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REPORT OF THE KENYA PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION TO THE 151ST ASSEMBLY OF THE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION (IPU) AND RELATED MEETINGS HELD IN GENEVA, SWITZERLAND 19TH TO 23RD OCTOBER, 2025

Clerks Chambers,
Parliament Buildings,
NAIROBI.

July, 2026

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REPORT OF THE 151ST ASSEMBLY OF THE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION (IPU) AND RELATED MEETINGS HELD IN GENEVA, SWITZERLAND 19TH TO 23RD OCTOBER, 2025

PREFACE

Honorable Speaker,

1. The 151st Assembly of the IPU and its related meetings was held at the International Conference Centre Geneva (CICG) in Geneva, Switzerland, from Sunday, 19th to Thursday, 23rd October 2025.

2. All IPU statutory bodies, including the Governing Council, Standing Committees, Committees on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians and on Middle East Questions, as well as the Forum of Women Parliamentarians and the Forum of Young MPs, convened during this Assembly.

3. The 151st Assembly was particularly significant as it was the first statutory meeting of the IPU following the Sixth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, which had taken place in Geneva in July 2025. The Assembly provided an opportunity to carry forward the commitments made by Speakers of Parliament and to translate them into concrete parliamentary action at the global level.

Honorable Speaker,

4. The general debate focused on the overarching theme "Upholding humanitarian norms and supporting humanitarian action in times of crisis," a subject of profound relevance given the proliferation of armed conflicts worldwide, the unprecedented scale of humanitarian need, and the growing strain on the international humanitarian system. The choice of Geneva as the venue carried particular symbolic weight, as the city hosted the diplomatic conference that adopted the Geneva Conventions nearly eighty years ago, establishing the cornerstone of international humanitarian law.

5. It is against a backdrop of deepening global crises that the assembly convened. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, nearly 310 million people were estimated to need humanitarian assistance in 2025, the highest figure ever recorded. Over 123 million people had been forcibly displaced worldwide, and 1.9 million people were experiencing catastrophic hunger. At the same time, funding for humanitarian response was shrinking, and respect for international humanitarian law was being eroded. It was within this sobering context

that parliamentarians from around the world gathered to reaffirm their commitment to human dignity and the rules of war.

6. At the same time, funding for humanitarian response was shrinking, and respect for international humanitarian law was being eroded. It was within this sobering context that parliamentarians from around the world gathered to reaffirm their commitment to human dignity and the rules of war.

Honorable Speaker,

7. On the proposal of Ms. A. Kuspan (Kazakhstan), seconded by Mr. N. Kurtulmus (Turkiye), the Governing Council elected Ms. G. Morawska-Stanecka, IPU Vice-President from Poland, as the President of the 151st IPU Assembly, who presided over the proceedings in the absence of IPU President Dr. Tulia Ackson due to forthcoming elections in her country.

8. Following the formation of the **Advisory Council of the Refoundation (CCR)**, the Council officially approved Niger's application to rejoin the IPU, restoring their seat in the global parliamentary community.

9. The Governing Council celebrated the induction of Brunei Darussalam as the IPU's newest member. This expansion marks a significant step toward the organization's ambition of achieving universal parliamentary representation.

10. The Assembly considered two requests for the inclusion of an emergency item: one submitted by South Africa on behalf of the African Group concerning the situation in Madagascar, and another submitted by Thailand, Argentina, Chile, Poland and Sweden concerning transnational organized crime, cybercrime and hybrid threats to democracy and human security. Both proposals obtained the requisite two-thirds majority in a roll-call vote, and the second proposal, having received the larger number of positive votes, was included on the Assembly's agenda.

Honorable Speaker,

11. The Kenya Delegation actively participated in all facets of the Assembly, making substantive contributions to the general debate, committee deliberations, and side events. Hon. John Makali, MP, participated in the meetings of the High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism, contributing to discussions on the Call of the Sahel initiative and the nexus between climate change and violent extremism. Hon. Millie Odhiambo, CBS, MP, in her capacity as President of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians, presided over the Committee's 178th session, which examined the situation of 300 parliamentarians across 16 countries and declared new cases admissible concerning

parliamentarians in Algeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia and Türkiye.

12. Sen. Catherine Mumma, MP, participated in the inaugural meeting of the IPU Committee on Health, contributing to discussions on universal health coverage and sexual and reproductive health and rights, and was actively engaged in the deliberations of the Working Group on Science and Technology, particularly concerning the development of an Annex on AI Ethics to the IPU Charter on the Ethics of Science and Technology.

Honorable Speaker,

The delegation notes with satisfaction that Kenya's engagement at the 151st Assembly contributed to the following outcomes—

i) The adoption of the Geneva Declaration, which reflects Kenya's longstanding commitment to the protection of civilians in armed conflict and the promotion of international humanitarian law;

ii) The adoption of the resolution on illegal international adoption, which incorporates provisions recognizing the particular vulnerabilities of children in conflict zones and the need for comprehensive victim support mechanisms;

iii) The adoption of the emergency item resolution on transnational organized crime and cybercrime, which acknowledges the global scale of these threats and calls for strengthened legislative frameworks and international cooperation;

iv) The unanimous adoption of the motion recommending the election of a woman as the next UN Secretary-General, aligning with Kenya's principled position on gender equality and women's leadership.

Honorable Speaker,

14. The Kenyan delegation to the 151st IPU Assembly and related meetings comprised the following:

i)The Rt. Hon. Amason Jeffah Kingi, EGH, MP - Speaker of the Senate and Leader of the Delegation.

ii)Sen. Catherine Mumma, MP - Member of the IPU Committee on Health and Working Group on Science and Technology.

iii)Sen. John Methu, MP – Senator.

iv)Hon. Millie Odhiambo, CBS, MP - President, Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

v)Hon. John Makali, MP - Member, High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism.

vi)Hon. Reuben Kiborek, MP - Member of the National Assembly.

vii)Hon. Rebecca Tonkei, MP - Member of the National Assembly.

viii)Hon. Geofrey Mulanya, MP - Member of the National Assembly.

ix) Mr. Jeremiah Nyegenye, CBS - Clerk of the Senate.

x)Mr. Mohamed Mohamed Ali - Deputy Clerk, Senate.

xi)Ms. Mary Chesire - Director, Directorate of Socio-Economic Committees.

xii)Mr. Benedict Furaha - Director, Office of the Speaker.

xiii)Mr. Aloisio Lekulo - Chief Serjeant-at-Arms, National Assembly.

xiv)Mr. Samuel Kalama - Principal Clerk Assistant I, Secretary of the Delegation (National Assembly).

xvi)Mr. Amos Sikweya - Senior Clerk Assistant, Secretary of the Delegation (Senate).

xv)Ms. Madeline Kisama - Public Communication Officer.

Honorable Speaker,

15. On behalf of the delegation, I take this opportunity to thank the Offices of the Speaker and the Clerk for their support in ensuring that Kenya was well represented during the 151st Assembly.

Honorable Speaker,

16. Article 7 of the IPU Statutes requires IPU Members to present IPU resolutions in the most appropriate format to their respective parliaments, communicate IPU resolutions to the government, encourage IPU resolutions to be implemented, and provide the IPU Secretariat with frequent and comprehensive updates on the actions taken and outcomes achieved, especially through its annual reports.

17. It is my pleasure and humble duty to submit this report, which highlights the proceedings, declaration, and resolutions of the 151st Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and Related Meetings, to Parliament for noting and required action in compliance with Article 7 of the IPU Statutes.

SEN. CATHERINE MUMMA, MP



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DATE.04.08.2026

A. BACKGROUND: ABOUT THE IPU

1. The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) is the global organization of national parliaments. Founded in 1889, it is the oldest multilateral political organization in the world, predating the League of Nations and the United Nations. The IPU celebrated its 135th anniversary in 2024, and the 151st Assembly marked another milestone in its long and distinguished history of fostering inter-parliamentary dialogue and cooperation.

2. The IPU currently comprises 183 Member Parliaments and 15 Associate Members, making it one of the largest and most representative international organizations. The admission of Brunei Darussalam at the 151st Assembly brought the IPU closer to its objective of universal membership, with 183 of the 193 United Nations Member States now affiliated with the Organization.

3. The fundamental mission of the IPU is to work for peace and cooperation among peoples and for the firm establishment of representative democracy. 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 to bring about action by Parliaments and their members;

    iii) Contributing to the defense 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.

4. The IPU's strategic framework for 2022–2026 is organized around five strategic objectives:

    i) **Building effective and empowered parliaments** – strengthening the institutional capacity, independence and effectiveness of parliaments;

    ii) **Promoting inclusive and representative parliaments** – advancing gender equality, youth participation and the representation of marginalized groups;

iii) **Supporting resilient and innovative parliaments** – enhancing parliaments' ability to adapt to change and harness technology for democratic governance;

iv) **Catalysing collective parliamentary action** – mobilizing parliaments to address global challenges and contribute to multilateral processes; and

v) **Strengthening the IPU's accountability** – ensuring the Organization's own governance, transparency and effectiveness.

5. The principal organs of the IPU are:

a) **The Assembly** – the principal statutory body that expresses the views of the IPU on political issues. It meets twice a year and brings together parliamentarians to study international problems and make recommendations for parliamentary and governmental action;

b) **The Governing Council** – the plenary policy-making body of the IPU, composed of three representatives from each Member Parliament. It meets at each Assembly and is responsible for determining the IPU's policies, approving its budget, admitting new members, and electing office-holders;

c) **The Executive Committee** – the administrative and executive body of the IPU, composed of 15 members elected by the Governing Council for four-year terms. It oversees the implementation of the IPU's policies and the work of the Secretariat; and

d) **The Secretariat** – based in Geneva, Switzerland, headed by the Secretary General, responsible for the day-to-day work of the Organization.

6. The IPU maintains a complex ecosystem of subsidiary bodies that carry forward its work between Assemblies:

i) Four Standing Committees – on Peace and International Security; Sustainable Development; Democracy and Human Rights; and United Nations Affairs;

ii)Three human rights and humanitarian law bodies – the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians; the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law; and the Committee on Middle East Questions;

iii) Two parliamentary forums – the Forum of Women Parliamentarians and the Forum of Young Parliamentarians;

iv) Three thematic committees – the Committee on Health; the High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG); and the Working Group on Science and Technology;

v) Two cross-cutting bodies – the Gender Partnership Group and the Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine; and

vi) One ad hoc mechanism – the Group of Facilitators for Cyprus.

7. The IPU enjoys permanent observer status at the United Nations General Assembly and maintains close working relationships with UN agencies, funds and programmes. The IPU-UN cooperation is governed by a Framework Agreement signed in 1996, and the IPU regularly contributes to major UN processes, including the Sustainable Development Goals, the climate change conferences, and the High-Level Political Forum.

8. The IPU is governed by its Statutes and Rules, which are periodically amended to reflect evolving priorities and practices. The 151st Assembly adopted amendments to Article 4.2 of the Statutes, formalizing the status of non-voting observer for Member Parliaments that have ceased to function on the territory of the country concerned, a measure of direct relevance to the situations in Afghanistan and Myanmar.

9. The IPU's work is financed through assessed contributions from Member Parliaments, calculated on the basis of the United Nations scale of assessments with adjustments to ensure equitable burden-sharing, and voluntary contributions from Member Parliaments, governments and other donors. The total approved budget for 2026 amounts to CHF 18,994,500.

10. The current President of the IPU is Dr. Tulia Ackson (United Republic of Tanzania), elected to a three-year term at the 147th Assembly in Luanda, Angola, in October 2023. The Secretary General is Mr. Martin Chungong (Cameroon), first elected in 2014 and re-elected in 2018 and 2022, whose term will conclude in June 2026.

B. INTRODUCTION

11. The 151st Assembly of the IPU and its related meetings was held at the International Conference Centre Geneva (CICG) in Geneva, Switzerland, from Sunday, 19th to Thursday, 23rd October 2025.

12. This Assembly followed the landmark 150th Assembly held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, in April 2025, the first IPU Assembly to be held in Central Asia,and the Sixth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, held in Geneva in July 2025. It was therefore an occasion to assess progress on commitments made earlier in the year and to chart the course for the remainder of the IPU's 2022–2026 Strategy period.

13. All IPU statutory bodies convened during this Assembly, with the General Debate focusing on the theme **"Upholding humanitarian norms and supporting humanitarian action in times of crisis."** This theme was particularly apt for an Assembly held in Geneva, the city where the Geneva Conventions were adopted nearly 80 years ago.

14. The Assembly was presided over by Ms. G. Morawska-Stanecka, IPU Vice-President from Poland, in the absence of IPU President Dr. Tulia Ackson, who was unable to attend due to forthcoming elections in her country.

C. AGENDA OF THE 151ST IPU ASSEMBLY

15. The following outlines the Agenda of the 151st Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union:

i) Election of the President of the 151st Assembly

ii) Consideration of requests for the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda

iii) General Debate on the theme: Upholding humanitarian norms and supporting humanitarian action in times of crisis

iv) Special accountability segment on the implementation of IPU resolutions and other decisions

v) Recognizing and supporting the victims of illegal international adoption (Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights)

vi) Reports of the Standing Committees

vii) Approval of the subject item for the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights at the 153rd IPU Assembly and appointment of co-Rapporteurs

vii) Amendments to the IPU Statutes and Rules

ix) Parliamentary action against transnational organized crime, cybercrime and hybrid threats

D. PARTICIPATION IN THE 151ST IPU ASSEMBLY AND RELATED MEETINGS

16. Delegations from 129 Member Parliaments took part in the work of the Assembly, including Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lesotho, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkiye, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

17. The following six Associate Members also took part in the Assembly: the Arab Parliament, the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), the Pan-African Parliament, the Parliament of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Parliamentary Assembly of La Francophonie (APF) and the Parliament of MERCOSUR (PARLASUR).

18. Observer organizations included a wide range of United Nations entities, parliamentary assemblies, international non-governmental organizations, political party federations and partner organizations: -

a) United Nations and related organizations: United Nations; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR); Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH); United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women); World Health Organization (WHO); World Trade Organization (WTO);

b) Parliamentary assemblies and associations: African Parliamentary Union (APU); Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union (AIPU); Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA); Collective Security Treaty Organization Parliamentary Assembly (CSTO PA); Forum of Parliaments of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (FP-ICGLR); International Parliamentary Network for Education (IPNEd); Interparliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy (IAO); Maghreb Consultative Council; ParlAmericas; Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (PNND); Parliamentary Assembly of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (AP-CPLP); Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM); Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic States (TURKPA); Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean (PA-UfM); Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas (COPA); Parliamentary Union of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation Member States (PUIC); Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum (SADC-PF); UNITE Parliamentarians Network for Global Health;

c) International non-governmental organizations: Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria; International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI);

d) International political party federations: Global Greens; Liberal International (LI); Permanent Conference of Political Parties of Latin America and the Caribbean (COPPPAL);

e) Other partner organizations: Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF); International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC); International Development Law Organization (IDLO); International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA); International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC); Sovereign Order of Malta.

19. Of the 1,103 delegates who attended the Assembly, 594 were members of parliament (581 from Member Parliaments and 13 from Associate Member

delegations), including 42 Presiding Officers and 40 Deputy Presiding Officers. Member Parliament delegations included 216 women MPs (37.2%) and 80 young MPs (13.7%).

20. The Member Parliament delegations included 216 women MPs, representing 37.2% of all parliamentary delegates. This figure was consistent with the 150th Assembly (37.2%) and slightly above the average for the previous five Assemblies (36.5%). It nonetheless remained below the record of 38.9% achieved at the 144th Assembly in Nusa Dua, Indonesia, in March 2022.

21. The delegations also included 80 young MPs (aged under 40), representing 13.7% of all parliamentary delegates. This represented a slight decrease from the 150th Assembly (14.4%) and remained significantly below the IPU's target of 25% young MP participation. The decline was particularly notable among young women MPs, whose share of parliamentary delegates fell from 6.3% at the 150th Assembly to 5.8% at the 151st Assembly.

22. The Assembly featured 42 Presiding Officers (Speakers or Senate Presidents) and 40 Deputy Presiding Officers, reflecting the high level of political representation. Notable among these was the presence of the President of the Senate of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mr. Jean-Michel Sama Lukonde Kyenge, who participated in a hearing before the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law.

23. The proceedings of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians, the Assembly General Debate, and all sittings of the Governing Council were live-streamed in English and the original language, attracting a total of 9,291 views. The communications team produced video extracts of plenary speeches, a service that remained highly popular with delegates seeking to share their contributions with domestic audiences.

E. GENERAL DEBATE: UPHOLDING HUMANITARIAN NORMS AND SUPPORTING HUMANITARIAN ACTION IN TIMES OF CRISIS

24. The general debate on the theme "**Upholding humanitarian norms and supporting humanitarian action in times of crisis**" constituted the centerpiece of the 151st Assembly. Over three days of deliberations, 132 legislators from 114 Member Parliaments took the floor, including 33 Presiding Officers, 15 young parliamentarians, as well as representatives of five Associate Members and 14 permanent observers.

25. The debate was opened by Ms. Gabriela Morawska-Stanecka (Poland), IPU Vice-President and President of the 151st Assembly. In her opening address, she conveyed the warm regards of IPU President Dr. Tulia Ackson, who was unable to attend the Assembly due to forthcoming parliamentary elections in her country.

26. Ms. Morawska-Stanecka observed that the subject of international humanitarian law was an apt one for an Assembly being held in Geneva,a city which, almost 80 years previously, had witnessed the adoption of the Geneva Conventions, the cornerstone of international humanitarian law. Those Conventions, she noted, were based on a deep conviction that human dignity must be safeguarded even in the midst of conflict. Over time, international humanitarian law had been expanded to acknowledge that certain weapons and tactics were too inhumane to be tolerated and should be consigned to history.

27. She drew the Assembly's attention to the devastating consequences of the growing number of conflicts worldwide: almost 310 million people in need of humanitarian assistance; 123 million people forcibly displaced; 1.9 million people in the grips of catastrophic hunger. At the same time, humanitarian norms were being questioned and cast aside, and humanitarian action was being defunded.

28. Ms. Morawska-Stanecka proposed three concrete suggestions for parliamentary action: -

    i) Prevention: Taking steps before the eruption of conflict to prevent violations of international humanitarian law, through the enactment and oversight of implementation of relevant treaties and domestic legislation;

    ii) Accountability: Rigorously enforcing humanitarian norms through effective accountability mechanisms, ensuring that those who commit serious violations of international humanitarian law are held to account; and

    iii) Mainstreaming: Constantly ensuring that humanitarian concerns are at the heart of all parliamentary work, including legislation, budgeting and oversight.

29. She concluded with an impassioned plea: "I urge you to show courage. Do not turn away from suffering. Stand up for your principles,uphold humanitarian norms and protect principled humanitarian action."

30. Mr. Martin Chungong, IPU Secretary General, noted that as conflict continued to rage in many parts of the world, the Assembly's focus on international humanitarian law was timely. He recalled the IPU's long history of promoting respect for international humanitarian law, with a dedicated Committee to Promote Respect for

International Humanitarian Law in place for over 30 years, conducting missions, liaising with key partners the ICRC and UNHCR, and guiding other areas of the IPU's work. The IPU had also been at the forefront of the development and ratification of key humanitarian disarmament and non-proliferation instruments.

31. Mr. Chungong highlighted three particular dimensions of the IPU's engagement with international humanitarian law: —

    i) The special open session of the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law on safeguarding humanitarian action;

    ii) The ICRC's virtual reality stand, which gave participants a glimpse of the horrific reality of armed conflict; and

    iii) The relevance of international humanitarian law to the IPU's 2025 focus on gender equality, noting that efforts by parliaments to become more gender-sensitive would enable the adoption of laws and policies that implement international humanitarian law in a way that accounts for the needs of women and girls and effectively combats conflict-related sexual violence.

32. Ms. Carla López Castro (Mexico), President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, observed that the humanitarian framework built over many decades was currently in danger, but urged parliamentarians to see that threat as an opportunity to renew their commitment to multilateralism and peace.

33. She highlighted the gendered dimensions of humanitarian crises: —

    i) Every day, 500 women and girls died from pregnancy and childbirth in fragile humanitarian situations;

    ii) 60% of those facing food deprivation and hunger were women and girls; and

    iii) Sexual violence continued to be used as a weapon in many warzones.

