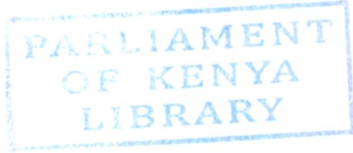


PARLIAMENT OF KENYA



*Approved*  
*SNA*  
*3/12/25*

13<sup>TH</sup> PARLIAMENT


(THIRD SESSION)

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REPORT OF THE 11<sup>TH</sup> IPU GLOBAL CONFERENCE OF YOUNG  
PARLIAMENTARIANS – UNITING GENERATIONS FOR GENDER  
EQUITY HELD IN LIMA, PERU  
11<sup>TH</sup> – 13<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2025

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Clerks Chambers  
Parliament Buildings  
**NAIROBI**

 <b>THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY PAPERS LAID</b>	
DATE: 03 DEC 2025	DAY: <i>Wednesday</i>
TABLED BY:	<i>Hon. Cynthia Muge MP</i>
CLERK AT THE TYPE:	<i>Chebude chebet</i>

December, 2025

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CYEC	County Youth Employment Compact
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
KEWOPA	Kenya Women Parliamentary Association
K-YES	Kenya Youth Employment and Skills Program
KYPA	Kenya Young Parliamentarians Association
MP	Member of Parliament
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UN CEDAW	United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
UN	United Nations
WYDE	Women and Youth in Democracy Initiative
YSHEN	Youth and Sexual Health Education Network

## PART ONE

### PREFACE

#### Honourable Speaker,

The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the world organization of parliaments, serves as a global forum for parliamentary dialogue, cooperation, and action. Founded in 1889, the IPU advances democracy and assists parliaments and parliamentarians worldwide to fulfill their mandates. Today it comprises 179-member parliaments and works closely with the United Nations and other partners to promote democratic governance and the rule of law. The IPU Assembly meets twice a year in different countries, facilitating international parliamentary debate and collaboration on issues of global concern.

Since 2014, the IPU has convened annual Global Conferences of Young Parliamentarians as unique platforms for young Members of Parliament (MPs) to exchange ideas, build networks, and shape common strategies to advance youth empowerment. Each conference focuses on a thematic priority linked to youth, ranging from political participation and peacebuilding to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), climate action, and digital innovation.

With gender equality taking center stage at the IPU in 2025, the 11<sup>th</sup> Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians was devoted to how young and senior MPs can unite to accelerate progress on equality between men and women. The theme **“Uniting Generations for Gender Equality”** was especially timely, coinciding with the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the landmark **1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action on Women’s Rights**. This focus reflects the IPU’s recognition that achieving gender parity requires an intergenerational effort, harnessing the energy of youth and the wisdom of experience.

#### Honourable Speaker,

Kenya has been an active participant in the IPU’s youth initiatives and is firmly committed to advancing the youth and gender equality agenda. The Parliament of Kenya was represented at the **11<sup>th</sup> Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians** by a delegation of young MPs under the age of 40, in line with the IPU’s guidelines, along with an additional senior MP to foster intergenerational dialogue. The delegation comprised:

- (i) Hon. Cynthia Muge – Member of the National Assembly
- (ii) Hon. Eddy Gicheru – Member of the Senate
- (iii) Hon. Miraj Abdulrahman – Member of the Senate
- (iv) Mr. John Mugoma – Secretary (National Assembly)
- (v) Ms. Abigael Washiali – Secretary (Senate)

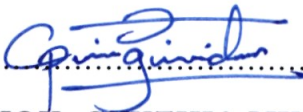
During the conference, members of the Kenya delegation were actively involved in the proceedings and contributed to the outcomes. Notably, **Sen. Eddy Oketch** addressed one of the key sessions, sharing Kenya's experiences and perspectives on partnering with civil society and other stakeholders to advance gender and youth empowerment. These contributions enriched the conference debates and spotlighted Kenya's efforts in implementing youth-friendly laws and tackling gender-based violence as useful examples for the global parliamentary community.

On behalf of the Kenyan delegation, I express our gratitude to you and the Parliamentary Service Commission for the support that enabled Kenya's effective participation in this important global conference. Your continued commitment to youth empowerment and gender equality allowed our young parliamentarians to engage meaningfully on the international stage and to bring home valuable insights.

**Honourable Speaker,**

Pursuant to Article 7 of the IPU Statutes, which obligates IPU members to submit IPU resolutions and decisions to their Parliaments for consideration and action, it is my duty and pleasure to present to the House this report on the **11<sup>th</sup> IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians**.

The report highlights the conference proceedings, Kenya's contributions, the official outcome of the conference, and recommendations for our Parliament's consideration in advancing gender parity, digital innovation, and intergenerational collaboration in our legislative work.



HON. CYNTHIA MUGE, M.P.

