



Inter-Parliamentary Union  
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# 133<sup>rd</sup> IPU ASSEMBLY AND RELATED MEETINGS

Geneva, 17 – 21.10.2015

Governing Council  
Item 9

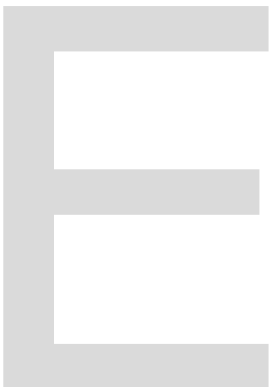
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## Cooperation with the United Nations system

*This document provides a brief checklist of activities undertaken in cooperation with the United Nations system from 15 March to 15 October 2015.*

### The United Nations

1. Following extensive preparations in coordination with the UN, as well as briefings for Permanent Missions in both Geneva and New York, the **Fourth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament** took place in New York from 31 August to 2 September. The Conference concluded with a Declaration on the role of parliaments in the post-2015 era. The UN Secretary General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, and other high-level UN officials, were in attendance along with over 170 Speakers and Deputy Speakers of Parliament. Special guests included the UNDP Administrator, the Executive Director of UN Women, as well as the current and incoming President of the UN General Assembly.
2. Immediately before the Speakers' Conference, the **10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Women Speakers of Parliament** was held on 29 and 30 August at UN Headquarters. Twenty-five women Speakers out of the 46 in office attended the Meeting, which adopted an outcome report on "Innovating for gender equality". Several Permanent Representatives joined the women Speakers at a reception held at the residence of the Italian Ambassador to the UN.
3. With back-stopping from several parliaments, the IPU reached out to Permanent Missions in New York to advocate for a clear recognition of the role of parliaments in the **Declaration of the UN Summit on the post-2015 development agenda** held on 25 to 27 September. As a result, three important references to parliaments appear in the final UN Declaration. The IPU President held discussions with the Head of the G77 group at the UN, as well as a number of Permanent Representatives, including those from Bangladesh and Morocco. He was scheduled to deliver a statement to the Heads of State at the Summit on behalf of the World Speakers' Conference and participated in one of the official roundtables in late September.
4. As part of a series of high-level events at the UN Summit, the IPU Secretary General was a panellist at a **special event of the UN Secretary-General** entitled "A call to action beyond 2015: Finding integrative solutions to accelerate change". He also attended a breakfast meeting organized by the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH).
5. On 2 and 3 September, the IPU Secretary General addressed two specialized Committees of the **UN Security Council** - the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee and the 1540 Committee (proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-State actors), on the role of parliaments and the IPU in these critical areas. With UN funding, the IPU will be convening a regional workshop in Algeria later this year to help address legislative gaps in combating the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.
6. Consultations on a new **cooperation agreement** between the two organizations continued on the basis of a draft that had been endorsed by IPU Members at the 132<sup>nd</sup> Assembly in Hanoi. Following an internal review of this draft by the UN, a revised text was developed for further negotiations.