34. Ms. López Castro called for gender-responsive humanitarian action and gender-responsive humanitarian budgeting, which should be viewed not as an expense but as an investment in breaking cycles of violence, preventing instability and fostering recovery. She noted that despite large numbers of elections around the world in 2024 and 2025, women still only accounted for 27.2% of MPs. More women were needed in parliaments and leadership roles, especially in peacebuilding efforts.

35. Ms. Julieta Sierra (Uruguay), representing the President of the Bureau of Young Parliamentarians, Ms. N. Abu Ghosh (Jordan), spoke on behalf of the millions of

young people growing up in areas of armed conflict. She noted that more than one in six children currently lived in conflict situations and over 240 million young people faced disruption to their education due to conflict.

36.She reminded the Assembly that the UN Security Council, in its resolution 2250 (2015) on youth, peace and security, had determined that it was no longer an option to exclude younger generations from peacebuilding processes and humanitarian responses. Yet just 2.8% of MPs worldwide were currently aged 30 or under,a figure that had not improved since 2023,and the share of young women under 30 in parliament had actually declined.

37.Ms. Sierra warned: "When young people are excluded from power, they will seek other ways to be heard." She cited the recent 'Gen Z' movements in multiple regions of the world as evidence of this phenomenon. She encouraged parliamentarians to enhance youth participation, safeguard education and employment for young people, and uphold the fundamental rights of young people even in crisis and conflict situations.

38. Mr. Pierre Krähenbühl, Director-General of the International Committee of the Red Cross, delivered a powerful and deeply considered keynote address. He expressed gratitude for the IPU's longstanding commitment to humanitarian principles, especially at a time when those principles were under great strain.

39.Mr. Krähenbühl noted the shared history of the ICRC and the IPU: two of their respective founders, Henry Dunant and Frédéric Passy, had been jointly awarded the first Nobel Peace Prize in 1901. This historical bond, he suggested, carried with it a contemporary responsibility.

40.He painted a stark picture of the current state of armed conflict: the ICRC was aware of more than 130-armed conflicts worldwide,the highest number in recent decades. His colleagues were witnessing the scale of devastation daily in Palestine, Ukraine, Sudan, Myanmar, Afghanistan and the Syrian Arab Republic, among others. Conflicts were proliferating and intensifying even as funding for humanitarian response was shrinking and access to people in need was being blocked by insecurity and administrative impediments.

41.Mr. Krähenbühl identified three principal threats to international humanitarian law:

i) Widespread violations and complacency: The normalization of violations of international humanitarian law, and the international community's apparent acceptance of this state of affairs;

ii) Selective application and permissive interpretations: The tendency to apply international humanitarian law selectively, or to interpret its provisions in ways that weaken its protective effect; and

iii) Reluctance to ratify, implement or remain bound: The growing reluctance of States to ratify humanitarian treaties, to implement them in domestic law, or to remain bound by existing treaty commitments.

42. Behind these threats, he suggested, was a deeper social process: dehumanization. The erosion of empathy and the normalization of suffering was lowering political and legal barriers to permissive policies, weakening demands for accountability, and making legal backsliding more politically tolerable. International humanitarian law remained a bulwark against that slide, but parliaments needed to reaffirm their commitment.

43. Real preparedness, Mr. Krähenbühl argued, required parliaments to: —

i) Enact and update legislation to implement treaty obligations;

ii) Embed qualified legal advisors in operational planning; and

iii) Maintain independent oversight and accountability mechanisms.

44. He informed the Assembly of the Global Initiative to Galvanize Political Commitment to International Humanitarian Law, launched by the ICRC and six national partners in September 2024, aimed at making international humanitarian law a political priority, mobilizing leadership, and producing practical recommendations for national action. He urged parliamentarians to encourage their governments to join and meaningfully engage in the initiative.

45. His concluding words resonated throughout the Assembly: "The question before the IPU Assembly is not only the fate of international humanitarian law, but the fate of humanity itself. Parliamentarians need to lend their voice, political courage and leadership to the ICRC to ensure a world where common humanity is the norm, not the exception."

46. The Rt. Hon. Amason J. Kingi, EGH, MP, Speaker of the Senate and Leader of the Kenya Delegation, delivered Kenya's national statement on 21st October 2025.

47. The Speaker began by associating Kenya with the statements delivered by the African Group and the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean. He recalled that Kenya, as a State Party to the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, had consistently upheld the principles of international humanitarian law and had

contributed to peace support operations under the auspices of the United Nations and the African Union.

48. He drew the Assembly's attention to three particular dimensions of the humanitarian crisis in Africa: —

i) The situation in the Horn of Africa: Prolonged drought, conflict and displacement had created conditions of severe food insecurity affecting millions of people. Kenya had, since independence, maintained an open-door policy towards refugees and asylum-seekers, and had recently adopted the Shirika Plan aimed at the socioeconomic inclusion of refugees. This plan, he noted, transformed the paradigm from humanitarian assistance to development solutions.

ii) The situation in the Great Lakes region: The ongoing conflict in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo had resulted in nearly 7.3 million internally displaced persons, with devastating consequences for civilians, particularly women and children. Kenya supported the Nairobi and Luanda processes and commended the recent bilateral engagement initiated by the IPU between parliamentarians from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda.

iii) The situation in the Sahel: The convergence of armed conflict, climate change, and governance deficits had created conditions conducive to the expansion of terrorist and violent extremist groups. Kenya, having experienced the devastating impact of terrorism, stood in solidarity with the peoples of the Sahel and supported the IPU's Call of the Sahel initiative.

49. The Speaker also highlighted Kenya's domestic efforts to uphold humanitarian norms: —

i) The enactment of the Refugee Act, 2021, which aligned Kenya's refugee protection framework with international standards and provided for the progressive realization of rights for refugees and asylum-seekers;

ii) The adoption of the Shirika Plan, a comprehensive approach to refugee self-reliance and socioeconomic inclusion, developed in partnership with UNHCR and other stakeholders;

iii) The operationalization of the National Committee on International Humanitarian Law, which coordinated the implementation and

dissemination of international humanitarian law across government ministries and agencies; and

iv) The ongoing consideration of the Prevention of Torture Bill, which would criminalize torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment in accordance with the Convention against Torture.

50. The Speaker concluded by affirming Kenya's commitment to the principles of international humanitarian law and to the Geneva Declaration. He urged the Assembly to move beyond declarations to concrete action: "We have had enough of fine words. The people of Gaza, of Sudan, of the Democratic Republic of the Congo—they do not need our sympathy. They need our action. They need us to use the powers we possess as parliamentarians to demand accountability, to allocate resources, and to ensure that the rules of war, hard-won over centuries, are not abandoned in our time."

51. The Speaker's statement was well received and was subsequently featured in the IPU's video-on-demand service, enabling its dissemination to domestic audiences in Kenya.

F. CHOICE OF AN EMERGENCY ITEM

52. The procedure for the inclusion of an emergency item in the agenda of the Assembly is governed by Rule 11 of the Rules of the Assembly. Under Rule 11.2, a request for the inclusion of an emergency item must: —

i) Relate to a major situation of international concern on which urgent action is required;

ii) Clearly specify the item proposed for inclusion in the agenda; and

iii) Be concise and confined to a single specific issue.

53. Rule 11.3 provides that the Steering Committee shall meet to examine the admissibility of requests and shall express an opinion on whether they meet the criteria stipulated in Rule 11.2. The final decision on inclusion is made by the Assembly through a roll-call vote, with the item receiving the largest number of positive votes being included on the agenda, provided it obtains a two-thirds majority of the votes cast.

54. By the deadline of 12:00 noon on 21st October 2025, two requests for the inclusion of an emergency item had been submitted: —

    i) Proposal 1: Global call for parliamentary solidarity and coordinated action on Madagascar, submitted by South Africa on behalf of the African Group; and

    ii) Proposal 2: Parliamentary action against transnational organized crime, cybercrime and hybrid threats to democracy and human security, submitted by Thailand, Argentina, Chile, Poland and Sweden, with the support of the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean and the Twelve Plus Group.

55. The Steering Committee met on the morning of 21st October 2025 to examine the admissibility of the two proposals. In accordance with Rule 12 of the Rules of the Assembly, the Steering Committee is composed of the President of the Assembly, the Vice-Presidents, the outgoing President of the Assembly, the chairs of the geopolitical groups, the President of the IPU, the Secretary General, and the Presidents of the Standing Committees.

56. The Steering Committee confirmed that both proposals met the criteria stipulated in Rule 11.2. Both related to major situations of international concern, were clearly specified, and were confined to a single specific issue.

57. At the Assembly sitting on the afternoon of 21st October 2025, the President invited the sponsors to present their proposals.

58. Proposal 1 – Madagascar: The delegation of South Africa, speaking on behalf of the African Group, presented the request concerning Madagascar. The delegate outlined the recent political crisis in Madagascar, which had seen the eruption of protests led by the 'Gen Z' movement, the attempted dissolution of the National Assembly by the President, and the subsequent swearing-in of Colonel M. Randrianirina as interim President. The situation, the delegate argued, represented not just a grave threat to the stability of the Southern African region but also a dangerous precedent for democracy across the continent. The proposal called for immediate coordinated international action, support for a peaceful resolution of the crisis, and the restoration of constitutional order.

59. Proposal 2 – Transnational organized crime, cybercrime and hybrid threats: The delegation of Thailand, supported by the co-sponsors, presented the request concerning transnational organized crime, cybercrime and hybrid threats. The delegate drew attention to a recent UNODC report documenting the industrial-scale proliferation of scam compounds across Southeast Asia, where hundreds of

thousands of victims from more than 70 countries had been trafficked and coerced into cyber scams. These compounds, the delegate noted, were rapidly transforming from regional criminal hubs into a globalized shadow economy, generating annual revenues rivalling national GDPs. The proposal called for unified parliamentary action to strengthen legislative frameworks, enhance international cooperation, and protect victims.

60. Following the presentation of the second proposal, the delegate of the Russian Federation raised a point of order. He stated that his delegation opposed the proposal on procedural grounds, adding that in his delegation's view, it violated Rule 11.2 of the Assembly since the proposal did not address a major situation of international concern. The delegate underscored that the objection of the Russian Federation was procedural and not related to the content of the proposal.

61. The President responded by explaining that, in accordance with Rule 11.3, the Steering Committee had met that morning and had confirmed that the second proposal met the criteria stipulated in Rule 11.2. The procedural objection was therefore noted but did not affect the admissibility of the proposal.

62. The Assembly then proceeded with a roll-call vote on the two proposals. A total of 129 Member Parliaments were entitled to vote.

63. The President announced that both proposals had obtained the requisite two-thirds majority. In accordance with Rule 11.2(b) of the Assembly, the proposal that received the largest number of positive votes,Proposal 2, with 834 affirmative votes,was included in the agenda of the 151st Assembly.

64. The President noted that while the Assembly could only include one emergency item on its agenda, the overwhelming support for the proposal on Madagascar—743 affirmative votes—demonstrated the deep concern of the global parliamentary community regarding the situation in that country. She announced that the IPU leadership would issue a statement on the situation in Madagascar, which was subsequently published on 23rd October 2025 (see page 143).

65. At the concluding sitting of the Assembly on 23rd October 2025, the President informed the Assembly that errors had been made in recording the votes of the delegations of Algeria and Viet Nam during the roll-call vote. Those errors had been duly corrected but had not affected the outcome of the vote.

66. The debate on the emergency item was held on 22nd October 2025, chaired by Mr. T. Tavares-Finson (Jamaica). The debate addressed the urgent issue of transnational organized crime, cybercrime, and hybrid threats to democracy and human security.

Key themes emerging from the debate.

67. Participants emphasized the interconnected nature of these threats, noting that criminal networks increasingly operated across borders and exploited the convergence of physical and digital spaces. Drug trafficking, human trafficking, cybercrime and money laundering were not discrete phenomena but interconnected elements of a global criminal economy.

68. Delegates highlighted the corrosive effects of organized crime and hybrid threats on democratic institutions, the rule of law, and human rights. Attacks on parliamentarians, journalists and civil society activists were identified as particularly concerning, as they sought to silence those defending transparency and accountability.

69. There was broad consensus on the need for strengthened legislative frameworks at the national level, harmonized across jurisdictions. Participants called for criminalization of coercion for the purpose of cyber scams, increased sanctions on security companies implicated in abuses, closure of legal loopholes exploited by illicit online gambling and cryptocurrency laundering, and enhanced independent oversight of State security and law enforcement bodies.

70. Delegates stressed that no country could address these threats alone. They called for enhanced cooperation through existing mechanisms such as UNODC and INTERPOL, as well as the consideration of new institutional mechanisms, including an international court against corruption and regional criminal courts against transnational organized crime.

71. A strong emphasis was placed on the need for victim-centered approaches that prioritize protection, rehabilitation and redress. Particular attention was drawn to the situation of women, children and other vulnerable groups subjected to forced cyber scams under threat of torture and detention.

72. State and non-State actors: The debate acknowledged that hybrid threats could emanate from both State and non-State actors. Delegates condemned airspace violations, coordinated influence operations, and targeted cyber intrusions as tools of intimidation and interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States.

Specific situations

73. The delegate from Thailand, speaking as co-sponsor of the resolution, noted that the humanitarian crisis in Myanmar had been exacerbated by the proliferation of scam compounds operated by transnational criminal organizations in border regions.

These compounds, the delegate noted, exploited governance gaps and conflict-affected areas to traffic victims from across the region and beyond.

74. Several delegates from the region of Southeast Asia confirmed the findings of the UNODC report and called for urgent regional and international action to dismantle these criminal networks and rescue their victims.

75. Delegates from the Sahel region highlighted the convergence of terrorism and transnational organized crime, with illicit trafficking in gold, fuel and other resources financing terrorist groups and destabilizing entire countries.

Conclusion of the debate

76. In concluding the debate, the delegate of Thailand, on behalf of the co-sponsors, emphasized the urgency of addressing organized crime and hybrid threats, noting the global scale of these issues. He expressed gratitude to the Assembly for its overwhelming support and stressed that the draft resolution represented a call for comprehensive, coordinated efforts among parliaments to safeguard democratic values and human rights.

77. Adoption of the resolution: The emergency item resolution, entitled Parliamentary action against transnational organized crime, cybercrime and hybrid threats to democracy and human security, was presented to the Assembly at its concluding sitting on 23rd October 2025 by Mr. H. Aden Gueddi (Djibouti), rapporteur of the drafting committee. The Assembly unanimously adopted the resolution (see page 152).

78. The successful inclusion and adoption of an emergency item resolution at the 151st Assembly stood in marked contrast to the 150th Assembly in Tashkent, where none of the three proposals considered had obtained the requisite two-thirds majority. The Secretary General, in his concluding remarks, observed that the active cooperation between geopolitical groups at the 151st Assembly had contributed significantly to this positive outcome.

79. The Kenya Delegation supported both emergency item proposals. With respect to the proposal on Madagascar, Kenya's position was informed by the principle of solidarity with fellow African Union member States facing unconstitutional changes of government and by the imperative of defending constitutional democracy on the continent. With respect to the proposal on transnational organized crime and cybercrime, Kenya's position was informed by the country's experience with transnational criminal networks, including those engaged in wildlife trafficking, money laundering and cyber-enabled fraud, and by the recognition that these threats required coordinated legislative action at the global level.

G. 216TH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

80. The 216th session of the Governing Council was held on 20th and 23rd October 2025, under the presidency of Ms. Gabriela Morawska-Stanecka (Poland), IPU Vice-President. The Governing Council is the plenary policy-making body of the IPU, composed of three representatives from each Member Parliament. It determines the IPU's policies, approves its budget, admits new members, and elects office-holders. The following agenda items were considered during the meetings of the 215th session of the Governing Council: -

i)Election of the President of the 151st Assembly

81. On the proposal of Ms. A. Kuspan (Kazakhstan), seconded by Mr. N. Kurtulmus (Türkiye), the Governing Council elected Ms. Gabriela Morawska-Stanecka (Poland) as President of the 151st IPU Assembly. Ms. Morawska-Stanecka, who also serves as an IPU Vice-President, assumed the presidency in the absence of IPU President Dr. Tulia Ackson, who was unable to attend the Assembly due to forthcoming parliamentary elections in her country.

82. In her acceptance remarks, Ms. Morawska-Stanecka expressed her gratitude for the confidence placed in her and pledged to conduct the proceedings with impartiality, transparency and respect for the diversity of views represented in the Assembly.

ii. Report of the IPU President

83. The Governing Council took note of the report of the IPU President, Dr. Tulia Ackson, presented on her behalf by the Secretary General in the President's absence.

84. The report covered the President's activities since the 150th Assembly in Tashkent, which had included: —

i) Representation of the IPU at regional and international high-level meetings, including the African Union Summit in Addis Ababa, the Summit of the Future follow-up events at the United Nations in New York, and the G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit in Brasília;

ii) Chairing of IPU and partner meetings, including the preparatory meetings for the Sixth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament and the 15th Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament;

iii) Advocacy for the IPU's priority theme for 2025 on gender equality, including through the launch of the Achieving gender equality, action by action campaign; and

iv) Engagement with Member Parliaments and geopolitical groups to advance the IPU's strategic objectives and strengthen parliamentary diplomacy.

85. The Governing Council congratulated the IPU President on the extensive activities undertaken and extended its best wishes for her successful re-election to the Parliament of the United Republic of Tanzania.

iii. Report of the Secretary General

86. The Secretary General, Mr. Martin Chungong, presented his interim report on the activities carried out by the IPU over the preceding nine months to implement its Strategy for 2022–2026.Key statistics on IPU activities since January 2025: —

i) 27 national support activities in 17 countries to build the capacity of parliaments institutionally and on key thematic issues;

ii) 69 regional and global events to mobilize and leverage parliamentary action and facilitate learning, comprising 36 in-person events, 28 online events, and 5 hybrid events; and

iii) Six new publications, with three others being presented at the 151st Assembly.

87. The Secretary General presented a review of activities carried out under each of the IPU's five strategic objectives: —

i) Strategic Objective 1 (Building effective and empowered parliaments): Support to countries in transition, including constitutional and legislative reform processes in Burkina Faso, Gabon, Guinea and Mali; strengthening of parliamentary oversight of the security sector; and capacity-building for parliamentary budget analysis and scrutiny.

ii) Strategic Objective 2 (Promoting inclusive and representative parliaments): Implementation of the Achieving gender equality, action by action campaign; development of the Plan of action for gender parity in parliament; and support to the Forum of Young Parliamentarians in implementing the reduced age threshold for young MPs.

iii) Strategic Objective 3 (Supporting resilient and innovative parliaments): Work on artificial intelligence and digital transformation, including the launch of the AI maturity framework for parliaments and the development of guidelines for the ethical use of AI in parliamentary settings.

iv) Strategic Objective 4 (Catalyzing collective parliamentary action): Major global initiatives facilitating dialogue, peace and parliamentary diplomacy, including the Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine, the Committee on Middle East Questions, and the Group of Facilitators for Cyprus; the Sixth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament and the 15th Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament; and parliamentary engagement in multilateral processes, including the Summit of the Future and the climate change conferences.

v) Strategic Objective 5 (Strengthening the IPU's accountability): Implementation of the recommendations of the Transparency, Accountability and Openness Working Group; development of the IPU Sustainability Policy; and continued digital transformation of the IPU's working practices.

88. The Governing Council took note of the Secretary General's interim report. A more comprehensive report on the impact of the IPU's work throughout 2025 will be presented at the 152nd Assembly in Istanbul, in accordance with established practice.

iv. Financial situation of the IPU

89. The Governing Council received a report on the financial situation of the IPU as at 31st July 2025 and an updated list of unpaid assessed contributions.

90. Reporting on behalf of the Executive Committee, Mr. M. Dick (Australia) noted that the IPU's budget performance was on track for the year and that the Organization's finances were currently healthy and stable.

91. Global investment markets had had an unsteady start to 2025, but the investment portfolio for the IPU and its closed Pension Fund had nevertheless seen a positive return of 1% since the start of the year.

