



Inter-Parliamentary Union

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IPU Statement

Mr. Saber Chowdhury, IPU President

Parliamentary Meeting on the
occasion of the UN
Climate Change Conference

Marrakech, 13 November 2016

Hon. President of the House of Councilors of the Kingdom of Morocco,
Hon. Speakers and Deputy Speakers of Parliaments, Fellow parliamentarians,
Ladies and gentlemen,

A very warm welcome to you all. Thank you for joining this Parliamentary Meeting jointly organized by the Moroccan Parliament and the Inter-Parliamentary Union. Let me also express my thanks and appreciation to our Moroccan hosts for the arrangements and for receiving us with such warm hospitality.

This meeting is taking place at a critical time as policymakers and practitioners seek to implement and put into practice the transformative Paris Agreement on climate change. The fact that the Agreement came into force less than a year after it was agreed is an encouraging sign that so many countries see climate change as a priority. It is even more encouraging that some of the largest greenhouse gas emitters have deposited their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession. In some of these countries parliaments played a key role in this process and I hope that during the meeting today we will hear about the engagement of your parliament.

Once the Paris Agreement is ratified, parliaments will have an even more important role in making sure that its provisions are translated into national laws and that adequate budget allocations are made to support their implementation. Parliaments will play a critical role in ensuring accountability and making sure that actions taken by the government make change on the ground. Last but certainly not least, members of parliament will be key in ensuring that everybody everywhere, including those most marginalized, benefits from our collective response to climate change.

The IPU has already taken steps to inspire parliamentary action on climate change. Early this year our 170 members adopted the Parliamentary Action Plan on Climate Change. Its main purpose is to galvanize political input, participation, follow-up and oversight by parliaments during the implementation of the Paris Agreement. Our meeting today will try to shed light on concrete ways in which parliaments can implement the recommendations of this plan. We will hear from a number of prominent experts and politicians. Equally important, we will hear from you.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We have the great honor of welcoming among us today Ms. Patricia Espinosa, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Ms. Espinoza will address us shortly to reflect on the opportunities presented by the new era in climate change negotiations following the Paris Agreement.

Madam Executive Secretary, on behalf of the entire global parliamentary community embodied in the Inter-Parliamentary Union, I wish to thank you for joining us today. The panel discussion that will follow Ms. Espinosa's presentation will try to define ways in which parliaments can support and implement the objectives of the Paris Agreement and the vision of the new era that it has brought about. The focus will be on legislation as a critical first step to translate the provisions of Paris into the national legal framework. We will have a distinguished panel of experts and parliamentarians that will reflect on this, including from the perspective of Nationally Determined Contributions and renewable energy. Very importantly for us parliamentarians, the panel will also look into ways to work across political party lines and create alliances to take this agenda forward.

We are also privileged to have with us today Ms. Jacqueline McGlade, Chief Scientist of the United Nations Environment Programme, who will join us after lunch. Ms. McGlade will speak about current and emerging challenges related to conflict and migration induced by climate change. Many of us in this room come from countries that strongly feel these effects of climate change.

Ms. McGlade's presentation will be followed by a panel that will discuss more deeply the various social impacts of climate change in different countries and regions. The distinguished panel of high-level experts and parliamentarians will focus on inequalities and how they get further exacerbated with climate change. Particular attention will be paid to the representative role of parliaments in this regard and ways to ensure better consultation with all citizens, including the most marginalized, in creation of climate change policies.

At the end of our deliberations, I hope that we will be able to reach consensus on the outcome document drafted by Moroccan Senator, Mr. Ahmed Touizi. The proposed text sends a clear political message to government negotiators and is also a rallying call to action for our global parliamentary community. Importantly, it will give us all something to build upon as we go home to our parliaments and continue our work to implement the Paris Agreement.

It is my hope that our debates will be frank, focused and productive – true to best parliamentary traditions. I look forward to the sessions ahead and I wish you a very successful meeting.