

Cooperation with the United Nations System

List of activities undertaken by the IPU from 15 September 2016 to 15 March 2017

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 200th session
(Dhaka, 5 April 2017)*

Democracy and human rights

Work on the second edition of the flagship **Global Parliamentary Report** continued on schedule. The Report is jointly produced by the IPU and UNDP. Publication is expected by September this year.

UNDP and the IPU continued their joint project of **assistance to the Parliament of Myanmar**.

A Regional Seminar on the SDGs and Human rights for parliaments in the Pacific region was organized in collaboration with OHCHR and UNDP. It was hosted by the Parliament of Fiji from 16-18 November.

At the 135th IPU Assembly (October), the IPU and OHCHR launched an updated version of their human rights handbook for parliamentarians (originally published in 2005). The handbook promotes better understanding among parliamentarians of international human rights norms and mechanisms, so that MPs can better contribute to their full implementation. The handbook was published in English; French and Spanish versions will be available early 2017.

The IPU maintained **regular contact with OHCHR**, including with its country offices, in order to promote satisfactory settlements in cases before the IPU Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians. On 4 December, IPU participated in a roundtable discussion at UN headquarters, **Turning international norms into local reality: Implementation, support and prevention**. The IPU **exhibit on the human rights of parliamentarians** was on display at UN Headquarters from 13 to 24 February.

In September, the IPU delivered a statement at the **High-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants**. Subsequently, the IPU provided input to the modalities resolution for a major conference in 2018, which is set to establish a new global compact on migration. The resolution acknowledges the role of parliaments on this issue and invites the President of the General Assembly to hold hearings with parliamentarians and other stakeholders in the lead up to the conference.

Gender equality and youth empowerment

On 20 September, the IPU President participated in and delivered a statement at the high-level event, **Together for the 2030 Agenda: Partnering for women, children and adolescents**.

In October, a **high-level parliamentary delegation led by the IPU President met the CEDAW Committee** at the United Nations Office at Geneva. The President and Committee discussed their work priorities, how to further their current joint work and how to enhance the role of parliaments in implementing CEDAW. At the CEDAW Committee's February session, the IPU also **reported on the level of women's participation** in the parliaments and governments of the countries under review, and on the level of parliamentary involvement in the State reporting process.

In October and November, the IPU Secretary General took part in several events to promote gender equality in his capacity as **International Geneva Gender Champion**. These included a panel debate at UN Headquarters organized with UN Women. The debate, **Women and politics: Beyond the vote** was preceded by a screening of the film *Suffragette*. **On International Women's Day** (8 March), the IPU Secretary General took part in activities organized by the UN Office at Geneva as part of the International Gender Champions initiative. This year's theme was **the power of sports in promoting women's rights**.

On 12 and 13 November, the IPU, UN Women and the Committee on equal opportunity for women and men of the Parliament of Turkey, organized a **training workshop for women parliamentarians** on leadership, communications and media relations.

The IPU-UN Women **Roadmap for substantive equality 2030** was launched at a special event on 14 February while a number of parliamentarians were in New York to attend the annual Parliamentary Hearing. The Executive Director of UN Women and the IPU Secretary General attended.

A new edition of the IPU–UN Women **Map of Women in Politics** was launched at the 61st Commission on the Status of Women in New York. On 17 March, the Parliamentary Meeting at the Commission considered the economic empowerment of women. Three side events were held with various UN partners on 16 March.

On 21–22 November 2016, five members of the IPU Forum of Young Parliamentarians took part in the inaugural **Forum of Human Rights, Democracy, and the Rule of Law** organized by OHCHR in Geneva. The Forum discussed issues under the theme *Widening the democratic space: The role of youth in public decision-making*. The delegation of young parliamentarians contributed their experiences to the debate. The IPU partnered with the Envoy of the UN Secretary-General on Youth, UNDP, OHCHR, the European Youth Forum and the Nigerian NGO YIAGA. Together they launched the **Not Too Young to Run** campaign.

On 30–31 January, three members of the IPU Forum of Young Parliamentarians participated in the 2017 session of the **Economic and Social Council Youth Forum**. In addition to the regular sessions, the MPs were interviewed in the SDG media hub and participated in a side event on being “Not Too Young to Run”.

International peace and security

In November the IPU worked with the UN Office at Geneva, the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform and other partners to co-host two events during Geneva Peace Week. The event was designed to highlight how parliaments can contribute to sustainable peace. This was the first event of its kind and was entitled *When peace agreements fail to secure sustainable peace: Learning from Yemen, Afghanistan, and Sri Lanka*. It examined the challenges and opportunities in a number of country-specific situations. The second event was called *Inequality as a danger to sustainable peace: Converging perspectives on human rights and peacebuilding*. It brought together experts to discuss the impact of societal inequality on sustainable peace from the perspectives of human rights and peacebuilding.

For the first time ever, parliaments and parliamentarians were acknowledged in a **Security Council resolution** as key actors in the fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The resolution was adopted on 15 December. It was the culmination of three years of engagement with the UN and parliaments on this issue.