92. The current situation of voluntary funding was healthy for the remainder of the year, with new grants confirmed from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), the European Union, the National People's Congress of China, and the Shura Council of Qatar, among other donors.

93. The Executive Committee had also discussed the arrears of assessed contributions, which now stood at CHF 1.5 million,an improvement of almost CHF 1 million since the 150th Assembly in Tashkent. This improvement was attributed to intensified outreach efforts by the Secretary General and the geopolitical groups, as well as the write-off of arrears for Member Parliaments whose affiliation had been suspended.

94. Despite this positive trend, the Governing Council expressed continued concern regarding the arrears situation of several Member Parliaments, particularly small island developing States facing structural economic challenges. The Council encouraged continued engagement with these parliaments through the Parliamentary Solidarity Fund and other support mechanisms.

v. Consolidated IPU Budget for 2026

95. The consolidated draft budget for 2026 was presented to the Governing Council. The draft budget had been prepared under the supervision of the Sub-Committee on Finance and had been reviewed in detail by the Executive Committee.

96. Reporting on behalf of the Executive Committee, Mr. Dick summarized the draft budget, which was projected at a total of CHF 18,994,000 in income and expenditure.

97. Mr. Dick noted that 2026 would be the fifth and final year of the current IPU Strategy for 2022–2026. Funds had been set aside for the evaluation of the current Strategy and the design of the new Strategy for 2027–2031.

98. The budget reflected IPU engagement with global crises: multiple conflicts, climate and environmental emergencies, pandemic effects and growing inequality. Parliamentary ecosystems would be mobilized around a range of international agreements and instruments, as set out in the budget document.

99. Integration between the various IPU programmes, democracy, peace and security, development, climate change, and scientific and technological innovation,was proceeding alongside the ongoing digital transformation of the IPU's working practices. The IPU was supporting parliamentary efforts to manage and regulate the development and use of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, harnessing its potential and minimizing risks.

100. The IPU would continue investing in the digitization of its archives, with a view to preserving and sharing the long and proud history of the Organization. This project, initiated in 2024, had already digitized over 30% of the IPU's historical records dating back to its founding in 1889.

101. Mr. Dick reported that the Secretariat was driving down costs wherever possible. Practical examples included: —

i) Reduction of the IPU's physical footprint through optimization of office space and increased teleworking;

ii) Transition to digital-first publication and dissemination of documents, reducing printing costs and environmental impact;

iii) Implementation of energy efficiency measures at IPU headquarters; and

iv) Virtualization of server infrastructure, reducing both capital expenditure and energy consumption.

102. These measures, he noted, demonstrated the IPU's commitment to doing more with less while simultaneously reducing emissions along the path to a carbon-neutral IPU.

103. The core budget included an increase of 3% in total assessed contributions, as agreed by the Governing Council in October 2022, in order to rebalance total contributions by the end of the current Strategy period back to their level of 2011. He also recalled the longer-term commitment to gradual growth in Member Parliaments' assessed contributions from 2027 onwards to keep up with the IPU's needs and inflationary increases.

104. External resource mobilization was estimated to generate voluntary contributions amounting to CHF 4.7 million in 2026, or 25% of the total income budget. This represented a slight increase in expected voluntary income compared to 2025, thanks to major multi-year grants. Mr. Dick encouraged all Member Parliaments to assist with the mobilization of voluntary funds for the IPU from within their own countries and geopolitical groups.

105. The Governing Council approved the 2026 consolidated budget. Kenya's assessed contribution for 2026 was set at CHF 14,800, reflecting its UN scale of assessment and the IPU's contribution methodology.

vi. Questions relating to membership and observer status

106. The Governing Council was informed that the IPU's ongoing efforts to achieve universal membership continued to yield fruit. With 183 Member Parliaments now affiliated with the Organization, the objective of universal membership,183 of 193 UN Member States,was within reach. The Council committed to redoubling its efforts to that end.

107. On the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the Governing Council welcomed the Parliament of Brunei Darussalam as the IPU's newest Member Parliament. Brunei Darussalam's admission brought the total number of IPU Member Parliaments to 183 and represented an important step towards universal membership in the Asia-Pacific region.

108. The Governing Council took note of the request of Niger to rejoin the IPU, following the suspension of its affiliation at the 150th Assembly in Tashkent in April 2025. The Council was informed of the conversations the Executive Committee had had with the Speaker of the Advisory Council of the Refoundation (CCR), Mr. M. Djingarey, including a request for support from the IPU for the CCR's efforts to guide reform processes in the country.

109. The Governing Council endorsed the recommendation of the Executive Committee to accept the request for re-affiliation of Niger. This decision reflected the IPU's policy of supporting transitional legislative bodies in countries emerging from political crisis, provided those bodies demonstrated a credible commitment to the restoration of constitutional democracy.

110. On the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the Governing Council approved the requests for permanent observer status from—

i) Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA), an international network of legislators committed to human rights, democracy and the rule of law;

ii) The European Parliamentary Forum for Sexual and Reproductive Rights (EPF), a network of parliamentarians advocating for sexual and reproductive health and rights; and

iii) The World Future Council, an organization dedicated to advancing policies that protect the rights of future generations.

111. Regarding two other requests for permanent observer status, received from the Conference of Speakers and Presidents of African Legislatures (CoSPAL) and the Asian-African Parliamentary Council respectively, the Governing Council took note of the view of the Executive Committee that those two organizations had been founded relatively recently and thus needed to establish a track record of cooperation with the IPU so as to meet the requirements for obtaining observer status.

vii. Arrears and suspension of membership rights

112. **Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Vanuatu:** The Governing Council took note of the ongoing arrears in the contributions of these three Member Parliaments. The Executive Committee had recommended the suspension of membership rights for Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines under Article 5.3 of the Statutes. However, the Governing Council decided to defer a decision on suspending their membership rights to its next session, pending ongoing negotiations to resolve the issue. This decision was informed by expectations that the situation could be resolved through support, including by re-examining the terms

of reference for the Parliamentary Solidarity Fund,and outreach within the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean.

113. **Andean Parliament:** The Governing Council endorsed the recommendation of the Executive Committee to suspend the Associate Membership rights of the Andean Parliament due to non-payment of its contribution since 2018.

114. The Governing Council was apprised of the situation of certain parliaments, grouped into three categories: —

i) Parliaments that are not functioning

115. Afghanistan: The IPU did not recognize the Taliban, which had taken power and dissolved institutions including the elected parliament in August 2021. In solidarity, the IPU recognized the members of the parliament elected in 2018, many of whom were living in exile, as its interlocutors and allowed them to attend its meetings in a non-voting observer capacity. An amendment to the Statutes was tabled at the 151st Assembly to create a specific status of non-voting observer Member Parliament for parliamentary entities that are not functioning on the territory of an independent or sovereign state, but which the governing bodies have decided to recognize as their interlocutors in the interests of democracy and legitimacy. The Governing Council reconfirmed its decision to continue to recognize the parliament in place before the Taliban took over the country.

116. Bangladesh: The Parliament had been dissolved following social unrest in July 2024 and several politicians of the Awami League, including former IPU President Saber Chowdhury, had been arrested. Following an intervention by the IPU, Mr. Chowdhury had been released. Several cases of violations of the human rights of parliamentarians were before the IPU's Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians. Recent news suggested that elections might be held in February 2026. The Governing Council took note of these developments, invited the Secretary General to continue to monitor the situation, and expressed hope that the governing bodies would soon have the pleasure of welcoming a fully-fledged parliament from Bangladesh back to IPU Assemblies.

117. Guinea Bissau: The power struggle between the Head of State and the Speaker of the National Assembly had ultimately resulted in the removal of the latter and his replacement by one of his deputies. The IPU governing bodies had consistently invited the deposed Speaker and his delegation to attend IPU meetings. Recently, the Speaker had reported that he had been disqualified by the authorities from the parliamentary elections due for January 2026. The Governing Council endorsed the

recommendation of the Executive Committee to express regret over the restrictions on the political rights of members of parliament and other politicians in Guinea-Bissau and decided to continue to show solidarity with the Parliament in place until the election of a new Parliament in accordance with the will of the people.

118. Haiti: The IPU membership rights of Haiti had been suspended in 2023 due to non-payment of its contributions and at present there was no functioning parliament in the country. The IPU continued to monitor developments. Elections were due for November 2025 and any developments would be brought to the attention of the governing bodies. The Governing Council took note of recent developments in Haiti and expressed the hope that elections would take place as foreseen.

119. Kuwait: The Parliament of Kuwait had been dissolved in 2024 and a timeline of four years had been set for elections. In the meantime, the administration of the Parliament was still functioning. The Governing Council endorsed the recommendation of the Executive Committee to continue to monitor the situation in the country and stressed the need for elections to take place as soon as possible in order for it to be able to welcome a fully-fledged parliament back to the IPU.

120. Myanmar: As in Afghanistan, the IPU recognized the Parliament that had been democratically elected in Myanmar and subsequently suspended by the military. A group of parliamentarians, the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH) represented the Parliament of Myanmar in exile and was therefore the IPU's interlocutor, enjoying the same non-voting observer status as Afghanistan. Representatives of the CRPH continued to attend the IPU's Assemblies. The Governing Council endorsed the recommendation of the Executive Committee to maintain its initial decision to recognize the CRPH as the interlocutor of the IPU in a non-voting observer capacity, and expressed the view that more action should be undertaken, beyond monitoring and statements of condemnation, to restore democracy in Myanmar.

121. Sudan: Sudan's affiliation to the IPU remained suspended as no parliament was functioning in the country. Recent developments did not point to the prospect of any elections soon. In light of the ongoing war, the Governing Council reiterated its calls for a ceasefire and dialogue, and approved the recommendation of the Executive Committee that the IPU continue to monitor the situation and identify ways of supporting any efforts that might lead to the restoration of constitutional rule in Sudan.

122. Syrian Arab Republic: Some progress had been reported since the overthrow of President Bashar al-Assad. Parliamentary elections had been held, with 119 seats out of 140 filled. The newly elected Parliament would henceforth be the IPU's

interlocutor. The Governing Council took note of these positive developments and urged the IPU to continue to identify ways of supporting the transitional process in the Syrian Arab Republic.

ii) Transitional parliaments

123. Burkina Faso: The Transitional Legislative Assembly remained the IPU's interlocutor in Burkina Faso and was ably fulfilling its legislative mission. On the recommendation of the governing bodies, the IPU had designed and was implementing several activities aimed at speeding up a return to constitutional normality. The Governing Council took note of these encouraging developments, and on the recommendation of the Executive Committee, stressed the need for the transitional process to reach its conclusion in a timely manner.

124. Eritrea: Despite the IPU Secretariat's efforts to reach out to the country, including its Ambassador in Geneva, no updates had been received on the situation of the Transitional National Assembly of Eritrea, which had never been an IPU Member Parliament. The IPU Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians was dealing with a number of cases related to the human rights of parliamentarians in the country. The Governing Council took note of the lack of progress and encouraged the Secretariat to continue to identify opportunities for engagement.

125. Gabon: Considerable progress had been reported, including the organization of both presidential and legislative elections, effectively concluding Gabon's transitional process, which the IPU had supported substantially, in conformity with the recommendations of the governing bodies. The Governing Council took note of these positive developments and looked forward to engaging with the new fully-fledged Parliament.

126. Guinea: On the request of the governing bodies, the IPU Secretariat had continued its engagement with the Transitional National Council. A new Constitution had been approved on 15th September 2025 and the IPU had agreed to provide support with the drafting of legislation to implement its provisions. The Governing Council endorsed the recommendation of the Executive Committee to take note of this positive progress and encourage the authorities to follow through with their plans for the transition.

127. Libya: The IPU-recognized Parliament elected in 2014 in Libya used to be based in Tobruk but was now in Benghazi. In recent years, efforts had been made to hold elections but for a variety of reasons they had not taken place. Elections had however taken place at the municipal level and consultations were ongoing with a view to organizing presidential and parliamentary elections in the very near future. The

Governing Council took note of this report and urged the Secretary General to undertake a mission to Libya and report back to the governing bodies.

128.Mali: Mali was in a similar situation to the other transitional parliaments in Central and West Africa. In recent months, there had been a worrying lack of clarity with regard to the transitional process, with political parties having been dissolved for a variety of reasons and some infighting among the ruling authorities of the country. The Governing Council invited the Secretary General to continue to monitor the situation closely and to bring any further cause for concern to the attention of the governing bodies for immediate response.

129.Niger: In the absence of a functioning parliament, the Governing Council had suspended the affiliation of Niger to the IPU in April 2025. Just a few weeks later, the Advisory Council of the Refoundation (CCR) had been set up, composed of 194 members from across the country's sociopolitical and economic spectrum. The Speaker of the CCR, Mr. M. Djingarey, had met with the members of the Executive Committee on two occasions, during which he had pleaded in favour of the reaffiliation of his Parliament to the IPU. On the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the Governing Council had approved Niger's request for reaffiliation earlier in the session. The Governing Council invited the Secretary General to continue to monitor the situation and work with the CCR to ensure that it met the timeline established for the transition.

130. South Sudan: The situation had deteriorated in South Sudan, with elections postponed several times. The Vice-President and Minister of the Interior had recently been arrested and the unity government had now collapsed. On the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the Governing Council expressed its deep concern over the instability in South Sudan and the continuous postponement of elections, and expressed hope that the internal conflicts in the country could be resolved as soon as possible to put the transitional period back on track.

iii) Countries where the political situation is impacting the functioning of the parliament

131. Madagascar: Protests led by the "Gen Z" movement had erupted in Madagascar in September 2025 and the President had attempted to dissolve the National Assembly. Colonel M. Randrianirina had recently been sworn in as interim President and had promised a transition period of a maximum of two years. The Governing Council took note with regret of the worrying events in Madagascar and, on the recommendation of the Executive Committee, agreed that the IPU should respond robustly, including monitoring the situation and identifying opportunities to work with the new authorities in Madagascar to stabilize the situation.

132. Nepal: Similar "Gen Z"-led protests to those in Madagascar had recently erupted in Nepal as a result of discontent among young people, leading to property destruction. The upper house of Parliament continued to meet but the lower house had been dissolved in view of elections scheduled for March 2026. The Governing Council expressed its concern regarding the recent events in Nepal and encouraged the IPU Secretariat to explore possible avenues of engagement with the Parliament in order to support a return to normality.

133. Palestine: No recent progress on elections had been reported and the overall situation in Palestine made it unlikely that elections would be held any time soon. On the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the Governing Council expressed its concern at the ongoing crisis in Palestine and reiterated the IPU's stance, as per the resolution adopted at the 150th Assembly in April 2025, in favour of a two-State solution to the crisis in the Middle East.

134. Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela: The Governing Council took note that there had been no recent significant developments in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and, on the recommendation of the Executive Committee, agreed to return to the matter in 2026, after the new National Assembly elected in May 2025 had taken office.

135. Yemen: The Parliament of Yemen continued to work under difficult circumstances and had recently requested exemption from paying its contribution to the IPU due to financial difficulties. On the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the Governing Council agreed to return to the matter at its next session.

136. Georgia: The Governing Council took note with concern of reports that the mandates of over a third of MPs had recently been terminated and that several had subsequently been imprisoned, and invited the Secretary General to continue monitoring the situation.

vii. Sixth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament

137. The Governing Council heard a report on the Sixth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, which took place at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 29th to 31st July 2025, and on the 15th Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament, held at the headquarters of the International Labour Organization in Geneva on 28th July 2025.

138. The World Conference had brought together over 120 Speakers of Parliament, the largest gathering of parliamentary leaders since the Fifth World Conference in Vienna in 2021. The Conference had adopted a High-Level Declaration entitled A world in turmoil: Parliamentary cooperation and multilateralism for peace, justice

and prosperity for all, which addressed the erosion of multilateralism, the proliferation of conflicts, the climate emergency, technological transformation, and the imperative of inclusive governance.

139. The 15th Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament, held under the theme Leading for inclusive and lasting peace, had adopted a Final Declaration calling for full respect for international humanitarian law, increased women's leadership in diplomacy and peace processes, and urgent action to achieve gender parity in parliaments and decision-making spaces.

140. The Governing Council endorsed the outcome declarations from these two high-level events. The Kenya Delegation noted with satisfaction that both declarations reflected Kenya's longstanding advocacy for inclusive peacebuilding, gender equality, and effective multilateralism.

viii. IPU priority theme for 2026

141. The IPU Secretary General presented the proposed priority theme for 2026. After a focus in recent years on climate change (2023), peace and security (2024), and gender equality (2025), it was proposed that the 2026 priority theme focus on respect for human rights.

142. Mr. Chungong noted that 2026 offered three crucial entry points for the IPU to reaffirm its commitment to human rights: —

i) The 50th anniversary of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians (CHRP) , the IPU's unique accountability mechanism for defending the rights of elected representatives worldwide. Established in 1976, the CHRP had examined over 3,000 cases of violations of the human rights of parliamentarians and had contributed significantly to the release or protection of hundreds of MPs;

ii) The 20th anniversary of the United Nations Human Rights Council, a key body with which the IPU had partnered to foster parliamentary engagement with global human rights mechanisms; and

iii) The 60th anniversary of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) , two cornerstones

of the international human rights framework, providing an additional platform to reaffirm the universality and indivisibility of rights.

143. In addition, the IPU carried out extensive capacity-building programmes to help parliaments strengthen their role as promoters and protectors of human rights. Through training, technical assistance and the sharing of good practices, these initiatives equipped parliamentarians with the tools, knowledge and institutional frameworks needed to advance human rights in law and practice, and to engage effectively with international human rights mechanisms.

144. The priority theme would therefore offer an opportunity for the IPU to strengthen its engagement for the defence of the human rights of parliamentarians as well as its support to parliaments in their work to defend respect for the human rights of all citizens.

145. The Governing Council approved the priority theme for 2026 as proposed. The Kenya Delegation welcomed this decision, noting that it aligned with Kenya's constitutional commitment to human rights and its active engagement with UN human rights mechanisms, including through the Universal Periodic Review and treaty body reporting processes.

ix. Future inter-parliamentary meetings

146.The Governing Council approved the list of future meetings as recommended by the Executive Committee.

147. The delegation of Türkiye warmly invited those present to the 152nd IPU Assembly in Istanbul from 15th to 19th April 2026. The invitation was accompanied by a video presentation showcasing Istanbul's historic and cultural attractions, as well as the facilities available for the Assembly.

148. The Secretary General informed the Council that the Parliament of Uzbekistan had offered to host the Twelfth IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians in Samarkand in 2026. The Council welcomed this offer and took note that the Secretariat would provide further details on dates and venue as soon as possible.

x. Amendments to the IPU Statutes and Rules

149.The Governing Council approved amendments to the Rules and Practices of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians, with a view to formalizing broad geopolitical representation among its membership.

150. The amendments increased the membership of the Committee from 10 to 12 members, with an equitable geopolitical distribution defined as three parliamentarians each from the African Group and Twelve Plus Group, two each from the Asia-Pacific Group and GRULAC, and one each from the Arab Group and Eurasia Group. The amendments also required the Committee as a whole to be gender-balanced, comprising six men and six women.

151. These amendments reflected the recommendations of the Executive Committee, which had encouraged the CHRP to make the necessary arrangements to ensure that every geopolitical group of the IPU would be represented among its membership.

xi. Reports of committees and other bodies

152. The Governing Council approved the recommendations contained in the reports on the activities of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians (CHRP), the Forum of Women Parliamentarians, the Forum of Young Parliamentarians, the Gender Partnership Group, the Committee on Middle East Questions, the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law, the Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine, the Committee on Health, the Working Group on Science and Technology and the High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG).The Council endorsed the new appointments to those bodies (see page 131).

xii. IPU Sustainability Policy

153.The Secretary General reported that, at its current session, the Executive Committee had reviewed a draft IPU Sustainability Policy, which would be tabled for formal adoption by the Governing Council at its 217th session in April 2026.

154.The draft policy aimed to clarify and guide sustainability practices across the IPU, addressing the environmental impact of IPU operations, meetings and travel, and integrating sustainability considerations into procurement, facilities management and event planning.

155. The Executive Committee had made several recommendations to support the implementation of the policy, namely to develop regular implementation plans with measurable targets and budget allocations. The Kenya Delegation expressed support for the development of the policy and encouraged the Secretariat to ensure that it was ambitious, credible and aligned with the Paris Agreement goals.