**LEADER OF THE DELEGATION**

DATE...3/12/2025.....

## 1. ABOUT THE INTERPARLIAMENTARY UNION

1. The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) was established in 1889 as the focal point for worldwide parliamentary dialogue. It exists to protect and build global democracy through political dialogue and concrete action. The current membership is 179 parliaments and 12 associate members. The IPU works closely with the United Nations and other partner organizations with similar ideals. To this end, the IPU aims at -
  - i) Fostering contacts, coordination and the exchange of experience among Parliaments and parliamentarians of all countries;
  - ii) Considering questions of international interest and express its views on such issues with the aim of bringing about action by Parliaments and their members;
  - iii) Contributing to the defence and promotion of human rights, which are universal in scope and respect for which is an essential factor of parliamentary democracy and development; and
  - iv) Contributing to better knowledge of the working of representative institutions and to the strengthening and development of their means of action.
2. The IPU's main areas of activity are representative democracy, international peace and security, sustainable development, human rights and humanitarian law, women in politics, education, science and culture.
3. The IPU Assembly is the principal statutory body that expresses the views of the Inter-Parliamentary Union on political issues. It brings together parliamentarians to study international problems and make recommendations for parliamentary and governmental action. The Assembly meets twice a year and is held each time in a different country, providing participants with an opportunity to see various national realities.
4. The organs of the IPU are the Assembly, the Governing Council, the Executive Committee and the Secretariat. IPU also works through committees, working groups and other *ad hoc* bodies. The following committees and bodies are currently in place:
  - i) Standing Committee on Peace and International Security;
  - ii) Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade;
  - iii) Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights;
  - iv) Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs;
  - v) Committee on Human Rights of Parliamentarians;
  - vi) Committee on Middle East Questions;
  - vii) Group of Facilitators for Cyprus;
  - viii) Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law;
  - ix) Advisory Group on Health;
  - x) Gender Partnership Group;

- xi) High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism;
  - xii) Forum of Women Parliamentarians; and
  - xiii) Forum of Young Parliamentarians.
5. The current President of the IPU is Dr. Tulia Ackson, Speaker of the National Assembly of the United Republic of Tanzania.

## **2. BACKGROUND OF THE IPU ANNUAL GLOBAL CONFERENCE OF YOUNG PARLIAMENTARIANS**

6. The IPU's annual Global Conferences of Young Parliamentarians are unique platforms for young members of parliament to get together, exchange, learn and define common and innovative strategies to advance youth empowerment.
7. In 2010, the IPU Member Parliaments adopted a landmark resolution entitled Youth participation in the democratic process at the 122<sup>nd</sup> IPU General Assembly in Bangkok, Thailand. The resolution stated that achieving meaningful democracy required the full and active participation of youth and youth organizations in democratic processes at the local, national, regional, and international levels. In that spirit, in 2013, the IPU established the Forum of Young Parliamentarians, a formal and permanent body dedicated to enhancing the quantitative and qualitative participation of young people in parliaments and in the IPU.
8. In 2014, the IPU established the annual Global Conference mechanism to contribute to: strengthening the role of young parliamentarians and youth participation in parliamentary activities; making recommendations from the perspective of young people's views on the activities and agenda of the IPU; and networking, solidarity and capacity building, broadening young people's approaches to issues of mutual concern.
9. Ten Global Conferences have taken place on various topics as follows:
  - (a) Youth participation in Politics and Democracy (Switzerland, 2014);
  - (b) Democracy, Peace and Prosperity (Japan, 2015);
  - (c) The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Zambia, 2016);
  - (d) Economic, Social and Political inclusion (Canada, 2017);
  - (e) The promotion of sustainability and the Protection of the interests of future generations (Azerbaijan, 2018);
  - (f) Achieving the SDGs and empowering youth through social welfare (Paraguay, 2019);
  - (g) Post COVID-19 Youth approach (2021, online conference format);
  - (h) Responding to Climate change (Egypt, 2022);
  - (i) Digital transformation and innovation for SDGs (Vietnam, 2023); and
  - (j) Preserving education and employment in all circumstances (Armenia, 2024).

