



NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF ZAMBIA

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STATEMENT ON THE DECISIONS OF THE 151ST INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION ASSEMBLY AND RELATED MEETINGS HELD IN GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, 19TH TO 23RD OCTOBER, 2025

PRESENTED AT THE 58TH SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY PARLIAMENTARY FORUM HELD FROM 30TH NOVEMBER TO 5TH DECEMBER, 2025 AT THE UHMLANGA HOTEL AND CONVENTION CENTRE, DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA

BY

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE MS NELLY BUTETE KASHUMBA MUTTI, SC, MP, FAPRA, SPEAKER OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF ZAMBIA AND REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SADC GROUP TO THE IPU EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

NOVEMBER, 2025

SALUTATIONS

1. Your Excellency, the Chairperson of the Southern African Development Community Parliamentary Forum (SADC-PF)
2. Honourable Speakers of SADC-PF Member Parliaments present and Heads of Delegations
3. Honourable Members of Parliament present
4. Your Excellency, the Secretary-General of the SADC-PF
5. Clerks and Secretaries General of Member Parliaments
6. Members of the Diplomatic Corps
7. Staff of Member Parliaments and the SADC-PF
8. Distinguished Guests
9. Ladies and Gentlemen

1.0 INTRODUCTION

I am honoured to present a statement on the key outcomes of the 151st Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Assembly and its Related Meetings held in Geneva, Switzerland from 19th to 23rd October, 2025. The 151st Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) was held at the International Conference Centre Geneva (CICG), under the theme "***Upholding humanitarian norms and supporting humanitarian action.***" All IPU statutory bodies, including the Governing Council, its subsidiary bodies and Standing Committees convened during the Assembly.

1.1 Participation at the 151st IPU Assembly and Related Meetings

1,103 delegates attended the 151st IPU Assembly and Related Meetings drawn from 129 Member Parliaments. Five (5) Associate Members and thirty-six (36) observers also took part in the work of the Assembly. Of the 1,103 delegates who attended the Assembly, 594 were Members of Parliament from (581 from Member Parliaments and 13 from Associate Member delegations), including 42 Presiding Officers and 40 Deputy Presiding Officers. The delegations included 216 women MPs (37.1 per cent) and 80 young MPs (13.7 per cent).

2.0 OUTCOMES OF THE 151ST INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION

2.1 ACTIVITY REPORT BY THE PRESIDENT

The General Assembly was briefed on the report by the President of the IPU on the activities she undertook since the last meeting. These included:

- (a) the 19th Meeting of the East African Community Bureau of Speakers of National Legislatures and the East African Legislative Assembly on 24th May, 2025 in Dar-Es-Salaam, Tanzania;
- (b) chaired the Meeting of the Preparatory Committee, held in Geneva on 28th July 2025, for the Sixth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament which took place from 29th to 31st July 2025;
- (c) attended an interactive multi-stakeholder hearing on 24th July 2025 at the UN Headquarters, New York, marking the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action;
- (d) chairing the on-going consultative meetings for the upcoming election of the IPU Secretary General; and
- (e) chaired virtual meetings of the 2025 Cremer–Passy Prize Selection Board.

2.2 ACTIVITY REPORT BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE ACTIVITIES FOR 2025

The Secretary-General presented the Impact Report for 2025 to the Assembly. In his report, he highlighted some of the major activities undertaken in 2025, in line with the IPU strategic objectives. The major highlights during the period under review included the following:

Strategic Objective 1: Building Effective and Empowered Parliaments

The Secretary-General stated that capacity building was conducted for MPs and staff on strengthening committee work, counter-terrorism, gender equality, security, health and climate. The training was conducted in Benin, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Lesotho, Libya, Mongolia, Namibia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe.

Strategic Objective 2: Promoting Inclusive and Representative Parliaments

The Secretary-General reported that the IPU had conducted national events on inclusive parliaments in Benin, Chad, Benin, Nigeria, Ecuador and Thailand themed around support for enhanced political participation, women and youth, skills building of women and young MPs and support to Gender sensitive self-assessments. Further, he reported that as of October, 2025, the percentage of women in Parliament had risen to 27.2 per cent from 26.9 per cent in October, 2024, while that of young MPs under 30 had reduced to 2.77 per cent in October, 2025 from 2.87 per cent in October, 2024.

Strategic Objective 3: Supporting Resilient and Innovative Parliaments

It was reported that the Third Summit of Committees of the Future was conducted in Chile in January, 2025.

Strategic Objective 4: Catalysing Collective Parliamentary Action

A number of activities were reported to have been conducted under this strategic objective, including the 150th IPU Assembly in April, 2025, in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, the Sixth World Conference of Speakers in July, 2025 and held engagements with various stakeholders including the World Health Organisation and World Tourism Organisation, among others.