H. 297TH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

156. The 297th session of the executive committee was held on 17th and 18th October 2025, immediately preceding the opening of the 151st assembly. The executive committee is composed of 15 members elected by the governing council for four-year terms and is responsible for the administrative and executive functions of the IPU.

i. Sub-Committee on Finance

157. The President of the Sub-Committee on Finance, Mr. M. Dick (Australia) , informed the Executive Committee of the work of the Sub-Committee, which had met to discuss financial questions ahead of the session of the Executive Committee.

158. The Sub-Committee had reviewed the financial situation of the IPU as at 31st July 2025. The Organization's budget performance was on track for the year so far and its finances were healthy and stable. The situation of voluntary funding was also healthy for the remainder of 2025.

159. Accumulated arrears of IPU assessed contributions currently stood at CHF 1.5 million, a significant improvement since the start of 2025. The Sub-Committee noted this improvement with satisfaction but stressed that follow-up of arrears remained an area that needed the attention and support of all Member Parliaments.

160. The Sub-Committee had discussed the IPU's draft budget for 2026 and reviewed the budget document, which it presented to the Executive Committee in full. The core budget included the increase of 3% in total assessed contributions agreed in October 2022 by the Governing Council, aimed at rebalancing total contributions back to their level of 2011 by the end of the current Strategy period. At the same time, voluntary income was projected to increase slightly as grants had been received or renewed.

161. The Sub-Committee advised the Executive Committee to recommend the 2026 budget to the Governing Council, which it subsequently did. The Executive Committee also heard the Secretary General's usual update on the mobilization of voluntary funding.

ii. Preparation of the IPU Strategy for 2027-2031

162.The Executive Committee heard a presentation by the consultant recruited to conduct the review of the IPU Strategy for 2022-2026 and prepare the IPU Strategy for 2027-2031.

163. The Executive Committee took note of the objective for the process to be conducted in a spirit of even greater inclusivity than previously, drawing on new ways to engage Member Parliaments and leverage evidence of the IPU's impact.

164. The methodology for the Strategy development would include: —

i) Desk review of IPU documents, evaluations and external assessments;

ii) Survey of IPU Member Parliaments, Associate Members and permanent observers;

iii) Focus group discussions with geopolitical groups, subsidiary bodies and partners;

iv) Interviews with key stakeholders, including IPU office-holders, UN partners, and donor representatives; and

v) Benchmarking and gathering of outside perspectives on strategic positioning, especially from the United Nations system.

165. The Executive Committee encouraged broad participation in the associated survey and focus group discussions by all relevant stakeholders. The Strategy was scheduled for adoption at the 152nd Assembly in April 2026.

iii. IPU Sustainability Policy

166.The Executive Committee reviewed the draft IPU Sustainability Policy, aimed at clarifying and guiding sustainability practices across the IPU, and recommended its submission to the Governing Council at the next session in Istanbul in April 2026.

167.The Executive Committee made several recommendations to support the implementation of the policy, namely to develop regular implementation plans with measurable targets and budget allocations. The Committee also recommended that the policy address not only environmental sustainability but also social and economic sustainability, in alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals.

iv. IPU Secretariat

168. The Executive Committee was informed of staff movements and promotions (see page 102 of the main 151st Assembly Report) and updated on the process for the selection of a new Secretary General.

169. The selection process, launched in March 2025, had attracted a diverse and highly qualified pool of candidates from all geopolitical groups. The Executive Committee had established a selection panel chaired by the IPU President and comprising representatives of the geopolitical groups. Interviews were scheduled for November 2025, with a view to presenting a candidate for election by the Governing Council at the 152nd Assembly in April 2026.

v. Cooperation between the IPU and the Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments (ASGP)

170. The Executive Committee received an update on the IPU's cooperation with the Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments (ASGP) provided by its President, Mr. J.P. Montero (Uruguay) .

171. Cooperation was progressing well and the active complementarity of the two institutions was constantly being strengthened. Recent joint initiatives included : —

i) The development of the Toolkit on Welcoming new parliamentarians: Good practices for onboarding and offboarding MPs, launched at the 151st Assembly;

ii) The joint IPU-ASGP session on Parliaments in a changing world: Navigating complexity, uncertainty and disruption, held during the 151st Assembly; and

iii) Ongoing collaboration on parliamentary standards and benchmarking.

172. The Executive Committee welcomed this fruitful cooperation and encouraged the continuation of bilateral exchanges and shared learning among national parliaments and between the ASGP and the IPU.

I. MEETINGS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

i. Standing Committee on Peace and International Security

173.The Standing Committee on Peace and International Security held two sittings, on 20th and 21st October 2025, with its President, Ms. A. Kuspan (Kazakhstan) , in the chair.

174.The first sitting of the Committee featured two back-to-back panel discussions. The first panel focused on Arms control policy and non-proliferation: Preventing the next arms race.The session was moderated by Ms. Y. Issar, Peace and Disarmament Programme, Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) in Geneva, who emphasized the urgency of revitalizing multilateral disarmament amid record military spending and escalating global tensions. She highlighted that over 130-armed conflicts were ongoing worldwide, while arms control and humanitarian disarmament frameworks were under increasing strain, and that parliamentarians played a crucial role in preventing renewed militarization and safeguarding humanitarian principles.

175.Ms. C. Solmirano, Head of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) Secretariat, emphasized the crucial role of parliaments in implementing the ATT, the first legally binding instrument governing the international trade in conventional arms. She explained that with 117 States Parties, the Treaty aimed to prevent the illicit trade and diversion of weapons that fuelled conflict and human rights violations. Drawing on insights from a regional workshop in Zambia, she highlighted that political will and parliamentary oversight were essential to effective implementation and to bridging global commitments with national practice. Finally, concluded that regulating the arms trade was not only a security imperative, but also a matter of human responsibility.

176.Mr. C. Foradori, President of the Eleventh Conference of States Parties to the ATT (CSP11), complemented Ms. Solmirano's presentation by highlighting the Treaty's contribution to peace and transparency in the global arms market. He noted that gaps in adherence, particularly in regions with limited participation, such as Latin America, created risks, "black holes", exploited by criminal networks. Further, called on parliamentarians to promote ratification, strengthen national oversight and engage youth to sustain disarmament efforts.

178.Ms. M. Parke, Executive Director of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) and former parliamentarian, warned that the risk of nuclear use was higher today than at any time since the cold war. She noted that even a limited nuclear exchange would have devastating humanitarian and climatic consequences, compounded by the collapse of key arms control agreements and the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into nuclear systems. Presenting the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) as a pathway to disarmament and victim assistance, she stressed the essential role of parliaments in aligning national policies with international law and humanitarian principles. In the same vein, urged members to raise the issue in their legislatures, sign ICAN's parliamentary pledge, and participate in upcoming meetings of States Parties, reaffirming that nuclear disarmament was not utopian but an existential imperative.

179.Ms. S. Mohan, Associate Researcher at the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), addressed the governance of emerging technologies, particularly AI and cyber capabilities. She noted their growing use in military contexts, including autonomous weapons and cyber operations, and referred to ongoing UN processes such as the Open-Ended Working Group on ICT Security and the Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems. She emphasized the importance of bridging digital divides, integrating gender perspectives, and linking disarmament, cybersecurity, and the women, peace and security agendas. Ms. Mohan urged parliamentarians to promote responsible innovation, strengthen oversight capacities and support inclusive governance of technologies shaping global security.

180.Mr. R. Lennane, Disarmament Adviser at the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), emphasized a humanitarian approach to disarmament focused on the human impact of weapons rather than their possession or number. He explained that this perspective placed responsibility on all States, and he underscored the link between disarmament and the protection of people represented by parliaments. Highlighting the achievements of humanitarian disarmament treaties, such as the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions, he noted their success in reducing suffering and shaping global norms, even among States not party to them. Mr. Lennane warned that recent withdrawals from these instruments risked undermining decades of progress, and urged parliamentarians to defend and promote their universalization, stressing that humanitarian norms were most essential in times of conflict as well as peace.

181.Over 20 delegates took the floor, converging on the need to strengthen existing arms control regimes and improve governance of emerging technologies. Interventions reflected national experiences with weapons contamination, stockpile

destruction and AI oversight. Delegates stressed the importance of transparency, verification and reciprocal compliance, and called for stronger parliamentary engagement in developing ethical and legal frameworks for new technologies. Several statements underscored adherence to humanitarian disarmament treaties, particularly the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, and highlighted the human, environmental and socioeconomic impacts of weapons contamination.

182. Other interventions called for political dialogue and confidence-building to prevent a new arms race, greater investment in disarmament and peace education, and for steps to reduce nuclear risks.

183. In their closing remarks, the panelists reaffirmed the shared responsibility of parliamentarians in advancing peace, disarmament and non-proliferation. They called for rebuilding confidence in multilateralism, upholding international law and humanitarian principles, and strengthening parliamentary oversight of emerging technologies. The session concluded with a collective call to renew dialogue, solidarity and trust to build a safer and more peaceful world for future generations.

184. The same day, the Standing Committee held a second panel discussion on Strengthening parliamentary oversight of defence spending. Ms. A. Kuspan (Kazakhstan), President of the Standing Committee, opened the session and launched the IPU issue brief Democratic checks, military balances: Parliamentary oversight in an era of rising military expenditure.

185. The publication called for greater transparency and accountability in defence budgeting, emphasizing parliaments' vital role in ensuring that military allocations align with democratic principles and citizens' security priorities. The President also announced a joint IPU-DCAF-SIPRI research project on exceptional defence budget practices and invited delegates to contribute to a global survey supporting the initiative.

186. The moderator, Ms. Y. Issar (QUNO) , opened the session by underscoring that parliamentary oversight was not a procedural formality but a democratic responsibility fundamental to accountability, transparency and public trust. She noted that global military expenditure reached a record US$ 2.7 trillion in 2024, cautioning that this continued growth risked exacerbating inequality, eroding trust between States and diverting resources from human security and sustainable development.

187. Mr. D. Lopes da Silva, Researcher with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), presented an analytical overview of recent trends in global military expenditure. He observed that over 100 countries increased their defence budgets in 2024, marking the tenth consecutive year of growth. He warned

that the growing reliance on off-budget and extra-budgetary mechanisms undermined democratic control and weakened parliamentary scrutiny. Lastly, called on parliaments to ensure that defence allocations remain transparent, efficient and responsive to citizens' needs.

188.Ms. C. Fredriksen, Senior Manager at INTOSAI Development Initiative (IDI), highlighted the indispensable role of supreme audit institutions (SAIs) in promoting fiscal transparency and accountability in the defence sector. She noted that excessive secrecy and exemptions often led to inefficiency, mismanagement and declining public trust. Drawing parallels with emergency spending during the COVID-19 pandemic, she warned that unchecked military spending could have similar consequences, diverting resources from essential public services. Further, urged parliamentarians to use audit findings proactively to enhance oversight and strengthen good governance.

189. Ms. D. Lui, Programme Manager at the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF), stressed that effective oversight required robust legal mandates, institutional capacity and a steadfast commitment to democratic principles. She presented the joint IPU-DCAF-SIPRI initiative to survey global parliamentary practices on defence oversight, designed to identify common challenges and good practices. Subsequently, underlined the importance of governance frameworks that addressed emerging technologies such as AI and autonomous weapons, calling for human-centred and responsible innovation in the security sector.

190.Mr. M. Spies, Senior Political Affairs Officer with the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), recalled the United Nations' long-standing efforts to link disarmament and development, including studies on the social and economic impacts of military expenditure. He called for renewed efforts to assess the environmental and societal costs of militarization, and to explore how disarmament savings could support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Further emphasized that transparent national reporting to the United Nations was essential for fostering dialogue on reducing military spending.

191.In the ensuing debate, eight delegates took the floor. Speakers acknowledged that while military investment remained necessary amid ongoing conflicts, cyber threats and global instability, true security could not rest on weapons alone. They remarked that oversight was what transformed expenditure into genuine protection, be it of borders, of democracy or of human dignity, and ensured that funding also supported prevention, mediation and inclusion. Participants also highlighted the need for informed and transparent parliamentary debate on the long-term implications of rising military budgets, particularly the risks of opacity and off-budget mechanisms

that weakened accountability. Several delegates reiterated that with global military spending soaring, resources were diverted from social investment and contributing to increased emissions. In the same vein, called for a balanced approach that safeguarded funding for peacebuilding, innovation and social resilience while addressing the environmental and economic costs of militarization.

192. Across interventions, there was also broad consensus that transparency was a source of strength and that parliamentary oversight was essential to ensuring defence budgets were not merely larger where needed, but also wiser, fairer and better aligned with the principles of human and common security. The panel concluded that rising defence budgets present not only fiscal but also democratic and ethical challenges. Strong parliamentary oversight, supported by transparency and accountability, remained indispensable to ensuring that public resources contributed to peace, stability and human security.

193. On 21st October, the Committee held an expert hearing on the theme of its next resolution The role of parliaments in establishing robust post-conflict management mechanisms and restoring a just and lasting peace. The session brought together experts and parliamentarians to explore how legislative institutions can foster sustainable peace, justice and inclusion in societies emerging from conflict.

194. Mr. P. Dziatkowiec, Director of Mediation and Peace Support at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP), highlighted the crucial role of parliaments in sustaining peace and transitional justice. Drawing on over 20 years of diplomatic and mediation experience, he stressed that lasting peace depended on justice, inclusion and political will, not on "quick fixes" or superficial agreements. Citing examples from Colombia, Northern Ireland and the Western Balkans, he showed that involving victims, civil society and parliaments enhanced legitimacy and reduced the risk of renewed conflict. Finally, concluded that parliamentarians, through their legislative, oversight, and representative roles, were uniquely placed to bridge divides, build trust and foster ongoing dialogue within and between societies.

195. Ms. S. Naraghi Anderlini, Founder and CEO of the International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN), underscored the urgent need for inclusive peacebuilding amid widespread global conflict. With over 120 million displaced and 2 billion living in fragile contexts, she stressed that recovery after war must go beyond security to include health, education, justice and gender-responsive policies. Drawing on examples from Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Iraq and Afghanistan, she warned that excluding women and ignoring gender dynamics sustained inequality and instability. She urged parliaments to enshrine inclusion, dignity and human potential in law and policy, emphasizing that only a "whole-of-society" approach, linking

parliaments and civil society, could turn crisis into lasting peace and shared prosperity.

196.Ms. Belhirch concluded that parliaments were key peacebuilders, restoring legitimacy and trust, and affirmed that the draft resolution would centre on justice, inclusivity and ownership, reminding that "peace without justice is no peace at all".

197.In the debate that followed, 19 delegates took the floor. Many underscored parliaments' central role in turning ceasefires into lasting peace through lawmaking and oversight, and a focus on justice, inclusion and accountability. They emphasized the importance of nationally owned recovery and called for legislative action to validate peace agreements, to protect displaced persons and to establish truth, reparations and amnesty mechanisms. Participants also highlighted the need for civilian-led security sector reform and parliamentary leadership in funding reconstruction, education and psychosocial support.

198.Several delegates urged institutionalizing inclusion, especially of women, youth and minorities, through mechanisms like double-majority rules and intercommunity committees. Others called for stronger anti-corruption frameworks, measurable reconciliation indicators, and a shift from militarized to human security by supporting early warning systems and civil society. The importance of parliamentary diplomacy, regional cooperation and countering disinformation was also stressed.

199. The debate concluded with a broad consensus that parliaments were decisive peacebuilders, able to codify commitments, oversee implementation, reintegrate ex-combatants and foster social cohesion to ensure peace was both achieved and sustained.

200.At the end of the Committee session, elections were held to fill positions on the Committee's Bureau. The following office holders were elected for the next two-year cycle, October 2025–October 2027: —

i) President: Mr. H. Mohammad (Malaysia)

ii) Vice-President: Ms. F. Belhirch (Netherlands)

201.The Committee also elected members to its Bureau for terms ending in October 2027. The African Group elected Mr. C. Lutundula Apala Pen' Apala (Democratic Republic of the Congo) for a first term. The Kenya Delegation noted that this election reflected the strong engagement of African parliaments in the work of the Committee.

ii. Standing Committee on Sustainable Development

202.The Standing Committee on Sustainable Development held its sittings on 21st and 22nd October 2025, chaired by the Committee Vice-President, Ms. M.S. Al Suwaidi (United Arab Emirates).

203.The first debate focused on the theme of the Committee's next resolution, entitled Building a fair and sustainable global economy: The role of parliaments in combating protectionism, reducing tariffs and preventing corporate tax evasion.

204.The theme was introduced by a distinguished group of four experts: Mr. A.R. Khan, Advisor for International Cooperation and Tax Policy at the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA); Ms. V. Gonzalez Behar, Head of Partnerships, Outreach and Resource Mobilization at the WTO's Enhanced Integrated Framework; Mr. M. Kobetsky, Honorary Professor at the Australian National University College of Law and Fellow at the Crawford School of Public Policy's Tax and Transfer Policy Institute; and Ms. M. St. Louis, Director of Global Trade Watch at Public Citizen.

205. Mr. A.R. Khan (DESA) informed that global public debt had exceeded US$ 100 trillion, with developing countries under significant fiscal pressure. According to World Bank data, US$ 1.4 trillion was paid annually to service external debt, including US$ 400 billion in interest,leaving nearly half the world's population in countries that are spending more on interest than on health and education combined.

206.Mr. Khan observed that efforts to raise taxes to reduce debt had often eroded public trust, revealing a structural issue in revenue mobilization. He noted that a number of multinational corporations that benefit from the best tax expertise paid the least amount of taxes. He highlighted that governments could have the same opportunity if they were able to tackle this problem in a more coordinated manner. Mr. Khan emphasized the need for coordinated government action and stronger parliamentary roles to improve fiscal governance, particularly through Public Accounts Committees, oversight mechanisms and finance committees.

207.Ms. V. Gonzalez Behar (WTO) emphasized that trade encompassed more than tariffs as it also involved standards and regulations that facilitate the movement of goods and services across borders. Recalling the 1930s, she warned that protectionist measures had led to a collapse in global trade and ultimately contributed to the Second World War. While today's trade system was more resilient thanks to international rules that had been established to prevent certain situations from happening again, she cautioned that trade remained fragile. She stressed that parliamentarians were central to trade policy and provided some suggestions to help shape the next resolution. She recommended focusing on non-tariff measures,

ratifying the WTO Fisheries Agreement, supporting WTO reform, and participating in the upcoming Parliamentary Conference taking place at the WTO so that the resolution could be a resource for ministers.

208. Mr. M. Kobetsky (Australian National University College of Law) highlighted that tax revenue was essential for funding public goods and services. He underscored the crucial role of parliaments in imposing tax liabilities on multinational corporations and reforming legislation to reflect their global operations. Just as multinationals were well advised and resourced, parliamentarians also needed to be equally well advised and act at the global level through forums such as those provided by the IPU and the UN. He emphasized that there were a number of mechanisms that could help develop effective tax policies to ensure that multinationals would not find loopholes. It was in fact crucial to address that issue as when there was tax avoidance, either taxpayers had to cover those gaps, or governments had to increase borrowing.

209. Ms. M. St. Louis (Public Citizen) noted that global trade was necessary, however current free trade agreements and neoliberal policies, which were mainly shaped by the interests of major corporations in the global north, were unsustainable. She urged parliaments to advocate for fairer global trade rules, corporate accountability, and investment in supply chains that respect workers, human rights and support a green economy. She also called for greater transparency and accountability in trade policymaking and for protecting domestic policy space and regulating it in the public interest. Finally, she emphasized the need for parliamentarians to actively engage in debates concerning trade and investment agreements as they had huge implications on many aspects of domestic policy making.

210. Following the experts' presentation, 22 delegates shared examples of how their countries were strengthening efforts to combat tax evasion and avoidance, promote economic growth and contribute to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The actions that they implemented included enacting laws, advancing data analytics, introducing penalty regimes, and enhancing international cooperation. Some countries criminalized fraudulent tax declarations and recognized tax evasion as a form of money laundering.

