



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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137th IPU Assembly

St. Petersburg, Russian Federation
14–18 October 2017



Interactive session

Key findings from the 2017 Global Parliamentary Report on oversight

Sunday, 15th October 2017
Reading Room (ground floor), Tavrishesky Palace

The 2nd Global Parliamentary Report (GPR), on parliamentary oversight and parliament's power to hold government to account, will be launched at the IPU Assembly on 15 October. It has been jointly prepared by IPU and UNDP on the basis of contributions from more than 150 parliaments. The report offers a series of recommendations and a scenario for change for strengthening oversight and accountability.

The interactive session will begin with a presentation of the report's findings, and a discussion of the political priority that is accorded to oversight.

If oversight and accountability are considered to be important for the quality of government and for the quality of democracy, then what actions do MPs and parliaments need to take to strengthen their oversight role? Given the complex environment in which parliaments operate, how can these changes come about?

The second part of the interactive session will consider the opportunities available to MPs and parliaments to increase their capacity for oversight. The challenges to oversight are well known - the lack of political space, lack of resources, access to information, competing demands on MPs' time, etc.

But what are some of the possible solutions? Considering the limitations on time, resources and information, to what extent can partnerships with external actors such as audit institutions and civil society help MPs and parliament in carrying out their mandate?

To hold government to account, parliaments engage with many different actors in society. Research for the GPR highlighted that crucial resources are available within civil society. The relationship between parliaments and civil society can be constructive and highly valuable for oversight, yet can also be a source of competition or confrontation. This session will explore the tensions and seek to draw out real-life examples of good practices from MPs' personal experiences.

Participants will be invited to consider questions such as:

Part 1: Strengthening parliament's oversight role

- What changes are required to strengthen oversight in participants' parliaments?
- How can MPs work to bring about change?

Part 2: Building partnerships for oversight

- What innovations can help to overcome challenges such as resource limitations?
- How do parliaments go about building and strengthening oversight partnerships, for example with audit institutions and civil society?
- How do MPs decide which actors within civil society to engage with, and how to work with them effectively?

#IPU137

Moderator:

Mr Charles Chauvel, Team Leader, Inclusive Political Processes
Governance and Peacebuilding, United Nations Development Programme

Panelists:

Mr David Carter, Speaker of the House of Representatives, New Zealand

Ms Claudia Roth, Deputy Speaker of the German Bundestag

Ms Pia Cayetano, Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives, Philippines

Ms Alexandra Jerkov, Member of the National Assembly, Serbia

Ms Kareen Jabre, Director, Division of Programmes, IPU