



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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Annual Report 2016

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What is the IPU?

The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) is the global organization of national parliaments. We work to safeguard peace and drive positive democratic change through political dialogue and concrete action.

The only international organization to bring together the world's national parliaments, we promote democracy and peace through this unique parliamentary membership.

An ever-changing pool of about 45,000 members of parliament, representing citizens worldwide, ensures the IPU always has a finger on the pulse of democracy.

The IPU is an independent, self-governing body funded mainly by our Members. Our current membership includes 171 national parliaments and 11 regional parliamentary bodies as associate members.

Protestors hold a sign reading "We want elections with zero deaths!" The IPU systematically condemns violence in electoral processes. Peaceful elections are the foundation of democratic governance.
© AFP/Issouf Sanogo

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Advancing democracy and the global security and development agenda

To say that 2016 was a tumultuous year would be an understatement. Acts of terror and affronts to peace and security; the displacement of untold numbers of people due to war and persecution; major upsets in the political sphere; and natural disasters and extreme weather: 2016 was a year of unprecedented misery, turmoil and instability. The effects were felt by the peoples of the world, including in the global parliamentary community, and no one with a conscience was left unmoved.

However, the year was not without signs – and, indeed, acts – of hope and progress.

2016 witnessed the beginning of global efforts to implement the United Nations [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) (Agenda 2030) adopted in 2015. It signalled the international community's commitment to meet the essential needs of the world's people and to deliver on their expectations – to end poverty in all of its forms, and to safeguard the planet for all people, today and in the future.

This comprehensive development package, and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), will require the work and dedication of many actors to implement, not least the participants in, and proponents of, democracy. As Ban Ki-moon, then Secretary-General of the United Nations, [stated](#), I believe firmly that, as national parliaments have been engaged from the outset in shaping these Goals, they feel a strong sense of ownership and commitment to their realization, and they are stepping up decisively to answer the call to play that vital role.

To this end, the global parliamentary community, with the support of the IPU, has begun to 'walk the talk' and strive to make the SDGs a reality. We are pursuing an integrated approach to Agenda 2030, aligning our direction with its requirements, and focusing our efforts where we can make the most impact – on the areas and the particular SDGs that are tied to our core values and purpose. We are developing research, tools and good practices, and applying them in our work at the regional and national levels. 2016 witnessed a flurry of regional and interregional seminars on the SDGs organized by the IPU. The eagerness with which parliaments welcomed the self-assessment toolkit on the SDGs we designed in partnership with UNDP attests to their commitment.

The historic Paris Climate Change Agreement entered into force in 2016, giving greater impetus to global efforts to recognize and address climate change as a real and formidable challenge. Parliamentarians were again in the forefront, devising a roadmap for the implementation of their own [Parliamentary Action Plan on Climate Change](#).

At UN Headquarters in July 2016, then UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and I were pleased to sign a [new cooperation agreement](#), thus providing new stimulus to collaboration between the two institutions. The agreement places the institutional relationship on a stronger footing

"Parliaments... will play a central role in translating and adapting the global agenda into real change on the ground – through legislation, fiscal reforms, robust citizens' participation and effective oversight, evaluation and accountability. Parliamentarians are vital to every part of our agenda to advance peace, development and human rights."

UN Secretary-General
Ban Ki-moon's remarks to the
[Annual Parliamentary Hearing](#)

IPU Secretary General
Martin Chungong affirms the
Organization's commitment to
universal membership. © UN
Women/Ryan Brown, 2016



and sets a framework for cooperation in a number of existing and new areas. In the wake of this agreement, a UN General Assembly resolution on interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the IPU was also adopted. Together, these accords give governments and parliaments a strong framework for enhanced cooperation at the global level.

2016 will also be remembered for the adoption of [a revised IPU Strategy for the period 2017-2021](#). This roadmap, the fruit of broad consultations among Members and partners, is part of the IPU's efforts to continually align its work with the global agenda. *Strategy 2017-2021* makes clear the connection between enhanced democracy through strong parliaments and better development outcomes for the world's people.

The Strategy builds on the IPU's work in existing areas and has been adapted to take into account new and heightened realities such as violent extremism and terrorism, as well as increasing attacks on democracy and the institution of parliament in many parts of the world. Peacebuilding, support for national reconciliation and conflict prevention have been moved up on the IPU's agenda, as the need to go back to basics and emphasize the IPU's core mandate of promoting peace through political dialogue resonated strongly with our Members.

Another watershed moment for the IPU in 2016 was the 40th anniversary of its Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians. The work of this unique body, which defends the human rights of members of parliament (MPs) and addresses alleged violations of these rights, is as important and relevant today as ever. 2016 saw the global parliamentary community reiterate its commitment to solidarity with MPs across the world who are subject to all sorts of impediments in the performance of their mandate.

The IPU's efforts to advance gender equality and, in particular, the political empowerment of women, were scaled up in 2016, with Women Speakers of Parliament upgrading their annual meeting to [Global Summit](#) level. The very venue of the 2016 session, Abu Dhabi, was highly symbolic, as the Arab region has one of the lowest levels of women's political representation in the world. The success of the Summit sends a strong message about women's political emancipation that will be heard throughout the planet.

Our Members recognize youth participation as crucial to genuine democracy, and inclusive and effective political processes. Involving young people in public life and political decision-making, and becoming more responsive to their needs, therefore figures prominently in the Organization's *Strategy 2017-2021*. In 2016, we laid a strong foundation for pursuit of these efforts, which will include the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) and social media to engage this constituency, and to access their input and creativity.

To crown the year, the IPU launched its new, dynamic and multilingual website. Our window to the world, the new website will reach out to a larger number of parliaments – Members and non-Members – as well as to partners and stakeholders, by providing relevant and updated information in four languages: English, French, Spanish and Arabic.

2016 also saw an important step forward in the IPU's continued drive towards universal membership. We achieved some success with the re-affiliation of the Parliaments of Egypt, as well as Comoros. With the accession of the Parliaments of Guyana and Swaziland to the IPU, also in 2016, the Organization is well on its way to achieving universal membership, currently standing at 171 parliaments and 11 Associate Members. The establishment by the IPU of its Parliamentary Solidarity Fund, which seeks to facilitate participation by small parliaments in the work of the Organization, will undoubtedly add impetus to this drive.

The events of 2016 have heightened, not just the importance, but also the urgency of the requirement that the IPU and its Members pursue our core mandate to build strong, democratic parliaments, and mobilize them around the global development agenda. We are poised to continue this work, and in 2017, to step up these efforts – because they are fundamental to our mission, and, more significantly, because the world's people are looking to us to fulfil this vital role. The world continues to be afflicted by injustice and inequalities, and it is no coincidence that the global parliamentary community is poised to address these as it embarks on a new year.



Martin Chungong
Secretary General

Strengthening parliamentary solidarity

Terrorism, monumental political shifts, rising economic inequality and mass human suffering in the world's conflict zones were some of the megatrends the global parliamentary community addressed at the two IPU Assemblies in Lusaka, Zambia, and Geneva, Switzerland.

The humanitarian catastrophe in Syria continues to loom large on the international agenda, and parliamentarians were keen to engage in helping to find solutions to alleviate human suffering and destruction. An emergency resolution on *The war and the severe humanitarian situation in Syria, particularly in Aleppo* condemned in the strongest possible terms the targeted attacks against civilians, hospitals and aid convoys, called upon all parties to the conflict to immediately cease such attacks and reinstate the ceasefire agreement of September 2016, and urged the Security Council to fulfil its primary responsibility of maintaining world peace and international security.

In 2016, the IPU *Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law* undertook a field mission to Lebanon to assess the Syrian refugee crisis and its effect on the Lebanese people. During Assembly deliberations, parliamentarians heard the report and recommendations arising from the field mission and pledged to follow up on these recommendations, in particular, by helping to mobilize funds, implementing sound support programmes for refugees and receiving communities, and, not least, addressing the root causes of the crisis.

Giving an identity to the 230 million children without a civil status was also identified as one of the major challenges of the humanitarian crisis in the 21st century. *The emergency resolution* adopted on this issue notes the alarmingly large number of unregistered children and highlights the impact of a child's lack of status on their access to education, welfare benefits and health services, and on other basic rights. It also identified a series of measures that parliaments can take, such as adopting laws that facilitate the issuance of birth certificates free of charge or at minimum cost, implementing mobile applications that allow authorized people to register births, setting up registry offices as close to people's homes as possible, allowing women to register children, digitizing registration, and promoting campaigns on regularizing the status of children without a legal identity or papers.

Combating violence, protecting world heritage

Counter-terrorism and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction remained high on our political agenda throughout the year. A resolution on *Terrorism: The need to enhance global cooperation against the threat to democracy and human rights* was adopted at our Assembly in Lusaka. In the resolution, our Members proposed a multi-faceted approach to dismantling terrorist networks, combating hatred, and countering terrorist propaganda. The resolution stressed the "absolute need" for international anti-terror cooperation to be stepped up. It urged



The world's MPs condemned the war and humanitarian catastrophe in Aleppo, Syria, during the 135th IPU Assembly. © AFP/Louai Beshara, 2016



parliaments to legislate to combat pro-terror websites and to criminalize acts such as travelling abroad to commit terror, recruiting and training terrorists, and funding terrorism. It also called for action to cut the risk of extremism taking root – by tackling poverty, discrimination and unemployment, while increasing dialogue, education and youth empowerment measures.

Members of parliament also maintained their strong focus on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, with a view to securing a nuclear weapons-free world. They welcomed the start of negotiations on a comprehensive agreement to ban nuclear weapons, examined avenues for action towards the establishment of new nuclear weapons-free zones, and identified good practices in addressing legislative gaps so as to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-State actors.

A separate and comprehensive [resolution](#) adopted in Lusaka addressed the threats posed by armed conflict and terrorism to the world's cultural heritage, including the destruction of historic sites and the looting of artefacts to fund extremism. The tragic destruction of Palmyra in Syria, one of the most ancient sites in the world, was the latest example of the need to find effective ways to protect cultural heritage. The resolution recommended that intentional destruction be defined as a war crime. It urged States to become party to the 1954 Hague Convention and its protocols dealing with the protection of cultural property in armed conflict, and all other relevant UN conventions. Parliaments were also urged to take action, including by ensuring laws are in place to prosecute perpetrators. Parliamentary

measures to protect cultural heritage from the impact of mass tourism, climate change and urbanization were also identified.

Promoting youth and women's participation in democracy, and human rights

Rejuvenating democracy and giving voice to youth was the theme of a lively [General Debate](#) during the Lusaka Assembly. The debate concluded with a forward-looking outcome document that identified important courses of parliamentary action. Among these, MPs stressed that responses to rising extremism must be based on more democracy, not less. Ensuring young people had opportunities and a viable future would help defeat radicalism. Our Members also committed to adapting and modernizing their parliaments so that they become inclusive, open institutions capable of delivering a better future for youth. Quotas to raise the number of young people in parliament, using modern technology to increase political engagement and transparency, and boosting political empowerment through the inclusion of civic education in school curricula were some of the proposed solutions.

There was a new push to enhance women's participation in parliament through a resolution adopted unanimously at the 135th Assembly on [The freedom of women to participate in political processes fully, safely and without interference: Building strong partnerships between men and women to achieve this objective](#). IPU Members committed to setting a target ensuring 30 per cent of MPs are women and another target to achieve gender parity. The IPU's governing bodies also adopted a decision to increase the proportion of women on the Executive Committee to 30 per cent.

In a speech to the upper chamber of the Russian Parliament, IPU President Saber Chowdhury praised Russia's longstanding membership of IPU and urged MPs to continue working for peace. © Sergey Raytakov/Ria Novosti/Sputnik



As the IPU Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians was commemorating its 40th anniversary, the theme of the General Debate at the 135th IPU Assembly in Geneva was *Human rights abuses as precursors of conflict: Parliaments as early responders*. The outcome document detailed specific actions parliaments can take to prevent human rights abuses and tackle them when they occur. Ensuring international human rights norms are part of national legislation, guaranteeing that law enforcement always acts with the necessary restraint, combating gender-based violence, and preventing the rise of violent extremism are a few of the concrete measures parliaments must take to protect their citizens' human rights. The recommendations arising from the debate made clear that MPs must speak out vigorously against violations and "...work tirelessly to find a remedy, whatever the violation, and wherever it occurs."

Growing the IPU community

In addition to the formal agenda of IPU statutory bodies, the Assemblies also provided a unique opportunity for dynamic parliamentary diplomacy. Over 200 bilateral meetings were held in Lusaka and Geneva, resulting in initiatives and new relationships of respect and understanding between parliamentarians and nations. True to our traditional role as a mediator and honest broker, the IPU facilitated dialogue between political factions in countries such as Cambodia, Cyprus, Yemen, Venezuela and Syria, as well as between parliamentarians from countries with very tense or non-existent diplomatic relations such as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea.

2016 also saw an important step forward in the IPU's drive towards universal membership. With two re-affiliations and two new affiliations, our membership reached an all-time high of 171 Member Parliaments and 11 Associate Members.

New challenges, new strategy

The new Strategy adopted by the world's MPs during the 135th Assembly was one of the major highlights of 2016. The *Strategy 2017-2021*, which is informed by the successes and lessons learned from the previous strategy, sets a new vision and mission to guide the IPU's work to meet increasing, multiple and complex challenges, including terrorism and violent extremism, climate change and growing inequality.

The Strategy, drafted under the guidance of IPU Member Parliaments, articulates the core values of the Organization and centres on two overarching goals: to build strong, democratic parliaments, and to mobilize them around the global development and security agenda. Within this framework, eight objectives have been defined.

These cover: the advancement of democratic values, the rule of law and strong, representative parliaments, and peace and security; and the promotion of gender equality, youth participation in politics, parliamentary involvement in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, and human rights.

To ensure maximum impact and that outcomes transcend individual interests, the Strategy lists enabling actions that concentrate our efforts in five areas: effective internal governance and oversight, visibility, advocacy and communications, gender mainstreaming and a rights-based approach, a properly resourced and efficient Secretariat, and building partnerships.