### 3. THE 11TH IPU GLOBAL CONFERENCE OF YOUNG PARLIAMENTARIANS

10. At the invitation of the IPU and the Congress of the Republic of Peru, the 11<sup>th</sup> IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians was held in Lima, Peru, from 11<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> September 2025, with 13<sup>th</sup> September 2025 dedicated to cultural activities and bilateral meetings.
11. Young MPs from around the world convened during this conference. The Conference focused on the overall theme of **“Uniting generations for gender equality”** and provided a unique platform for young members of parliament to get together, exchange, learn and define common and innovative strategies to advance youth empowerment.
12. The 11<sup>th</sup> IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians introduced an intergenerational component. Traditionally limited to MPs under 40, delegations were in 2025 invited to include one senior MP (over 40), fostering cross-generational dialogue on gender equality. This approach resulted in gender-balanced participation and culminated in joint commitments by both young and senior parliamentarians to address and reduce gender inequality.
13. The Conference, hosted by the Congress of the Republic of Peru, convened young and senior parliamentarians from across the globe. Notably, for the first time in the history of IPU youth conferences, gender parity was attained, with equal representation of male and female MPs. The average age of young parliamentarians was 34, and women comprised 50% of all delegates.
14. The Conference was jointly organized by Peru’s Congress and the IPU and formally inaugurated by Peruvian leadership. **President Dina Boluarte** delivered the opening address, followed by **President of the Council of Ministers of Peru, Mr. Eduardo Arana Ysa**. The ceremony featured remarks from the **President of the Congress of Peru, Hon. José Enrique Jerí Oré**, and senior IPU officials, including **Vice-President Ms. Gabriela Morawska-Stanecka**, **Secretary General Mr. Martin Chungong**, **President of the IPU Bureau of Young Parliamentarians Ms. Nour Abu Ghosh**, and **Executive Committee Vice-President Ms. María del Carmen Alva Prieto**.

#### 3.1 Opening Ceremony and Keynote Address

15. The opening ceremony set an optimistic and resolute tone. In their remarks, Peru’s leaders emphasized that the theme **“Uniting Generations for Gender Equality”** comes 30 years after the Beijing Declaration, noting that progress toward gender equality has become uneven and is even

backsliding in some areas. They highlighted Peru's commitment to push for renewed global action to advance the rights and opportunities of women and girls.

16. IPU officials in attendance highlighted the unique role of young MPs in reinvigorating this agenda, noting that young people bring fresh energy and ideas, and that their inclusion in politics is essential to democratic legitimacy. They also welcomed the presence of senior MPs to bridge wisdom and innovation, stressing that collaboration across generations will accelerate solutions to longstanding gender disparities.
17. The *Keynote Address* was delivered by **Ms. Marianne Mikko, Vice-Chairperson of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (UN CEDAW)**. Drawing on her experience in CEDAW, Ms. Mikko provided a global overview of the status of women's political participation and the legal obligations governments have to end gender-based discrimination.
18. She noted that while women's representation in parliaments worldwide has nearly tripled since 1995 (rising from 11.3% to 27.2% of seats), progress has stalled recently, with only a 0.3% increase in the past year. She warned that the slowdown is the slowest rate of progress in nearly a decade and indicates that deliberate action is needed to overcome structural barriers.
19. Ms. Mikko welcomed the adoption of **CEDAW General Recommendation No. 40. on the Equal and Inclusive Representation of Women in Decision-Making Systems**, and urged parliaments to implement its provisions, such as instituting temporary special measures (quotas) and combating violence against women in politics. She noted that achieving full equality is not only a moral imperative but also vital to strengthening democracy.

### **3.2 Session 1: Assessing the Advancement of the Global Agenda for Gender Equality**

20. Session 1 was a panel discussion focused on taking stock of where the world stands on gender equality, especially in political and public life, and what this means for young people. The Session was chaired by **Sen. Shahzaib Durrani (Pakistan) of the IPU Bureau of Young Parliamentarians**.
21. The session featured expert presentations providing the latest data and trends. The recent findings of the IPU were a centerpiece. For instance, global women's parliamentary representation stood at 27.2% in 2025 (a significant rise from 11% in 1995, but still far from parity). Alarming, progress had nearly ground to a halt in 2024, necessitating a wake-up call that new approaches are needed to "bend the curve" upward.

22. The underrepresentation of youth, particularly young women, was noted as a democratic deficit. Women under the age of 30 years account for just about 1.4% of the world's MPs, despite being roughly 25% of the global population. This gap points to interlocking age and gender biases that keep young women out of decision-making spaces, an issue that the conference sought to address.
23. Experts from the World Bank, UN Women, and the UN Youth Envoy's office joined the panel. They highlighted how gender inequality in political participation is tied to broader societal inequalities. For instance, countries with more women in politics tend to pass more laws improving women's economic rights and opportunities. Thus, empowering women leaders has benefits for society at large.
24. The Experts identified persistent obstacles to women's leadership, such as discriminatory social norms, legal barriers, and violence against women in politics. It was noted that between 80–85% of women parliamentarians worldwide have faced psychological violence such as threats, harassment or hate speech, with young women MPs and those from minority groups most frequently targeted.
25. Following the expert input, delegates took the floor to share their own countries' experiences. Young MPs from various regions reported achievements such as new parity laws or rising numbers of women candidates, as well as common challenges like backlash against women's rights or difficulties in enforcing gender quotas.
26. The session concluded with a recap by the panelists, who noted *collective achievements* such as nearly every country now having at least one woman in parliament, but also *shared challenges* like the slow pace of change and emerging pushbacks.

