

Cooperation with the United Nations system

List of activities undertaken by the IPU between 15 March and 15 September 2017

*Noted by the IPU Governing Council at its 201st session
(St. Petersburg, 18 October 2017)*

Democracy and human rights

On 20 April, the IPU participated in the UN University event *The Rise of Nationalist Politics and Policy Implications for Migration* held at UN Headquarters in New York. Over the summer, the IPU and the Office of the President of the General Assembly began consultations for the 2018 UN-IPU Parliamentary Hearing, which will provide a major contribution to the inter-governmental negotiations of the Global Compact on Migration.

The IPU participated in the 35th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) held from 6 to 23 June 2017. The IPU was involved in the organization of two side events and made two official statements at this session.

The first side event was a high-level public dialogue on 12 June on the linkages between the work of parliaments and the independence of the judiciary. The event was organized jointly with the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) and the Albert Hirschman Centre on Democracy at the Graduate Institute of Geneva, with the support of the Permanent Missions of Italy, Japan, Mexico and the United Kingdom.

The second event took place on 20 June and was organized by the Universal Rights Group and the Permanent Mission of Georgia in collaboration with the IPU. It focused on the role of parliaments in ensuring effective national implementation of the recommendations of the UN human rights mechanisms, including UNHRC and its Universal Periodic Review. Participants underscored the need for stronger parliamentary capacity-building on human rights, systematic collection of good parliamentary practice, and enhanced engagement between the UN human rights mechanisms and parliaments.

On 23 June, UNHRC adopted a resolution encouraging closer involvement of parliaments in its work. The resolution requested the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to prepare a study in cooperation with the IPU on how to promote and enhance synergies between parliaments and the work of UNHRC and its Universal Periodic Review.

On 29 June, the IPU participated in a multi-stakeholder consultation organized jointly by UNESCO and OHCHR on strengthening the implementation of the UN plan of action on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity. This issue has recently gained prominence within the framework of SDG 16, which highlights the protection of fundamental freedoms and public access to information.

The IPU attended the 106th Session of the International Labour Conference held from 5 to 16 June 2017, including the event organized in Geneva on 12 June to mark the World Day Against Child Labour, held under the theme *In conflicts and disasters, protect children from child labour*.

The role of parliaments was highlighted in the UN General Assembly (UNGA) modalities resolution for a new Global Compact for safe, orderly and regular migration. On 18 April, the IPU participated in a panel during the IOM International Dialogue on Migration on *Strengthening international cooperation on and governance of migration in 2018*. The IPU also facilitated the participation of 20 MPs in the UNGA thematic session on the economic aspects of migration held in New York on 24 and 25 July, and in a multi-stakeholder hearing on 26 July.

On 15 September, the IPU organized events in Geneva and in New York in cooperation with the United Nations to mark the 10th anniversary of the International Day of Democracy and the 20th anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Democracy.

Preparations for the second IPU-UNDP Global Parliamentary Report proceeded on schedule with a view to its launch at the 137th IPU Assembly. The focus of this edition is the oversight function of parliaments.

The IPU took part in an expert meeting held in Norway in May 2017 and contributed to discussions led by the UNDP Oslo Governance Centre on SDG 16 indicators.

UNDP and the IPU continued their joint project of assistance to the Parliament of Myanmar and began collaboration in support of the Parliament of Georgia.

Gender equality and youth empowerment

The IPU Secretary General and the UN Women Executive Director launched a new edition of the IPU-UN Women *Map of Women in Politics* on 15 March at the 61st session of the Commission of the Status of Women held in New York. The IPU organized three side events with its partners: on 14 March with the Permanent Mission of Canada, and on 16 March – one with UNICEF and one with UNDP. On 17 March, the IPU and UN Women held the usual full-day Parliamentary Meeting on the economic empowerment of women. It was attended by 200 MPs.

In the context of the June UNHRC session, the IPU together with the National Democratic Institute and the Permanent Missions of Sweden and Sierra Leone, organized a side event on violence against women in politics. The side event served as a platform for interaction with the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women on the causes and consequences of such violence. The IPU also contributed with an oral intervention to the UN Working Group on discrimination against women in law and in practice during the interactive dialogue held at the Human Rights Council session.

The IPU has continued to engage with the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). On 3 July, the IPU briefed the Committee on the state of women's participation in politics in the countries under review, and on the level of parliamentary engagement in the CEDAW reporting process in the concerned countries.

The IPU and UN Women have continued their support to the Grand National Assembly of Turkey in the area of gender equality.

On 25 and 26 April, the IPU partnered with UNDP and the Parliament of Sri Lanka to jointly convene in Colombo (Sri Lanka) a Regional Meeting of Young Parliamentarians from the Asia-Pacific region on *The role of young parliamentarians in advancing inclusive and peaceful societies and preventing violent extremism*. Fifty young MPs from 11 countries, as well as dozens of civil society youth leaders, attended. They discussed region-specific issues pertaining to violent extremism and identified actions for its prevention. The discussions also highlighted the importance of SDG 16 and the enhancement of political institutions as a powerful way to address the drivers of violent extremism.