The Strategy is designed to be flexible, allowing for ongoing adjustments. This is essential as the Organization monitors progress and modifies activities as new challenges and opportunities emerge.



The IPU launched a new application during the 135th Assembly as part of its PaperSmart Initiative.
© IPU/Pierre Albouy, 2016

Bringing parliamentary voices to global affairs

The IPU's strong working relationship with the United Nations deepened in 2016, with a [renewed cooperation agreement](#), vibrant parliamentary input into key UN processes, effective work by the [Committee on UN Affairs](#), constructive engagement with senior UN officials at events organized by the IPU, and the adoption of a bi-annual [resolution](#) of the UN General Assembly on interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and the IPU.

With 80 co-sponsors, the UN General Assembly resolution recognized the IPU's commitment to support parliaments and parliamentarians in the achievement of the SDGs. The resolution also encouraged the IPU to continue to provide substantive contributions to global debates on a number of challenges such as migration, non-proliferation and disarmament, and disaster risk reduction. The resolution welcomed the new regular parliamentary side event being held during the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, the main global

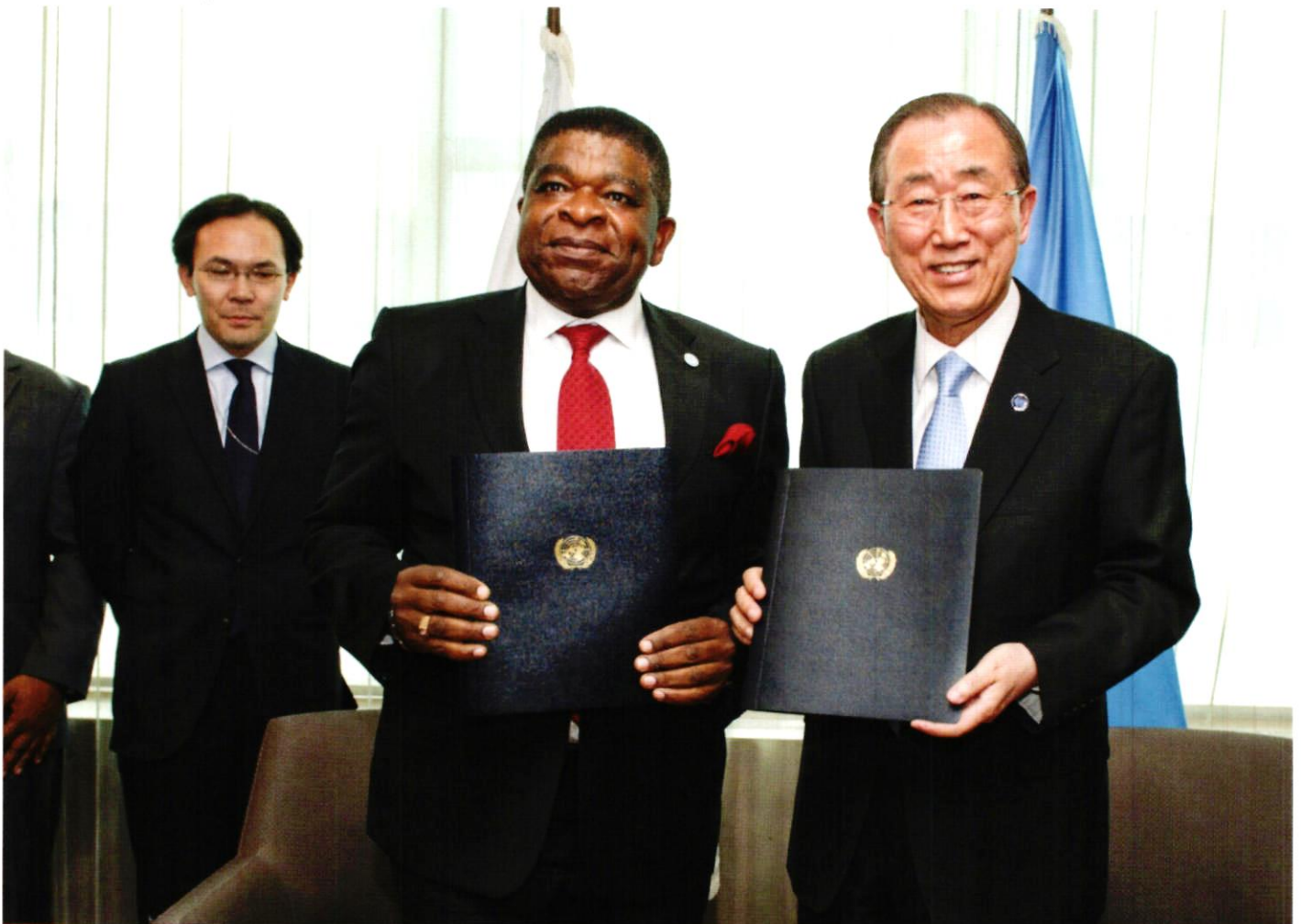
mechanism to track the implementation of the SDGs. It also expressed support for the [Common Principles for Support to Parliaments](#), which was developed by the IPU and a group of UN and other partners to ensure high standards for technical assistance to parliaments. Ambassadors and parliamentarians participated in the UN General Assembly debate, underscoring the critical importance of effective cooperation in the age of the SDGs and in the face of increasing international challenges.

The General Assembly resolution also calls for an annual meeting of the leadership of the United Nations and the IPU to review joint work and identify opportunities for political and operational cooperation. The first such meeting, held in 2016, was instrumental in clarifying the complementary roles of the United Nations and the IPU in the global cooperation architecture.

Increasing cooperation with the United Nations

Twenty years after the first IPU-UN cooperation agreement was concluded, the Secretaries General of the United Nations and the IPU signed a new cooperation agreement. This agreement puts our partnership with the United Nations on a stronger and more strategic footing, and sets the course for even closer cooperation in the future.

[New IPU-UN agreement charts the way for renewed cooperation.](#) © UN Photo/Rick Bajornas, 2016





Crack cocaine users gathered by a wall with the inscription "A disease named crack", in central Sao Paulo, Brazil. In 2016, over 200 parliamentarians met at the United Nations to address the global drug problem. © AFP/Grizar Junior, 2010

As the global organization of parliaments, the IPU's important role in promoting representative democracy, human rights and gender equality through political dialogue and parliamentary action is highlighted in the agreement. The need for parliamentary engagement to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is also emphasized.

Helping to stem the worldwide drug problem

The 2016 Annual Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations in February provided an opportunity for over 200 parliamentarians to engage on important issues related to the global drug problem. Entitled "*The world drug problem: Taking stock and strengthening the global response*", the meeting featured dynamic interactions with UN officials, civil society experts and members of the diplomatic community. The summary of the meeting was presented to the UN General Assembly Special Session on Drugs in April 2016.

Speaking at the opening of the session, President of the General Assembly, Danish MP Mogens Lykketoft, encouraged parliamentarians to express the ideas and opinions of their constituents during the discussions, to draft and adopt the relevant legal frameworks, and to embrace their role as custodians of parliamentary accountability – overseeing the implementation of international commitments, and calling for action and answers when needed.

IPU President Saber Chowdhury speaks with participants during the 2016 Annual Parliamentary Hearing. © IPU/Joel Sheakoski, 2016

Yury Fedotov, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, also welcomed parliamentary engagement in the broad range of issues related to drugs, including health, agriculture, stability and development, as well as substance abuse and organized crime. IPU President Saber Chowdhury stressed the importance of the health and human rights perspectives in addition to the law enforcement aspects of this issue.

Focus on challenges at the United Nations

At its meeting in Lusaka during the 134th Assembly, the IPU's Committee on UN Affairs worked on moving forward with the



The IPU pledged its support of the WTO's commitment to ensure an inclusive approach to international trade negotiations. © IPU/Giancarlo Fortunato, 2016



implementation of the SDGs, and provided a forum where parliamentarians shared good practices and ideas to ensure that in future these international and cross-cutting goals are factored into national budget processes, policies and legislation. The committee session made the link between the IPU and the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, which is mandated to perform a global review of SDGs implementation during its July session.

The Committee also initiated the first ever dialogue between the IPU and candidates for the position of UN Secretary-General. While it was not possible to hold a debate with the declared candidates, the Committee put three written questions to them and their responses were posted to the IPU's website. The interaction provided an opportunity to further develop the relationship between the IPU and UN Secretary-General nominees, and will continue to allow for this in future. Going forward, the IPU hopes to augment our already very solid relationship with the new UN Secretary-General António Guterres, a former parliamentarian.

During the Geneva session, the IPU Committee on UN Affairs held a debate on UN funding that shed light on the complexity of national reporting on UN contributions for most countries. A second debate examined the adequacy of the UN response to allegations of sexual assault of children by UN peacekeepers.

Representing parliamentary concerns at the United Nations

In 2016, the IPU President, the IPU Secretary General and the Office of the Permanent Observer represented the Organization and the world parliamentary community in a number of UN debates and processes, bringing to the fore the outcomes of statutory and specialized inter-parliamentary meetings and deliberations. Statements were delivered to meetings of

the Commission on the Status of Women, the UN General Assembly Special Session on Drugs, the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, the comprehensive review of Security Council resolution 1540 on weapons of mass destruction, the General Assembly high-level meeting on large movements of refugees and migrants, and a number of other important debates.

We also underscored the need to have the role of parliaments reflected in the new General Assembly resolution on UN system operations, known as the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review.

Parliamentary dimension to functioning of world trade

Together with the European Parliament, the IPU continued to spearhead efforts to enhance parliamentary oversight and accountability of the World Trade Organization (WTO). The [annual Parliamentary Conference on the WTO \(PCWTO\)](#) and the regular meetings of the PCWTO Steering Committee provided valuable opportunities for parliamentarians to interact with WTO officials and negotiators, secure additional information and clarifications, better understand the challenges and opportunities facing the WTO, and mainstream these findings into their work at the level of national parliaments. The IPU also pledged to support WTO efforts to deliver on its commitments through an inclusive approach that takes into account the aspirations of all involved in determining international trade agreements.

National reconciliation and conflict prevention

Objective 6 of the *IPU Strategy 2017-2021* is “Contribute to peacebuilding and conflict prevention”. Members wanted this goal to feature more prominently on the IPU’s agenda because it relates to the Organization’s core mandate to promote dialogue and the peaceful resolution of conflicts. Under this objective, the IPU assists parliaments in addressing thorny issues and creating an inclusive framework for decision-making and dialogue with a view to subsequently identifying longer-term needs for capacity-building and advisory services.

As part of this framework, the IPU continued to assist the Thai interim parliament with the constitution-drafting process. Following the presentation of the draft constitution, IPU Secretary General Martin Chungong and a constitutional expert undertook a two-day mission to Bangkok to ascertain progress made towards a return to democratic rule and to support an effective constitutional process. The mission report highlighted the need for Thais to feel a sense of “ownership” of the constitution and for free discussion of the drafting by the people.

We also organized a parliamentary fact-finding mission with the Forum of Parliaments of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (FP-ICGLR) in Burundi and Uganda. The mission was aimed at strengthening dialogue in Burundi through parliament. Meetings with different stakeholders in Burundi – and in Uganda with President Museveni – helped the members of the mission to get a better understanding of the political and security situation, and the challenges faced by the country and its parliament. Its report included eight recommendations to help Burundi overcome the ongoing political crisis in the country.

In his ongoing dialogue with the Burundi parliamentary authorities, the IPU Secretary General reiterated his desire for the authorities to promote inclusive dialogue involving all Burundian actors within and outside the country. The Secretary General also

maintained dialogue with members of the opposition in exile to seek their views and identify possible IPU support to resolve the crisis in Burundi.

The IPU participated in the third instalment of [Geneva Peace Week](#) – a collective initiative to connect and highlight the work of actors working for peace, rights and well-being. During the week, we co-hosted two events to delve into matters such as how countries can ensure that peace, once established, is sustained, and how to redress inequality, which if allowed to persist can jeopardize peace.

Events in countries such as the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Libya, Syria and Yemen are being closely monitored by the IPU. We stand ready to assist the parliamentary and governmental authorities of these countries to rebuild the institution of parliament and help promote dialogue within the institution with a view to national reconciliation.

Disarmament and non-proliferation

In an effort to promote implementation of UN Security Council [resolution 1540](#) on preventing non-State actors from obtaining weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), the IPU organized a regional seminar in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire. More than 70 MPs from 18 countries took part in the seminar, the first event to bring together MPs from an entire continent to discuss the implementation of this resolution. The seminar made several recommendations which served as the IPU’s contribution to the 2016 Comprehensive Review of the Status of Implementation of resolution 1540. UN Security Council resolution 2325, adopted at the end of the comprehensive review, acknowledged parliamentarians’ key role and encouraged them to be more forthcoming in enacting the necessary legislation to implement obligations under resolution 1540.

Peace and international security

At the 134th Assembly in Lusaka, the IPU [Standing Committee on Peace and Security](#) adopted a [resolution](#) on enhancing global cooperation on counter-terrorism. In addition, the Committee organized a series of meetings to raise awareness among its members of issues related to the promotion of democratic

70 MPs from 18 countries took part in an IPU regional seminar on UN Security Council resolution 1540.

Development Implementation Risks Africa
Non-proliferation Non-state actors
Parliamentarians
Action plan National focal point
Control
Nuclear Security Council
Biological Information Chemical
Resolution 1540
Coordination
Legal framework
Weapons of mass destruction



In 2016, the Committee on Middle East Questions held its first roundtable in Geneva dealing with water. © IPU/Jorky, 2016

accountability of the private security sector, and comprehensive disarmament. In 2017, it is poised to adopt a strong resolution on *The role of parliament in preventing outside interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States*.

Middle East questions

The IPU has committed to work towards more concrete actions and outcomes. In line with this, the Secretary General has initiated changes in the work of the [Committee on Middle East Questions](#) based on two objectives:

1. establish regional projects of peace that can turn elements of conflict such as water, food, unemployment and energy into factors of co-existence through regional efforts and exchange of expertise; and
2. build bridges of dialogue between parliaments of the region that can support the peace process and address regional threats and challenges, as well as the SDGs.