211. Delegates voiced concern that global economic interdependence left developing and smaller economies particularly vulnerable. They highlighted that millions of people lived in extreme poverty, that many were still deprived of access to water and shelter, and that the global economy was fragmenting due to protectionism, coercive measures, sanctions, unilateral closure of borders, disruption of international logistics and supply chains. They stressed that protectionism appeared to temporarily protect national interests but, in the long run, it weakened

competitiveness, disrupted supply chains and undermined trust among countries at a time when solidarity and multilateral cooperation were most needed.

212.Parliaments were recognized as key actors in reversing these negative trends by enacting fair and transparent tax laws, closing loopholes and ensuring alignment of national policies with the SDGs. Delegates stressed that parliaments played a vital role in promoting sustainable trade and investment, strengthening oversight of international commitments, and ensuring that economic policies prioritize people over profits. Delegates also stressed the importance of parliamentary dialogue, information sharing, and collaboration in international forums—like the IPU, UN, OECD, G20 etc.—to foster equitable global economic governance.

213.Panel discussion on climate change and vulnerable communities: The second debate examined The impact of global warming: A parliamentary call to protect the most vulnerable. The panel discussion focused on the role of parliaments in addressing the impacts of climate change on vulnerable communities.

214. The Moderator, Ms. A. Ellis, Senior Director Strategic Partnerships and Networks, Julie Ann Wrigley Global Futures Laboratory, emphasized that climate change was not just an environmental crisis but that it was also a human crisis with those contributing least to climate change often bearing the heaviest burden.

215. Hon. Tonkei, delivered Kenya's intervention in this debate. She highlighted the severe impacts of climate change on Kenya's arid and semi-arid lands, including prolonged drought, loss of livestock, and food insecurity. She drew attention to Kenya's leadership in renewable energy, with over 90% of electricity generated from clean sources, and to the country's ambitious Nationally Determined Contribution under the Paris Agreement. She called for increased climate finance for adaptation, particularly for vulnerable communities in the Horn of Africa, and for stronger parliamentary oversight of climate commitments.

216. The Rapporteur of the Parliamentary Meeting at COP30, Mr. H. Costa, a Member of the Parliament of Brazil, stated that the Parliamentary Meeting at COP30, organized by the IPU and the Parliament of Brazil, would take place on 14th November 2025 in Belém, Brazil. A brief video was shown on the Parliamentary Meeting and main COP venues in Belém.

217.Mr. Costa then presented the key themes of the preliminary draft outcome document of the Parliamentary Meeting at COP30. He highlighted that the document called on parliaments to take a number of actions to strengthen climate action including the need to: ensure international climate commitments are translated into national legislation and policies; consider methane emissions, decarbonization, reforestation, and health in climate responses; prioritize the need of vulnerable

groups; and foster the responsible use of artificial intelligence to address climate change.

218. Parliamentarians from seven national parliaments and representatives from four organizations and one regional parliament made interventions from the floor. The points raised in the discussion included: the importance of oversight and climate change accountability, the need to recognize climate change linkages with human health and displacement, the urgency of addressing methane emissions, and the vital role of indigenous peoples and other vulnerable groups in climate action.

219. At the end of the Committee session, elections were held to fill positions on the Committee's Bureau. The following office holders were elected for the next two-year cycle, October 2025–October 2027: —

i) President: Ms. M.S. Al Suwaidi (United Arab Emirates)

ii) Vice-President: Mr. C. Rendón García (Mexico)

220. The Committee also approved its workplan for the next Assembly. It will dedicate all its sittings to the drafting of the resolution.

iii. Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights

221. The Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights held two sittings, on 20th and 22nd October 2025, with the acting President of the Standing Committee, Ms. D. O'Neill (Australia) , in the chair.

222. On 20th October 2025, the Committee considered the draft resolution Recognizing and supporting the victims of illegal international adoption and taking measures to prevent this practice, introduced by the co-Rapporteurs, Ms. C.L. Crexell (Argentina) , Mr. M. De Maegd (Belgium) and Mr. S. Patra (India) .

223. When examining the draft resolution, the Committee considered 174 amendments submitted by 26 parliaments: Argentina, Azerbaijan, Canada, China, Finland, France, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Lithuania, Morocco, Netherlands, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, South Sudan, Switzerland, Thailand, Türkiye, United Arab Emirates and Ukraine. Three amendments were proposed by the Forum of Women Parliamentarians.

224.The Co-Rapporteurs presented the revised draft resolution to the Committee at its final sitting on 22nd October 2025. The Committee took final decisions on two proposed amendments, then adopted the draft resolution.

225.The Russian Federation expressed its opposition to the entire text of the resolution while Belarus expressed a reservation on the entire text of the resolution.

226.The Kenya Delegation supported the resolution and did not enter any reservations. Kenya's position was informed by the following considerations: —

i) Kenya is a State Party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption, and has enacted comprehensive domestic legislation governing adoption and children's rights;

ii) Kenya has experienced cases of illegal intercountry adoption, including instances where children have been trafficked from Kenya to other countries under the guise of adoption;

iii) Kenya supports the recognition of victims' rights to truth, identity and redress, and the establishment of reparative measures; and

iv) Kenya supports strengthened international cooperation to prevent and combat illegal intercountry adoption, including through bilateral and multilateral mechanisms.

227.The Bureau met on 22nd October 2025 to consider proposals for the Committee's future work programme. It recommended that the subject of the next resolution should be Inclusive social development for all: Parliamentary strategies to promote the rights and empowerment of people living with disabilities.

228.It further recommended that the Committee hold a debate, that would not lead to a resolution, at the 152nd Assembly in April 2026 on the theme of artificial intelligence (AI).The Committee approved both proposals. It also approved the nomination of Ms. F. Öncü (Türkiye) , Mr. C. Lohr (Switzerland) and Ms. C.M. Mumma (Kenya) as co-Rapporteurs of the next resolution.A preparatory debate would take place at the 152nd Assembly in April 2026 and the resolution would be finalized at the 153rd Assembly in October 2026.

229.At its final sitting, the Committee elected new members of the Bureau. It took note that the Eurasia Group had not put forward a candidate for the presidency of the Committee as foreseen by the agreed distribution of leadership positions for the Standing Committees, and approved the nomination from the African Group of Ms. F. Ilimi Haddouche (Algeria) as Vice-President of the Committee.

230. The Committee also elected members to its Bureau for terms ending in October 2027: —

i) African Group: Mr. C. Lutundula Apala Pen' Apala (Democratic Republic of the Congo) for a first term;

ii) Eurasia Group: Ms. A. Aghazada (Azerbaijan) for a second term; one vacancy remains for this Group;

iii) Group of Latin America and the Caribbean: Mr. E. Goerling (Argentina) for a first term; Ms. R. Abed (Paraguay) for a first term;

iv) Twelve Plus Group: Mr. M. De Maegd (Belgium) for a second term.

231. Kenya had been eligible to seek election to the Bureau of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights, with one vacancy to be filled by a man or a woman from the East and Central Africa region. The delegation, following consultations within the African Group, decided not to advance a candidature on this occasion, instead focusing its efforts on elections to the High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG) and the Bureau of Young Parliamentarians.

iv. Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs

232.The Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs held two sittings on 21st and 22nd October 2025 with the Vice-President of the Committee, Ms. C.L. Crexell (Argentina) , in the chair.

233.The first sitting was dedicated to a discussion on the election process for the United Nations Secretary-General. The presenters were;Mr. A. Motter, IPU Senior Advisor, Economic and Social Affairs, Office of the Permanent Observer of the IPU to the United Nations;Ms. C. Gallach, Representative of GWL Voices; and Ms. M.N. Leoni, Director of GQUAL.

234.Mr. A. Motter provided a short presentation on the key steps to elect the UN Secretary-General. He explained that the process was governed by Article 97 of the UN Charter, which provides that the Secretary-General shall be appointed by the

General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council. While the Charter is silent on the length of the term, the General Assembly has established that the term of office shall be five years, renewable.

235. In practice, the selection process involves informal consultations within the Security Council, confidential straw polls, and ultimately a formal recommendation by the Security Council to the General Assembly. The General Assembly then appoints the Secretary-General by acclamation or, if necessary, by vote.

236.Recent reforms, including the 2015 General Assembly resolution on revitalization of the work of the General Assembly, have made the process more transparent and inclusive, including through the issuance of joint letters from the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Security Council calling for nominations, public hearings with candidates, and the requirement that candidates be nominated by Member States.

237.Ms. C. Gallach (GWL Voices) presented her Group's view of the main reasons why it was time for a woman to become the world's "top diplomat", for which some 80 governments had already expressed their support. Electing the first woman UNSG after a string of nine men since the birth of the organization in 1945 was simply the right thing to do in light of the UN's commitment to gender equality. The existential crisis that the UN was going through and the deteriorating world situation called for a fresh new approach and leadership style, which a woman was more likely to provide. Ms. Gallach very much welcomed parliaments' engagement on the issue as the best way to make the voices of the people heard.

238. Having heard from the panel, the Chair invited Ms. S. Ataullahjan (Canada) to present the motion that she had proposed to the Bureau of the Committee the day before and that the Bureau had supported. Ms. Ataullahjan said that upon further consideration the motion's title should be changed to Recommendation to elect the first woman to the post of United Nations Secretary-General.

239. In the ensuing debate, in which 34 delegations participated, with 16 interventions, the following points were highlighted:—

i) The best way for parliaments to help ensure the election of a woman UNSG in 2026 was to support as many women candidates as possible. To the extent possible, the five permanent members of the Security Council, whose support was needed (by virtue of their veto power), should be persuaded to field or support only women candidates.

ii) Candidates' records should highlight their skills and respect of all UN values, as well as impartiality and moral authority. Several delegates

emphasized that the next Secretary-General must be someone of proven integrity, diplomatic skill, and commitment to multilateralism.

iii) Regardless of who was elected in the end, the new SG would need greater autonomy to make decisions for the good of the organization and the world. Some delegates expressed concern that the Secretary-General had become too constrained by the competing interests of Member States, particularly the permanent members of the Security Council.

iv) The election of a first woman UNSG the following year was also important to open doors to women leaders in other parts of the UN system where they continued to be under-represented. Delegates noted that only four of the 41 UN funds, programmes and specialized agencies were currently headed by women.

240. Hon. Rebecca Tonkei, MP, delivered Kenya's intervention in this debate. She affirmed Kenya's strong support for the election of a woman as the next UN Secretary-General. She noted that Kenya had a proud record of women's leadership, including the first woman Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, a long tradition of women parliamentarians and cabinet ministers, and currently a woman Speaker of the National Assembly. She called on the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean, which was considered next in the geographical rotation for the position, to identify and support highly qualified women candidates. She also urged the IPU to continue its advocacy for women's leadership in multilateral institutions, building on the outcomes of the 15th Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament.

241. At the end of the debate, the Chair put the retitled motion to a vote. The motion was adopted unanimously.

242. The second sitting focused on the new UN80 reform initiative. The presenters were;Mr. G. Ryder, UN Under-Secretary-General for Policy, Chief coordinator of the UN80 Initiative;Mr. P. Linnér, Programme Director, Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation; and Ms. B. Adama, Global Policy Forum.

243. Mr. G. Ryder set out the context and the purpose of the initiative which was intended to make the UN more relevant and more effective in responding to current global challenges. The UN was strapped for cash as a few major donors were not paying their dues on time and in full. Worse still, the UN was confronted with a "value crisis" whereby multilateralism was being undermined by a "go it alone approach".

244. In the ensuing debate, in which 11 delegations contributed, the following key points were raised: —

i) Parliaments ought to exercise close oversight of the UN80 Initiative to ensure that it led to better results both in terms of concrete work to support countries and in terms of managing complex global issues. Delegates called for regular briefings from governments on the progress of the initiative and for parliamentary scrutiny of national positions.

ii) Parliaments ought to do a better job in dissecting all budget allocations to the UN system to ensure that they were of good quality, with less earmarking and more money going to more efficient funding pools. Several delegates noted that their parliaments had limited visibility on the composition and effectiveness of voluntary contributions to the UN system.

iii) While much of the future of the UN system depended on its funding base, ultimately what needed to change were its decision-making processes and structures, such as the Security Council, where a few countries ran the show. Delegates reiterated longstanding calls for Security Council reform, including expansion of both permanent and non-permanent membership and improvement of working methods.

iv) Any restructuring of the UN system needed to respect all three pillars of the UN—i.e., peace and security, human rights and development—making sure that none was sacrificed at the expense of the others. In particular, current under-funding of the human rights pillar needed to be redressed. Several delegates expressed concern that the human rights pillar had been consistently under-resourced and that the UN80 initiative must not exacerbate this imbalance.

v) As a way of securing its financial independence, the UN should not shy away from looking at innovative financial schemes (e.g., a small tax on air travel). Delegates noted that such proposals had been discussed for decades but had never gained sufficient political support. Parliaments could play a role in generating political will for innovative financing mechanisms.

vi) Improving the effectiveness and accountability of the UN as the leading multilateral organization would depend critically on strengthening its engagement with parliaments, civil society, the private sector and other actors along the lines established in the 2025 Pact for the Future. Delegates welcomed the recognition in the Pact for the Future of the important role of parliaments in the multilateral system and called for its full implementation.

245. Hon. Geofrey Mulanya, MP, delivered Kenya's intervention in this debate. He expressed Kenya's strong support for the United Nations and for the UN80 reform initiative, while emphasizing that reform must not be driven solely by budget cuts but must address the fundamental questions of representation, equity and effectiveness. He recalled that Kenya had consistently advocated for reform of the Security Council, including through the African Union's Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration, which call for Africa's full representation in an expanded Security Council, including with permanent seats. He urged the IPU to continue its advocacy for UN reform and to support parliaments in their oversight role.

246. The Committee elected new members to its Bureau for terms ending in October 2027: —

i) President: Ms. V. Centeno (Ecuador)

ii) Vice-President: Mr. F. Al-Nouiri (Libya)

iii) African Group: Mr. J. Uerikua (Namibia) for a first term

iv) Arab Group: Ms. R.S. Alyahya (Saudi Arabia) for a first term

v) Asia-Pacific Group: Ms. M.I. Marcos (Philippines) for a first term

vi) Eurasia Group: A vacancy remains for this Group

vii) Group of Latin America and the Caribbean: Ms. V. Centeno (Ecuador) for a first term

viii) Twelve Plus Group: Ms. M. Tender (Portugal) for a first term

J. FORUM AND BUREAU OF WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS

247. The 40th session of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians was held on 19th October 2025 with 244 participants in attendance, including 158 parliamentarians

(136 women and 22 men) from 73 countries. The President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, Ms. C. López Castro (Mexico) , chaired the session.

248.Ms. López Castro opened the session and welcomed participants to the 151st Assembly. She recalled that 2025 was a landmark year for gender equality, marking the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the 25th anniversary of the UN Women, Peace and Security agenda, the 10th year of the Sustainable Development Goals, and the 40th anniversary of the IPU Forum of Women Parliamentarians.

249.She noted that the IPU's priority theme for 2025 was gender equality, and that the Global Conference of Women Parliamentarians held in Mexico in March 2025 had adopted a Plan of action for gender parity in parliament. The Forum's 40th session was an opportunity to take stock of progress and to renew commitments to achieving gender equality in politics and society.

250. As a contribution to the work of the Assembly, participants examined, from a gender perspective, the draft resolution before the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights, entitled Recognizing and supporting the victims of illegal international adoption and taking measures to prevent this practice.

251. In the debate, participants noted that patriarchal norms, discrimination and socioeconomic exclusion combined to create structural inequalities that drove illegal adoptions. Such inequalities were further exacerbated in times of conflict and displacement. Vulnerabilities leading to such practices were strongly gendered, as biological mothers were particularly exposed to misinformation when they were young, unmarried, poor, belonged to a minority or indigenous group, had a migrant background, or faced other forms of exclusion.

252. Participants called for: —

i) The formal recognition of illegal international adoption as a form of trafficking and for its inclusion in anti-trafficking efforts with a rights-based, victim-centred approach;

ii) The alignment of national legal frameworks with international standards, including the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW);

iii) Strengthened monitoring mechanisms and robust victim-support systems providing psychological assistance and legal aid;

iv) Awareness-raising and capacity-building for law enforcement officials, social workers and judges to help detect and prevent such practices;

v) A holistic response that tackles the structural and gendered inequalities underlying illegal adoptions, ensures justice for the women and girls affected—whether biological or adoptive mothers or adopted children—and strengthens prevention efforts.

253. The debate resulted in the formulation of three amendments to the Standing Committee's draft resolution. Subsequently, all the amendments proposed by the Forum were integrated into the draft resolution, enhancing the gender perspective of the text.

254. Launch of the Gender-Responsive Assemblies Toolkit: Mr. M. Chungong, IPU Secretary General and Chair of the International Gender Champions (IGC) Global Board, together with Ms. C. Kraft-Buchman, CEO and Founder of Women at the Table, presented the second edition of the Gender-Responsive Assemblies Toolkit.

255.The Toolkit serves as a how-to guide for creating environments that support women's equal participation and influence at assemblies, and ensuring that deliberations deliver on gender equality. It highlights key measures to be taken before, during and after assemblies, offering inspiration for parliaments and other deliberative bodies. The Toolkit includes many of the pioneering policies that the IPU has been advancing over the years, thanks in part to the work of the Gender Partnership Group.

256.Sen. Catherine Mumma, MP, a member of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, participated actively in the Forum. In her intervention, she highlighted Kenya's progress in advancing gender equality in parliament, including: —

i) The constitutional requirement that not more than two-thirds of the members of elective or appointive bodies shall be of the same gender, which has resulted in significant increases in women's representation;

ii) The Women's Representation in Parliament (Affirmative Action) principle, which provides for 47 elected women representatives, one from each county;

iii) The establishment of the Women's Parliamentary Caucus, which brings together women MPs across party lines to advocate for gender-responsive legislation and policies;

iv) The ongoing efforts to address sexual harassment and sexism in Parliament, including through the development of a code of conduct and anti-harassment policy.

257. Sen. Mumma also noted that while Kenya had made significant progress, challenges remained, particularly in achieving gender parity in elective positions and in ensuring that women's leadership translated into transformative outcomes for all women and girls. She called for continued solidarity and cooperation among women parliamentarians across the world.

258. The Forum elected Ms. S. Claydon (Australia) to fill the vacant seat of the Asia-Pacific Group, for a term running until March 2027.

259. The Bureau met on 19th and 22nd October 2025. In their deliberations, members discussed the situation of women in conflict-affected areas and expressed their solidarity with women and girls impacted by conflict. They called for greater involvement and leadership of women in building and sustaining peace, and for the IPU to focus future activities on women as peacebuilders.

260. The Bureau also reviewed preparations for the 2026 Global Conference of Women Parliamentarians, which would take place in Belgrade from 2nd to 4th June 2026. Ms. I. Stamatović (Serbia) invited all participants to attend.

K. FORUM AND BUREAU OF YOUNG PARLIAMENTARIANS

261. The Forum of Young Parliamentarians was held on 20th October 2025, with more than 100 participants, including 61 parliamentarians (21 young women and 40 young men) from 48 countries. It was presided over by Ms. J. Sierra (Uruguay), who, as the youngest member of the Bureau present, replaced the President of the Bureau of Young Parliamentarians.

262. The IPU Vice-President and Secretary General made opening remarks focused on the importance of the Forum's mission to amplify youth voices amid the rise of Gen Z movements. Young MPs' leadership in advancing gender equality was highlighted, and it was noted that the 11th Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians, held in Peru in September 2025, had achieved gender parity among participants for the first time in the Conference's history.

263. Members of the Forum shared recent developments in advancing youth participation in their countries, including: —

i) The creation of youth caucuses in several parliaments;

ii) The appointment of young MPs to leadership roles, including committee chairs and deputy speakerships;

iii) Reforms to lower the age of eligibility to stand for office, such as in Peru, where the minimum age for congressional candidates had been reduced from 25 to 21.

264. Noting new IPU data showing that the proportion of young MPs had stalled since 2023, they warned that the world was moving too slowly on youth inclusion and called for more transformative action. The IPU's Women in Parliament 2025 report showed that the share of MPs under 30 remained at just 2.8%, unchanged from 2023, and that the share of young women under 30 had actually declined.

