action by involving women and youth in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of climate change strategies and by ensuring that policies, legislation, programmes and other climate related measures and actions cater to the needs and interests of women and youth.
- Strengthening and scaling-up investments in adaptation efforts.
- Strengthening the capacities of institutions to analyse climate-related risks.
- Enhancing support to countries and communities in need, including by addressing the climate financing gap and enhancing cooperation with neighbouring countries to ensure well-coordinated responses to climate-related challenges.

As representatives of the people, we also have a role to lead by example. This includes both walking the talk as individual parliamentarians, but also reflecting on how our parliaments can reduce their carbon footprints at an institutional level. We can practice what we preach by:

- Cutting energy usage in our parliaments and taking climate-related impacts into account in our procurement practices.
- Optimizing the use of digital tools and technology to conduct our work.

³ <https://yaleclimateconnections.org/2019/09/countries-with-more-female-politicians-pass-more-ambitious-climate-policies-study-suggests/>

- Signalling our commitments as community role models by making visible lifestyle efforts to reduce our carbon footprints, including taking environmentally friendly transportation, recycling waste at home, and others.

Inadequate climate financing remains a major obstacle, especially for developing countries. Developed countries have committed to contributing US\$ 100 billion per year for climate financing, however this target has yet to be reached. We affirmed the importance of using our legislative, budgetary and oversight roles to ensure that this commitment is honoured and that funding is facilitated in a sustained and predictable manner and through the appropriate financial instruments with the highest level of concessionality. Least developed and highest-risk countries should be prioritized. The transfer of technologies is also indispensable to tackle this problem together.

Although we represent younger generations, climate change is an intergenerational problem in need of intergenerational solutions. We remain keen to work hand in hand with youth representatives as well as with more senior leaders to bring to reality the solutions that will benefit us all.

In the coming months, thousands of political leaders, youth groups and many others will congregate right here in Sharm el-Sheikh for the 2022 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP27). We are grateful to the Arab Republic of Egypt for hosting this Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians as a way to feed in the voices of youth and young parliamentarians into the wider discussions of COP27. We are convinced that parliaments are fit for purpose to be key partners in the collective effort to address climate change. And within parliaments, we, young parliamentarians, are key allies in answering this existential calling. We hope that the ideas and solutions brought forward will feature prominently in the forthcoming COP27 meetings, and we are committed to supporting a successful COP27 in Egypt.