The projects of peace seek to identify and implement technological solutions to historical problems. The IPU thus initiated a series of roundtables. The first of these, conducted in Geneva in 2016, dealt with [water](#). Its findings were endorsed by the 135th Assembly in Geneva and the second roundtable is due to be held during the course of 2017.

The Committee on Middle East Questions visited the region in January and had very open discussions and fruitful meetings with the Speaker and members of the Israeli Knesset, and representatives of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In Ramallah, they met members of the Palestinian National Council and the committee on the settlements issue. They also met the Palestinian President, Mahmoud Abbas.

Counter-terrorism

Fighting terrorism and violent extremism is a centrepiece of global security efforts. For the IPU, 2016 was a defining moment in this regard. The Organization joined hands with the UN Office on Drug and Crime (UNODC) to devise the IPU's first-ever counter-terrorism strategy, building on relevant IPU resolutions since 1996.

This strategy is intended to support the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the UN Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, as well as to fill the gap in implementation by applying the provisions regarding the role of parliament in the UN Strategy and Plan of Action. This will require not only the translation of international resolutions into national law and the establishment of preventive measures, but also action to tackle the root causes of violent extremism that may lead to terrorism.

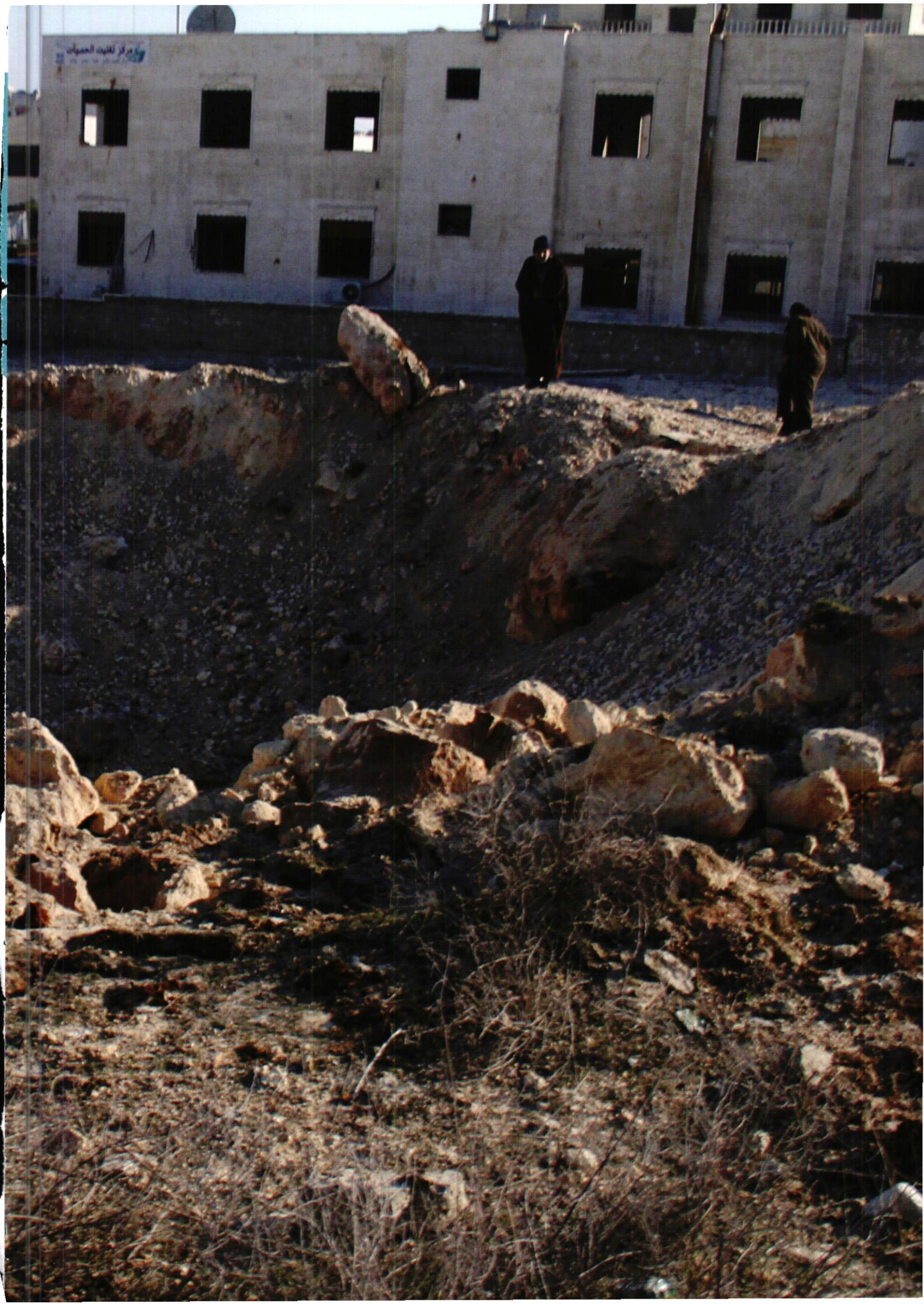
Syria

Parliamentary elections took place in Syria in April 2016. A delegation from the newly-elected Parliament attended the IPU Assembly in October 2016. The IPU has continued to encourage the Syrian Parliament to play a strong role in national reconciliation and in serving the interests of all of Syria's people, and the Organization is keen to help prepare the ground for a representative parliament in a post-conflict Syria.

Inter-Korean dialogue

The IPU Secretary General has made a particular commitment to promoting political dialogue in the case of "forgotten" or intractable conflicts. He has visited Pyongyang and Seoul to gain a first-hand understanding of the issues that have left Korea one of the last divided countries in the world. The IPU uses parliamentary diplomacy to foster initial contacts and to create an atmosphere that builds trust and dispels suspicion. The role is one of support, and it is in this role that the Secretary General has maintained regular consultations with the authorities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea in an effort to promote dialogue between them at the parliamentary level.

The IPU encouraged the Syrian Parliament to play a strong role in national reconciliation. © AFP/Muhammad Haj Kadour, 2016



Better parliaments, stronger democracies

Declining public confidence in democratic institutions has reinforced the need for strong and stable parliaments that represent the voice of the people. Ensuring parliaments remain the drivers of democratic progress and function effectively were core priorities for the IPU in 2016. During the year, the Organization continued to pursue an integrated approach to meeting these objectives through the development of a range of tools, standards and criteria, and through their application to support national parliaments in building capacity.

Common Principles in action: a parliament-centred approach

The *Common Principles for Support to Parliaments* adopted in 2015 were designed to enable parliaments to develop their capacity and increase their effectiveness in carrying out their functions. By the end of 2016, 109 parliaments and partners had endorsed these principles, expanding their application and relevance.

In the past year, the IPU made determined efforts to translate the Common Principles into concrete actions. We organized the first in a series of expert roundtables on individual principles. This roundtable, on Common Principle three, *Building to last: Parliamentary support aims for sustainable outcomes*, mobilized over 50 participants from more than 20 national parliaments and partner organizations. It provided a platform for the sharing of good practices. In addressing common challenges facing parliaments, it stressed the need for integrated planning, monitoring and evaluation to ensure the sustainability of parliamentary development.



A roundtable on Common Principle three mobilized over 50 participants from more than 20 national parliaments. © IPU/Jorky, 2016

Integral to the Common Principles is the understanding that an individual parliament must take the lead in determining if and what kind of external assistance is required to support developing its capacities. For example, the Afghan Parliament decided to set up a parliamentary service (PS), as a PS gives a parliament greater autonomy in the management of its own administration, staffing and financing. They sought and received the IPU's assistance in this capacity-building undertaking.

The IPU's work in Zambia is another example in 2016 of the application of the Common Principles. The National Assembly firmly guided the development of its digital repository by taking the lead in identifying its needs following a series of IPU-supported expert training workshops. It established a steering committee to take decisions, set goals and continue driving progress.



The IPU provided assistance to the Afghan Parliament in establishing a parliamentary service. © IPU/Jorky, 2016

Building parliamentary capacities worldwide

In 2016 the IPU supported eight national parliaments to develop their capacities; these included Afghanistan, Egypt, Myanmar, Palestine, the Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Tunisia and Zambia.

In Egypt, the Speaker of the new Parliament, Ali Abd Elall Sayed Ahmed, and the IPU Secretary General renewed an agreement that paves the way for continued collaboration on strengthening parliament and democracy in the country. Following a needs assessment, a comprehensive project document articulated six priority areas, identified by the Egyptian Parliament, for the IPU to support; these ranged from establishing a parliamentary institute and improving oversight, law-making and representation, to increasing promotion of gender equality.

Members of Parliament in Myanmar took part in a five-day induction programme in 2016, which was backed by the IPU and UNDP. The programme centred on the three main areas of parliamentary responsibility – passing laws, overseeing the government and representing citizens. Nearly 460 MPs from all political parties and both houses of parliament took part in the programme, which saw the transfer of knowledge from former to new MPs and exchanges with MPs from some nine countries.

Additional support provided to MPs and staff of the Myanmar Parliament included the installation of a modern data centre, along with plans to host an intranet and a website within the centre, as well as vital ICT services training for staff.

The Parliament of the Republic of Korea undertook a constitutional review to identify ways to promote women's participation in politics, examine sharing of powers within government and foster greater citizen engagement in parliamentary affairs. To assist the parliament in this endeavour, the IPU organized an exchange of views and experiences with constitutional and gender experts from Belgium, Canada, France and Germany. It also provided comparative information on parliamentary nomination procedures and confirmation hearings from across the global parliamentary community.

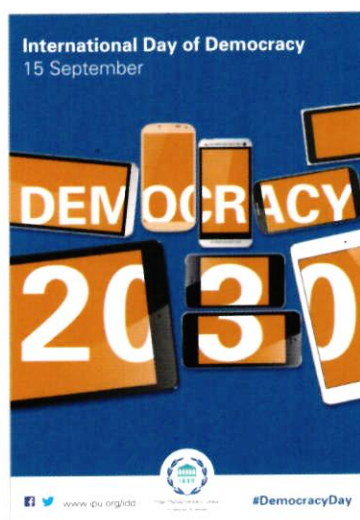
In Sri Lanka, the IPU helped establish a digital library and assisted with the installation of a software system tailored to the Sri Lankan Parliament. The IPU also trained staff in the maintenance and management of the new

system, strengthening their parliament's ability to manage and safeguard its valuable documents.

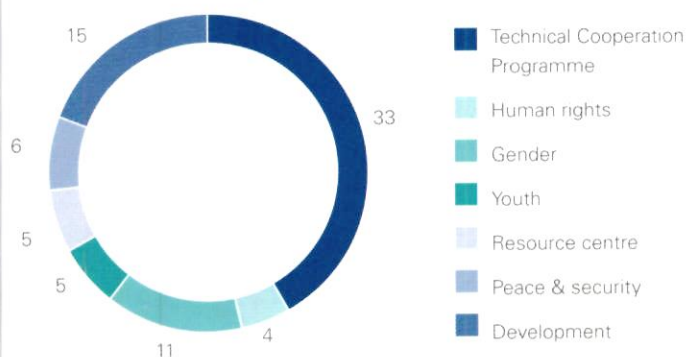
In Tunisia, we provided expertise for a workshop on parliamentary administration management models and the oversight function of parliament.

Democracy 2030

The [2016 International Day of Democracy](#) was celebrated by more than 20 national parliaments, many using the theme proposed by the IPU: *Democracy 2030*. The IPU organized a public event to mark the day, bringing together parliamentarians and citizens to discuss parliaments and the future of democracy. The discussion was highly relevant at a time when new technologies are enhancing the ability of parliaments to engage directly with citizens. It also explored ways in which parliaments can engage youth in their own spaces, while at the same time creating more space for youth in parliaments. In addition, *Democracy 2030* underscored the fundamental importance of enhancing democracy in order to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which acknowledges that strong, transparent, accountable and inclusive institutions are necessary across the board if the Sustainable Development Goals are to be met.



92 national and regional activities by theme



Celebrating our Members

In 2016, the number of IPU Member Parliaments rose to 171, with the addition of Egypt, Guyana, Comoros and Swaziland.

IPU President Saber Chowdhury took part in celebrations marking the [125th anniversary of the Serbian Parliament's](#) membership in the IPU. The Serbian Parliament was one of the first Members, having joined in 1891.

Keeping the momentum on gender equality

The rise in the number of women Speakers of Parliament, combined with strong commitments by IPU Member Parliaments to implement specific measures to increase the number of women MPs, contributed significantly in 2016 to the goal of gender equality in parliaments. Despite this, IPU 2016 data shows that much work still needs to be done, as women only account for 23 per cent of the world's MPs, falling short of the Beijing target of 30 per cent.

The IPU and Member Parliaments also remain concerned about violence and discrimination against women and girls, and throughout the year continued to take concrete actions to create a world free from gender-based violence.

Global action on women's participation in politics

A new record was achieved in 2016 with over 50 women elected to preside over a parliament or chamber. In 2005, the number of women Speakers was just 19 – the lowest number recorded since 1995, when the *Beijing Platform for Action* was signed.

A *Summit of Women Speakers* “United for Shaping the Future” was organized by the IPU and the United Arab Emirates Federal National Council in 2016. Held in Abu Dhabi, 34 female Speakers of Parliament, together with parliamentarians from 50 countries, attended the Summit. Women Speakers unanimously adopted the *Abu Dhabi Declaration*, which sets out practical steps to:

- help parliaments concentrate on emerging and future challenges
- tackle geopolitical, socio-economic, environmental and technological issues
- ensure a more gender-sensitive and inclusive world, and
- build a better quality of life for future generations.

They also reaffirmed their commitment to advance women's participation in politics, make parliaments more gender-sensitive, empower women and girls, and put an end to discrimination and violence against women.

The IPU is also leading by example with Secretary General Martin Chungong continuing in 2016 in his role as an International Gender Champion. As a champion, he committed to a quota of at least 30 per cent of women represented across IPU structures and groups. The 135th Assembly in Geneva marked another milestone, with 33 per cent of participants being women – well above the global average for the number of women MPs.

Supporting women's caucuses

In 2016, the IPU assisted women's parliamentary caucuses to continue in their role as strong catalysts of solidarity and collective action.