265. Members discussed the theme of the General Debate of the 151st Assembly from a youth perspective. They emphasized the need to ensure education and economic opportunity for young people in times of crisis and called for the adaptation of humanitarian systems to new threats, including disinformation, AI misuse and climate-induced crises.

266. They also discussed their perspectives on the draft resolution, recognizing and supporting the victims of illegal international adoption and taking measures to prevent this practice. Further, stressed the need for stronger legal safeguards, psychological support and reintegration programmes for victims of illegal international adoption, and public awareness campaigns. Finally, highlighted the role of young MPs in particular to be champions of advocacy and innovation on this issue.

267. The youth overview report on the draft resolution was presented by former member of the Bureau of Young Parliamentarians Mr. K. Ait Mik (Morocco). Young MPs emphasized the importance of recognition and support for the victims of illegal adoption, both adopted persons and their families. In the same vein,called for enhanced psychological support, reintegration programmes, public awareness campaigns—including through digital platforms—and safeguards to ensure confidentiality for children. Further, called for greater efforts to prevent this practice through strengthened legislation, enhanced oversight of verification mechanisms and increased international cooperation.

268. Appointment of youth rapporteurs: In preparation for the 152nd IPU Assembly, the Forum: —

i) Appointed Mr. H. Ebrahim (Bahrain) to serve as youth rapporteur for the proposed resolution on The role of parliaments in establishing robust post-conflict management mechanisms and restoring a just and lasting peace. In this regard, participants called for greater institutionalization of youth participation in peace efforts, and for the implementation of United

Nations Security Council resolution 2250 (2015) on youth, peace and security.

ii) Appointed Mr. W. Soto (Peru) to serve as youth rapporteur for the proposed resolution on Building a fair and sustainable global economy: The role of parliaments in combating protectionism, reducing tariffs and preventing corporate tax evasion. Participants highlighted the importance of capacity-building for young MPs to scrutinize international trade and fight tax evasion, including in partnership with other stakeholders.

269. The Forum also held a Q&A on the IPU's Achieving gender equality, action by action campaign, identifying synergies with the I Say Yes to Youth in Parliament! campaign and reaffirming that youth empowerment and gender equality are mutually reinforcing.

270. Hon. John Makali, MP, a member of the High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism, participated in the Forum as an observer. In his intervention, he highlighted Kenya's efforts to promote youth participation in politics and decision-making, including: —

i) The constitutional provision for the representation of youth in Parliament, with 12 nominated members (four from the Senate and eight from the National Assembly) representing youth, persons with disabilities and workers;

ii) The establishment of the Youth Parliamentary Caucus, which brings together young MPs across party lines to advocate for youth-responsive policies;

iii) The enactment of the Kenya Youth Development Policy, which provides a framework for youth empowerment and participation;

iv) The ongoing efforts to lower the age of eligibility for certain elective positions, including through constitutional amendment proposals.

271. Hon. Makali also expressed concern at the decline in youth representation at the 151st Assembly compared to the 150th Assembly, and called on parliaments and geopolitical groups to ensure that at least one MP under 40 years of age is included in each delegation to IPU Assemblies.

272. Earlier that day, the Bureau of Young Parliamentarians reviewed youth participation at the 151st Assembly and urged parliaments in future to include at least one MP under 40 in each delegation. They also agreed on procedures to

implement the recent change to the IPU Statutes and Rules allowing the Forum to propose amendments to Standing Committee resolutions.

273.The Forum elected Ms. J. Quashie (Ghana) to its Bureau for the seat that was not filled at the 150th IPU Assembly, for a term ending in March 2027. This election filled the vacancy for the African Group.

L. OTHER SUBSIDIARY BODIES OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

i. Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians

274.The Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians (CHRP) held its 178th session from 18th to 22nd October 2025. Mr. E. Blanc (France), President, chaired the session.

275.During the session, the Committee examined the situation of 300 parliamentarians (30% of whom are women) across 16 countries. In terms of case developments, new cases concerning nine parliamentarians were declared admissible,including one MP in Algeria, one in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, three in Somalia, and four in Türkiye,while one case in Ecuador was ultimately declared inadmissible.

276. The Committee also held 10 hearings with national delegations, civil society organizations, and complainants, both online and in-person.

277.The Committee submitted decisions to the Governing Council for adoption on the situation of 288 parliamentarians in the following countries: Algeria, Bangladesh, Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Eswatini, Iraq, Israel, Myanmar, Pakistan, Palestine, Somalia, Thailand and Türkiye.

278.Hon. Millie Odhiambo, CBS, MP, presided over the Committee's 178th session in her capacity as President of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians. Her leadership of the Committee was widely commended by members and by the Secretary General.

279.In her opening remarks, Hon. Odhiambo emphasized the critical importance of the Committee's work in defending the rights of parliamentarians around the world. She noted that the Committee had examined over 3,000 cases since its establishment in 1976 and had contributed significantly to the release or protection of hundreds of MPs. She called on all Member Parliaments to cooperate fully with the Committee and to implement its decisions.

280.Hon. Odhiambo also highlighted the particular vulnerability of women parliamentarians to human rights violations, including sexism, harassment and violence. She called for a gender-sensitive approach to the Committee's work and for the integration of a gender perspective into all its decisions and recommendations.

281.The Governing Council, at its 216th session, approved amendments to the Rules and Practices of the Committee, increasing its membership from 10 to 12 members and formalizing equitable geopolitical representation. These amendments, which Hon. Odhiambo had strongly advocated for, would ensure that all geopolitical groups of the IPU are represented among the Committee's membership and that the Committee as a whole is gender-balanced.

ii. Committee on Middle East Questions

282.The Committee on Middle East Questions met twice, on 20th and 22nd October 2025, with Mr. H.-J. Talsma (Netherlands), President of the Committee, in the chair. The Secretariat introduced a new AI Agent intended to assist the Committee's analytical and reporting work, accompanied by a code of ethics governing its use. The Agent provided a briefing on developments in the Gaza Strip since the 150th Assembly, covering the humanitarian situation, casualty figures and international ceasefire efforts.

283.Members expressed grave concern over reports of continued hostilities despite the announcement of a ceasefire. They urged the consolidation of a sustainable, verifiable and unconditional ceasefire to prevent further suffering, and reaffirmed that humanitarian assistance must remain unconditional and unhindered in accordance with international law.

284.The Committee heard a presentation by Mr. D.F. Puyana, Ambassador and Permanent Observer of the University for Peace to the United Nations in Geneva, on education for peace and coexistence. He highlighted the role of parliaments in promoting peace education and inclusive dialogue.

285.Members agreed that education for peace is essential for rebuilding trust and tolerance, but noted that it must be tied to tangible political progress and reflect realities on the ground. They underlined that advancing peace education in situations of occupation remains difficult and must go hand in hand with efforts to restore faith in international law and institutions.

286.Turning to organizational matters, the Committee discussed the proposed restructuring of its composition and working methods, in line with the resolution the

role of parliaments in advancing a two-State solution in Palestine adopted at the 150th Assembly in April 2025.

287. The Committee took note of the Secretariat's amended proposal, which would: —

i) Maintain 12 elected members with equitable geopolitical distribution and gender parity;

ii) Preserve both ex officio members (Israel and Palestine);

iii) Include standing invitations to the Bureaux of Women and Young Parliamentarians; and

iv) Include the possibility of establishing a Group of Facilitators for Israel and Palestine, modelled in part on the IPU's practice for Cyprus.

288. While members agreed on the importance of ensuring representativeness and continuity of engagement, several expressed reservations about aspects of the proposed changes. In particular, members questioned the need for new mechanisms, such as a Group of Facilitators for Israel and Palestine, warning that they could divert from the Committee's core purpose as the main parliamentary forum for dialogue on the subject.

289. The Committee concurred that the Israeli-Palestinian question must remain central to its mandate and that any restructuring should strengthen its founding purpose and enhance participation, inclusiveness, representativeness and effectiveness.

290. The Secretariat was requested to adjust the proposal accordingly and to present a revised version at the next meeting.

291. Absence of Israeli ex officio representative: Members voiced concern at the continued absence of the Israeli ex officio representative, including from the present session, and agreed that the President should formally seek clarification from both ex officio members, Israel and Palestine, to reaffirm their engagement and commitment to the Committee's work.

292. The Committee reaffirmed its unwavering commitment to the swift and effective implementation of a fair and sustainable two-State solution, in accordance with international law, ensuring an end to occupation and the realization of Palestinian sovereignty as the only credible path to lasting peace. Members stressed that this objective requires urgent and coordinated parliamentary action.

293.The Committee reiterated the need for immediate humanitarian access, renewed political dialogue, and continued efforts to rebuild trust between the parties.

294.The Secretariat informed members of progress in preparing a report outlining the IPU's long-standing engagement in the Middle East and presented a draft workplan for 2025–2026. This includes organizing a Committee retreat in early 2026 to review working methods and strengthen cooperation ahead of the 152nd Assembly in April 2026.

295.Members also welcomed the preparations by the King Hamad Global Center for Coexistence and Tolerance for an event marking the International Day of Peaceful Coexistence to be held in Bahrain, considering both this event and the retreat as timely opportunities to advance dialogue and visibility of the Committee's work.

296.Hon. Reuben Kiborek, MP, delivered Kenya's intervention in the Committee. He reaffirmed Kenya's consistent support for a two-State solution, with Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security within internationally recognized borders. He expressed concern at the continued humanitarian crisis in Gaza and called for an immediate, sustainable and unconditional ceasefire. Further, also expressed concern at the absence of the Israeli ex officio representative and urged the Israeli Parliament to re-engage constructively with the Committee. Finally, he welcomed the proposal for a Committee retreat and expressed Kenya's willingness to contribute to its deliberations.

iii. Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law

297.The Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL) met on 21st October 2025. The meeting was chaired by Mr. A. Farrugia (Malta) , President of the Committee.

298.The Committee heard an update on parliamentary efforts in Thailand to end statelessness and protect refugees. Recent legislative action has led the government to decide to simplify and streamline the application process for Thai nationality or permanent residency for about 480,000 stateless people. In addition, the government had adopted a resolution that would grant some 81,000 long-staying refugees from Myanmar the right to work in Thailand.

299.The Committee also heard about initiatives taken to provide assistance to former members of parliament from Afghanistan who found themselves currently at risk. It welcomed the initiatives reported by the representatives from Thailand and Malta.

300. The Committee received an update on the humanitarian situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and held a hearing with the delegation of the DRC, led by the President of the Senate of the DRC, Mr. J.-M. Sama Lukonde Kyenge.

301. The President reported to the Committee on the dire humanitarian situation that the DRC is facing. Currently, there are nearly 7.3 million internally displaced persons in the DRC, with a large majority, around 80%, in the eastern part of the country. The constant flow of displacement, temporary returns, and repeated re-displacement places a heavy burden on host communities and peripheral urban services.

302. Levels of violence targeting women and children remain high in eastern DRC, while the number of incidents involving humanitarian actors is also concerning, with 126 incidents identified between August and September 2025. This situation has been aggravated by public health emergencies, including Ebola, cholera and measles. The issue of humanitarian access was also raised as a concern, especially in areas occupied or controlled by armed groups. This continues to hamper the delivery and continuity of humanitarian operations, leaving large segments of the population without assistance.

303. The Committee called on the global parliamentary community to raise awareness on the humanitarian crisis in the DRC and to scale up action to provide financial support for ongoing activities as well as support for humanitarian assistance, particularly in the areas of food security, health, nutrition, shelter, household items and education.

304. The Committee expressed serious concerns about the devastating humanitarian landscape in the DRC, especially about how recent funding cuts to humanitarian aid globally have heavily impacted the humanitarian response in the country. In 2025, only USD 389 million of the USD 2.5 billion required for humanitarian assistance in the DRC were received.

305. Hon. John Makali, MP, a member of the Committee, delivered Kenya's intervention. He expressed Kenya's deep concern at the humanitarian situation in the DRC and its solidarity with the Congolese people. He recalled Kenya's role in supporting peace processes in the DRC, including through the Nairobi Process and the East African Community-led mediation efforts. He called for increased international support for humanitarian response in the DRC and for renewed efforts to achieve a political solution to the conflict.

306. The Committee discussed efforts towards ending statelessness, with a focus on childhood statelessness. Committee members decided that the open session of the IHL Committee at the 152nd IPU Assembly would focus on the topic of statelessness.

307.The Committee continued its work on raising awareness on key humanitarian disarmament treaties. During this session, the Committee focused its discussions on the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) . The Committee considered different measures through which parliaments can support the universalization and national implementation of the Convention and called on Member Parliaments to take up this issue in their respective institutions.

308.The Committee re-elected as its Chair Mr. A. Farrugia (Malta) for another one-year term. A vacancy remains for the Eurasia Group on this Committee.

iv. Committee on Health

309. The Committee on Health held its first meeting on 19th October 2025 with 10 members in attendance. The Committee also held a dialogue with technical partners on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) on the same day.

310. The Committee elected Ms. O. Ataniyazova (Uzbekistan) as President for a one-year term.

311. Sen. Catherine Mumma, MP, who had been elected to the Committee at the 150th Assembly in Tashkent, participated in the inaugural meeting of the Committee. Her participation reflected Kenya's strong engagement on global health issues and its commitment to the right to health.

312. Building on the IPU's work on health and the contributions of the now discontinued IPU Advisory Group on Health, the Committee discussed parliamentary engagement on universal health coverage (UHC) in follow-up to the 2019 IPU resolution Achieving universal health coverage by 2030: The role of parliaments in ensuring the right to health.

313.It covered involvement alternatives and stressed the value of adding national-level legislative action examples and best practices to global data while accounting for various national situations. While acknowledging the necessity of focusing its efforts on a small number of high-impact issues, it emphasized the value of collaboration, especially in times of crisis, and equity and resilience as cross-cutting goals.

314.The Committee requested that the IPU Secretariat propose a roadmap for implementing activities in the lead-up to the 2027 United Nations High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage.

315. The Committee further reflected on the outcomes of its dialogue with technical partners on SRHR, one of the most congested areas of healthcare due to fragmented global health architecture and funding, regressive policy environments, the

devaluation of science, and the increasing marginalization of the SRHR agenda amid concurrent crises.

316.The discussion uncovered many SRHR priorities, stressing the complexity of their interconnections and the need to link them to structural issues related to equity, resilience, and social and economic contexts. The Committee highlighted the importance of listening to and working with people, of focusing on youth and of promoting education and raising awareness.It shared examples of legislation as an instrument to protect rights, address harmful practices and improve access to SRHR services, including through harmonization at the regional level.

317.Sen. Catherine Mumma, MP, delivered Kenya's intervention in the Committee. She highlighted Kenya's progress in advancing universal health coverage, including through the enactment of the Universal Health Coverage Act, 2023, which established the legal and institutional framework for achieving UHC. She also highlighted Kenya's commitment to sexual and reproductive health and rights, including through the Reproductive Health Care Act, 2024, which guaranteed access to comprehensive reproductive health services.

318. Sen. Mumma noted that despite these legislative advances, significant challenges remained, particularly in ensuring equitable access to quality health services for marginalized and vulnerable populations. She called for increased international cooperation and solidarity in support of strengthening health systems in developing countries.

319.Finally, the Committee discussed its workplan for the coming year, including engagement on adolescent health and closer connections with parliaments through field visits.

v. High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism

320.The High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG) held its 19th meeting on 19th October 2025, chaired by Ms. M. Guerra Castillo (Mexico) .

321.Since the last Assembly, the HLAG had held a webinar on 21st August 2025, the International Day of Remembrance of and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism, entitled Education as a Tool for Prevention, Reconciliation and Empowerment. Participants from around 20 parliaments, international organizations and civil society emphasized the role of education in preventing radicalization, promoting social cohesion, and integrating victims' testimonies into educational systems.

322.IPU Secretary General Mr. M. Chungong underlined the interconnected nature of terrorism, social and environmental crises, and the need for inclusive and human rights-based responses. He commended the Group's continued dedication and praised the Chairperson's leadership in keeping the HLAG active and results-oriented.

323.Mr. Stroobants presented findings from the IEP's Ecological Threat Report showing that ecological pressures,particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa and the MENA region,are increasingly linked to conflict and instability. He explained that climate change acts as a "threat amplifier", intensifying vulnerabilities caused by food and water scarcity, weak governance and population pressures. The Sahel was identified as a global hotspot where environmental degradation, insecurity and poor governance converge, creating conditions conducive to extremist recruitment. He emphasized the importance of building resilience through the IEP's Positive Peace framework.

324.Ms. Wong reinforced these findings, describing climate change as a risk multiplier that aggravates instability and enables extremist groups to exploit resource crises and governance gaps. She shared examples from Somalia, Mali and the Sahel, where armed groups have turned environmental stress into economic and political leverage. Drawing on the UNDP's Journey to Extremism study, she noted that lack of economic opportunity, not ideology, is the main driver of recruitment into violent groups. Ms. Wong called for greater access to climate finance in fragile contexts and for reintegration programmes to include climate-resilient livelihoods.

325.The Chairperson also proposed that HLAG members undertake parliamentary field visits to countries in the Sahel as part of the Call of the Sahel initiative. These visits would allow direct engagement with national parliaments to better understand local challenges, share experiences, and strengthen cooperation on counter-terrorism and the prevention of violent extremism. The missions would aim to promote trust, visibility and joint action, particularly given the limited capacity of many Sahelian parliaments to participate in IPU activities. They would also include exchanges with community leaders, presentation of the Positive Peace framework, and exploration of how successful programmes,such as Dr. Fatima Akilu's Lafiya Sarari programme, could be replicated in other countries.

326. Hon. John Makali, MP, was appointed as facilitator for the Security priority area of the Call of the Sahel initiative. This appointment reflected Kenya's extensive experience in counter-terrorism and the prevention of violent extremism, including through the development and implementation of the National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism and the establishment of the National Counter Terrorism Centre.

327. In accepting the appointment, Hon. Makali expressed his commitment to advancing the Call of the Sahel initiative and to strengthening cooperation between the IPU and Sahelian parliaments. He highlighted the importance of a holistic approach to security that addresses the root causes of violent extremism, including poverty, inequality, exclusion and injustice.

328.On 20th October 2025, the HLAG organized a panel discussion on Migration, terrorism and transnational organized crime: Challenges and parliamentary responses.The discussion highlighted that one of today's major global challenges stems from the exploitation of displaced people and migrants,in particular unaccompanied migrant children,by criminal networks operating in vulnerable contexts. Participants noted that political and media narratives often link migration with insecurity and terrorism, obscuring real structural causes such as poverty, inequality and climate change.

329.Experts emphasized that migration should not be conflated with terrorism or insecurity, highlighting the need for approaches grounded in human rights, protection and international cooperation. They pointed to the emergence of "terror-criminal ecosystems" in regions such as the Sahel, where terrorism and organized crime increasingly overlap.

330.Representatives from the Sahel region pointed to the ongoing illicit trafficking of resources such as gold and fuel that continues to finance terrorism. They proposed creating a permanent committee within the IPU and enhancing coordination with regional mechanisms such as the Alliance of Sahel States (AES).

331.In closing, the Chair of the HLAG underscored the importance of strengthening humanitarian responses grounded in solidarity, dignity and shared responsibility. She highlighted the essential role of parliaments in enacting legislation that safeguards migrants and displaced people affected by terrorism and violent extremism. Finally, she urged the international community to place humanitarian action at the core of global security strategies, reaffirming that lasting peace requires compassion, inclusion and protection for those most affected by instability.

332.The Governing Council elected the following members to the HLAG for a four-year term ending in October 2029:—

i) African Group: Mr. K. Kabre (Burkina Faso);

ii) Eurasia Group: Two vacancies remain for this Group;

iii) Group of Latin America and the Caribbean: Mr. A. Gajadien (Suriname).

333. Hon. John Makali, MP, was re-elected to the HLAG for a four-year term ending in October 2029. His re-election reflected the high esteem in which he is held by the African Group and the wider IPU membership, and his continued commitment to the Group's work.

vi. Working Group on Science and Technology

334.Two sittings of the Working Group on Science and Technology were held: one online on 16th June 2025, and one in Geneva on 21st October 2025.