7. On 10 July, the IPU President was one of the discussants on a **panel of the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council** on strengthening and building institutions for policy integration in the post-2015 era. The panel helped highlight the role of parliaments in monitoring implementation of the SDGs at both the national and global levels, including through the UN High-Level Forum on Sustainable Development.
8. On 14 and 15 May, the IPU Secretary General participated in a **high-level retreat of Every Woman and Every Child**, convened by the UN Secretary-General. The retreat provided an opportunity to mobilize a strong coalition of new and existing global health leaders to contribute to and deliver an updated Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescent's Health for 2016-2030. As a result of strong and high-level IPU involvement, the Global Strategy, launched by the UN Secretary-General in late September, refers prominently to the key role of parliamentarians in prioritization, funding, representation, accountability and upholding rights. The IPU has committed to the Strategy, pledging to assist parliaments in discharging their core functions to deliver better health outcomes for women, children and adolescents.
9. The IPU attended either as a participant or as a presenter in several UN meetings (formal and informal), including: a meeting of the **Working Group of Committee 1540 on Transparency and Media Outreach** (1 July), the **High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development** (1-8 July), and a meeting of the **Global Policy Forum** on the influence of corporations in UN decision-making and operations. An IPU statement was delivered on 19 May before the **negotiators of the UN Summit Declaration** to make the case for a clear reference to the role of parliaments.
10. In collaboration with IDLO, UNDESA, and the Permanent Mission of Italy, the IPU sponsored a **debate on access to legal information** on 24 June. Among other things, the debate highlighted the role of legislation in protecting access to information as a fundamental right of citizens, as well as the difficulty that parliaments encounter in gaining access to independent data and analysis.
11. Initial consultations for the joint **Parliamentary Hearing** during the current 70<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly (GA) were held with the GA President-elect, Mr. Mogens Lykketoft (former Speaker of the Danish Parliament). The IPU President met with Mr. Lykketoft to secure his support for the IPU in the 70<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly, which will include a new resolution on interaction between the two organizations.
12. In keeping with its engagement with the **UN Development Cooperation Forum (DCF)**, the IPU participated in the first symposium of the 2014- 2016 biennium in Republic of Korea from 8 to 10 April. Preparations for the second symposium on 4 and 5 November in Kampala, Uganda, are underway. The IPU also supported the implementation of the DCF **survey on mutual accountability for development cooperation**.
13. As part of the inter-agency group for the Least Developed Countries, the IPU participated in discussions on the preparatory process for the **mid-term review of the Istanbul Programme of Action** that will take place in June 2016. As a first contribution to this process, the IPU Secretary General will write to the parliaments in the LDCs alerting them to the national reviews that are supposed to take place in the latter part of the year with UNDP support.
14. Preparations for the **Parliamentary Meeting** on the occasion of the COP21/CMP11 session in Paris later this year are underway. Co-organized with the French Parliament, the meeting, to be held on 5 and 6 December, will help galvanize political will for strong action on climate change. It will feature a series of debates and interactive panels with prominent international climate change experts and politicians, and should culminate with the adoption of a forward-looking political declaration.
15. The IPU held its **Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians** in May at the Parliament of Japan in Tokyo. The Conference theme was "Democracy, peace and prosperity" and addressed socio-economic rights, peace and security from a youth perspective. UN efforts on youth employment, education and participation in peace-building were highlighted throughout the Conference by officials from ILO, UNDP and UNICEF based in Japan or Asia. Special emphasis was placed on the SDGs and their responsiveness to youth needs and interests. A message was delivered by the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Youth.

16. In August 2015, young parliamentarians of the IPU took part in the **Global Forum on Youth, Peace and Security** hosted by the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and co-organized by the United Nations.

#### **OHCHR – CEDAW Committee**

17. The Chair of the UN CEDAW Committee, Ms. Yoko Hayashi, took part in the World Conference of Young Parliamentarians held in May 2015 in Tokyo and launched a debate on “Eliminating all forms of violence against youth, in particular girls and young women”.

18. The IPU presented a report on parliaments’ involvement in the CEDAW reporting process and women’s political participation in the States reporting to the 61<sup>st</sup> session of the CEDAW Committee held in July in Geneva.

19. Working group meetings were also held between members of the **CEDAW Committee** and the IPU’s Gender Partnership Programme during the Committee session. The meeting served to discuss various aspects of parliamentary oversight of CEDAW and share information on post-2015-related activities regarding gender equality.

#### **UNDP**

20. The IPU continued to contribute to the work of a **virtual network of experts** on the indicators for Goal 16 of the SDGs, on governance. This included an expert workshop in Vienna on 6 and 7 May in which IPU staff participated. The report of the group was issued in July and will contribute to the efforts deployed by the UN to finalize governance indicators by March 2016.

21. The IPU and UNDP have agreed to join forces to publish a second edition of the successful **Global Parliamentary Report**. An expert meeting held at IPU Headquarters on 22 and 23 June helped define the outline of this report, which will examine the issue of parliamentary oversight: what it means and how it takes place in different political contexts.

22. The IPU continued to work closely with UNDP country offices, providing **technical assistance** and capacity-building programmes to national parliaments. This was the case, over the past six months, in Afghanistan, Guinea-Bissau, Myanmar, Pakistan, and Tunisia.

23. The IPU and the **Millennium Campaign** explored possible collaboration to engage parliaments in the implementation of the SDGs. A particular area of interest might be ensuring citizens’ feedback on SDGs implementation through a new version of the My World facility.

24. In August 2015, UNDP officially endorsed the Common Principles for Support to Parliaments.

#### **OHCHR**

25. In collaboration with OHCHR, the IPU held a side event on 22 June on the occasion of the 29<sup>th</sup> **Human Rights Council session**. Chaired by the President of the Human Rights Council, Ambassador Rucker of Germany, the event assessed progress on the recommendations of a panel discussion of the Human Rights Council 2013 session regarding parliaments’ engagement in the Universal Periodic Review. The IPU and OHCHR also advanced with the preparation of a compilation of best practices of such parliamentary engagement.