In Côte d'Ivoire, the IPU facilitated a workshop to introduce gender quotas in the electoral law as part of its ongoing support to the Ivorian caucus of women parliamentarians. The workshop brought together women and men MPs, as well as government officials and representatives of civil society. Specific proposals, including one for an immediate minimum gender quota of 30 per cent, with the ultimate objective of achieving parity, were made to the ministry responsible for issues associated with women and gender equity.





The IPU Secretary General champions women's empowerment during an event at Geneva's Palais des Nations. @ IPU/Mariana Duarte Mutzenberg, 2016

In [Mauritania](#), the IPU supported the newly created women's parliamentary caucus. A workshop on advocacy and communication was organized to equip women MPs with skills and a roadmap to advocate for a law on combating violence against women. An increasing number of women MPs are joining the caucus thanks to the dynamism of the group, and its targeted and practical activities.

The IPU also took part in the inaugural planning meeting of the caucus of newly-elected women MPs in Serbia, held in collaboration with UNDP and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). Our contribution provided an overview of gender-sensitive reforms that could be promoted by the caucus in the future.

Throughout 2016, we continued to implement our joint multi-year project with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) to support the Turkish Parliament in the area of gender equality. This included a training programme for women MPs on leadership and communication skills. The training's primary purpose was the promotion of women's political leadership and gender equality in the media. Participants also included Turkish women leaders from outside parliament, such as ministers and governors. The IPU, together with UN Women, also organized a study visit to Oslo for staff supporting the Turkish Parliament's Committee on Equality of Opportunity for Women and Men. This joint initiative reviewed draft labour legislation from a gender perspective in order to propose amendments that would align the draft laws with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

The Global Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament met under the theme, "United for Shaping the Future". © Federal National Council, UAE, 2016

Parliaments as gender-sensitive institutions

The promotion of gender equality by parliament requires dedicated gender expertise and infrastructure, strong policy and legal frameworks, and the willingness to regularly review the institution's work from a gender perspective.

The IPU launched a [Self-assessment toolkit for parliaments](#). It is intended to help parliaments review their level of gender sensitivity. Kenya was the first country to use the new IPU toolkit. A self-assessment exercise was carried out with IPU support. Participants identified a quota to enhance women's representation in leadership positions in parliament; dedicated gender equality policies; and positive measures to enhance gender expertise within parliament, such as training opportunities and the creation of a senior gender focal point position.

At the regional level, the IPU took part in a Europe-wide meeting on gender-sensitive parliaments organized by the European Institute for Gender Equality. We contributed to shaping future efforts to monitor gender sensitivity among parliaments in the European Union.

Advancing gender equality

An important part of the IPU's work on gender equality is the support of parliaments' efforts to advance women's human rights, in particular through implementation of CEDAW and of SDG 5 on empowering all women and girls, and advancing gender equality.

In 2016, the IPU concentrated on fostering gender equality in conflict and post-conflict situations by enhancing parliamentary commitment to the women, peace and security agenda. On the occasion of the annual session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), the IPU organized a panel discussion with the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the Office for North Africa of the UN Economic Commission for Africa. The discussion centred on how UN Security Council [resolution 1325](#) on women, peace and security could be implemented in Arab countries.

Cooperation between the IPU and the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (the CEDAW Committee) also remained high on the IPU and UN agenda throughout the year. A specialized meeting was co-organized by the IPU and the CEDAW Committee in October 2016 and led by the IPU President Saber Chowdhury. The meeting identified ways to enhance parliaments' role in promoting gender equality through support of CEDAW. Participants also undertook a review of more than a decade and a half of parliamentary involvement with CEDAW. This review showed a substantive increase in parliaments' contribution to the drafting of State reports. It noted that the improvements in country reports and the enhanced parliamentary inputs are a direct result of the over 15 years of joint work by the IPU and the CEDAW Committee.

Implementation of CEDAW has also been promoted through targeted national activities, which included the valuable contribution of CEDAW Committee members. Through such activities we also enhanced cooperation among national stakeholders – MPs, government and civil society. As well, we provided for the sharing of experiences among MPs from different parts of the world on how best to contribute to realizing the rights enshrined in the Convention.

Alongside the annual session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the IPU and UN Women organized their own annual parliamentary event. The meeting, on *The power of legislation for women's empowerment and sustainable development*, echoed the main CSW theme. Participating MPs and experts reviewed the status of discriminatory laws worldwide, and discussed the power of parliaments to implement reforms and adopt strategies for repealing discriminatory laws. In addition, participants explored opportunities to secure effective enforcement of laws on gender equality, and ways in which violence against women could be eliminated through the work of parliament. The event included nearly 120 parliamentarians and some 60 experts from international organizations, government and civil society.

We provided direct assistance to parliaments in several countries in 2016. In addition to the support provided by the IPU and UN Women to the Turkish Parliament, the IPU and the Namibian Parliament organized a parliamentary seminar on CEDAW and the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), with a focus on the concluding observations adopted by the CEDAW Committee. The priority areas identified and recommendations made have been fully integrated into Namibia's *National Plan of Action on Gender-Based Violence 2016-2020*.

The IPU undertook a needs assessment with the Fiji Parliament to enable it to identify areas where parliament can enhance its contribution to the realization of the SDGs, including by advancing gender equality. Follow-up action by the Fiji Parliament and other parliaments in the region will be implemented with our support.

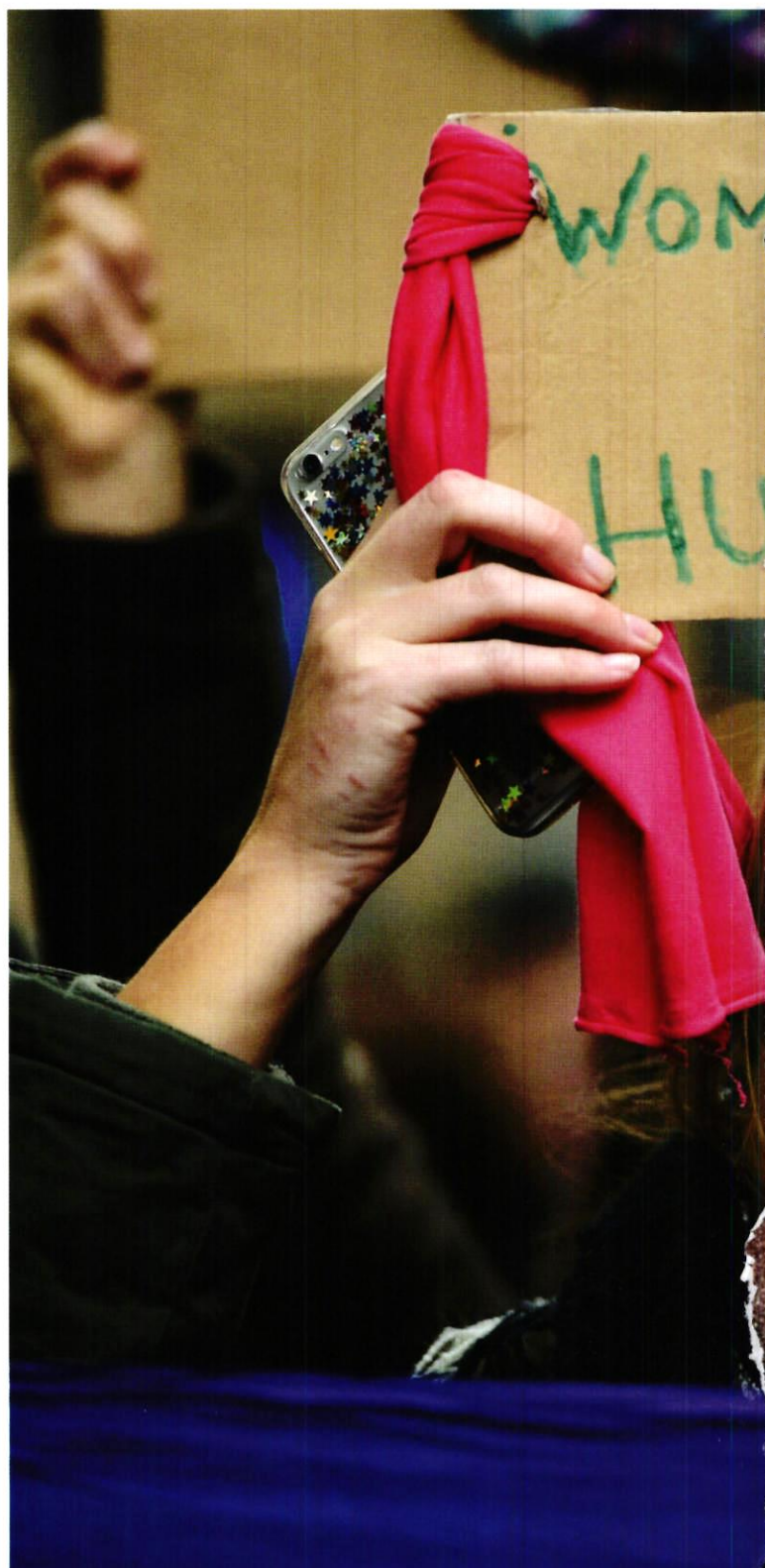
Ending violence against women, including harassment of and violence against women MPs

In 2016 the IPU published a landmark [study on sexism, harassment and violence against women MPs](#). The study revealed that sexism and violence directed at women MPs are global problems that impede gender equality and undermine the foundations of democracy.

Of the 55 women MPs from 39 countries surveyed, over 80 per cent reported experiencing some form of psychological violence, especially sexist remarks and threats on social media. Some 20 per cent of respondents have been subjected to sexual harassment, and 20 per cent said they had been slapped, pushed or struck, including by other members of parliament. These unacceptable behaviours impede women MPs from carrying out their work freely and securely. They also hindered the proper functioning of parliaments, and their inclusiveness and determination to achieve equality.

In the study, we also surveyed parliaments on measures taken to prevent and eliminate sexist behaviour, violence and harassment. Positive examples are highlighted in what has become a new baseline for future research and advocacy on a phenomenon that should not be tolerated anymore.

The study had a significant impact on the global parliamentary community and received considerable media coverage. Members of the IPU Bureau of Women Parliamentarians decided to disseminate the study in their parliaments to encourage debate, and to inspire relevant actions to put an end to all forms of violence against women MPs.



In early 2017, women and men across the globe marched in solidarity to promote gender rights. © AFP/Lluis Gene, 2017



Championing human rights and protecting the rights of MPs

The IPU [Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians](#) continued to spearhead our efforts to protect individual parliamentarians and to promote redress in cases of violations of their human rights. It conducted fact-finding visits to [Cambodia](#) and the Maldives, and mandated trial observations to Colombia and Malaysia during the year in review. The Committee addressed complex situations of alleged abuse of opposition MPs' human rights taking place in several parts of the world against an increasing backdrop of political crises.

The world witnessed a disquieting spike in the violation of MPs' human rights in 2016. For the third year in a row, violations of MPs' human rights increased overall, underscoring once more the dangers MPs across the world face in exercising their mandate and their right to freedom of expression. In 2016, the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians examined the situation of 459 parliamentarians from 42 countries whose rights were, or risked being, violated in some way. These numbers compare to 320 members from 43 States in 2015, and 311 parliamentarians from 41 countries in 2014. New cases concerning 196 parliamentarians were submitted to the Committee during the year in review.

Every region in the world witnessed violations of MPs' human rights in 2016:

- 155 MPs from the Americas (34%)
- 110 from Asia (24%)
- 89 from Africa (19%)
- 63 from Europe (14%)
- 39 from the Middle East and North Africa (8%), and
- 3 (1%) from the Southern Pacific.

Compared with previous years, 2016 saw a surge of new cases in Latin America, Europe and, to a lesser extent, Asia, and a significant decrease of reported human rights abuses in Africa, and in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). For the first time in recent years, the Committee received reports concerning parliamentarians in the Southern Pacific. In most of the cases submitted, MPs who have been subjected to human rights' violations are opposition parliamentarians (73 per cent), although a significant 25 per cent of MPs come from ruling parties. Overall, 80 per cent of the MPs concerned are men and 20 per cent are women (compared to 88 per cent and 12 per cent, respectively, in 2015).

The IPU expressed concern that the use of judicial proceedings to punish peaceful political dissent undermined the ability of parliamentarians and parliaments to fulfil their institutional mission. Amidst increasing levels of persecution of MPs, a disturbing pattern of repression emerged in 2016: more often, court action and unlawful exclusion from political life were used as means of silencing critical voices. Lack of fair trial and other unjust proceedings became the most common type

Violations of the human rights of MPs – 2016

No. of cases currently examined by IPU Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians

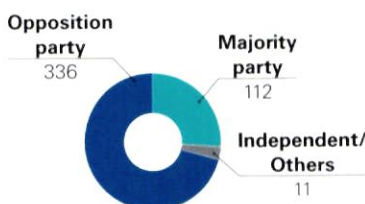
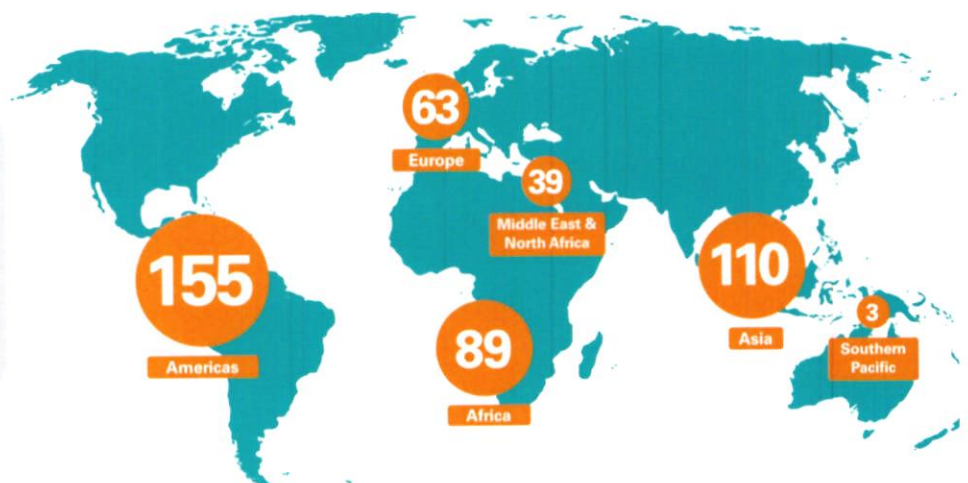


Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy, for progress

459 MPs
in **42** countries

Most common violations

- 1 Lack of fair trial and other unfair proceedings
- 2 Undue suspension and loss of parliamentary mandate
- 3 Violation of freedom of expression
- 4 Arbitrary detention of parliamentary mandate



IPU's Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians is a unique source of protection and redress for MPs killed, attacked, intimidated or jailed for their political views or differences.