### **3.3 Session 2: Recent Trends on Gender Equality and Key Priorities to Address**

27. Session 2 built upon the assessment by delving into current trends, emerging issues, and pinpointing priority actions for parliaments. The Session was chaired by **Mr. Abdelgader Abderamane Koko (Chad) of the IPU Bureau of Young Parliamentarians**. The session featured a panel of young parliamentarians and civil society experts, including **Mr. Dan Carden, MP (UK)** and member of the Bureau of Young Parliamentarians, alongside representatives of advocacy organizations.
28. The panel highlighted the proliferation of campaigns and initiatives aimed at boosting youth and women's participation. For instance, the IPU's own campaigns **"I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament!"** to promote youth representation and **"Achieving gender equality, action by action"**, a call for concrete parliamentary actions on gender parity.

29. These campaigns provide toolkits and a framework for parliaments to make measurable commitments, such as pledging to increase the number of young MPs or to adopt gender-sensitive reforms in parliamentary operations. The session provided a detailed overview of transformational actions that these campaigns propose, intending to inspire delegates to replicate or adapt them back home.
30. The experts cautioned against the negative trends threatening progress. They noted a resurgence of anti-gender equality rhetoric and movements in some countries, often fueled by disinformation. The experts noted that in certain jurisdictions, hard-won laws protecting women's rights have come under attack, with attempts to roll back protections against domestic violence or to impose new restrictions on reproductive rights.
31. Panelists from women's advocacy groups described how younger generations are paradoxically witnessing *backtracking* on gender equality in some places. The panelists cited that some Millennials and Gen Z cohorts show less support for gender equality than older generations, underscoring the need to continually educate and engage youth on gender issues, rather than assume progress will march forward automatically.
32. **Mr. Max Carvajal, a Peruvian official in the Ministry of Housing**, gave a special address on "*Gender Equality: Closing Gaps in Drinking Water and Sanitation.*" He illustrated how lack of access to safe water disproportionately affects women and how women's leadership in local governance has led to more inclusive water and sanitation policies. He explained that gender equality cuts across sectors like health, education, the economy, and even digital access.
33. Delegates noted that in the digital realm, for instance, the gender gap in internet access and the rise of online harassment are new frontiers that parliamentarians must address to ensure women and girls fully benefit from innovation.
34. The discussion identified priority actions going forward, including strengthening legal frameworks for gender equality, such as by entrenching parity requirements in electoral laws, dedicating budget resources to gender-focused programs, and partnering with youth and grassroots movements to sustain momentum.
35. The session concluded with an interactive segment, where participants and panelists exchanged views on how to overcome obstacles. There was broad agreement on the need for both bold political measures like quotas or parity laws and societal measures like mentoring young women leaders, engaging men as allies, and changing social norms to hasten the pace of change.

### **3.4 Special Session: Intergenerational Alliances for Gender Equality (WYDE Initiative)**

36. The **Special Session on Intergenerational Alliances** was organized under the **WYDE (Women and Youth in Democracy) Initiative**, a collaborative project funded by the European Union and implemented by UN Women, the IPU, and other partners. This session embodied the conference theme by bringing young and senior parliamentarians together in structured dialogues and working groups focused on gender equality. It marked the upcoming **30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Beijing Declaration**, offering a chance to reflect on the progress towards the realization of gender equality across generations.

#### **3.4.1 Part 1 – “Gender Equality Across the Generations: What’s Changed? What Hasn’t?”**

37. The first part of the special session was a moderated conversation led by **Mr. Agustín Almodóbar, a Senator from Spain and member of the IPU Executive Committee**. In this intergenerational dialogue, seasoned political leaders (including several senior MPs and veteran gender equality experts) sat alongside young MPs and youth activists to compare perspectives. They examined the evolution of gender equality since the 1990s.

38. Senior participants shared how the push for women’s rights in the 1990s led to breakthroughs like the establishment of gender quotas in many countries and the inclusion of gender equality in the Millennium Development Goals. Young participants discussed current findings and experiences, such as the use of social media campaigns to demand action on issues like period poverty or violence against women, illustrating how today’s strategies differ from those of the past.

39. The conversation revealed the persistence of certain patriarchal norms and the recurring need to defend gains from pushback. One senior MP noted that some debates (e.g., on women’s reproductive rights) felt like “history repeating itself,” underscoring the importance of memory and vigilance. Younger MPs expressed appreciation for the trail blazed by their predecessors, while urging fresh approaches to engage their peers who may not identify with older feminist narratives.

