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## Fourth Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians

# Young Parliamentarians as drivers of inclusion

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### Outcome Document

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We, over 200 participants comprising 90 young men and 30 young women parliamentarians from 51 countries, came together here in Ottawa for the Fourth Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians. The average age of the parliamentarians was 37.5. Representatives of the Government of Canada as well as representatives of international organizations, civil society organizations and private sector companies joined us, including the United Nations, the World Refugee Council, International Labour Organization, GenSqueeze, government trade authorities, the Malala Fund, Samara Canada, the Assembly of First Nations, Equal Voice, the Atkinson foundation, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, Facebook, and academic experts.

The world is more interconnected than ever before, yet we continue to witness exclusionary policies and rhetoric. As young parliamentarians, we affirmed our strong commitment to protecting and promoting inclusion of all people in social and economic policies and in democracy.

Inspired by Canada's lead on welcoming immigrants and their social, cultural, educational and economic inclusion, we agreed to make migrants' and refugees' protection a priority. Today, there are 27 million young people on the move. But for us, migrants and refugees are not numbers, they are human beings. We are gravely concerned about reports of migrants and refugees in transit being sold off in slave auctions in Libya, and strongly condemn this practice.

No one chooses where to be born. Every young person should have a place to call home, it is a basic right. It is our duty to treat migrants and refugees with empathy, dignity and respect. As young people ourselves, we know that migration is an opportunity for individuals, for families, and for our countries. It can bring significant economic, social and cultural benefits to host countries as well as income to countries of origin. It also benefits human relations and cooperation across borders. Our action on that front will focus on:

- Legislating and speaking out against hate speech, discrimination, xenophobia and racism;
- Ensuring the ratification of international conventions and agreements protecting the rights of migrants and refugees, and holding governments to account in their implementation;
- Overseeing the actions taken by our governments to ensure access to education, employment, health care and social services for young migrants and refugees, so that they all have equal opportunity to contribute to their host country's prosperity;
- Adopting laws and policies that protect migrants and refugees, in particular young women, from discrimination and abuse, including sexual and gender-based violence;
- Overseeing development cooperation led by our governments so that it supports host countries, that it is youth-centred, and that it creates sustainable economic opportunities for young people in their home countries;

- Taking into account youth perspectives to find political solutions to conflict situations that cause the movement of peoples.

A priority is also to make economies work for everyone through economic inclusion. When 71 million young men and women are left unemployed, we are both wasting valuable talent and energy, and fostering an environment where poverty, alienation, and even extremism can take root.

Economic inclusion is also about creating opportunities for the most marginalised and the most vulnerable. We salute the principle of Canada's First Nations of making decisions that do not only look at the next few years, but seven generations ahead. We explored basic income projects and agreed that such initiatives have positive impacts on combating extreme poverty and reducing inequalities by facilitating access to health, housing, education and employment for the most vulnerable. However, we affirmed that all countries are different and have their own particular circumstances, that financial inclusion is required for basic income projects to work, and that such programmes should not necessarily be created at the expense of current social programmes.

As young parliamentarians, we want to transform economies by:

- Strengthening the linkages between social and economic policies and placing young people and future generations at the centre of socioeconomic policymaking to ensure a minimum standard of living for all;
- Linking up efforts to eliminate economic and social inequalities with efforts to protect the environment;
- Supporting innovation and the creation of good jobs for the future through international trade and economic cooperation among nations;
- Ensuring financial inclusion, especially for women and young people, and more broadly for people living in rural and remote areas;
- Reviewing the measurement of economic performance so that it better takes into account equality for all, well-being of the population and environmental sustainability;
- Acknowledging the fast-changing world we live in, including by better taking into account increasing automation and technological changes, and transforming our institutions to be fit for purpose;
- Supporting environment-friendly innovations, in particular in the technology and industry sectors as such innovations are often led by young entrepreneurs;
- Legislating and overseeing government actions to support youth entrepreneurship, vocational training and education adapted to the job market;
- Addressing the generational gaps in public spending by introducing generational analyses of budget spending, promoting more equitable budgeting between younger and older people, ensuring that budgets are accessible for young people, and adopting an evidence-based approach through enhanced impact assessments.

Social and economic inclusion cannot work without political inclusion. Women, young people, indigenous peoples, and minorities of all stripes need to have a seat at decision-making tables. We are well aware of the imbalanced state of youth participation in parliaments, where just 1.9% of MPs are under 30. The time for talking has come to an end, we must take the next step in driving concrete change by:

- Boosting the representation of young people in parliaments, including through youth quotas in the form of legislated measures, reserved seats and party quotas;
- Ensuring that those young parliamentarians that make it to office can fully participate and are provided with opportunities to play meaningful roles. This includes introducing family-friendly procedures and working methods in parliaments;
- Creating and strengthening youth caucuses within parliaments, which serve as reference points for young people to connect with their parliaments and governments;

- Opening up parliaments and political parties to young people, including through youth wings, and through their participation in parliamentary work. Tracking of ages of committee witnesses would be a useful monitoring tool in this regard;
- Eliminating discrimination based on age to run for office in our legal frameworks: if you are old enough to vote, you are not too young to run;
- Ensuring accessible and affordable quality education for young people;
- Supporting measures that foster the representation of all groups in political decision-making, including, minorities, indigenous people, and especially young women, who face multiple discrimination in running for office.

To achieve all this, we cannot go it alone. We need partners alongside us, including more senior leaders. We extend our hands in friendship to the older generation, and state that in an evolving world, we need to do politics differently and we can do so together. In this spirit, we call for a global campaign to unite leaders of all ages for youth.

We welcome IPU's continued support for youth participation and young parliamentarians. We ask IPU to support capacity-building and mentorship activities for young parliamentarians at national level to support us in these efforts.

We express our thanks to the Parliament of Canada for hosting this Fourth Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians, and creating the platform to turn the tide in favour of a more inclusive world for all.