If MPs cannot do their job safely or without fear, they cannot ensure parliament does its job of protecting the human rights and

political freedoms of society as a whole. Without respect for fundamental human rights such as freedom of thought and expression, the right to life, liberty, equality and the right to take part in government—there can be no democracy.

IPU works with parliaments to ensure they deliver on their human rights responsibilities.



www.ipu.org
<http://ipu.org/iss-e/hr-law.htm>
postbox@ipu.org



Afghan MP Fawzia Koofi was elected President of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians in January 2017. © IPU/Pierre Albouy, 2016

we worked closely with our longstanding partner, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). In 2016, we jointly organized a panel discussion on the progress of parliamentary engagement in the HRC, which was first initiated in 2013. Participants included members of the Geneva diplomatic community, parliamentarians, representatives of civil society and academics.

The IPU and OHCHR also published an updated version of their joint publication, *Handbook for Parliamentarians: Human Rights*. The handbook provides an overview of the international human rights legal framework and international mechanisms that oversee its implementation at the national level. It is intended to support parliamentary efforts to deliver concretely on human rights.

As part of our work to improve the way that parliaments contribute to championing human rights, the IPU organized an information seminar for the parliaments of the Pacific region to raise awareness about how the Sustainable Development Goals could be implemented through a human rights perspective.

Participants recognized that the SDGs and human rights were two sides of the same coin. They concluded that, when fulfilling their duties, parliamentarians should address both human rights and the Goals simultaneously, and they emphasized that for effective implementation robust accountability mechanisms were required. As well, they made a plea for greater resources to be allocated to implementation.

Combating child trafficking and labour

The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimated in 2013 that the number of children involved in some form of child labour was 168 million across the globe. Previously, in 2002, the ILO had estimated that 1.2 million children were victims of trafficking each year. Behind these staggering figures are the stories of children whose fundamental human rights have been violated.

The IPU worked on a range of fronts to raise awareness in parliaments about the need to eradicate both of these scourges.

During a **regional seminar** on combating large-scale child trafficking and labour, MPs from across West and Central Africa agreed to cooperate more closely. More than 100 participants took part in the seminar, including 80 MPs from 16 countries. The seminar was organized jointly by the IPU and the Parliament of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), with support from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Participants resolved to do an inventory of regional and international legal instruments on child trafficking, child labour and child protection. They also encouraged ECOWAS Member States to ratify and ensure the implementation of these instruments; run internal information sessions for parliamentarians on child trafficking, child labour and child protection; and support efforts to raise awareness of these issues among the wider population.



The 40th anniversary commemorations were a vivid reminder of the ever-increasing relevance of the Committee and of the fact that, in human rights, perseverance pays. The case of former Senator Hipólito Solari, which was shared through the personal testimony of his granddaughter, Olivia Solari Yrigoyen, is a good example. Senator Solari's case was one of the first to be brought before the committee in 1977. He was detained, tortured and exiled from Argentina against the backdrop of the coup d'état the year before. After his release, he continued to fight for justice and human rights, and subsequently became a member and the President of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians. It took until 2015 for him to obtain the conviction of his tormentors.

of abuse in 2016 (rising from 18.1% in 2015 to 24.6% in 2016), followed by the suspension or revocation of the parliamentary mandate – a tactic that increased considerably, from 12.3% in 2015 to 20.7% in 2016. Violations of freedom of expression remain relatively stable (with a 2% increase compared to 2015), while arbitrary arrests and detentions decreased significantly (10.8% in 2016 against 18.7% in 2015).

Among the highlights of the commemorations were a photo exhibition and personal accounts by family members of parliamentarians who suffered or continue to suffer violations of their human rights. Emphasis was placed on the human story behind each case that comes before the Committee. An overview of the Committee's work, its achievements, as well as the challenges it faces, were presented during a special segment of the IPU Assembly. An [animated film](#) on the work of the committee was also produced for this occasion, and will be helpful in making that work better known inside and outside parliaments across the world.

Given the surge in cases before the Committee, the 40th anniversary commemorative events underscored that it was more imperative than ever that IPU Members and individual parliamentarians from across the world demonstrate greater solidarity with their colleagues whose fundamental rights have been violated.

Helping parliaments deliver on human rights

The IPU's commitment to the promotion of human rights remained steadfast throughout the year. We continued to support close parliamentary involvement in the work of the Human Rights Council (HRC) and its Universal Periodic Review. As part of that undertaking,

in this challenging world context that the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians marked its 40th anniversary. The 135th IPU Assembly (Geneva, October 2016) on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians marked the 40th anniversary. The Assembly paid tribute to the work of the committee and to the many courageous male and female parliamentarians around the world who are under threat for speaking out against injustice and abuse. Since its establishment in 1976, the Committee has examined the cases of over 2,500 parliamentarians in 109 countries, working tirelessly to persuade the authorities until a solution is found on the basis of two key principles – “never give up” and “help parliamentarians under threat”.



The Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians conducted a fact-finding mission to Cambodia in 2016. © IPU, 2016

Consolidating youth empowerment

Half of the world's population today is under 30 years of age. Despite their large numbers, the IPU's research in 2016 showed that young people continue to be chronically under-represented in the world's parliaments. We have therefore included youth empowerment as a core objective in our *Strategy 2017-2021*, and are emphasizing the vital role parliaments should play in fostering the political participation of young women and men.

The importance of youth participation in parliaments was centre stage during the 134th IPU Assembly General Debate on *Rejuvenating democracy, giving voice to youth*. During the debate, Member Parliaments stressed the urgency of getting more young people involved in politics, not only as a matter of right, but also as a key ingredient for the much-needed renewal of political institutions.

Leading integration

"Walking the talk," the IPU introduced measures to integrate young parliamentarians across its structure. The linchpin for these efforts is the Forum of Young Parliamentarians of the IPU, a youth-led international body that is the voice of the world's young parliamentarians. In its third year, the forum

has introduced a process of country reporting of youth-related achievements to improve monitoring and evaluation of its impact, and has contributed a youth perspective to the IPU's work on rejuvenating democracy, the promotion of women's participation in politics, and the advancement of human rights.

Youth actions to achieve the SDGs

The IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians, hosted by the National Assembly of Zambia in March, brought together more than 130 young members of parliament from across the world to examine how youth can help achieve the SDGs by 2030. Working with dozens of youth advocates, representatives of youth parliaments, international organizations and civil society, young parliamentarians adopted ambitious youth-led solutions to implementing the SDGs. These include enhanced transparency and oversight of public finances to combat corruption, increased partnerships with youth, and incorporating young people's views and concerns in national development plans, strategies, policies and laws.

The IPU as the global hub for data and guidance

In 2016, the IPU also cemented our position as the worldwide hub for the monitoring of youth participation in parliament, and the production of guidelines to enhance it. Based on survey data from parliaments, our 2016 report on *Youth participation in national parliaments* revealed that only 1.9 per cent of the world's 45,000 parliamentarians are younger than 30. The report



The IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians identified youth-led solutions to implementing the SDGs. © IPU/Kwatu Media, 2016

also analysed youth participation in parliaments from a gender perspective, and compared regions and subregions. Measures parliaments have taken to strengthen youth participation in their work were also examined. The report provided strong recommendations that included the adoption of quotas, and aligning the minimum age to run for office with the minimum age to vote. It stressed the need to craft specific programmes and measures for the participation of people below 30 years of age, and young women in particular. The report is regarded as the most authoritative analysis of youth participation in parliaments, and has been cited in the work of numerous international and civil society organizations.



Campaigning for youth participation

In November 2016, we partnered with the UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth to launch the *Not Too Young To Run* campaign. The campaign champions the rights of young people running for elected office and inspires youth everywhere to stand for election. Using IPU data, the campaign had an immediate social media impact, with over 60 million impressions to the *#NotTooYoungToRun* hashtag in its first week. The campaign engaged several young legislators active in the IPU's Forum of Young Parliamentarians.

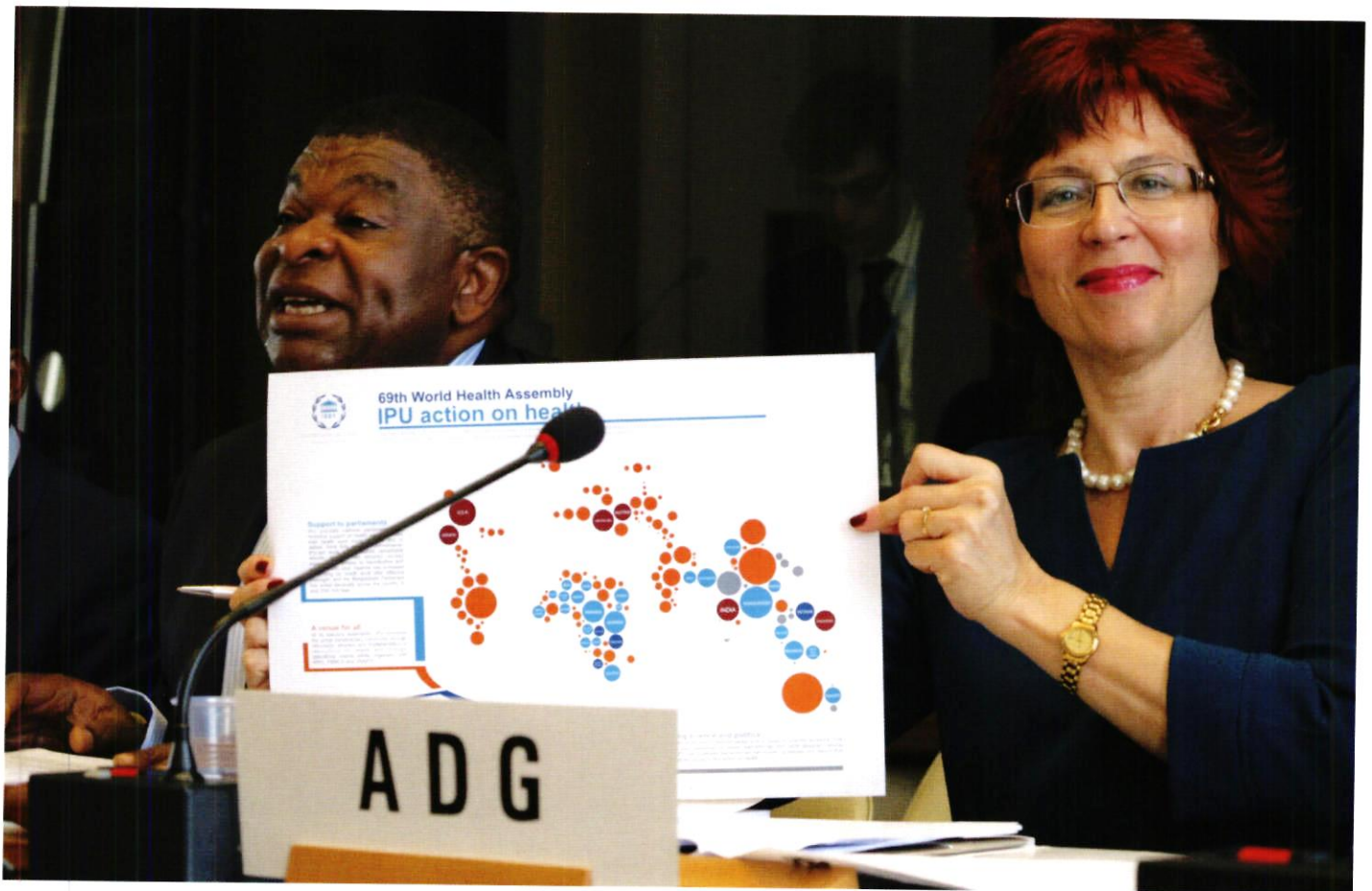
The global campaign promotes the rights of young people to stand for election by helping to lower the legal age at which they can do so and by encouraging the alignment of the age to run with the age to vote. The campaign reflects the belief that, "If you're old enough to vote, you're old enough to run for office." It is led by the UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, UNDP, OHCHR, the IPU, the Youth Initiative for Advocacy, Growth and Advancement, and the European Youth Forum. Join the campaign at <http://nottooyoungtorun.org/> and on Twitter using *#NotTooYoungToRun*.

Empowering young parliamentarians on the international scene

In addition to supporting youth on the national level, we facilitated raising the voice of young parliamentarians in international deliberations. A strong delegation from IPU's Forum of Young Parliamentarians participated in the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Global Youth Forum 2016 on implementing Agenda 2030, and OHCHR's Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law. The young parliamentarians played leadership roles in both events, helping affirm young parliamentarians as key players in the international youth movement, while also exposing members of the forum to a wide range of global leaders and perspectives. Not only has this helped solidify young MPs as champions for youth empowerment internationally, it has helped consolidate the IPU's role as a leader in the movement.



The IPU works to raise the voices of young parliamentarians in international fora.
© IPU/Charlie Halwindi, 2016



Helping parliaments deliver on health

In 2016, we worked closely with the World Health Organization (WHO), the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis, to ensure access without discrimination to health services for all.

This joint action included development of the capacities and competencies of parliaments to contribute to improved health outcomes for women, children, adolescents and other marginalized groups, such as men who have sex with men and people who inject drugs. Our work centred on:

- providing strong contributions to the health-related SDG targets, in particular, the effort to end AIDS by 2030
- expanding access to health services, and
- implementing the provisions of the Global Strategy on Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health.