#### **3.4.2 Part 2 – Intergenerational Working Groups: “Sharing Perspectives, Building Coalitions and Shaping Solutions to Accelerate Equality.”**

40. Following the plenary, the session transitioned to an interactive segment, wherein participants were organized into intergenerational working groups composed of young and senior Members of Parliament representing various regions. Each group was assigned a thematic priority:

- (a) achieving parity in political participation;
  - (b) advancing equality in the law;
  - (c) fostering gender-sensitive institutions; and
  - (d) combating violence against women and girls.
41. Delegates engaged in comparative analysis of national contexts. For example, one group observed that despite a statutory 30% quota for women in parliament, actual representation had plateaued slightly above this threshold, prompting deliberation on strategies to progress from minimum quotas to genuine parity. Another group considered measures such as lowering the voting or candidacy age to increase youth participation, with senior MPs sharing historical perspectives on similar legislative efforts.
42. Each working group was mandated to propose at least one actionable, intergenerational initiative to advance its respective focus area. Recommendations included the establishment of formal mentorship programs pairing young MPs with senior counterparts to cultivate future leaders, as well as “reverse mentoring” initiatives whereby young MPs would guide senior colleagues in areas such as digital engagement and gender-sensitive policymaking. Joint advocacy campaigns were also proposed, notably involving senior male MPs and young women MPs collaborating to promote women’s leadership, thereby modeling intergenerational solidarity.
43. This collaborative exercise was credited with breaking down silos and fostering personal connections among participants, thus reinforcing the foundation for sustained, cross-generational cooperation in advancing gender equality objectives.

### **3.4.3 Part 3 – Findings and Recommendations**

44. The special session concluded with a report-back plenary where each working group presented its findings and key recommendations. The following common themes emerged in the recommendations –
- (a) mentorship;
  - (b) the need to institutionalize intergenerational collaboration through creating youth advisory councils to parliaments, or reserving seats/positions for young people in decision-making bodies); and
  - (c) the need to codify gender equality guarantees into law to weather political shifts.
45. The WYDE special segment demonstrated that uniting the enthusiasm of youth with the experience of elders can yield innovative strategies to reinvigorate the gender equality movement.

### **3.5 Session 4: Uniting Stakeholders Across the Parliamentary Ecosystem for Gender Equality**

46. Session 4, chaired by Ms. Ivana Stamatovic, MP (Serbia) and Bureau member, broadened the scope of discussion to forging partnerships beyond parliament. The premise was that parliaments and MPs cannot achieve gender equality in isolation. They must work closely with the broader parliamentary ecosystem, including civil society, international organizations, the private sector, and grassroots movements, to drive change.
47. It began with a keynote address by Ms. Javiera Díaz, a spokesperson for *Tremendas*, a youth-led feminist platform, who spoke about the power of youth-driven civil society initiatives in Latin America to influence gender policies. She urged MPs to view civil society not as critics but as partners and “co-creators” of gender-responsive legislation, especially at a time when young activists are leading innovative campaigns on issues like gender-based violence and climate justice.
48. The session then proceeded in a “tour de table” format, inviting MPs from the floor to share short interventions about successful collaborations in their countries. Delegates described examples such as working with NGOs to draft a stronger sexual harassment bill or partnering with a youth network to run public outreach that encouraged young women to register to vote. Collaboration can take many forms, including –
- (a) formal mechanisms like national gender equality councils, including parliamentarians and civil society, or
  - (b) ad-hoc alliances around specific causes.
49. Panel of civil society champions and advocates provided their views on how to better foster partnerships for gender equality. Representatives from women’s rights organizations, a youth advocacy group, and a UN agency observed that they need the following from parliamentarians –
- (a) openness to input,
  - (b) willingness to consult those affected by policies, and
  - (c) the political will to turn recommendations into action.
50. Sen. Oketch Eddy Gicheru (Kenya) was invited as a panel presenter to share Kenya’s experience in multi-stakeholder approaches. His remarks centered on the importance of inclusive partnerships at both national and local levels in empowering youth and advancing gender equality. He noted that over 60% of Kenya’s population is under 24 years old, a demographic reality that makes youth empowerment not just a choice but a necessity. He stressed that collaboration between parliament and civil society organizations (CSO) is important for creating an enabling environment to harness the potential of young Kenyans.

