



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

Fourth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament

United Nations Headquarters, New York
31 August to 2 September 2015



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1 March 2015

Information note

The Fourth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament will be held at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 31 August to 2 September 2015. The overall theme of the Conference will focus on peace, democracy, and development seen through the parliamentary lens. The Conference is part of the series of high-level meetings leading up to the UN Summit in late September 2015, at which the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will be launched.

The Conference is convened by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and will be chaired by the IPU President, Mr. Saber Chowdhury. All arrangements relating to the holding of the event are being made under the guidance of a Preparatory Committee composed of Speakers of Parliament and members of the IPU Executive Committee.

This Note is intended to provide a preliminary overview of the general organizational aspects of the event. It is accompanied by the draft Rules of the Conference (as proposed by the Preparatory Committee), a note on online registration, and a form to indicate speaking preferences. More detailed information, including a draft outcome document, will be provided in June, after the third meeting of the Preparatory Committee.

Schedule of meetings

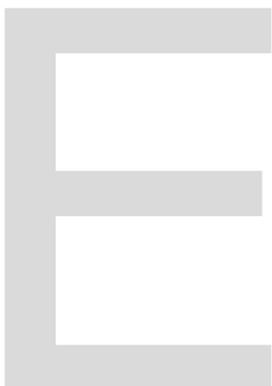
A **plenary** debate will be held in the General Assembly Hall from Monday 31 August to Wednesday 2 September. It will run from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 to 6 p.m. each day, except for the last day when the proceedings may end earlier. The United Nations Secretary-General will participate in the opening of the Conference on 31 August.

A **group photo** of the Speakers will be taken during the lunch break on the first day.

Two **panel discussions** will be held on 1 September in the Trusteeship Council chamber, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 to 6 p.m. respectively. They will address subjects that are linked to the overall theme of the Conference.

A limited number of rooms at the UN will be reserved for **bilateral meetings**, with bookings made through the IPU Secretariat.

An **official reception** will be held on the evening of Monday, 31 August.



Participation

The Conference will include the following categories of participants:

Speakers

Invitations shall be extended to the Presiding Officers of all parliaments that are Members of the IPU, as well as of other parliaments of sovereign States that meet the IPU's definition¹ of a national parliament. In the case of bicameral parliaments, invitations will be addressed to the Presiding Officers of both Chambers.

Observers

- Presidents of the main regional and international parliamentary assemblies and organizations (Associate Members and Permanent Observers of the IPU);
- Heads of Programmes and Agencies of the United Nations system and the WTO

Permanent Representatives of Member States to the United Nations in New York

Special guests

High-ranking officials of the United Nations and other international figures will be invited to address the meeting on specific topics.

Size and composition of delegations

The size of the delegation from each Parliament and Associate Member should in principle not exceed six persons (ten persons in the case of bicameral parliaments). Observer delegations should be composed of no more than two persons. Seating arrangements at desks will be made according to this formula. Additional seats will be available in the gallery in each room.

Seating arrangements

In the United Nations General Assembly Hall, each delegation will have six seats, three at desks and three immediately behind them, without desks.

Observers will be allotted one seat at a desk and one seat behind.

Additional seating is available in the room and galleries of the General Assembly Hall for persons accompanying parliamentary delegations.

The country that will be seated in the front row will be determined by the drawing of lots, and all other delegations will follow in English alphabetical order.

Speaking rights

Presiding Officers of Parliament, Presidents of the official parliamentary organizations that are Associate Members of and Permanent Observers to the IPU, as well as special guests, will be invited to address the meeting.

During the plenary sessions in the General Assembly Hall, each Presiding Officer shall be entitled to five minutes' speaking time or, in instances where both Presiding Officers from a bicameral parliament wish to address the Conference, each of them will be entitled to speak for four minutes. Presidents of parliamentary organizations shall be entitled to three minutes' speaking time.

A speaker's registration form is attached to this note. Each Parliament is requested to indicate in writing to the IPU Secretariat, **by 15 July 2015**, at which sitting the Presiding Officer would like to take the floor. The IPU Secretariat will establish the order of the speakers by taking into account, as far as possible and on a first-come, first-served basis, the preferences that have been indicated.

¹ The Inter-Parliamentary Council, in 1993, defined a parliament as a "national assembly which, according to domestic law, is endowed as a minimum with power to legislate and oversee the Executive".

Declaration

At the end of the Conference, participants will be invited to adopt an Outcome Document, which will have been drafted by a Preparatory Committee and submitted to all parliaments in advance of the Conference for comments. The Outcome Document will be presented officially to the UN Summit later in September.

Languages

The plenary meeting of the Conference will have interpretation into all six official languages of the United Nations (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish). Speakers addressing the Conference in any other languages will need to have their individual statements translated into one of the six official languages. An additional interpretation booth will be available, on a rotating basis, for interpreters supplied by delegations.

Registration and accommodation of delegations

The deadline for registrations is **21 August 2015**.

All invited participants are encouraged to use the IPU online registration system. Attached is an annex that provides instructions on how to use the system, which will be operational as of **1 May 2015**. Only one person should be designated as the delegation coordinator and have access to the system.

Should delegations encounter any difficulties, they are requested to contact the registration service at postbox@ipu.org. If for any reason a delegation is unable to register online, it may send an e-mail to the same address, or a fax to +41 22 919 41 60 and will receive a registration form.

A provisional list of participants will be compiled based on registrations received. Delegates will have an opportunity to check the accuracy of this list before the end of the Conference.

Regarding travel and accommodation, delegations should contact their Permanent Missions in New York for assistance. The Permanent Missions have been notified of the Conference, and most of them are accustomed to handling hotel reservations and other requirements for visiting delegations.

Entry visas into the United States of America

All delegates must have valid visas for entry into the United States of America. As the visa application process may be lengthy, delegations are encouraged to submit applications as soon as possible.

Entry passes into the United Nations compound

Due to strict security measures in effect at the United Nations, every delegate to the Conference will need a special United Nations identification pass in order to enter the UN premises. Entry passes are to be requested for each person registered for the Conference through each country's Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York.

The IPU will be able to assist in obtaining UN passes for the Presidents of interested parliamentary assemblies and other special guests.

Media

The United Nations media accreditation office will issue the necessary passes to allow journalists access to United Nations Headquarters. A Press Conference room will be available upon request and on a first-come first-served basis for Presiding Officers wishing to hold briefings for the media. A media stakeout area will be set up outside the General Assembly Hall to facilitate impromptu interviews.

Security

Security at UN Headquarters is the responsibility of the United Nations, which will apply its own regulations in this respect. One such regulation obliges all participants in the Conference to display their identity badges visibly upon entering and at all times while on the United Nations premises. More information concerning security at UN Headquarters will be provided in the coming months.