



Inter-Parliamentary Union

For democracy. For everyone.



IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians Lusaka, Zambia

**Mulungushi International Conference Centre (MICC)
16-17 March 2016**

Outcome Document

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On 16 and 17 March 2016, we 130 young men and women parliamentarians from 50 countries, from among a total of 200 participants, gathered in Lusaka, Zambia, for the third IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians. The parliamentarians attending the Conference – whose average age was 38 years – were joined by some 20 leaders of youth parliaments, civil society organizations, and international agencies all brought together by the IPU.

Our third Conference was jointly organized by the IPU and the National Assembly of Zambia. Its theme was *Agenda 2030: Youth taking the lead, leaving no one behind*. The Conference focused on the recently adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that we were eager to address from a people-centered perspective. We warmly thank the IPU and the National Assembly of Zambia for convening such a momentous event right at the start of the implementation of the new development agenda.

We are the young politicians who can bring about the change needed to deliver on our promises. We commit to taking the lead in driving forward fair, equitable and sustainable development work for all and in particular for the most vulnerable and marginalized.

Agenda 2030

We have no doubt that development, democracy, and human rights are connected. We are convinced that our actions as young parliamentarians can drive our countries and nations to deliver on the SDGs.

From Zambia, the pride of Africa, we want our action to be driven by the principle of *Ubuntu*. We firmly believe that there can only be national development benefits for all when benefits are also delivered to all at the global level. We will pursue our inter-parliamentary cooperation with Ubuntu in our minds.

We affirm the indispensable role that young people will play at the heart of delivering the development goals. We call for a new era of rights, freedoms and well-being for the 1.2 billion young men and women of the world.

We are convinced that inclusivity in politics and youth participation are keystones, which will ensure that young people can benefit from and take part in delivering development. Without the contribution and leadership of young people, we affirm that Agenda 2030 cannot be achieved. We will not shrink from confidently stating that youth participation in parliament is an enabler for democracy, for rights and for fair, equitable and sustainable development.

We call on senior politicians and decision-makers to show political will and to lend their vocal support to youth participation. We want to work hand-in-hand with the older generation of

politicians so as to boost youth representation in our parliaments. As young MPs, we are currently a minority in parliament representing a majority in our societies: only 1.9% of MPs are aged under 30 while half the world's population is the same age. Tackling this inequality in politics is our highest priority.

Our parliaments are also critical enablers of development; we require them in order to attain all the SDGs. We must drive a people-centred approach across our parliamentary work. We must open up our institutions to ensure that we are hearing the voices of all people, in particular the most vulnerable and marginalized. We are convinced that the progress we achieve will be measured by how the most vulnerable and marginalized groups fare throughout the development agenda.

We are convinced that a rights-based approach to development is a key factor in promoting equality, equity and non-discrimination. We highlight the need for indicators to measure development that will take human rights and well-being into account. We need international and national agencies, as well as civil society organizations, to work in partnership in order to enhance and promote the collection and use of disaggregated data based on a multitude of factors, including age, gender, economic status, ethnicity, race, religion, and disability status.

We are ushering in a new era for democracy. In doing so, we must take into account advances in digital technology. As digital natives and as bearers of fresh ideas and perspectives, young people are ideally equipped to enhance our democracies by founding an age of Democracy 2.0 and by promoting more open, transparent and effective parliaments. As young MPs, we can set the stage by using social media and digital communication channels to better link young citizens and our parliaments.

We are convinced that corruption is one of the greatest challenges to the implementation of fair, equitable and sustainable development. It is also diminishing people's trust in our institutions. We have agreed that our role in curbing corruption can greatly contribute to making our parliaments better and our democracies stronger.

We are deeply engaged in the protection of our planet and in prompting sustainable production and consumption patterns. Those will ensure that young people and future generations can benefit from natural resources and live a healthy life on a healthy planet. We support the IPU Action Plan to address climate change and we commit to do our share for its implementation.

As young parliamentarians, we are committed to:

- infusing policymaking on development with youth perspectives by directing national development strategies and plans, overseeing their implementation and allocating resources to ensure their delivery for young men and women;
- contributing to institutionalizing the development goals in our parliaments by establishing specialized committees where appropriate;
- upholding accountability by contributing to systematic reviews of government progress towards the implementation of development plans in a way that reinforces transparency and access to information;
- channelling young people's views and concerns into policy and legislation by boosting our partnerships with youth organizations and through direct interaction with them inside and outside parliament, including through digital tools such as petitions and online hearings;
- prioritizing spending in our budgets on social and economic well-being and international development cooperation rather than military expenditure;
- monitoring international development cooperation in order to promote public health, job creation and education in developing partner countries;

- enhancing transparency, visibility and oversight of public finances so as to lead the fight against corruption and allow for increased public scrutiny of state spending, including through social media.
- legislating for and overseeing enforcement of free and compulsory education for all young men and women, and ensuring that training is adapted to the needs of the job market;
- supporting youth creativity and entrepreneurship, including by allocating funds and facilitating access to loans for young entrepreneurs in user-friendly ways;
- supporting gender equality and young women's empowerment;
- bringing the development agenda to the attention of the public and the media, including by calling on sports celebrities popular with young people.

We are convinced that the rejuvenation of our democracies works hand in hand with young people leading the way on the development agenda, and ensuring that no one is left behind. By giving a voice to young people, by empowering us to participate in the development agenda in meaningful ways, and by embracing our fresh ideas, talents, and leadership in promoting digital technologies, democracies will be made more open, accessible, transparent, accountable, and effective.

We, parliamentarians from around the world came to Lusaka because we refuse to be shut out, because we do not accept that decisions about us should be made without us, and because we want to help propel humanity into a new era for the benefit of all.

With this in mind, we affirm the interlinkages between the theme of this Conference, and the theme of the General Debate of the 134th IPU Assembly, *Rejuvenating democracy, giving voice to youth*. We recommend that this outcome document inform the Assembly Debate.

We also request the continuous support of the IPU in bringing us together in global conferences, raising our voice, and strengthening our influence. We congratulate the IPU on its new report, *Youth participation in national parliaments* (2016), and encourage it to pursue its monitoring of youth representation.

We look forward to meeting again in 2017 to discuss further ways and means of improving the lives of young people globally.