51. Sen. Oketch noted that in its legislative role, Parliament has pushed for legislation to promote access to education, employment opportunities, and healthcare for youth. He highlighted that Parliament has also spearheaded for adequate budget allocations to youth and gender equality programs, ensuring policies are backed by resources.
52. Sen. Oketch stated that Parliament has worked to ensure that county governments implement budgets and policies that prioritize youth development and equal opportunity. For instance, Parliament has ensured that a portion of development funds target women and youth entrepreneurship. Parliament also liaises with county assemblies on legislation that affects youth and women in local communities.
53. In its advocacy and representation role, Parliament engages directly with youth constituencies, holding forums to listen to young people's concerns and encouraging youth participation in decision-making, such as including youth voices in public hearings and committees. This multi-faceted parliamentary engagement ensures that the interests of the younger generation, including young women, are heard in governance processes.
54. Sen. Oketch highlighted that civil society provides skills training in entrepreneurship and leadership for youth, helping prepare the next generation of women and men leaders. Civil society also facilitates dialogue by creating platforms such as town halls or social media campaigns for youth to express their views on policy issues, which MPs can then take up in legislative debates. CSOs also perform accountability function by monitoring the implementation of youth-related policies and advocating for the rights of youth and women.
55. Sen. Oketch highlighted *Youth and Sexual Health Education Network (YSHEN)*, a coalition addressing young people's sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence issues. Through YSHEN, civil society groups conduct health and wellness programs for youth and engage with parliamentarians to influence health policies based on grassroots evidence. As a result of such collaboration, Kenyan legislators have been better informed when drafting laws like the Reproductive Healthcare Bill.
56. Sen. Oketch also highlighted *Kenya Youth Employment and Skills (K-YES) Program*, a public-private partnership model. In K-YES, local businesses, county governments, and civil society came together to provide vocational training and job opportunities for youth, especially young women.
57. Sen. Oketch noted that **County Youth Employment Compacts (CYECs)** were formed to tackle unemployment collectively. These compacts have led to innovative solutions like entrepreneurship funds and tech hubs for youth. He noted that such initiatives show that when everyone, including the government, private sector, and civil society, works together, the impact

on youth empowerment and gender inclusion is far greater than isolated efforts.

58. Sen. Oketch observed that progress in women's political representation has been incremental but visible, noting that due to the affirmative action seats and sustained advocacy, more women now sit in Parliament, the Senate, and county assemblies than a decade ago. However, Kenya is still striving to fully implement the constitutional two-thirds gender principle. The principle has yet to be realized in Parliament, as legislative attempts to enforce it have fallen short in the past.
59. Sen. Oketch acknowledged that civil society and judicial interventions have played a key role in pushing accountability in the quest for two-thirds gender principle. For instance, court rulings have directed Parliament to enact the necessary laws, and women's organizations continue to petition for action. He highlighted that Kenya's experience shows the value of persistent, multi-front advocacy. While political will has sometimes lagged, external pressure from civil society and legal mandates have kept the agenda alive.
60. Sen. Oketch also pointed out how digital technology and social media have emerged as powerful tools in Kenya's gender and youth advocacy landscape. Social media campaigns led by young activists have brought issues like sexual harassment in universities or the need for youth employment opportunities to national attention. These platforms amplify youth and gender equality campaigns, often with young leaders at the forefront, and can quickly rally public support.
61. Sen. Oketch noted that many Kenyan MPs have learned to engage with these online movements, sometimes collaborating with influencers or leveraging hashtags, to inform their parliamentary questions or committee work. He, however, cautioned that the digital arena has its dangers, as online harassment, especially of women in public life, is on the rise. He mentioned that Kenya has taken steps to combat cyber harassment through the Computer Misuse and Cybercrimes Act, which criminalizes online stalking, bullying, and the distribution of intimate images without consent.
62. Sen. Oketch emphasized that partnerships are strongest where political will is combined with citizen engagement and cross-generational solidarity. When elected leaders genuinely welcome civil society as a partner, and when younger and older generations of leaders learn from each other, the outcomes in terms of legislation and social change are more robust and sustainable.
63. Sen. Oketch noted the need to –

- (a) strengthen multi-stakeholder platforms that bring together parliamentarians, civil society, the private sector, and development partners for coordinated action;
- (b) promote youth mentorship programs to build the next generation of gender equality champions;
- (c) harness digital innovation, such as social media, online tools for greater awareness, accountability, and youth participation in policymaking, while also putting safeguards in place against digital abuse; and
- (d) encourage senior MPs to support and learn from young leaders, institutionalizing a culture where knowledge transfer is two-way, for example, seniors guiding legislative processes, and youth guiding seniors on technology and new perspectives.

### **3.6 Session 5: Working Group Hackathon – “Achieving Gender Equality, Action by Action”**

64. Session 5 introduced an innovative “hackathon” style exercise to turn the knowledge gained from previous sessions into practical solutions and commitments. Facilitators provided a brief recap of the IPU’s new campaign, *achieving gender equality, action by action*, outlining steps parliaments can take to reach gender parity and empower young women. Participants were then divided into working groups to undertake a series of simulated scenarios related to promoting gender equality.