Infographic showing the IPU's health-related work is displayed during the 69th World Health Assembly.
© IPU, 2016

Global debates on health

The IPU continued in 2016 to mobilize parliaments' contribution to key global health mechanisms and processes. Along with the WHO, we organized the [first-ever parliamentary meeting at the World Health Assembly](#). This historic event highlighted how, in holding a unique position as the voice of their constituents, parliamentarians can play a key role in prioritizing actions and resource allocations that protect everyone's right to the highest attainable standard of health.

Members of parliament from around the world took part in the Parliamentary Meeting organized at the UN's High-Level Meeting on Ending AIDS. They discussed successful practices, and identified ways in which they can fast-track effective policies to ensure everyone can access the health services they need. The IPU organized the meeting in close cooperation with UNAIDS, building on the two organizations' partnership to combat the disease through parliamentary action. The declaration adopted at the high-level meeting recognizes and appreciates the IPU's efforts to support national parliaments in eliminating political and legislative obstacles to effective national HIV and AIDS responses.

In other developments in 2016, the UN Secretary-General invited IPU President Saber Chowdhury to sit on the [High-Level Advisory Group for the Every Woman Every Child Movement](#), and IPU Secretary General Martin Chungong to be a member of the Lead Group of the [Scaling Up Nutrition Movement](#).



A 15-year old girl poses for a video on the day of her wedding to a 32-year old man in Bangladesh. The Government is proposing new legislation to close the gap between civil and religious personal law.

© Getty Images/AFP/ Allison Joyce, 2015

Addressing inequalities in health care

The IPU continued to work closely with parliaments in tackling inequalities in health and making sure that special attention is given to the needs of the most vulnerable and marginalized populations.

In Lesotho, we conducted a review of the parliament’s actions on the health-related Millennium Development Goals and identified key commitments that contributed to their achievement. The study described the extent to which Parliament had exercised its power to ensure progress on government’s commitments, and promote improved and more equitable delivery of services. A proposed action plan for the Parliament of Lesotho on the implementation of health-related SDGs was also included in the review.

- providing girls who are already married with options for schooling, employment and livelihood skills, sexual and reproductive health information and services, and offering recourse to services in cases of domestic violence, and
- addressing the root causes of child marriage, including poverty, gender inequality and discrimination, the low value placed on girls, and violence against girls.

Among these interventions, legislation to stop CEFM is particularly critical.

Together with the Parliament of Bangladesh, we started a two-year joint initiative that aims to strengthen the impact of community outreach efforts by MPs to end child marriage. The initiative also provides a platform for discussing and developing recommendations to the draft child marriage bill due to be discussed before Parliament in 2017.

The Parliament of Rwanda and the IPU began work on reinforcing parliamentary action on promoting family planning, adolescents’ health, access to sexual and reproductive health, and civil registration and vital statistics. In November, meetings between MPs and community leaders, local officials and the general public were organized in 30 districts. They identified gaps, needs and cultural factors that hindered access to family planning. The

Protecting the health of women and girls

The IPU expanded its partnership with the WHO to undertake in-depth studies of the impact of legislation on health-related issues. The first such study was published in 2016 and examined child, early and forced marriage (CEFM) legislation in 37 Asia-Pacific countries. CEFM is a human rights violation that robs a girl of her childhood, puts her health and growth at risk, disrupts her education, limits her opportunities for empowerment and social development, and increases her risk of exposure to violence and abuse. The study’s primary recommendations included cross-cutting measures such as:

- legislation to increase the minimum age of marriage for girls to 18 years
- providing equal access to quality education for both girls and boys
- mobilizing girls, boys, parents and leaders to change practices that discriminate against girls

findings will inform future parliamentary work on the issue. Building on existing collaboration that began in 2012, the Parliament of Uganda and the IPU further developed parliamentary action on maternal, newborn and child health. In November 2016, we organized a seminar for newly-elected MPs in which a new advocacy strategy to guide the work of the 10th Parliament of Uganda on maternal, newborn and child health was developed.

Forty MPs in Sierra Leone received in-depth training at an IPU-sponsored workshop on ending discrimination and stigmatization experienced by Ebola survivors. After the workshop, the MPs conducted outreach visits in Freetown and the eastern town of Kenema to share messages of support for survivors, and to counter the violence and stigma experienced in communities and health settings by women who had been afflicted by the illness. They reached out to local leaders, police and legal officials, health, education and social workers, civil society organizations, groups representing women and youth, and the general public.

The IPU Advisory Group on HIV/AIDS and Maternal, Newborn and Child Health made a field visit to Lusaka, Zambia – one of the 13 cities in the world that is fast-tracking access to HIV treatment. The group saw first-hand the successful implementation of community programmes to limit mother-to-child transmission and advocated for further scale-up. The IPU plans to provide the Zambian Parliament with technical support and advice on women's, children's and adolescents' health.



MPs in Sierra Leone received training on ending the stigmatization of Ebola survivors. © IPU, 2016

Putting the SDGs at the core of parliamentary action

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a comprehensive package that includes three major and interdependent components: the SDGs, climate change, and disaster risk reduction. The agenda is an ambitious vision to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all. IPU Members are committed to taking the necessary action to carry forward this vision – and to continue to work to make parliaments “fit for purpose” to tackle the sustainable development agenda. Under the auspices of the IPU, parliaments have committed to translating the SDGs into enforceable domestic laws, to holding governments to account, and to aligning budgets with national sustainable development plans.

In 2016, the IPU concentrated on promoting SDG implementation through parliamentary exchanges and cooperation at the regional level. Through a series of seminars, we increased knowledge and understanding among parliaments about the SDGs and helped them strategize at regional levels. The seminars produced a number of tangible and forward-looking recommendations for parliaments to engage in SDG implementation. SDG 16, which highlights the importance of governance, inclusion, participation, rights and security for the achievement of sustainable development, was a focus of these regional meetings.

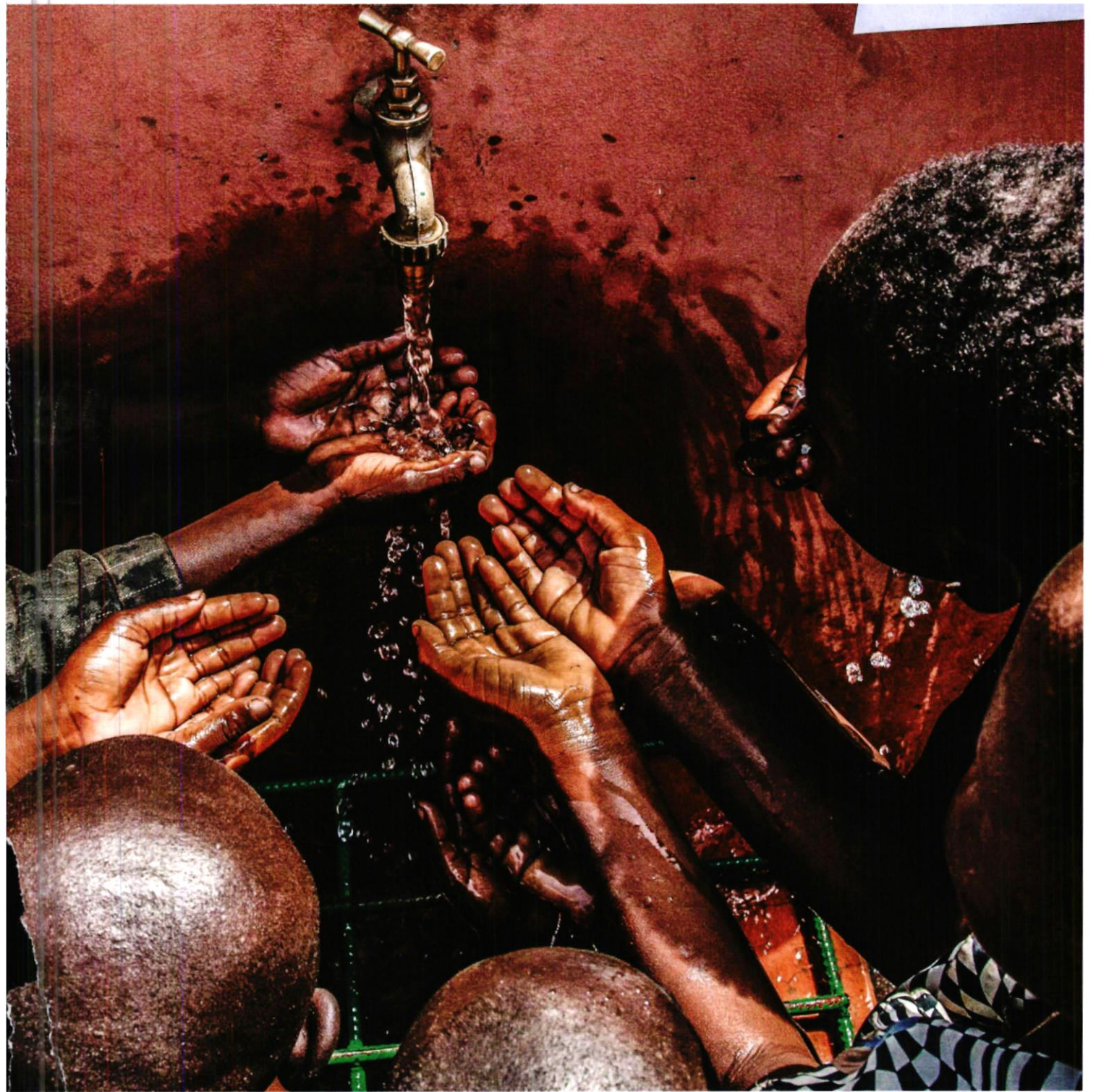
In January, Speakers of Parliament from South Asia explored practical ways to achieve the SDGs, with particular attention paid to improving health by cutting tobacco use. They highlighted governance gaps and the need to develop a national and regional roadmap for action. They said that systems to monitor progress and establish accountability are critical preconditions for parliamentary engagement. In order to advance this work, the Speakers adopted the *Dhaka Declaration on SDG Action in South Asia* and agreed to establish the South Asian Speakers’ Forum on Achieving the SDGs. They decided that the forum should meet once a year to discuss progress on the Goals, highlighting one aspect of their implementation each time.

During April, the Parliaments of Central and Eastern Europe met for the second consecutive year in Bucharest, Romania, to follow up on the conclusions they had reached in 2015. They pledged to implement the SDGs using an inclusive approach: “People, Peace, Prosperity, Planet and Partnerships”. They adopted a statement suggesting that MPs are uniquely placed to educate citizens about the importance of moving towards a culture of environmental responsibility. Parliaments were urged to ensure they had appropriate laws to protect the environment and sufficient funding set aside for measures to respond to natural disasters and reduce the impact of climate change. On the occasion of this regional seminar, the Parliament of Romania adopted a comprehensive declaration on the SDGs – the first of its kind anywhere in the world.

Parliamentarians from across Latin America and the Caribbean met in December in Panama City at a [seminar](#) under the auspices of the IPU and the Parliament of Latin America and the



The IPU is committed to efforts to achieve the ambitious 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. © NurPhoto/Alvaro Fuente, 2015



Caribbean (Parlatino). They concentrated on economic, social and environmental inequalities, and how they impede progress towards sustainable development of the region. They identified key steps that parliaments could take to close income gaps between and across countries, as well as to combat stigma and discrimination that stand in the way of well-being and prosperity.

The IPU and the Chinese National People's Congress convened a first-ever interregional seminar in Beijing in September. This innovative meeting drew participants from Bangladesh, Cambodia, Kenya, Pakistan, Rwanda, Zambia and China, who used this platform to exchange experiences on SDGs implementation. Discussion included how cooperation among developing countries could enhance implementation of the SDGs, and special attention was paid to climate change and its consequences, which is emerging as one of the most important impediments to achieving the SDGs.

Helping parliaments institutionalize the SDGs

In order to assist parliaments in engaging with the SDGs and contributing to their implementation, the IPU in partnership with UNDP designed an *SDG self-assessment toolkit*. The toolkit is intended to enable parliaments to identify good practices, gaps, opportunities and lessons learned to effectively institutionalize the SDGs and mainstream the various Goals in the legislative process. The conclusions of the self-assessment should allow parliaments to set priorities for reform in order to strengthen their response to the SDGs and start their own process of internal benchmarking. The ultimate objective is that parliaments are "fit for purpose" to fully engage in achieving Agenda 2030.



Parliamentary roadmap to tackle climate change

In 2016, the IPU stepped up our action on climate change. Member Parliaments adopted the *Parliamentary Action Plan on Climate Change*, the main purpose of which is to galvanize political input, participation, follow-up and oversight by parliaments during the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

The Action Plan was at the centre of the Parliamentary Meeting at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP22/ CMP12) in Morocco, which gathered some 300 delegates from more than 60 countries and five continents. The meeting proved that there is strong awareness among parliamentarians about the need to act decisively on climate change. This includes, in particular, legislating for the transition to renewable energy, technology transfer and nationally-determined contributions; i.e., public commitments outlining the climate change measures that signatories to the Paris Agreement intend to implement after 2020.

In many countries, parliament lacks the capacity to contribute effectively, help establish strategies and ensure their financing. Investing in building this capacity is a key prerequisite for sound legislation and action. The Morocco meeting adopted a roadmap for implementation of the *Parliamentary Action Plan on Climate Change*.

