



Inter-Parliamentary Union

For democracy. For everyone.

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## IPU Statement

### Panel Discussion on Enhancing Capacity Building in Public Health

*35<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council, 6-23 June 2017*

Thank you Mr. President.

Mr. President,

Political will at the highest level is a driver to elevate health to the top of national agendas. As legislators, overseers of government action and community leaders, Members of Parliament play a key role in this regard.

In close cooperation with international and national partners, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the global organisation of parliaments, works to ensure access to health services for all without discrimination. The ultimate goal is to provide a strong contribution to some of the health SDG targets, in particular efforts to end AIDS by 2030; expand access to health services; and implement the provisions of the Global Strategy on Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health.

At the global level, the IPU ensures a parliamentary contribution to key global health mechanisms and processes. For example, the first-ever parliamentary meeting at the 69<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly in 2016 highlighted how parliamentarians can play a key role in prioritising actions and resource allocations to ensure the highest attainable standard of health.

At the national level, the IPU works closely with parliaments in tackling inequalities in health and making sure that special attention is paid to the needs of the most vulnerable and marginalised populations. As a result of collaboration with the IPU, the Parliament of Uganda increased funding for health workers in rural areas, and parliamentarians in Rwanda intensified outreach to adolescents on sexual and reproductive health issues. In these and many other similar cases, the IPU ensured a bridge between its technical partners and parliaments, making sure that scientific evidence found its way into parliamentary action on health.

Thank you.

Geneva, 8 June 2017