65. Each group’s “hackathon challenge” was to respond to a realistic scenario. The groups were tasked to brainstorm quick, creative solutions mirroring how a hackathon in the tech world produces prototypes under time pressure. Participants assumed different roles with some as MPs, others as civil society, and then presented their proposed actions to the whole session.

66. Young MPs took the lead in many groups, showcasing the skills and perspectives they bring. The proposed actions included –

- (a) launching all-party parliamentary campaigns under the banner “#ISayYes” to publicly pledge support for a parity law, coupled with town hall meetings to rally citizen backing; or
- (b) drafting a model social media policy for Parliament to combat online hate, to be adopted as a resolution by the IPU.

67. Groups identified what they, as individuals and as collective networks of young MPs, could do immediately post-conference. A recurring theme was collaboration, with many solutions involving partnerships, whether cross-party alliances within parliament or alliances with tech companies and NGOs.

### 3.7 Session 6: “Unconference” – Youth-Led Open Discussions

68. Session 6, chaired by Mr. Wilson Soto, MP (Peru), a member of the IPU Bureau of Young Parliamentarians, was an **Unconference** where the agenda is determined by participants on the spot. At the start of the session, volunteers pitched their discussion topics in a plenary “marketplace”. Participants then voted by interest, and the most popular topics were assigned breakout spaces. The young MPs who proposed those topics became the facilitators of their respective discussions, truly flipping the script so that the conference floor belonged to the youth participants themselves.
69. In the breakout groups, MPs and observers from different countries freely exchanged experiences and brainstormed. Unlike formal sessions, these conversations were informal, peer-to-peer learning opportunities, and they often delved into very specific or emerging issues that young MPs are passionate about. After an hour of discussions, everyone reconvened for a Reporting Plenary. Each facilitator gave a brief report on their unconference group’s key points.

### 3.8 Closing Session and Outcome Document

70. The Closing Session, chaired by Hon. Dan Carden (UK), representing the IPU Bureau of Young Parliamentarians, was held to adopt the outcomes and for concluding remarks. The session presented the draft **Outcome Document (Lima Declaration)**. In the **Lima Conference Declaration**, the young parliamentarians and their senior colleagues pledged unified action to “turn the tide” and safeguard democracy through full gender equality. The Declaration framed gender parity as essential for real-world change, pointing that countries with more women in politics tend to pass more laws benefiting women’s economic rights and opportunities.
71. The young MPs expressed concern that backsliding on the political participation of women and youth is a real threat, and that urgent prioritization is needed to reverse this trend. They supported the **Plan of Action on Gender Parity in Parliaments** adopted at the Global Conference of Women Parliamentarians in March 2025, and urged its implementation, alongside the new guidance from **CEDAW General Recommendation 40** on women’s political participation.
72. The declaration in Lima outlined the following key priorities and calls to action for parliaments –
- (a) mobilizing MPs as champions for gender equality;
  - (b) enacting constitutional and legal reforms to entrench parity;
  - (c) opening more opportunities for young women and young men to run for office;

- (d) achieving parity not just in numbers of MPs, but in positions of leadership and influence;
- (e) making parliaments safe and inclusive workplaces; and
- (f) tackling online violence and misinformation.

73. The President of the Congress of Peru, Hon. José Enrique Jerí Oré, thanked the participants and reiterated Peru's commitment to implement the conference outcomes, noting that Peru would be evaluating its own parliamentary practices for greater gender sensitivity.
74. IPU Vice-President Ms. Gabriela Morawska-Stanecka (Poland) lauded the delegates for their passion and concrete ideas, and she affirmed that the IPU would support follow-up efforts, including tracking how parliaments act on the recommendations. She emphasized mentorship and coalition-building as key takeaways, reflecting on how seeing young and senior MPs work together in Lima was inspiring and should become standard practice.
75. Ms. María del Carmen Alva Prieto of Peru (IPU Executive Committee Vice-President) noted that "*When young and old march together, no obstacle is insurmountable*", capturing the spirit of solidarity that defined the gathering. With that, the 11<sup>th</sup> Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians was officially closed.
76. On the final day, the Peruvian hosts organized a cultural programme for the delegates. Participants visited the historic Legislative Palace in Lima and enjoyed cultural performances in the Plaza Constitución. This informal day allowed young MPs to continue networking in a relaxed setting, experiencing Peru's rich cultural heritage. Such cultural exchanges are a tradition of IPU conferences, reinforcing camaraderie and understanding among parliamentarians beyond formal sessions.