335.During its sitting on 16th June, the new Working Group members reviewed the IPU Charter on the Ethics of Science and Technology and discussed promoting it within national parliaments, particularly in emerging fields such as artificial intelligence (AI), and strengthening cooperation with the scientific community.

336.Members were briefed by the IPU Secretariat on the Science for Peace School session for parliamentary staff on Understanding artificial intelligence (AI) and its impact on parliamentary work: AI, human consciousness and ethics, held from 5th to 9th May 2025 at the Synchrotron-light for Experimental Science and Applications in the Middle East (SESAME) in Allan, Jordan.

337.During its sitting on 21st October 2025, the Working Group members held a broad discussion on strengthening parliamentary engagement with science and technology. All members present shared their respective national initiatives and institutional mechanisms in this regard.

338.They emphasized the importance of evidence-based policymaking, improving scientific literacy among legislators and ensuring equitable access to digital technologies. Members collectively underscored that technological progress should be guided by ethical principles, inclusiveness and respect for human rights.

339.Sen. Catherine Mumma, MP, a member of the Working Group, delivered Kenya's intervention. She highlighted Kenya's efforts to strengthen parliamentary engagement with science and technology, including: —

i) The establishment of the Parliamentary Research and Information Centre, which provides parliamentarians with evidence-based research and analysis on policy issues;

ii) The enactment of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2022, which established the legal and institutional framework for STI governance;

iii) The development of the Kenya Artificial Intelligence Strategy, currently under consultation, which aims to harness AI for sustainable development while mitigating its risks;

iv) The ongoing digitization of parliamentary processes, including the e-Parliament initiative, which has improved access to legislative information and enhanced citizen engagement.

340. Sen. Mumma also emphasized the importance of regional and international cooperation in science and technology governance. She called for increased support for capacity-building initiatives for parliamentarians from developing countries, particularly in the areas of AI ethics, data protection and cybersecurity.

341. The Working Group reaffirmed water as a central theme of parliamentary engagement, recognizing it as a long-standing priority, and agreed to designate water as a key thematic focus to be advanced in cooperation with the United Nations.

342. The Working Group heard a presentation from Ms. S. Koeppel, Secretary of the UN Water Convention, who shared insights on global water challenges and the role of science, data and AI in achieving sustainable and peaceful water management. She stressed that technology must be complemented by strong legislation, adequate funding and robust parliamentary oversight to ensure equitable access to clean water and sanitation.

343. She underlined that more than 60% of the world's freshwater resources are shared across borders, requiring effective cooperation and legal frameworks to prevent conflict and manage resources equitably. She invited the members to participate in the Global Workshop on AI and water technologies in May 2026 in Geneva, and in the UN Water Conference in December 2026 in the United Arab Emirates.

344. The Working Group discussed the rapid evolution of AI and its influence on all sectors such as education, healthcare, national security and electoral integrity, and underscored the need for parliaments to address both its potential opportunities and risks.

345. Members shared national experiences in promoting AI-driven innovation while regulating its ethical application, and highlighted the importance of transparency, accountability, human oversight and inclusivity in AI development and use. Members also warned that, without proper regulation, AI could exacerbate inequality and fuel misinformation.

346. The Working Group reaffirmed the IPU Charter on the Ethics of Science and Technology as a key framework guiding the ethical governance of scientific and technological progress. Recognizing the complexity and transformative impact of

AI, members agreed to develop an Annex on AI Ethics to the Charter to provide practical guidance for legislators on AI policy and lawmaking.

347. The Governing Council elected the following members to the Working Group for a four-year term ending in October 2029: —

i) Arab Group: Ms. M. Aljaghoub (Jordan);

ii) Asia-Pacific Group: Ms. S. Kiran (Fiji);

iii) Eurasia Group: Two vacancies remain for this Group;

iv) Group of Latin America and the Caribbean: Ms. B. Rodríguez (Uruguay);

v) Group of Twelve Plus: Mr. B. Akburak (Türkiye).

348. Sen. Catherine Mumma, MP, who had been a member of the Working Group since its establishment, completed her four-year mandate at the conclusion of the 151st Assembly. The Kenya Delegation expressed its profound appreciation for her contributions to the Working Group's work, including her leadership in promoting the IPU Charter on the Ethics of Science and Technology and her advocacy for the inclusion of developing country perspectives in global AI governance debates.

M. OTHER ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

i. Joint Meeting with Chairs of Geopolitical Groups

349. On 19th October 2025, the IPU Vice-President and Secretary General met with the Chairs of the geopolitical groups, the Presidents of the Standing Committees, and the Presidents of the other specialized bodies of the IPU.

350. The IPU Vice-President recalled that, following amendments to the Rules of the Assembly, the format of the meeting had been expanded to include the Presidents of all subsidiary bodies of the Governing Council. Discussions were therefore aimed at enhancing coordination and promoting synergies across the IPU's different organs.

351. The meeting addressed three substantive items: —

i) The IPU's initiatives in the area of parliamentary diplomacy and mechanisms that deal with crisis situations;

ii) The IPU priority theme for 2025 and its related amendments to the Statutes and Rules, as well as the priority theme for 2026; and

iii) Preparations for the next IPU Strategy.

352. Mr. M. Chungong, IPU Secretary General, presented an overview of IPU mechanisms aimed at addressing crisis situations and advancing parliamentary diplomacy. He outlined three main categories: institutional, political and programmatic.

353. Under institutional mechanisms, the Secretary General referred to mediation efforts in several regions, including West Africa, the South Caucasus and the Korean Peninsula; and most recently in Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. He also noted the contribution of specialized IPU bodies that focus on specific situations, such as the wars in Ukraine and in the Middle East.

354. Regarding the IPU's political mechanisms, he highlighted the role of the Standing Committees and the emergency item resolutions in mobilizing parliamentary action through political statements. Under programmatic mechanisms, he referred to activities designed to translate political commitments into practice, including capacity-building, advocacy and reconciliation initiatives.

355. In the ensuing discussion, participants underlined the need to ensure coherence, efficiency, and complementarity among existing IPU mechanisms. Several IPU officeholders supported efforts to streamline structures, avoid duplication, and make better use of existing expertise within the Organization. Others conveyed the importance of maintaining dialogue with all parties to conflict and ensuring that parliamentary diplomacy remained flexible and preventive, not merely reactive. Participants also highlighted that cross-committee coordination was needed, as well as stronger information-sharing between geopolitical groups and specialized bodies.

356. Turning to the second agenda item, the Secretary General recalled that gender equality had been selected as the IPU priority theme for 2025. He noted that this year marked several milestones, including the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 40th anniversary of the IPU Forum of Women Parliamentarians. He also announced the priority theme for 2026, which would be human rights, in recognition of the 50th anniversary of the IPU Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

357. Ms. C. López Castro (Mexico), President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, presented the amendments recently adopted to improve gender parity in the IPU Statutes and Rules. She recalled that the reforms adopted in 2024-2025 had strengthened gender balance and alternation in leadership positions,

ensured the participation of the President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians in key IPU bodies, and defined parity as an organizational objective.

358. She outlined the Bureau's new proposals aimed at reinforcing sanctions for single-sex delegations, promoting gender-balanced representation among IPU office holders, and reducing the size of delegations that lacked gender diversity. These proposals would need to be circulated among the geopolitical groups for consultation.

359. Introducing the third item, Ms. K. Jabre, Director of Programmes, presented the roadmap for the preparation of the IPU 2027-2031 Strategy, to be adopted at the 152nd Assembly in April 2026.

360. She explained that the process would be led by the Executive Committee with the support of the Secretariat and structured in two phases: an assessment phase (October-December 2025) and a development phase (January-March 2026). The methodology would include desk reviews, surveys, focus group discussions, and interviews with IPU Member Parliaments, partners and donors. The approach would be inclusive, consultative and results-oriented.

361. During the discussions, some preliminary suggestions were put forth on possible priorities for the next five-year Strategy. It was also suggested that each Standing Committee could consider channeling its draft resolutions through the relevant specialized IPU body for the annual priority theme. For example, in 2026, this process could be followed with the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law, with a view to mainstreaming human rights across the Organization's work.

362. It was also proposed that a serious re-evaluation be undertaken of the modalities for the IPU emergency item process, with a view to enhancing constructive and inclusive exchanges and making sure topical issues were adequately addressed.

363. Rt. Hon. Amason J. Kingi, EGH, MP, Speaker of the Senate and Leader of the Kenya Delegation, participated in the joint meeting in his capacity as a member of the African Group. In his intervention, he emphasized the importance of coherence and coordination among IPU bodies and urged the Secretariat to ensure that the work of subsidiary bodies is aligned with the IPU's strategic objectives and does not duplicate efforts.

364. He also expressed Kenya's strong support for the proposed priority theme for 2026 on human rights, noting that Kenya's Constitution is anchored in a robust Bill of Rights and that Kenya has been at the forefront of advancing human rights at the regional and international levels. He called for the Strategy development process to

be inclusive and consultative, ensuring that the perspectives of all Member Parliaments, particularly those from developing countries, are fully taken into account.

ii. Workshop on Breaking the Hunger Cycle

365. The workshop, held on 20th October 2025, was organized jointly with the World Health Organization (WHO), the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH), and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

366. It was moderated by Ms. C. Roth (Germany), who emphasized that food systems are under stress from conflicts, climate change and various intersecting crises, and that breaking the hunger cycle requires a focus on multisectoral legislation and policies, equity, resilience and innovation.

367. Mr. J.-L. Touadi (FAO) called for renewed efforts for the implementation of the right to food, as hunger is not declining fast enough due to persistent structural inequalities, making it a key justice and governance issue. He stressed that legislation has the power to make the invisible visible and the importance of multilateralism. Finally, he informed participants about the upcoming Third Global Parliamentary Summit against Hunger and Malnutrition to be held in 2026 in South Africa, noting that the present workshop would help to shape and inform the preparations for the Summit.

368. Ms. K. Engesveen (WHO) highlighted that most countries either lack sufficient data or are off track to achieve global nutrition targets, leading to various forms of malnutrition. She presented several interventions that parliamentarians can promote, including food labelling, restricting the marketing of unhealthy food, advocating for the taxation of sugary drinks and unhealthy food, protecting breastfeeding, and advancing food safety.

369. Ms. E.T. Muteka (Namibia) underlined that food insecurity is a serious challenge in Namibia, affecting 40% of the population, due to climate shocks, rising food prices and high unemployment rates. Women, children under five, subsistence farmers and the elderly are among the most affected groups. She further stressed the gender dimension of food security and the situation of remote rural areas. She highlighted priorities for parliamentary action, including strengthening legislation and oversight, improving access to food at the community level, building resilience, and cooperating at the regional and international levels.

370. Ms. M. del Socorro Núñez Monreal (Mexico) outlined Mexico's progress on food security and nutrition through a series of measures, including stronger legislation

and regulations to address the double burden of malnutrition, taxes on sugar-sweetened beverages, social programmes to reduce poverty, and initiatives targeting indigenous communities and marginalized rural populations.

371. Ms. S. Panzani (Scaling Up Nutrition Movement) described the current context marked by fewer resources and increased competition for funds across sectors. However, unprecedented commitment was shown at the 2025 Nutrition for Growth Summit, testifying that nutrition is worth investing in. She called on parliamentarians to support implementation of nutrition commitments, and shared examples of successful multisectoral efforts and parliamentary engagement at the national and regional levels.

372. Parliamentarians and representatives from Bahrain, Burkina Faso, Canada, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Namibia, Peru, the Philippines, the Russian Federation, and the Andean Parliament took the floor in the discussion. They highlighted the impacts of climate change, conflict, population displacement and trade policies on food security and nutrition, as well as the lack of access to means of production for indigenous populations and women. The issue of methane and its impact on climate change was also raised. Examples of actions to improve nutrition for children and women—especially pregnant and breastfeeding women—were shared, including education, welfare programmes, agriculture reforms, and legislation.

373. Hon. Reuben Kiborek, MP, delivered Kenya's intervention in the workshop. He highlighted the severe impacts of the ongoing drought in the Horn of Africa on food security and nutrition, with millions of Kenyans facing acute food insecurity. He outlined Kenya's efforts to address food security, including: —

i) The National Food and Nutrition Security Policy, which provides a framework for coordinated action across sectors;

ii) The Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO), which develops climate-resilient crop varieties and livestock breeds;

iii) The National Drought Management Authority, which implements early warning systems and emergency response programmes;

iv) The School Meals Programme, which provides nutritious meals to millions of schoolchildren while supporting local farmers through home-grown school feeding.

374. Hon. Kiborek called for increased international cooperation and solidarity in support of food security and nutrition, particularly for countries in the Horn of Africa facing recurrent climate shocks. He also expressed Kenya's support for the Third

Global Parliamentary Summit against Hunger and Malnutrition and committed to Kenya's active participation in its preparations.

iii. Panel Discussion on Migration, Terrorism and Transnational Organized Crime

375.On 20th October 2025, the High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG) held a panel discussion to examine the complex intersection between migration, terrorism and transnational organized crime. The session brought together over 30 participants, including parliamentarians from various countries, as well as experts from specialized organizations and academia.

376.The discussion highlighted that one of today's major global challenges stems from the exploitation of displaced people and migrants,in particular unaccompanied migrant children,by criminal networks operating in vulnerable contexts. Participants noted that political and media narratives often link migration with insecurity and terrorism, obscuring real structural causes such as poverty, inequality and climate change.

377. Experts emphasized that migration should not be conflated with terrorism or insecurity, highlighting the need for approaches grounded in human rights, protection and international cooperation. They pointed to the emergence of "terror-criminal ecosystems" in regions such as the Sahel, where terrorism and organized crime increasingly overlap.

378.The discussion also underscored that effective migration governance should focus on protection, prevention and partnership, while promoting institutional resilience, social cohesion, and economic opportunity to address the root causes of radicalization.

379. Representatives from the Sahel region pointed to the ongoing illicit trafficking of resources such as gold and fuel that continues to finance terrorism. They proposed creating a permanent committee within the IPU and enhancing coordination with regional mechanisms such as the Alliance of Sahel States (AES).

380.Delegates from other regions, including Asia and Europe, stressed the high human and economic costs of terrorism and called for harmonized legal frameworks, anti-corruption measures, and stronger protection for vulnerable groups.

381. Hon. John Makali, MP, as facilitator for the Security priority area of the Call of the Sahel initiative, delivered a keynote intervention in the panel discussion. He shared Kenya's extensive experience in countering terrorism and violent extremism, highlighting the following key lessons: —

i) Kenya's National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism emphasizes the importance of engaging all sectors of society—government, civil society, religious leaders, women, youth and the private sector—in prevention efforts.

ii) The Nyumba Kumi (Ten Households) initiative has strengthened community-police partnerships and improved information-sharing, enabling early detection and prevention of terrorist activities.

iii) Kenya has developed comprehensive programmes for the rehabilitation and reintegration of former violent extremists, including through the National Counter Terrorism Centre and partnerships with civil society organizations.

iv) Effective prevention requires addressing the root causes of violent extremism, including poverty, inequality, exclusion, injustice and lack of opportunity. Kenya's "Komesha Ugaidi" (Stop Terrorism) campaign combines security measures with development interventions in at-risk communities.

382. Hon. Makali also emphasized the nexus between climate change and violent extremism, noting that environmental degradation, resource scarcity and livelihood losses in arid and semi-arid lands have created conditions conducive to radicalization and recruitment. He called for increased investment in climate-resilient livelihoods and sustainable development in fragile and conflict-affected regions.

383. In closing, the Chair of the HLAG, Ms. M. Guerra Castillo, underscored the importance of strengthening humanitarian responses grounded in solidarity, dignity and shared responsibility. She highlighted the essential role of parliaments in enacting legislation that safeguards migrants and displaced people affected by terrorism and violent extremism. Finally, she urged the international community to place humanitarian action at the core of global security strategies, reaffirming that lasting peace requires compassion, inclusion and protection for those most affected by instability.

iv. Workshop on Triple Win: Protecting Climate, Health and Economy by Cutting Methane

384.The workshop, held on 21st October 2025, brought together 48 participants, including 42 parliamentarians and parliamentary staff from 31 countries spanning every region of the world. It was attended by one Speaker and one Deputy Speaker, along with high-level representatives from the Climate and Clean Air Coalition

(CCAC), Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH), Campaign for Nature and other partners.

385. The discussion focused on how parliaments can use their legislative, budgetary and oversight powers to accelerate methane reduction and deliver multiple benefits for climate, health and the economy.

386. Ms. M. Otto, Head of the CCAC Secretariat, underlined that "methane is our emergency brake", the fastest lever for reducing global temperatures this decade, and emphasized the need for clear policy signals, legislation and investment frameworks from parliamentarians.

387. Parliamentarians recognized the need to integrate methane reduction into national climate laws, nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and budget processes. Participants proposed that governments be required by law to inform parliaments of their NDC commitments, ensuring stronger oversight.

388. Hon. Geofrey Mulanya, MP, delivered Kenya's intervention in the workshop. He highlighted Kenya's commitment to reducing methane emissions, including through: —

i) The Climate Change Act, 2016, which provides a comprehensive legal framework for climate action, including mitigation and adaptation;

ii) The National Climate Change Action Plan 2023-2027, which sets targets for reducing emissions from key sectors, including agriculture, energy and waste;

iii) The Kenya Agricultural Livestock Research Organization's work on improved livestock feed and manure management to reduce enteric fermentation emissions;

iv) The Kenya Biogas Programme, which has installed over 18,000 domestic biogas digesters, reducing methane emissions from animal waste while providing clean energy for cooking and lighting.

389.Hon. Mulanya called for increased international cooperation and support for methane reduction efforts in developing countries, including through technology transfer, capacity-building and climate finance. He also expressed Kenya's support for the Global Methane Pledge and urged all countries to set ambitious methane reduction targets in their updated NDCs.

390.The workshop concluded with the shared recognition that parliamentary action is crucial for translating global methane commitments into national results.

Participants emphasized that reducing methane is a cost-effective and high-impact strategy for protecting the climate, health and economies. They agreed on the importance of continued cooperation through the IPU's project, enhancing parliamentary action on climate change: Building capacity and strengthening efforts to reduce methane emissions, funded by the Global Methane Hub.

v. Open Session on Safeguarding Humanitarian Action

391. On 21st October 2025, the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL) held an open session debate on the theme Safeguarding humanitarian action in times of armed conflict.

392. The session was chaired by the President of the Committee, Mr. A. Farrugia (Malta), and featured a panel of distinguished experts including Ms. E. Misola Richard, Legal Adviser at the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC); Ms. J. Wong, Legal Adviser for Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF); Ms. S. Howard, Director of the Geneva Global Office at the World Food Programme (WFP); and Ms. G. Morawska-Stanecka, Vice-President of the IPU and member of the IHL Committee.

393. Panellists recalled that IHL provides a legal framework that protects principled humanitarian action and imposes an obligation on States to protect humanitarian personnel as well as allowing and facilitating the rapid and unimpeded passage of impartial humanitarian assistance to civilians in need. In addition, consent to humanitarian assistance must not be refused on arbitrary grounds.

394. The panel shed light on the fact that hospitals and healthcare facilities have been the target of attacks in contemporary armed conflicts. In the case of MSF, the organization has faced additional challenges to providing impartial healthcare in conflict zones controlled or occupied by non-State armed groups due to counterterrorism sanctions and measures imposed on them. This has led to MSF staff members being arrested and/or criminally charged for allegedly "supporting terrorism".

395. Panellists and participants raised the issue of the recent funding cuts to humanitarian aid globally, which have heavily impacted the delivery of humanitarian aid by organizations such as WFP. In 2025, WFP has seen a 40% shortfall of its funding in comparison to 2024, which has created substantial challenges for its operations to provide food assistance to persons affected by armed conflict, particularly those facing famine in Sudan and Gaza.

396. Participants highlighted that parliamentarians play a key role in ensuring that laws and policies reflect IHL norms with a view to protecting humanitarian action. They

agreed that humanitarian aid must not be used as a weapon of war, and that it is essential to raise the humanitarian agenda in parliament and more broadly at the IPU.

397. Participants were also encouraged to call on their governments to endorse the recently launched Declaration for the Protection of Humanitarian Personnel.