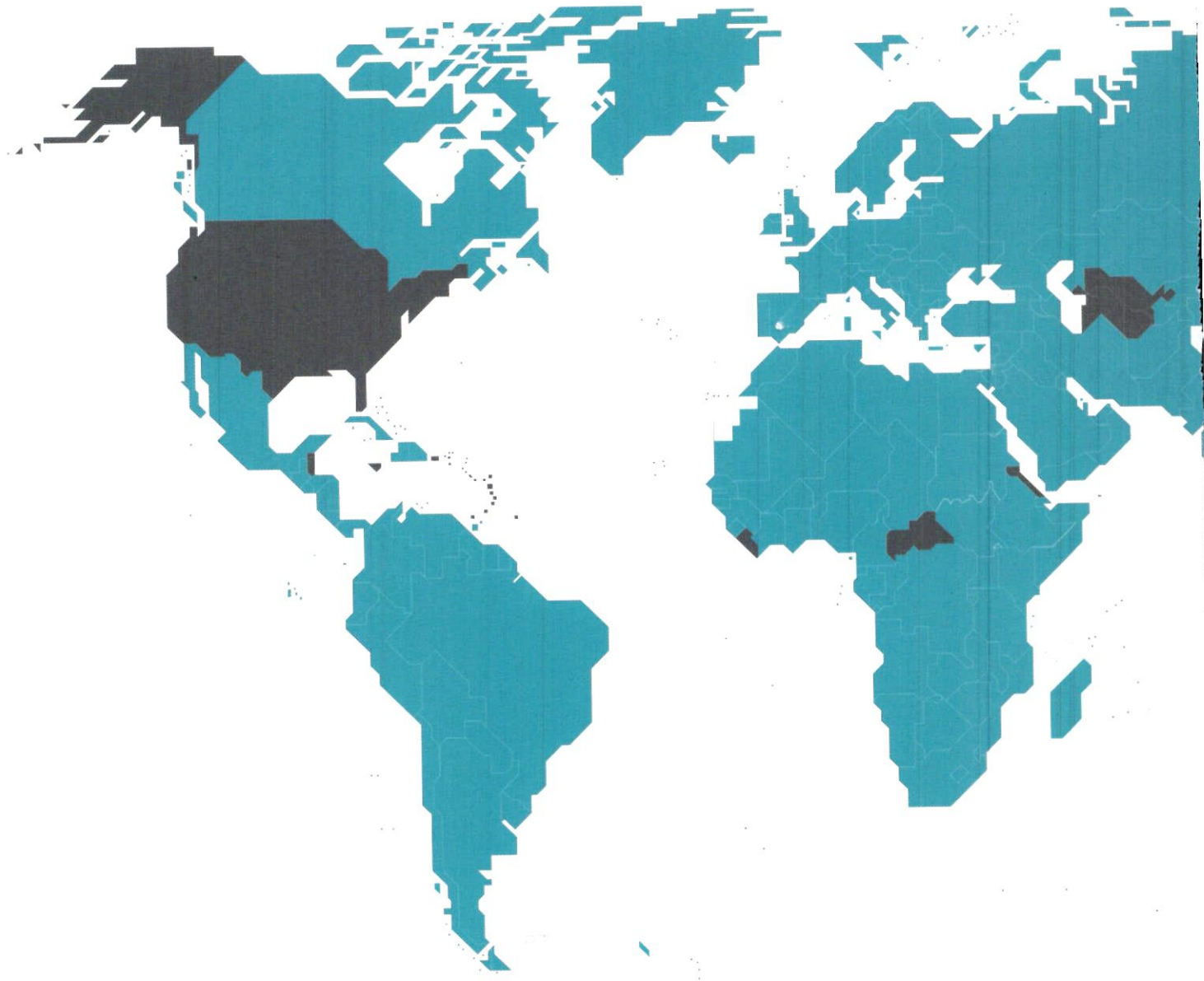
Resource mobilization: who funds the IPU?

The IPU's work to promote peace, democracy and sustainable development is financed primarily by our Members and Associate Members. We also receive a growing amount of voluntary contributions from governments, development agencies, UN bodies and foundations.

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Worldwide Support for Development, and Irish Aid are among the donors who have provided current multi-year funds for programmes related to gender, human rights and technical cooperation. In December 2015, [the Government of China](#) signed a funding agreement with the IPU to support programmes and build parliamentary capacity contributing to sustainable development in developing countries. Partnerships with the UN family deliver support to a number of country-level programmes.

Funding developments in 2016 included governmental contributions and strengthened partnerships. The Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development provided a three-year grant to support the IPU's gender activities. The Government of the United Arab Emirates has provided support in programme funding, and has also made available services in kind for the development of the IPU website. The Republic of Korea continued to offer support in terms of secondment of senior research staff to the IPU. The Government of Equatorial Guinea pledged resources to assist our work related to youth empowerment. The WHO signed a new partnership agreement in 2016 for IPU activities relating to maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health. Further funds have been received from the Governments of Angola and Micronesia.

The IPU remains committed to looking for more voluntary funding to help meet the objectives of its new Strategy.



The IPU at a glance

Membership

In 2016, the Parliaments of Comoros and Egypt were readmitted to the IPU. The Parliaments of Guyana and Swaziland were affiliated. Associate member status was accorded to the Forum of Parliaments of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (FP-ICGLR). The Council also approved a request for associate membership from the Interparliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States (IPA CIS), formerly a Permanent Observer.

The Council was apprised of the situation of certain parliaments and took note of recommendations from the Executive Committee with regard to the following parliaments: Burundi, Cambodia, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Libya, Somalia, South Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Turkey, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and Yemen.

The Council approved the establishment of a Parliamentary Solidarity Fund with a view to encouraging the participation of parliaments, especially those of small island developing States, in the IPU's drive towards universal membership. The practical modalities of the Fund would be developed by the Sub-Committee on Finance for subsequent adoption by the governing bodies.

The IPU currently comprises 171 national parliaments and 11 Associate Members.

Members (171)

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon,



- IPU Members
- Non-IPU Members

Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Palestine, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe

Associate Members (11)

Andean Parliament, Arab Parliament, Central American Parliament (PARLACEN), East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), European Parliament, Interparliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States (IPA CIS), Inter-Parliamentary Committee of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), Latin American Parliament (PARLATINO), Parliament of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Parliament of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC) and Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)

Composition of the Executive Committee as of 28 February 2017

	Members	Expiry of term
Ex-officio President:	Mr. S. Chowdhury (Bangladesh)	October 2017
Vice-President of the Executive Committee:	Mr. I. Liddell-Grainger (United Kingdom)	October 2017
IPU Vice-Presidents:	Mr. E. Ethuro (Kenya)	October 2019
	Mr. A. Jasem Ahmed (United Arab Emirates)	April 2017
	Mr. K. Kosachev (Russian Federation)	October 2019
	Mr. A. Lins (Brazil)	October 2019
	Mr. S. Suzuki (Japan)	October 2018
Members:	Ms. F. Benbadis (Algeria)	October 2018
	Mr. R. del Picchia (France)	October 2018
	Ms. G. Eldegard (Norway)	October 2019
	Ms. A. Habibou (Niger)	March 2019
	Mr. K. Jalali (Islamic Republic of Iran)	October 2019
	Ms. M. Mensah-Williams (Namibia)	March 2018
	Mr. N. Schrijver (Netherlands)	October 2017
	Mr. Nguyen Van Giau (Viet Nam)	October 2019
	Ms. Y. Ferrer Gómez (Cuba)	October 2020
	Ms. M.I. Oliveira Valente (Angola)	October 2019

Standing Committees: Composition of the Bureaux as of 28 February 2017

	Members	Expiry of term
Peace and International Security		
President:	Ms. L. Rojas (Mexico)	March 2020 (Elected as President in March 2016)
Vice-President:	Mr. D. Pacheco (Portugal)	March 2018 (Elected as Vice-President in March 2016)
African Group	Mr. R. Ossele Ndongo (Gabon)	March 2018
	Ms. G. Katuta (Zambia)	March 2019
	Mr. A.L.S. Ssebagala (Uganda)	March 2020
Arab Group	Ms. S. Hajji Taqawi (Bahrain)	March 2018
	Mr. A. Al-Ahmad (Palestine)	March 2018
	Mr. K. Albakkar (Jordan)	March 2020
Asia-Pacific Group	Mr. R.K. Singh (India)	March 2019
	Ms. S. Abid (Pakistan)	October 2020
	Mr. A. Suwanmongkol (Thailand)	October 2020
Eurasia Group	Ms. K. Atshemyan (Armenia)	March 2018
	Mr. M. Ashimbayev (Kazakhstan)	March 2018
	Mr. A. Klimov (Russian Federation)	March 2018
Group of Latin America and the Caribbean	Ms. G. Fermin Nuesi (Dominican Republic)	March 2018
	Mr. Y. Jabour (Venezuela)	March 2018
Twelve Plus Group	Current President	
	Ms. J. Durrieu (France)	March 2018
	Mr. A. Neofytou (Cyprus)	March 2018
	Current Vice-President	

Rapporteurs of the Standing Committee to the 136th Assembly:

Mr. K. Kosachev (Russian Federation)
Ms. S. Koutra-Koukouma (Cyprus)

	Members	Expiry of term
Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade		
President:	Ms. S. Tioulong (Cambodia)	October 2018 (Elected as President in March 2016)
Vice-President:	Mr. A. Cissé (Mali)	March 2018 (Elected as Vice-President in March 2016)
African Group	<i>Current Vice-President</i> Mr. F. Musendu Flungu (Democratic Republic of the Congo)	October 2019
Arab Group	Ms. J. Mhlanga (Zimbabwe)	March 2020
	Mr. K. Abdullah Abul (Kuwait)	March 2018
	Ms. Z. Ely Salem (Mauritania)	March 2018
Asia-Pacific Group	Mr. A. Hussain Adam (Sudan)	March 2020
	Ms. N. Marino (Australia)	March 2018
	Mr. N. Singh (India)	October 2019
Eurasia Group	<i>Current President</i> Ms. Z. Greceanii (Republic of Moldova)	March 2020
	Ms. L. Gumerova (Russian Federation)	March 2020
	Mr. C. Tursunbekov (Kyrgyzstan)	October 2020
Group of Latin America and the Caribbean	Mr. L.A. Heber (Uruguay)	October 2019
	Mr. R.F. Acuña Nuñez (Peru)	October 2019
	Ms. C. Prado (Panama)	October 2019
Twelve Plus Group	Mr. O. Hav (Denmark)	March 2018
	Ms. T. Lindberg (Sweden)	March 2020
	Ms. J. Mijatovic (Serbia)	March 2017

Rapporteurs of the Standing Committee to the 136th Assembly:

Ms. G. Cuevas (Mexico)
Mr. N.K. Premachandran (India)

	Members	Expiry of term
Democracy and Human Rights		
President:	Ms. B. Tshireletso (Botswana)	March 2020 (Elected as President in October 2016)
Vice-President:	Ms. S. Koutra-Koukouma (Cyprus)	March 2018 (Elected as Vice-President in October 2016)
African Group	<i>Vacancy</i> Mr. D.P. Losiakou (Kenya)	March 2018
Arab Group	<i>Current President</i> Mr. N. Al-Gburi (Iraq)	March 2018
	Ms. J. Alsammak (Bahrain)	March 2019
	Ms. F. Dib (Syrian Arab Republic)	March 2018
Asia-Pacific Group	Ms. Lork Kheng (Cambodia)	March 2018
	Mr. P. Wangchuk (Bhutan)	March 2020
	Mr. A.Y. Desai (India)	March 2020
Eurasia Group	Mr. L. Slutsky (Russian Federation)	March 2020
	Mr. S. Yershov (Kazakhstan)	March 2020
	Armenia	March 2020
Group of Latin America and the Caribbean	Mr. M. Bouva (Suriname)	March 2018
	Ms. R.M. Bartra Barriga (Peru)	March 2019
	Ms. K. Sosa (El Salvador)	March 2018
Twelve Plus Group	Ms. A. King (New Zealand)	March 2017
	<i>Current Vice-President</i> Mr. J. Lacao (Portugal)	March 2020

Rapporteurs of the Standing Committee to the 137th Assembly:

Mr. I. Umakhanov (Russian Federation)
To be confirmed

Members

Expiry of term

United Nations Affairs

	Members	Expiry of term
President:	Mr. A. Avsan (Sweden)	March 2019 (Elected as President in October 2015)
Vice-President:	Mr. A.F.I. Al-Mansour (Sudan)	March 2018 (Elected as Vice-President in March 2016)
African Group	Mr. D.G. Boko (Botswana)	March 2019
	Mr. S. Chiheb (Algeria)	October 2018
	Ms. C.N. Mukiite (Kenya)	March 2018
Arab Group	<i>Current Vice-President</i>	
	Ms. A.I. Albasti (United Arab Emirates)	March 2018
	Ms. R. Benmassaoud (Morocco)	March 2018
Asia-Pacific Group	Mr. A.K. Azad (Bangladesh)	March 2019
	Ms. E. Nursanty (Indonesia)	October 2018
	Ms. B. Sampatisir (Thailand)	October 2020
Eurasia Group	Ms. A. Bimendina (Kazakhstan)	October 2019
	<i>Vacancy</i>	
	Mr. D. Asylbek uulu (Kyrgyzstan)	October 2020
Group of Latin America and the Caribbean	Mr. J.C. Mahía (Uruguay)	March 2018
	<i>Vacancy</i>	
	Ms. G. Ortiz González (Mexico)	March 2018
Twelve Plus Group	<i>Current President</i>	
	Mr. D. Dawson (Canada)	March 2018
	Ms. A. Trettebergstuen (Norway)	October 2019

In accordance with Rule 8.1 of the Rules of the Standing Committees as amended in October 2013, Members of the Bureau shall be elected for a term of two years and may be re-elected for a further period of two years. The date featuring in the column "Expiry of term as a Bureau member" corresponds to the maximum theoretical duration of the mandate.

Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments

The Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments (ASGP) brings together Secretaries General and other senior office holders in charge of parliamentary services. It studies the law, procedure, practice and working methods of different parliaments and proposes measures for improvement and for securing cooperation between the services of different parliaments. It is a consultative body of the IPU, and the ASGP President reports annually to the IPU Executive Committee on the Association's activities. The ASGP assists the IPU on subjects within the scope of the Association. Studies carried out by the IPU relating to parliamentary laws and practices are routinely shared with the ASGP and benefit from its input.