On 24 January the IPU participated in the **high-level dialogue on sustaining peace** organized by the President of the General Assembly. The IPU representative delivered a speech and also remarked in two roundtable discussions that the UN needed to engage more closely with parliaments as political actors and not just recipients of technical assistance. The report of the high-level dialogue will set the stage for a larger UN conference on this topic during the 72nd session of the General Assembly.

From 31 January to 2 February, the IPU and the **UN Office for Drugs and Crime** co-organized a meeting with the Egyptian Parliament in Aswan, Egypt. The meeting focused on parliamentary action to counter terrorism. Parliamentarians from the Middle East, North Africa and the Gulf States discussed the challenges that arise when extremism leads to terrorism. They identified regional and national strategies for effective responses, and welcomed the draft of a plan of action driven by parliamentarians on how parliaments can act to prevent terrorism. The plan was conceived to fill the current implementation gaps in UN resolutions relating to terrorism.

The October 2016 session of the IPU Committee on UN Affairs dealt in part with the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse committed by UN Peacekeepers. The report of that Committee session was therefore shared with members of a new **UN task force to review the UN response to allegations of sexual abuse**.

Sustainable development

The IPU contributed to a number of development discussions at UN headquarters in New York, including: the **joint meeting of ECOSOC and the Second Committee of the General Assembly** on changing the political economy of globalization (7 October); a panel discussion organized by the

UN Office for South-South Cooperation on Thailand's sufficiency economy (12 January); and the **Fifteenth Coordination Meeting on International Migration** (16-17 February).

On migration, the IPU began consultations with the Office of the President of the General Assembly on possible ways to engage parliaments in the process for a **global compact for a safe, orderly and regular migration**, which will culminate with a global conference in September 2018. The discussion followed the adoption of a resolution in January, which invites parliaments to contribute to the process.

With support from UNDP, the IPU made a major contribution to the **second High-level Meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation** (Nairobi, 28 November to 1 December 2016). A one-day parliamentary meeting to reflect on the key issue of the Meeting's agenda was held on 29 November. On 30 November, there was also a smaller side event to focus on the capacity-building needs of parliaments, organized with the UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs and the Association of European Parliamentarians with Africa. Much of IPU's contribution to the process was well reflected in the outcome document of the second High-level Meeting.

Parliaments and the Sustainable Development Goals: A self-assessment toolkit was launched at a parliamentary seminar for the Latin American region held in Panama City on 1 December. It was produced by the IPU and UNDP in English, French, Spanish and Arabic. The toolkit includes a questionnaire that parliaments can use to review their own capacities to implement the SDGs through the legislative and oversight process.

In all, the IPU organized five regional seminars on the SDGs, which were attended by officials and experts from UNDP, UNAIDS, WHO and UN Women. The seminars were held in the Pacific, Latin America, South Asia, Africa, and Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

On 13 November, the IPU and the Parliament of Morocco convened the annual Parliamentary Meeting on the occasion of the UN Climate Change Conference in Marrakech (COP22/CMP12). A total of 300 delegates from more than 60 countries attended. The parliamentarians were informed about the main issues of the Conference from those working full-time on climate change questions. MPs had the chance to improve their knowledge of the recommendations included in the IPU's Parliamentary Action Plan on Climate Change, and discussed how to swiftly operationalize the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. The outcome of the Parliamentary Meeting was presented to the main UN Conference.

An IPU representative participated in the **annual ECOSOC retreat** with UN ambassadors and other UN officials on 20 and 21 January. The retreat was an opportunity to review some of the political and organizational aspects of the 2017 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and related processes.

The **2017 Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations** (13–14 February) was dedicated to SDG14 (*Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development*). The hearing was entitled *A World of Blue: preserving the oceans, safeguarding the planet, ensuring human well-being in the context of the 2030 Agenda*. It attracted 150 MPs and several UN high representatives. The outcome of the Hearing will be one of the contributions to the UN Ocean Conference in early June.

The parliaments of the 40 countries that have volunteered to submit **progress reviews to the High-level Political Forum** session in July were all informed of the process by the IPU Secretary General. The parliaments have been invited to participate in their respective national reviews and return a questionnaire to the IPU that will help to assess the quality of the process.

Senior-level interaction

Officials from over a dozen UN organizations and specialized agencies attended the 135th IPU Assembly (Geneva, October 2016) and made contributions to the debates and deliberations.

On 17 January, the IPU Secretary General, Mr. Martin Chungong, participated in the first briefing and brainstorming session with Geneva-based international organizations hosted by the new **UN Secretary-General**, Mr. António Guterres. Mr. Chungong reiterated the IPU's commitment to the SDGs. The Director of the Division for Member Parliaments and External Relations and the Head of the Office of the Permanent Observer to the United Nations met the Chief of Staff to

Mr. Guterres on 13 February in New York. It laid the ground for a more detailed meeting with UN departmental heads later in the year, as established by GA resolution 70/298.

During the annual Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations, the IPU President and Secretary General met with the President of the UN General Assembly and other UN officials, to discuss future cooperation.