On 12 July, the IPU submitted a research paper entitled *Youth participation in parliaments and peace and security* for the UN Secretary-General's Progress Study on Security Council Resolution 2250 (Youth, Peace and Security). The paper built on the IPU's 2016 report *Youth participation in national parliaments* and its worldwide data and highlighted the linkages between youth participation in parliament with peace and security activities in four case studies. With a view to providing a more in-depth analysis, an extensive review of literature and semi-structured interviews with 40 respondents, including young parliamentarians and other stakeholders, was also undertaken. The paper resulted in a series of recommendations to further harness the contribution of young people to strengthening peace and security.

On 10 and 11 August, the IPU participated in the 2017 Youth Assembly at UN Headquarters in New York, a platform for youth from around the world to learn and share practical knowledge and skills with UN diplomats and other professionals. The IPU was part of a panel on empowering youth in the cultural, economic, scientific and political spheres.

International peace and security

The IPU worked with the UN Office at Geneva, the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform and other partners, to begin preparations for three joint events to take place during Geneva Peace Week (6-10 November 2017).

On 12 June, the IPU attended a briefing on the process for the negotiation of a nuclear ban treaty. The IPU Secretary General wrote on 19 June to all Member Parliaments urging them to engage in the process. The Treaty, which was adopted on 7 July, explicitly acknowledges the role of parliamentarians in helping create a nuclear-free world.

On 20 June, a representative of the Office of the Permanent Observer of the IPU to the UN in New York moderated a workshop on international judicial cooperation as part of the special forum of the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee.

On 29 June, the IPU participated in the Forum to Mark 50 years of Occupation organized in Geneva by the UN Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

Sustainable development

The IPU attended the High-Level SDG Financing Lab on 18, 23 and 24 April. The Organization participated in the Steering Committee meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (GPEDC), which includes UNDP, and took part in subsequent working group meetings on multi-stakeholder partnerships and country-level implementation of the SDGs. Initial work toward an IPU-UNDP Guidance Note for MPs on development cooperation got underway during the summer.

On 26 April, the IPU participated in a working session on Budgeting for the SDGs, organized by the International Budget Partnership and UNDP. In addition to UNDP, UNDESA and UN Women, participants included representatives from the governments of Brazil, India and Mexico.

On 1 May, the IPU made an intervention at the World Bank's launch in New York of its report entitled *Governance and the Law*.

The IPU delivered a statement at the World Oceans Conference held from 3 to 9 June at UN Headquarters in New York. The statement reflected the outcome of IPU's Annual Parliamentary Hearing held in February, which focused on oceans.

The IPU attended the 5 July launch of the UN Secretary-General's Report on repositioning the UN Development System, a major overhaul which should begin in early 2018. The UN Deputy Secretary-General confirmed the organization's intention to consult broadly with other partners, including the IPU, as this report is being finalized.

On 7 July, the IPU attended the informal discussion on a General Assembly resolution on global economic governance and lobbied for inclusion of the role of parliaments.

The spring session of the IPU Committee on UN Affairs (Dhaka, 4 April), was devoted entirely to preparations for the 2017 UN High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on sustainable development, taking stock of parliamentary action and a debate on the main theme of the HLPF. The session featured UN representatives from ESCAP, UNDP and UN Women.

Subsequently, the IPU participated in the HLPF in New York (10-19 July), where 44 nations submitted their voluntary reviews on implementation of the SDGs. On July 17, 80 MPs from 36 countries participated in an official HLPF side event organized by the IPU. The IPU President, Secretary General and Ms. Petra Bayr, an Austrian MP, held a news conference on 19 July outlining MPs involvement in the HLPF and in ensuring the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. On 18 July, the IPU partnered with the Permanent Mission of Peru, IDLO and International IDEA in a side event on democratic accountability for gender equality in service delivery and poverty eradication. The IPU Secretary General addressed the plenary of the HLPF on 20 July.

The IPU facilitated the participation of a group of MPs in the UN Development Cooperation Forum held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from 6 to 9 September, and provided feedback for the meeting.

On 24 May, the IPU Secretary General delivered a speech at the General Debate of the 70th World Health Assembly. On 29 May, under the sponsorship of Austria, Bangladesh and Cameroon, the IPU and the WHO co-organized, for the second year in a row, a parliamentary meeting on the role of parliamentarians in bridging the gap between evidence and policy. It was attended by the IPU Secretary General and two members of the IPU Advisory Group on Health.

Senior-level interaction

On 3 April, during the 136th IPU Assembly in Dhaka, members of the IPU Committee on UN Affairs met with the Bangladesh UN Country Team (UNCT) in the presence of UN Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Mr. Miroslav Jenča, and visited a UNICEF project. The meeting with the Country Team was intended to highlight the potential for interaction between the United Nations and host countries' parliaments.

The IPU Secretary General met with the new UNDP Administrator, Mr. Achim Steiner, on 18 July in New York and with the UNFPA Acting Executive Director, Dr. Natalia Kanem on 17 July. He also met on 19 July with the new UN Envoy on Youth, Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake, during her very first week in her new role at the United Nations.

On 10 August, the IPU Secretary General held an initial consultation with the UN Deputy Secretary-General, Ms. Amina Mohammed, regarding preparations for a meeting of UN and IPU high-level officials in the second half of 2017. The meeting reviewed the practical modalities of interaction between the two organizations at the national and global levels.