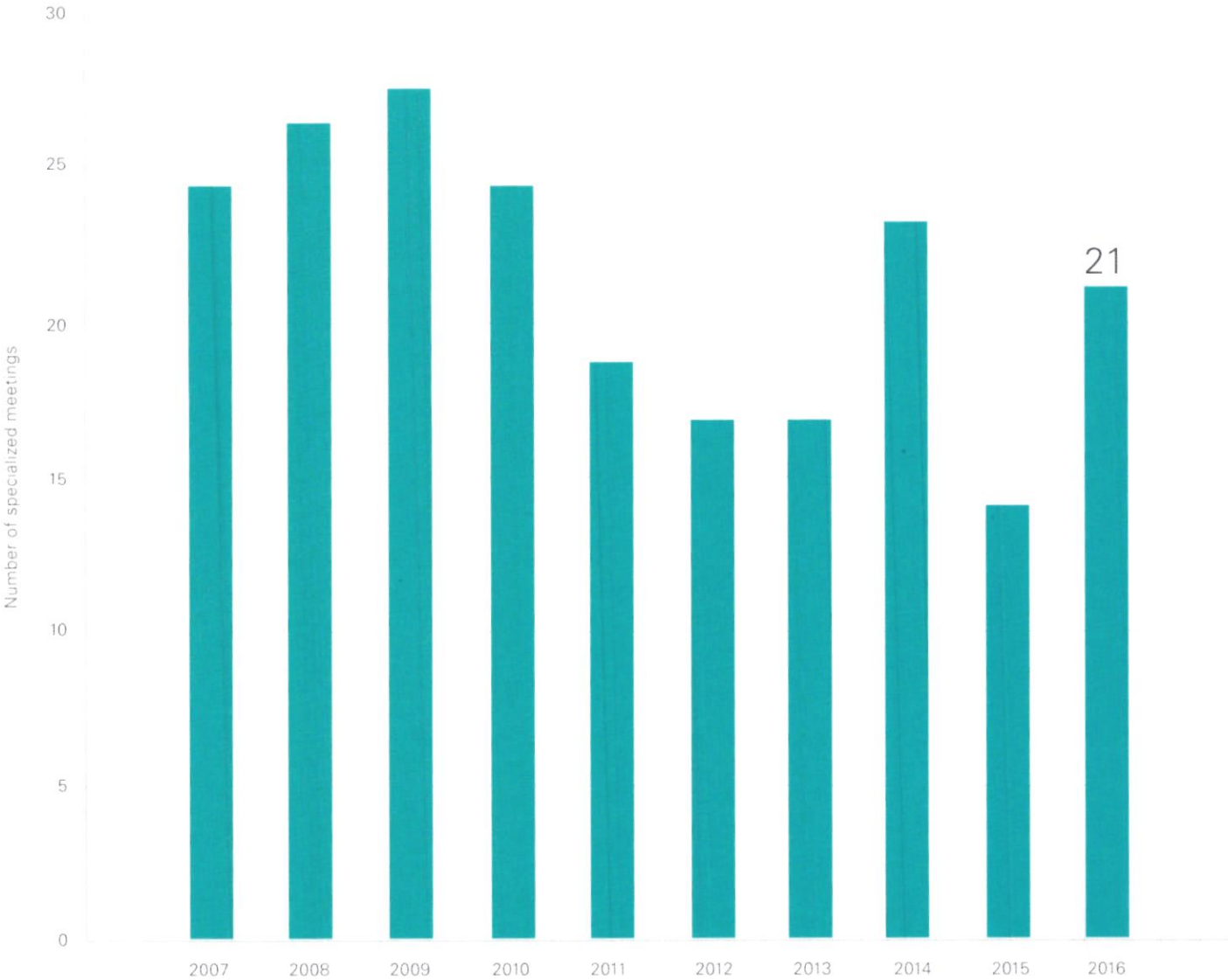
Around 100 parliamentarians and Secretaries General of parliaments took part in a panel debate on "How parliaments change: Draft recommendations for strengthening oversight". Organized jointly by the IPU and the ASGP at the 135th Assembly in Geneva, the debate was part of the ASGP's contribution to the second Global Parliamentary Report. Participants shared experiences and lessons learned from being involved in parliamentary reform, focusing on parliament's oversight role in holding the executive to account.

In 2016, the ASGP also provided substantial support to many of the parliamentary capacity-building projects carried out by the IPU. Several of its members provided expertise during capacity-building activities in Afghanistan, Egypt, Myanmar, Palestine, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Tunisia and Zambia.

Specialized meetings in 2016

- [Annual Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations](#)
NEWYORK (UN Headquarters), 8-9 February 2016
- [Seminar for African parliaments on the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1540](#)
ABIDJAN (Côte d'Ivoire), 22-23 February 2016
- [Parliamentary meeting on the occasion of 60th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, organized with UN Women](#)
NEWYORK (UN Headquarters), 15 March 2016
- [The IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians](#)
LUSAKA (Zambia), 16-17 March 2016
- [Regional Seminar on the theme "Parliaments and the implementation of the SDGs"](#)
BUCHAREST (Romania), 18-19 April 2016
- [Information seminar on the structure and functioning of the Inter-Parliamentary Union for French-speaking participants](#)
GENEVA (IPU Headquarters), 17-20 May 2016
- [Regional Seminar on "Harmonizing synergies for wide-ranging parliamentary actions against child trafficking and labour and strengthening South-South and Triangular cooperation"](#)
ABUJA (Nigeria), 25-26 May 2016
- [Parliamentary side event at the World Health Assembly](#)
GENEVA (WHO), 26 May 2016
- [Roundtable on water \(for the Middle East region\)](#)
GENEVA (IPU Headquarters), 31 May - 2 June 2016
- [Parliamentary Meeting at the UN General Assembly High-Level Meeting on Ending AIDS](#)
NEWYORK, 7 June 2016
- [2016 Annual Session of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO](#)
GENEVA (WTO Headquarters), 13-14 June 2016
- [World e-Parliament Conference](#)
VALPARAISO (Chile), 28-30 June 2016
- [Interregional seminar on parliamentary capacity-building and the further implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals](#)
BEIJING (China), 18-20 September 2016
- [Parliamentary session within the framework of the annual WTO Public Forum](#)
GENEVA (WTO Headquarters), 27 September 2016
- [37th session of the Steering Committee of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO \(in camera\)](#)
GENEVA (IPU Headquarters), 28 September 2016
- [Expert Roundtable on the Common Principles for Support to Parliaments](#)
GENEVA (Switzerland), 28 October 2016
- [Parliamentary Meeting on the occasion of the United Nations Climate Change Conference \(COP22/CMP12\)](#)
MARRAKESH (Morocco), 13 November 2016
- [Regional seminar on Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals through a human rights perspective \(for Parliaments of the Pacific region\)](#)
NADI (Fiji), 16-18 November 2016
- [Parliamentary Meeting at the Second High-Level Meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation](#)
NAIROBI (Kenya), 29 November 2016
- [Regional Seminar on the Sustainable Development Goals for the Parliaments of Latin America and the Caribbean, Meeting the SDGs while reducing inequalities in and among countries: The role of parliaments](#)
PANAMA, 1-2 December 2016
- [Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament \(11th Meeting of Women Speakers\)](#)
ABU DHABI (United Arab Emirates), 12-13 December 2016

Ten-year evolution in IPU meetings



Financial results

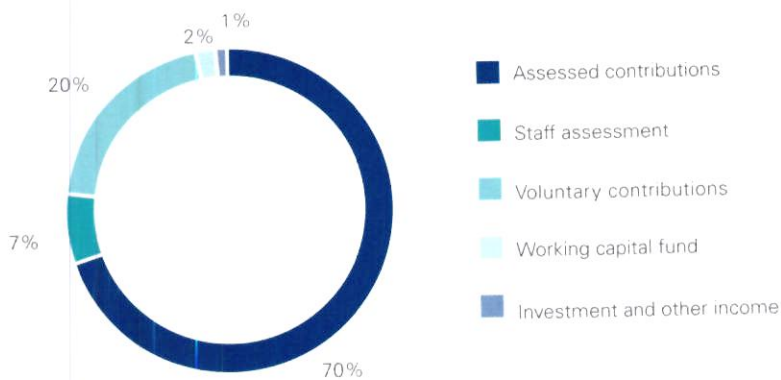
Financing

The IPU is financed primarily through the annual assessed contributions from Member Parliaments. Additional revenue is derived from the internal staff assessment, programme support cost charges, interest, fund income and meeting room rentals. In line with International Public Sector Accounting Standards, the IPU no longer recognizes the staff assessment element as either income or expenditure in its Statement of Financial Performance but utilizes it for budgetary purposes.

In addition, the IPU also solicits bilateral and multilateral donors for voluntary funding that is used to finance technical cooperation projects and activities. A summary of revenue sources for 2016 is presented below, including staff assessment for expenditure comparison.

IPU Revenues by Source (budget basis)

	CHF (Swiss francs)	%
Assessed contributions	10,066,000	70%
Staff assessment	995,651	7%
Voluntary contributions	2,826,841	20%
Working capital fund	356,100	2%
Investment and other income	59,624	1%
Total revenue	14,304,217	

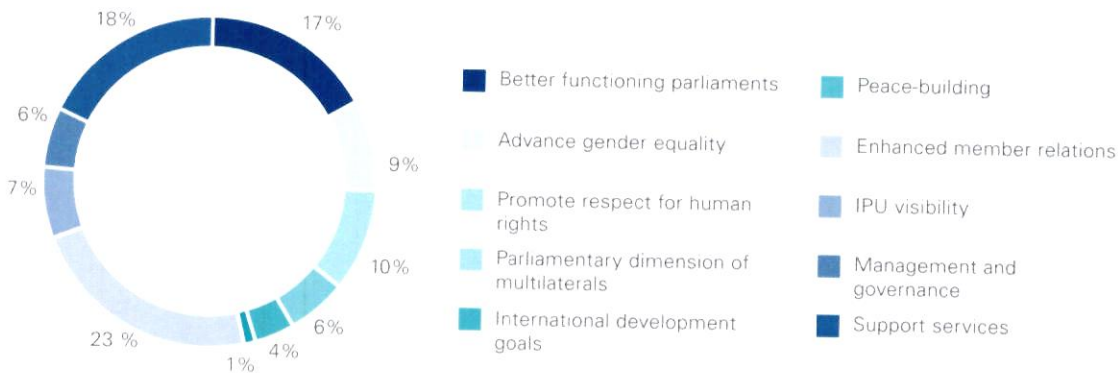


Expenditures

IPU expenditures are dedicated to achieving the strategic objectives of the Organization. A breakdown of expenditures by strategic objective is shown in the following chart, which includes staff assessment for comparison.

IPU Expenditures by Strategic Objective (budget basis)

	CHF (Swiss francs)	%
Better functioning parliaments	2,492,252	17%
Advance gender equality	1,313,622	9%
Promote respect for human rights	1,400,344	10%
Parliamentary dimension of multilaterals	922,311	6%
International development goals	537,378	4%
Peace-building	176,814	1%
Enhanced member relations	3,253,043	23%
IPU visibility	1,018,504	7%
Management and governance	814,065	6%
Support services	2,577,336	18%
Other charges and eliminations	-99,498	-1%
Total expenses	14,406,171	



Financial statements

The consolidated financial statements of the IPU and its legacy Pension Fund for 2016 are prepared in accordance with International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) on a full accrual and going-concern basis. The Organization's financial statements are audited annually by the IPU's external auditor under mandate from the Executive Committee. The external auditor is appointed from a national audit office, currently the Swiss Federal Audit Office.

This is the fifth year in which the IPU financial statements have been consolidated with the legacy Pension Fund and prepared in full compliance with IPSAS.

Further information on the IPU's financial processes, including its annual financial statements and consolidated budgets, are available at: <http://www.ipu.org/finance-e/overview.htm>

The IPU and closed Pension Fund

Statement of Financial Position at 31 December 2016 in CHF (Swiss francs)

	2016	2015
Assets		
Current assets		
Cash on hand	11,881	9,122
Cash in current accounts	6,959,389	5,777,679
Cash held by investment fund manager	264,122	261,344
Term deposits and savings accounts	4,738,677	4,738,412
Sub-total cash and cash equivalents	11,974,069	10,786,557
Accounts receivable		
From Members	721,626	605,120
From donors	36,358	332,440
From tax reimbursements	44,966	62,813
Others	25,316	23,144
Sub-total accounts receivable	828,266	1,023,517
Investments	8,702,020	9,230,735
Other current assets	311,781	224,884
Sub-total current assets	21,816,136	21,265,692
Non-current assets		
Fixed assets		
Building and grounds	8,490,950	8,737,880
Furnishings	33,457	43,271
General equipment	-	-
IT equipment	66,793	80,448
Vehicles	22,875	28,975
	8,614,076	8,890,573
Intangible assets	-	-
Sub-total non-current assets	8,614,076	8,890,573
Total assets	30,430,212	30,156,265

2016

2015

Liabilities

Accounts payable and accrued payables	204,290	225,432
Advances from Members	527,195	521,621
Deferred revenue	3,492,146	2,050,007
Loans	189,600	189,600
Sub-total current liabilities	4,413,231	2,986,660
Borrowings long term	5,373,687	5,497,881
Closed Pension Fund	10,387,112	11,073,299
Other employee benefits	1,488,738	1,534,570
Sub-total non-current liabilities	17,249,537	18,105,750
Total liabilities	21,662,768	21,092,410

Net assets

Restricted funds	427,828	477,335
Accumulated fund balance (Working Capital Fund after contribution)	8,339,618	8,586,520
Net assets	8,767,446	9,063,855

IPU and closed Pension Fund

Statement of Financial Performance for the year ended 31 December 2016 in CHF (Swiss francs)

	2016	2015
Revenue		
Assessed contributions	10,066,000	10,601,676
Voluntary contributions	2,826,841	2,711,755
Investment income	411,823	(190,306)
Other income	58,362	31,860
Total Revenue	13,363,026	13,154,985
Expenses		
Personnel expenditure – permanent staff	8,382,833	8,099,255
Personnel expenditure – temporary staff	2,792,457	2,564,088
Change in closed pension fund provision	-686,186	-691,416
Travel expenditure	1,013,941	1,175,341
Contractual services	785,138	855,768
Operating expenses	766,269	792,562
Supplies, materials and equipment	120,416	142,765
Allowance for doubtful accounts	41,489	143,097
Grants and honoraria	68,183	157,035
Depreciation	309,491	308,970
Amortization of loan	65,406	66,818
Loss on foreign exchange	-	35,298
Total Expenses	13,659,436	13,649,581
Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	(296,409)	(494,596)