3.0 ANNUAL MEMBERS REPORTING EXERCISE

The IPU Statutes state that all Member Parliaments and Associate Members shall send an annual report of actions taken to follow up on IPU resolutions and decisions (Article 6 of the Statutes). The reporting exercise represented both qualitative and quantitative data provided by national parliaments in 2025, when 38 IPU Member Parliaments scheduled to report were invited to complete a survey, and all Member Parliaments were encouraged to take part on voluntary basis. As in previous years, the 2025 edition of the survey was organised and focused on tangible parliamentary measures in the IPU's priority areas as set out in the IPU 2022 to 2026 Strategy, as well as the interaction between Parliaments and the United Nations. Of the 38 Parliaments scheduled to report, 29 returned complete questionnaires, giving a response rate of 76 per cent.

4.0 IPU FINANCIAL REPORT

The Secretary-General reported that the IPU's financial situation was healthy. In terms of income, it was reported that the Sub-Committee assessed contributions amounting to CHF 11,897,700 which were invoiced in full at the beginning of the year and attributed as revenue. It was further reported that the internal assessment on staff salaries was on target at 104 per cent of the budget. The net budgeted amount was estimated at CHF 1,162,100 for 2025.

For 2025, the Secretary-General had prepared a voluntary funding budget totaling CHF 4.5 million. An opening balance of CHF 5.4 million was available at the start of the year for programmes in 2025 and beyond. New resources were received in net CHF 1.1 million. He informed the Committee that that amount was added to the opening balance resulting in a sum of CHF 6.5 million. Further voluntary funding was due before the end of the year and new funding sources were being developed for the coming years. The Sub-Committee emphasised the need for geopolitical groups to assist in identifying partners for resource mobilisation in voluntary funding of IPU activities.

5.0 MEMBERSHIP AND OBSERVER STATUS

The IPU's efforts to reach universal membership continued to progress, especially in the Caribbean. Following the accession of Bahamas and Jamaica in 2023 and 2024 respectively, the Governing Council welcomed the Parliament of Belize, bringing the IPU one step closer to the total of the 193 countries recognised by the United Nations. The Governing Council was informed that discussions were ongoing with two other Parliaments; those of Brunei Darussalam and Kiribati, with respect to their potential future accession.

Niger's membership to the IPU was suspended in April, 2025, due to the absence of a functional legislature, following a military coup in July, 2023. Consequently, Niger made a request to be re-admitted to the IPU after the establishment of the Advisory Council of Niger, which operates as a Parliament. The request by Niger to be re-admitted to the IPU was a matter that was subject of lengthy debate both in the Executive Committee and the Governing Council. The Speaker of the Advisory Council of Niger, Honourable Mamoudou Harouna Djingarey, was invited to address both the Executive Committee and the Governing Council on his country's efforts towards operating a democratic Parliament that met the IPU values and principles. Following the address, the Governing Council resolved to re-admit the Republic of Niger to the IPU.

6.0 AMENDMENTS TO THE IPU STATUTES AND RULES

The Assembly was informed that since its establishment in March, 2024, the Working Group on Amendments to the IPU Statutes and Rules had examined proposals received from IPU Member Parliaments, geopolitical groups, Bureau of Women Parliamentarians and Bureau of Young Parliamentarians, and prepared two rounds of amendment proposals which were adopted by the IPU governing bodies in October, 2024, and April, 2025, respectively. The Assembly heard that a series of outstanding issues were presented to the ExCom in Olympia, Greece in June, 2025 and that the ExCom endorsed the submission of:

- (a) amendment to formalise the status of non-voting observer for Parliaments no longer functioning on the territory of the country concerned; and
- (b) a series of amendments to the Committee on Human Rights of Parliamentarians to improve the Committee's geopolitical composition.

7.0 ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

Several elections took place in various IPU bodies and the positions were distributed to the geopolitical groups of the IPU.

8.0 FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE IPU

The Assembly was informed of the approved future meetings and other specialised meetings of the IPU aligned within the strategic objectives of the organisation. The key meetings include the following:

- a 152nd IPU Assembly and Related Meetings - Istanbul, Turkiye, 15th to 19th April, 2026;
- b 153rd IPU Assembly and Related Meetings - United Republic of Tanzania (TBC);
- c Parliamentary Meeting at COP 30 - Belem, Brazil, 10th to 21st November, 2025; and
- d Global Conference of Women Parliamentarians - Serbia, 2nd to 4th June, 2026.

9.0 151ST IPU RESOLUTIONS

9.1 ADOPTION OF THE GENEVA DECLARATION UPHOLDING HUMANITARIAN NORMS AND SUPPORTING HUMANITARIAN ACTION IN TIMES OF CRISIS, ENDORSED BY THE 151ST IPU ASSEMBLY

The General Assembly at the 151st IPU Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland, reaffirmed its commitment to upholding and promoting respect for international humanitarian law (IHL) and supporting humanitarian action.