26. The IPU and OHCHR, in partnership with ILO, finalized in September their joint Handbook on *Migration, human rights and governance*, which will be launched during the 133<sup>rd</sup> IPU Assembly (17-21 October) during which IPU Member Parliaments will discuss and identify effective responses to challenges arising from migration.

#### **Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)**

27. The IPU and UNHCR began preparations for a conference on statelessness to be hosted by the Parliament of South Africa in November 2015. As a traditional partner of the IPU Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law, UNHCR provided briefings to the Committee at the 132<sup>nd</sup> IPU Assembly.

## UNAIDS

28. The IPU completed implementation of a Programme Funding Agreement with UNAIDS. As a final activity, the two organizations produced a policy guide entitled *Fast-Tracking HIV Treatment: Parliamentary Action and Policy Options*. The guide lists actions that parliamentarians can take to increase access to HIV treatment and provides illustrations of good practice by legislatures and individual parliamentarians.

## UNICEF

29. A parliamentary **seminar on child malnutrition and stunting** took place in Windhoek, Namibia, on 28 and 29 September. The meeting was sponsored by the IPU, UNICEF and the Parliament of Namibia and catered to parliamentarians from the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

## UNISDR

30. Following the **UN Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction** and the related Parliamentary Meeting in Sendai, Japan, held on 13 March, whose outcome document included strong references to the role of parliament, UNISDR and the IPU have been in talks to explore possible collaboration at the operational level.

31. A special breakfast event on disaster risk reduction sponsored jointly by the IPU and UNISDR was held on 1 September during the Fourth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament in New York.

## UN WOMEN

32. UN Women took part in a panel on Beijing +20 organized during the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians held during the 132<sup>nd</sup> IPU Assembly in Hanoi. Senior officials from UN Women interacted with MPs on the links between Beijing +20 and the new development agenda, as well as the role of parliaments in effecting change. UN Women was also present for the celebration of the Meeting's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the launch of the *My power for women's power* campaign.

33. The IPU and UN Women organized a side event on the occasion of the 132<sup>nd</sup> IPU Assembly in Hanoi. The side event focused on men's involvement in promoting and ensuring respect for women's rights and served to invite more men MPs to join UN Women's *He for She* campaign.

34. UN Women and the IPU finalized an agreement to support the Parliament of Turkey in its work for gender equality, focusing mainly on providing support to the parliament's Gender Equality Committee. The project is due to begin in October 2015

35. The IPU, UN Women, UNDP, NDI and International IDEA supported the organization of three e-discussions respectively on *Beijing +20; Do women make political parties more successful?*; and *Creating a work-life balance for women in politics* on the iKNOWPolitics website ([www.iknowpolitics.org](http://www.iknowpolitics.org)).

## World Health Organization (WHO)

36. At the regional level, the IPU once again partnered with WHO to organize the Accountability Loop Budget Advocacy training workshop in Asia. Held in Manila, Philippines, from 6 to 10 April 2015, the workshop provided parliamentarians from five Asian countries with an opportunity to acquire skills and knowledge on effective budget advocacy.

37. At the global level, the IPU and WHO organized a parliamentary session at the Consultation for the UN Secretary-General's Global Strategy on Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health held in Johannesburg from 5 to 7 May. The session recommended that parliaments be considered a vital partner in the Strategy, that every effort be made to strengthen parliamentary capacity to engage on issues linked to women's, children's and adolescents' health, and that IPU be part of the future global accountability mechanism.

38. For the first time ever, the Director-General of WHO, Dr. Margaret Chan, is due to address the 133<sup>rd</sup> IPU Assembly in October. This augurs well for more substantive cooperation between the two organizations.

### **World Trade Organization (WTO)**

39. On 30 September 2015, the IPU and the European Parliament organized a parliamentary session within the framework of the Annual WTO Public Forum. The theme of the session was "Reducing trade costs: Why speedy legislative action on the Trade Facilitation Agreement is of paramount importance". It served as a logical continuation of the work started by the IPU after the 9<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference, which adopted the Trade Facilitation Agreement aimed at boosting global trade by expediting the movement, release and clearance of goods. To enter into force, the Agreement required domestic ratification by two-thirds of WTO Members. The IPU undertook a number of measures to accelerate this process up and reviewed the situation at the 34<sup>th</sup> session of the Steering Committee of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO, which took place on 1 October.

### **UNFCCC**

40. To build up political momentum in advance of the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris, the IPU Secretary General, acting at the request of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, addressed letters to 14 national parliaments urging them to speed up ratification of the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol. A total of 144 instruments of acceptance were required for the entry of this instrument into force, the parliaments in question being in advanced stage of the ratification process. By 2 September 2015, two parliaments out of 14 had ratified the agreement, with the others to follow suit.