#### 4. KENYA'S PARTICIPATION AND CONTRIBUTIONS

77. Kenya's delegation engaged in all aspects of the **11<sup>th</sup> Global Conference** and made significant contributions that were noted by conference participants. In **Session 1's country interventions**, the Kenyan delegation highlighted the steps Kenya has taken towards gender equality in politics, including the constitutional provision of the two-thirds gender principle and the establishment of a vibrant **Kenya Women Parliamentary Association (KEWOPA)**, which mentors and supports female legislators.
78. Kenya's delegation also acknowledged the challenges faced in implementing the gender principle, explaining the repeated attempts to pass the required legislation and the continued resolve to achieve this constitutional mandate. This provided a case study for others on how political will and public pressure interact to drive change. Delegates from other countries viewed Kenya's experience with judicial enforcement of gender quotas as an innovative approach when parliamentary consensus is difficult to achieve.
79. Kenya's voice was prominent in **Session 4** through the presentation by **Sen. Eddy Oketch** on Kenya's multi-stakeholder initiatives. Conference participants commended Kenya's holistic approach, linking national legislation, county-level action, and civil society engagement as a model of good practice. In the Q&A, there were follow-up questions about the provisions of the **Computer Misuse and Cybercrimes Act (Cap. 79C)** that Kenya uses to combat online harassment, since online abuse of women leaders was a concern shared by many. His explanation of Kenya's legal framework outlawing cyber-stalking, cyber-bullying, and revenge pornography with strict penalties gave other delegations ideas on legal tools to consider in their own contexts.
80. At the special **WYDE intergenerational session**, the Kenyan delegation was active in both speaking and facilitating. The senior MP in attendance, a long-serving woman parliamentarian, participated in the **Part 1** panel conversation, sharing reflections on the journey of Kenya's gender equality movement from the 1990s. She spoke about Kenya's progress in girls' education, women's health, and cultural challenges that persist, such as addressing gender-based violence in communities. Her insights enriched the discussion by providing an African perspective on intergenerational change and by reinforcing that progress is not linear.
81. In the working groups, **Part 2**, Kenyan delegates joined different tables and helped infuse ideas from our national context, such as suggesting the inclusion of marginalized groups, such as persons with disabilities, pastoralist communities, in any parity measures.
82. At the **Unconference, Session 6**, a member of our delegation proposed and led a breakout discussion on **"Youth and Digital Innovation in Parliamentary Engagement."** This topic reflected Kenya's reputation as a

technology hub, the **Silicon Savannah** and the interest in how digital tools can enhance democratic participation. The discussion explored ideas like mobile platforms for constituent feedback and using open data and social media analytics to inform policy decisions.

83. In informal networking and side meetings, the Kenya delegation forged connections with counterparts from other countries, particularly within the African Group of the IPU. Plans were discussed for follow-up bilateral exchanges with various delegations. Kenyan delegates also consulted IPU officials about technical support for implementing some of the conference recommendations, such as conducting a gender-sensitive parliament audit in Kenya and establishing a youth caucus.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE KENYA DELEGATION

84. The Kenya Parliament Delegation to the 11<sup>th</sup> IPU Global Conference of the Young Parliamentarians, pursuant to Article 7 of the IPU Statutes, urges the two Houses of Parliament to –
- (1) Note and endorse the **Outcome Document of the 11th IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians (Lima Declaration)**, pledge support for its vision of full gender equality and intergenerational partnership in politics and resolve to integrate the principles therein into parliamentary business as a demonstration of Kenya’s commitment to the global call to address gender inequality and implement relevant IPU resolutions.
  - (2) Renew and prioritize legislative efforts, including constitutional amendments and actionable mechanisms such as special electoral quotas or top-up nominations, to fully implement the two-thirds gender principle and ensure no more than two-thirds of any elective or appointive body are of the same gender, in alignment with domestic legal obligations and global parliamentary commitments.
  - (3) Institutionalize a formal *Mentorship and Leadership Development Program*, under the **Kenya Young Parliamentarians Association (KYPA)** and in collaboration with senior members, to foster intergenerational cooperation and capacity building among young and first-term MPs, with particular emphasis on women, through structured mentorship, shadowing, and joint outreach initiatives, thereby ensuring continuity and shared leadership.
  - (4) Leverage digital platforms, including the expansion of live-streamed committee hearings, social media townhalls, and e-petition platforms, and review and strengthen laws and policies against online harassment and cyberbullying, particularly targeting women in politics, to enhance youth engagement and safety.
  - (5) Revive their engagements with the **National Gender Equality Commission**, establish regular *Women and Youth Roundtables* with civil society and youth representatives, partner with institutions such as the **Kenya National Youth Council** to ensure structured input on legislation and oversight, and direct parliamentary committees to incorporate gender-responsive budgeting and youth impact assessments into their processes.
  - (6) Undertake the IPU’s “*Gender-Sensitive Parliament*” self-assessment, implement best practices for gender and youth inclusion, including improved facilities, revised standing orders, flexible work arrangements, robust anti-harassment measures, and regular training, to serve as a model of equality and inclusivity.