398. Hon. Rebeca Tonkei,MP delivered Kenya's intervention in the open session. She reaffirmed Kenya's commitment to international humanitarian law and to the protection of humanitarian personnel. She highlighted Kenya's role as a humanitarian hub in the East and Horn of Africa region, hosting the headquarters of several UN agencies and international NGOs, and providing critical support for humanitarian operations in Somalia, South Sudan and the broader region.

399. She called for strengthened international cooperation to ensure the protection of humanitarian personnel and the delivery of impartial humanitarian assistance. She also expressed Kenya's support for the Global Initiative to Galvanize Political Commitment to International Humanitarian Law and urged all countries to join and meaningfully engage in the initiative.

vi. Workshop on Parliaments Taking Action on AI

400.The workshop brought together parliamentarians from multiple countries to discuss the challenges and opportunities of artificial intelligence governance. It was moderated by Ms. S. Teleanu (DiploFoundation), with opening remarks from Mr. H. Ebrahim (Bahrain) and Mr. R. Edwards (Chile).

401. Five central themes emerged from the discussions, revealing both the complexity of the task ahead and the commitment of legislative bodies to responsibly address this transformative technology.

402.Theme 1: Understanding and capacity-building – A recurring theme was the critical need for parliamentary capacity development. Effective AI governance requires legislators to have sufficient technical literacy, not to become programmers, but to understand enough to ask the right questions. This knowledge gap presents a significant challenge, as parliamentarians must evaluate complex technological systems while ensuring accountability and transparency.

403.A delegate from the Netherlands noted that effective oversight requires lawmakers to understand AI systems adequately, even if they do not have advanced technical expertise. This foundation of understanding was consistently identified as the prerequisite for all subsequent legislative and oversight activities.

404.Theme 2: AI governance approaches – Participants discussed various regulatory frameworks being adopted globally, with particular attention to risk-based approaches that distinguish between high-risk and low-risk AI applications.

405.Chile and several other countries, drawing on the European Union's risk-based model for AI governance, are implementing systems that apply stricter requirements for AI used in sensitive areas such as healthcare, justice and public administration, while maintaining lighter regulations for lower-risk applications.

406. The debate revealed tension between horizontal frameworks that establish broad national AI policies and sector-specific legislation targeting particular use cases such as autonomous vehicles or copyright protection. A delegate from Argentina highlighted a fundamental challenge: territorial regulation struggles to govern a global phenomenon, potentially creating competitive disadvantages for regions with stricter rules while failing to adequately control transnational AI systems.

407.Theme 3: Education and human capital – The presentation on educational AI integration in Bahrain provided a concrete example of systemic implementation. The proposed model connects ministries, educational institutions, teachers, students and parents through an integrated platform that personalizes learning, generates adaptive assessments, and provides system-wide analytics while maintaining human oversight.

408. This approach exemplifies the dual focus on AI as both a topic for curricula and a tool for educational delivery. Multiple speakers emphasized that preparing future generations for an AI-integrated world requires immediate action in educational systems, as students will constitute the workforce navigating increasingly automated environments.

409.Theme 4: Parliamentary action and oversight – Discussions revealed diverse approaches to parliamentary engagement with AI: —

i) India: A delegate described the government's comprehensive "AI for All" vision, supported by parliamentary committees examining AI's multifaceted impacts and digital platforms enhancing legislative accessibility;

ii) Türkiye: A delegate highlighted the establishment of a dedicated parliamentary AI commission in 2024.

410.IPU research has also identified four main areas of parliamentary action: —

i) Establishing foundational structures such as committees and working groups;

ii) Drafting and adopting AI-specific legislation;

iii) Exercising oversight through ministerial questioning and public hearings;

iv) Organizing multi- stakeholder consultations to ensure broad participation in AI policy development.

411. Theme 5: International cooperation – Perhaps the most emphatic consensus emerged around the necessity of global collaboration. Given that AI development and infrastructure remain concentrated in the United States and China, speakers stressed that international cooperation is essential to prevent widening technological and economic divides.

412. Chile emphasized that countries must work together to ensure open-source alternatives and shared standards, warning that failure to cooperate will result in a world with greater inequalities. References to multilateral initiatives including the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence, UNESCO frameworks, and the upcoming AI Impact Summit in India demonstrated growing recognition that effective AI governance transcends national boundaries and requires coordinated international approaches to establish interoperable systems, common ethical standards, and equitable access to AI benefits.

413. Sen. Catherine Mumma, MP, delivered Kenya's intervention in the workshop. She highlighted Kenya's ongoing efforts to develop a national AI strategy and to strengthen parliamentary capacity for AI governance. She emphasized the importance of inclusive and participatory approaches to AI policy development, ensuring that the voices of marginalized and vulnerable communities are heard and their rights protected.

414. She called for increased international cooperation and solidarity in AI governance, particularly in supporting developing countries to build their capacity and to participate meaningfully in global AI policy debates. She also expressed Kenya's support for the development of the Annex on AI Ethics to the IPU Charter and committed to contributing to its drafting.

vii. Interfaith Workshop on Countering Intolerance

415.The workshop introduced parliamentarians to religious literacy, religious engagement and inclusive citizenship as tools to help parliamentarians counter intolerance, celebrate religious diversity, uphold freedom of religion or belief, and foster more peaceful and inclusive societies. It shared good practice examples from parliamentary and non-parliamentary actors in applying these

tools in different contexts.The workshop was designed as a precursor to a toolkit on religious literacy and inclusive citizenship which the IPU was developing.

416. Ms. A. Filip, IPU Director of the Division for Member Parliaments and External Relations, offered opening remarks and situated the workshop within the broader framing of the IPU's work on interfaith dialogue. The workshop was moderated by Ms. S. Markiewicz, IPU Advisor for Interfaith Dialogue.

417.Participants highlighted the importance of robust education on religions and beliefs, as well as on civics, values, democracy and human rights, especially from an early age, to foster societies that celebrate diversity and are more inclusive. It was also highlighted that good religious education could flourish where religious freedom was upheld.

418. Participants further underlined that religious engagement begins with the premise that secular actors acknowledge the impact of religion on societies and the need to partner with faith actors to advance their own agendas. It was noted that inclusive citizenship requires a culture of comprehensive participation in public life.

419. Good practice examples showcased included projects encouraging values-driven reform efforts within a sectarian system; parliamentary diplomacy to foster interfaith dialogue, solidarity and reconciliation; and human rights promotion, especially freedom of religion or belief, as a measure to make societies more inclusive.

420. Hon. Reuben Kiborek, MP, delivered Kenya's intervention in the workshop. He highlighted Kenya's constitutional commitment to freedom of religion or belief and its rich tradition of interfaith dialogue and cooperation. He noted that Kenya is home to diverse religious communities, Christian, Muslim, Hindu, and traditional African religions, that have historically coexisted peacefully and collaborated on issues of common concern.

421. He shared examples of parliamentary engagement in interfaith dialogue, including: —

i) The Parliamentary Caucus on Interfaith Dialogue, which brings together MPs from different religious backgrounds to promote understanding and cooperation;

ii) The National Cohesion and Integration Commission, which works to prevent ethnic and religious conflict and promote national unity;

iii) The Religious Leaders' Forum, which provides a platform for religious leaders to engage with the government on policy issues.

422. Hon. Kiborek called for strengthened interfaith cooperation at the global level and expressed Kenya's support for the IPU's work on interfaith dialogue, including the development of the toolkit on religious literacy and inclusive citizenship.

viii. Workshop on Children's Rights in the Digital Environment

423.The workshop on Children's rights in the digital environment, held on 21st October 2025, was organized in collaboration with the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

424. Ms. S. Kiladze, Chairperson of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, set the tone by recognizing that digital environments pose both immense opportunities and serious risks to children, with increasing violations of children's rights online compared to previous generations. She stressed that a number of the problems identified include AI-driven harm (e.g., chatbot-related suicides), skyrocketing child sexual abuse online, cyberbullying, and limited rehabilitation services for victims.

425. Mr. S.A. Ndiaye (Senegal) suggested four major governance models including: centralized, market-driven, multi-stakeholder (public, private and civil society), and distributed (standard- and norm-based). He stressed broad support for multi-stakeholder, rights-based and risk-adaptive approaches, with parliamentary control and algorithmic transparency. He believed that international cooperation had a determining role to play due to the cross-border nature of online crimes and the global reach of digital platforms.

426. Mr. I. Annan, Director of Human Rights at the Parliament of Ghana, addressing issues related to culture, said that cultural context should shape child rights policy implementation, but must not be used to justify practices that cross red lines, such as corporal punishment. He raised concerns about children's lack of direct voice in policymaking, with suggestions for increasing their involvement in developing relevant laws and policies. He advocated for responsible parental engagement and digital literacy for parents and teachers, and acknowledged the difficulty in policing and investigating online crimes against children due to their scale and complexity.

427. Both speakers underscored that parliaments were crucial actors in protecting child rights, with functions spanning legislation, oversight, budgeting and public advocacy. They called for comprehensive laws, annual parliamentary reporting on child rights, budget prioritization, and the creation and monitoring of national strategies and frameworks for online child protection.

428.Hon. Rebecca Tonkei, MP, delivered Kenya's intervention in the workshop. She highlighted Kenya's efforts to protect children's rights in the digital environment, including: —

i) The Children Act, 2022, which provides comprehensive protection for children's rights, including provisions addressing online exploitation and abuse;

ii) The Computer Misuse and Cybercrimes Act, 2018, which criminalizes cyber harassment, cyber stalking and child online exploitation;

iii) The National KE-CIRT/CC, Kenya's national computer incident response team, which investigates and responds to cybercrimes, including those targeting children;

iv) The National Online Safety Campaign, which raises awareness among children, parents and educators about online risks and safety measures.

429. Hon. Tonkei called for strengthened international cooperation to combat online crimes against children, noting the transnational nature of these crimes and the need for harmonized legal frameworks, joint investigations, and information-sharing. She also emphasized the importance of including children's voices in policymaking and ensuring that laws and policies are responsive to their needs and experiences.

ix. Workshop on Parliamentary Mediation

430.This workshop, held on 22nd October 2025, examined the unique role of parliamentarians in mediation and conflict resolution. It sought to strengthen participants' understanding of mediation principles and consider how these might be reframed to fit the parliamentary mandate, address practical challenges, and find innovative approaches to fostering sustainable peace through inclusive, people-centred dialogue.

431. Opening the session, Ms. Ş. Pavey, Senior Adviser, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and former Member of the Turkish Parliament, emphasized the preventive value of mediation in averting humanitarian crises and underscored the importance of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.

432. Drawing on her parliamentary and UN experience, she illustrated how parliamentarians can act as mediators within their constituencies. She shared examples of successful initiatives such as the creation of the Australian Turkish Friendship Association, building on the legacy of reconciliation after the Gallipoli campaign of 1915, and a local mediation effort in eastern Sudan where community

and religious leaders secured land for displaced persons through trust and moral authority. She concluded that parliamentarians are natural mediators because of their daily engagement in dialogue and representation.

433. Joining remotely, Mr. D. Kiniger-Passigli, Vice-President of the World Academy of Art and Science and founder of the New Peace Offensive initiative, discussed the conceptual and ethical foundations of mediation. He stressed that parliamentarians serve as vital links between national institutions and local communities, and that genuine peace results from sustained, trust-based engagement rather than quick agreements.

434. Referring to the UN Charter, he identified key "golden rules": consent, impartiality, preparedness, respect for context, and ensuring ownership of outcomes by the parties themselves. He also underlined the role of science, culture and education in rebuilding trust amid the erosion of multilateralism.

435.Ms. S. Naraghi Anderlini, founder and CEO of the International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN), focused on inclusive mediation and the need to reframe peace processes to better integrate local and civil-society actors. She cautioned against models that reward violence or prioritize armed groups over community peacebuilders, emphasizing that women who are often the first to mediate crises are still routinely excluded from formal processes.

436. Drawing from experiences in Colombia, Somalia and Yemen, she argued that sustainable peace depends on both political will and inclusivity, without which agreements lack legitimacy and public support. She noted that parliamentarians are uniquely positioned to bridge divides between State institutions and communities, counter misinformation, and promote diplomacy and human security over coercive measures.

437.The ensuing discussion reflected a broad range of parliamentary perspectives on mediation in practice. Participants shared experiences of working in complex political and cultural environments, highlighting both the potential and the constraints of parliamentary engagement in peacebuilding. Examples illustrated the courage and persistence required to sustain dialogue under pressure, including efforts to defuse religious tensions through engagement, even with hardline community figures, and regional mediation initiatives to ease border disputes in South-East Asia.

438. The discussion further underlined the value of integrating humanitarian and legal principles into peace processes. Respect for international humanitarian law and human rights, along with stronger inclusion of women and civil-society representatives in peace efforts, were viewed as essential for building confidence among parties and for creating the conditions necessary for lasting peace.

439.Participants highlighted that mediation requires not only technical expertise but also a shift in mindset. As elected representatives, parliamentarians often work within partisan frameworks, yet effective mediation demands neutrality, empathy and trust-building across divides. It was noted that sustainable peace cannot rely solely on individual leadership but must be supported by resilient and inclusive institutions capable of sustaining dialogue and reconciliation over time.Participants called for practical tools to help parliamentarians apply mediation principles and efficiently perform that role.

440. Rt. Hon. Amason J. Kingi, EGH, MP, Speaker of the Senate and Leader of the Kenya Delegation, delivered Kenya's intervention in the workshop. He highlighted Kenya's extensive experience in mediation and conflict resolution, including: —

i) The National Dialogue and Reconciliation process following the 2007-2008 post-election violence, mediated by H.E. Kofi Annan and the Panel of Eminent African Personalities;

ii) The Building Bridges Initiative, a national dialogue process aimed at addressing long-standing governance challenges and promoting national cohesion;

iii) Kenya's role as a mediator in regional conflicts, including through the IGAD-led peace process for South Sudan and the Nairobi Process for the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

441.The Speaker emphasized that parliamentary mediation is distinct from executive mediation, as parliamentarians bring unique assets—proximity to constituents, cross-party relationships, and legitimacy derived from electoral mandate. He called for the IPU to develop a dedicated programme on parliamentary mediation, including training modules, toolkits and peer-learning exchanges.

442. The debate concluded by reaffirming that parliamentary mediation is both a privilege and a responsibility. By drawing on their legitimacy, public trust and proximity to citizens, parliamentarians can act as credible facilitators of dialogue, bridging the gap between political actors and local communities and contributing meaningfully to sustainable, inclusive peace.

x. Parity Debate on Gender Equality and Equal Care

443. On 22nd October 2025, the Forum of Women Parliamentarians organized a parity debate with 88 participants, including 30 women and 16 men parliamentarians from 30 countries. Ms. T. Vardanyan (Armenia) , First Vice-President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, presided over the session.

445. Participants lamented the stagnation in the progress of women's participation in parliament, with the proportion of women MPs around the world remaining at about 27%. They also highlighted the persistent prevalence of sexism, harassment and violence against women in politics.

446. Turning to solutions, they shared insights from initiatives carried out in their respective countries and parliaments, not only to enhance women's participation and address gender-based violence but also to transform parliamentary institutions into gender-sensitive and equal care-friendly workplaces for both men and women MPs and staff.

447. Sharing of good practices focused on: —

i) Several parliaments have introduced parental leave policies for MPs, enabling both mothers and fathers to balance their parliamentary duties with care responsibilities;

ii) The provision of on-site childcare facilities and breastfeeding rooms in parliament buildings;

iii) Measures to recognize, reduce and redistribute unpaid care work, including through flexible working hours, proxy voting, and support for carers;

iv) Measures to ensure gender balance in leadership positions, including through alternation rules, dual leadership, and quotas.

448. The debate concluded with a call to action for parliamentarians to join the IPU's Achieving gender equality, action by action campaign and to strengthen their efforts in championing gender equality and equal care responsibilities in their respective institutions.

449. Hon. Rebeka Tonkei MP, delivered Kenya's intervention in the parity debate. She highlighted Kenya's progress in advancing gender equality in parliament, including: —

i) The constitutional requirement that not more than two-thirds of the members of elective or appointive bodies shall be of the same gender;

ii) The establishment of the Women's Parliamentary Caucus, which advocates for gender-responsive legislation and policies;

ii) The ongoing efforts to develop a Parliamentary Gender Policy that addresses sexual harassment, promotes work-life balance, and ensures equal opportunities for women and men in all aspects of parliamentary work.

450. Hon. Tonkei also acknowledged the challenges that remain, including the persistent underrepresentation of women in elective positions and the prevalence of sexism and harassment. She called for sustained commitment and collective action by women and men parliamentarians to achieve gender equality in politics and society.

N. DECLARATIONS AND RESOLUTIONS OF THE 151ST IPU ASSEMBLY

i. Geneva Declaration on Upholding Humanitarian Norms

451. At the concluding sitting on 23 October 2025, Ms. H.P. Manyeneng (Botswana) and Mr. L. Wehrli (Switzerland) introduced the Geneva Declaration on "Upholding humanitarian norms and supporting humanitarian action in times of crisis." The Assembly unanimously endorsed the Declaration.

452. The Declaration reaffirmed that IHL was designed to ensure a balance between the principles of humanity and military necessity, and that the 1949 Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols represent the minimum standards of common humanity in the battlefield.

453. The Declaration pledged parliamentarians to work to: strengthen the current IHL legal framework and its enforcement; prevent violations of IHL; support the provision of principled humanitarian action; and strengthen the global humanitarian ecosystem.

ii. Resolution on Illegal International Adoption

454. Mr. M. De Maegd (Belgium), co-Rapporteur of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights, presented the resolution "Recognizing and supporting the victims of illegal international adoption and taking measures to prevent this practice."

455. The Assembly adopted the resolution, with opposition expressed by the Russian Federation and a reservation on the whole text expressed by Belarus.

456. The resolution urged States to formally acknowledge the existence of illegal intercountry adoptions and implement necessary legal, administrative and investigative measures. It called upon parliaments to conduct independent investigations, strengthen international cooperation, and provide support and remedies for victims.

iii. Emergency Item Resolution

457. Mr. H. Aden Gueddi (Djibouti), rapporteur of the drafting committee, introduced the emergency item resolution on "Parliamentary action against transnational organized crime, cybercrime and hybrid threats to democracy and human security."

458. The Assembly unanimously adopted the resolution, which called for comprehensive, coordinated efforts among parliaments to safeguard democratic values and human rights against these evolving threats.

iv. IPU Leadership Statement on Madagascar

459. The IPU leadership issued a statement expressing deep concern about the military takeover in Madagascar and the suspension of the Constitution. The statement called for immediate coordinated international action and stood ready to work with the UN, SADC and African Union for a peaceful resolution.

460. The Kenya Delegation strongly supported the leadership statement on Madagascar. Kenya's position was informed by the African Union's principled opposition to unconstitutional changes of government and by the imperative of defending constitutional democracy on the continent. Kenya stood ready to work with regional and international partners to support a peaceful resolution of the crisis and the restoration of constitutional order in Madagascar.

O. RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE KENYA DELEGATION

461. The Kenya Parliament Delegation to the 151st Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Assembly and related meetings, pursuant to Article 7 of the IPU Statutes, urges the two Houses of Parliament to:

i) Note this Report; and

ii) Follow up on the implementation of the Geneva Declaration and Resolutions of the 151st IPU Assembly and Related meetings, particularly:

(i) The Geneva Declaration on Upholding Humanitarian Norms and Supporting Humanitarian Action, with particular attention to strengthening national legislation on international humanitarian law;

(ii) The Resolution on Recognizing and Supporting Victims of Illegal International Adoption, given Kenya's role as a co-Rapporteur for the next resolution on inclusive social development for persons with disabilities;

(iii) The Emergency Item Resolution on Transnational Organized Crime, Cybercrime and Hybrid Threats, given their relevance to Kenya's national security priorities; and

(iv) The Motion on Electing the First Woman as UN Secretary-General, supporting gender parity in international leadership positions.

462. The delegation further recommends that Parliament:

i) Continue to support Kenya's active participation in IPU bodies, including the Committee on Health and the Working Group on Science and Technology;

ii) Consider ratification and domestication of pending international humanitarian law instruments;

iii) Strengthen parliamentary oversight of defense spending in line with IPU recommendations; and

iv) Enhance youth and women's participation in parliamentary delegations to IPU Assemblies.