



Inter-Parliamentary Union

For democracy. For everyone.

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Office of the
IPU Secretary General

For the Presidents
of all IPU Groups

Geneva, 6 August 2015

Dear Madam President,
Dear Mr. President,

The International Day of Democracy will be celebrated on 15 September, as it has been every year since 2008. This Day provides a special opportunity for parliaments around the world to engage citizens in discussions about parliament and democracy.

The theme chosen by the IPU for 2015 is “Public participation for democracy”. This theme offers ample space to discuss the extent to which the right to participate is respected by government and exercised by citizens, as well as ways to increase public participation in democracy.

Public participation is the bedrock upon which democracy rests. People have both rights and responsibilities to take part in democracy. This includes formal participation such as voting in elections, and also informal methods where people inform themselves about public affairs, have political conversations and demonstrate tolerance for views that are different from their own. Meanwhile, public authorities, including parliaments, have a responsibility to provide education, information and encouragement to public participation.

The IPU, parliaments and many others will use this theme to celebrate the International Day. As in the past, I encourage parliaments to organize special event in commemoration of the International Day of Democracy. More than 100 parliaments have organized such in previous years, ranging from open days to essay-writing competitions, radio programmes and parliamentary debates. In keeping with previous practice, the IPU will track all parliamentary events in 2015. You may find some interesting examples of parliamentary activities from previous International Days at www.ipu.org/idd. You may also wish to approach the local offices of the United Nations, and in particular the United Nations Development Programme, to explore the possibilities for partnership in the commemoration of this Day

I would be grateful if you could inform us in due course of activities carried out by your Parliament on the International Day of Democracy, so they can be included on the IPU website.

Yours sincerely,

Martin Chungong
Secretary General