9.2 RECOGNISING AND SUPPORTING THE VICTIMS OF ILLEGAL INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION AND TAKING MEASURES TO PREVENT THIS PRACTICE

The General Assembly of the IPU adopted, by consensus, the resolution on recognising and supporting the victims of illegal international adoption and taking measures to prevent the practice. Among others, the Assembly urged all States, regardless of whether they were parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child or the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption, to formally acknowledge the existence of illegal intercountry adoptions and their impact on the children and their families, and to implement the necessary legal, administrative and investigative measures to bring to account those responsible and to prevent their occurrence and recurrence, in accordance with relevant international agreements, while maintaining confidence in legal adoptions carried out in accordance with international standards;

9.3 RECOMMENDATION TO ELECT THE FIRST WOMAN TO THE POST OF UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENERAL, MOTION ADOPTED BY THE IPU STANDING COMMITTEE ON UNITED NATIONS AFFAIRS

The IPU Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs affirmed the position that, in the context of the current process for selecting the next United Nations Secretary-General in 2026, the historic moment had come to elect a woman as United Nations Secretary-General, both as a matter of principle and as a demonstration of the United Nations' commitment to ensuring equality for all. To this end, member countries were encouraged to engage with their Government leadership to initiate a search for women candidates as soon as possible with a view to ensuring a large pool of highly qualified women candidates for election by the Security Council.

9.4 EMERGENCY ITEM

Pursuant to Rule 11 of the IPU Statutes and Rules, the following two requests for the inclusion, as emergency items, were submitted:

- (a) Global call for parliamentary solidarity and co-ordinated action on Madagascar. The request was submitted by South Africa, on behalf of the African Geo-Political Group; and
- (b) Parliamentary action against transnational organised crime, cybercrime and hybrid threats to democracy and human security. The request was submitted by Thailand, Argentina, Chile, Poland and Sweden, with the support of the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean and the Twelve Plus Group.

The Assembly proceeded with a roll-call vote on the two items. The proposal submitted by

Thailand, Argentina, Chile, Poland and Sweden, with the support of the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean and the Twelve Plus Group, received the highest number of positive votes and was adopted.

9.5 IPU LEADERSHIP STATEMENT ON THE SITUATION IN MADAGASCAR

The General Assembly unanimously agreed to issue a leadership statement on the situation in Madagascar. The Statement was issued in the General Assembly by the Secretary General on behalf of the IPU President. The IPU expressed its deep concern about the military takeover in Madagascar and the suspension of their Constitution. It further went ahead to condemn the loss of life, injuries and destruction of property resulting from the unrest. The IPU leadership expressed its fears that the unfolding happenings in Madagascar represented not just a grave threat to the stability of the Southern African region, but set a dangerous precedent for democracy across the whole continent, in clear violation of international law.

10 SELECTION / RECRUITMENT OF THE NEW SECRETARY-GENERAL

The General Assembly was briefed on the recruitment process of the New Secretary-General for the organisation following the successful completion of the two-term mandate by the current Secretary-General pursuant to Article 27 of the Statutes. A total of 58 applications were received and 20 have so far been shortlisted. Allow me to give you a summary of the selection process and time frames for the members to appreciate the process.

STAGE	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
1	Publication of the vacancy announcement – circulation amongst the Members, IPU website, UN Agencies	Secretariat	1 April 2025
2	Candidatures shall be submitted within a period of four months from the date of the official vacancy announcement.		1 August 2025
3	Examination of the candidatures by the President of the IPU, Dr Tulia Ackson, and by the Registrar, Ms. Andrée Lorber, to ensure that they meet the minimum requirements decided by the Executive Committee.	IPU President & Registrar	1-30 Sept 2025
4	The accepted applications will then be submitted to the Vice-President of the IPU. Drawing up of an initial shortlist consisting of the 20 best-qualified candidates.	Registrar IPU Pres. & IPU VicePres	1 Oct 2025 15 Oct 2025
5	The complete documentation of the shortlisted candidates will be sent to each member of the IPU Executive Committee	Registrar	15 Oct 2025
6	Each member of the Executive	Executive	1 Dec 2025

	Committee will draw up a shortlist of five candidates and inform the Registrar about their choice	Committee	
7	The five candidates who receive the largest number of votes will be invited to an interview which will take place during the 152 nd Assembly in April 2026.	Registrar	3 Dec 2025
8	Interview with the five final candidates. Announcement of the two or more candidates retained by the Executive Committee.	ExCom President	Mar-Apr 2026
9	The final candidates campaign during the IPU Assembly, present their candidature to the geopolitical groups and the Forum of Women Parliamentarians and the Forum of Young Parliamentarians.	Candidates	Mar-Apr 2026*
10	Election of the new Secretary General during the 152 nd IPU Assembly by secret ballot following a 5-minute presentation to the Governing Council.	Governing Council	Mar- Apr 2026*
11	Period of notice required for the newly elected Secretary General with the previous employer.		3 months
12	Beginning of the term of the new Secretary General.		1 July 2026

11.0 CONCLUSION

Let me once again place on record my gratitude for being privileged to represent the SADC Group on the EXCO for the IPU. I believe that these highlights will help member parliaments to take stock of emerging issues at the IPU.

I thank you all.