



## Climate Vulnerable Forum Global Parliamentarians Meeting

“Parliamentarians of Climate Threatened Nations Championing Planetary Prosperity”

### Statement

by

**Mr. Martin Chungong**

Secretary General of the IPU

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Thank you very much Saber, and nice to see you again.

I do recognize all the high-level participants present at this meeting, as well as of course the high-level participants.

President Nasheed (I think I'll see you in a while),

We have Mami Mizutori, a very valued partner for us at the IPU as we work together to mobilize parliaments to support of efforts to mitigate disaster risk,

I therefore recognize all of you and have to say how pleased I am to be participating in this momentous meeting today, which marks the beginning of an initiative which I think is very noble: bringing parliaments together to discuss how they can work to address the challenges brought about by climate change - or should we say climate emergency, as you said Saber and as H.E. Ban Ki-moon said a moment ago.

It is a pleasure for me to speak during today's virtual Global Parliamentarians Meeting of the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF). This event marks an important occasion as this is the first global meeting of parliamentarians of the CVF, and therefore the first time that this group of parliamentarians has come together to jointly discuss the challenges and opportunities in tackling the climate emergency.

Bringing together the parliamentarians of CVF countries marks an important step in strengthening the role of parliaments in implementing the Paris Agreement and addressing climate emergency. I notice that almost all of the CVF Member States are also members of the IPU, and this is a great opportunity to work together as a global organization encompassing everyone in order to reflect on ways to strengthen our joint engagement in this very critical area. Saber, you are an honorary IPU President and it is under your watch that we did adopt the parliamentary action plan on climate change, which I think is very relevant today. And I am very pleased to see that this is part of the resources made available to the participants of the meeting that we are having today. Thank you for your leadership.

As we know, climate change is one of the most pressing issues of our time. Everybody has said that, and we have seen what climate change can do to undermine development gains. We have to tackle this emergency more robustly in the context of the devastating effects of the COVID-19 epidemic. It is a wake-up call for us because it has highlighted the fragilities that exist within society and our economic structures. And the people who have been hit the hardest by the COVID-19 pandemic are likely to be those dealing with severe challenges created by climate change.

This emergency makes the implementation of the Paris Agreement more critical than ever. It is an international agreement, granted, but it must be supported by strong national level-action to be

effective. And that is where parliaments and parliamentarians have a critical role to play. I think that we have all been told about those powers that parliaments have: law-making, budget allocation, oversight and accountability. All that we are saying they should put to good use to ensure that legislative responses to climate change are both nationally appropriate and aligned with the Paris Agreement. They can allocate resources, and they must allocate resources, for the implementation of the Paris Agreement. We also want to see parliaments more robust in developing oversight of governments so that there are clear provisions for enforcement and monitoring of climate-related legislation.

Countries that have signed the Paris Agreement have also agreed to submit revised and enhanced nationally determined contributions (NDCs) by the end of 2020. The end of 2020 is just 6 weeks away, which highlights the emergency and the urgency of the situation. And we want to see parliaments today using their oversight powers to ensure governments prepare revised NDCs and that these commitments are translated into legislation at the national level.

I just want to restate the commitment of the IPU to supporting parliaments. Saber, what you said about your wish for long-standing collaboration with the CVF is music to my ears. We want to make sure that parliaments are at the forefront of the efforts to stem the negative impacts of climate change. And there is no paucity of policy resources: the IPU at the highest level has adopted a resolution on climate change and the Paris Agreement, and the recent Conference of Speakers also clearly emphasized the importance of parliaments, and the need for parliaments to drive the transition to a climate-neutral economy to build more resilient societies and highlight the economic and social benefits of reducing global carbon emissions.

I am pleased to say that we are working also with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) on a number of initiatives, including a handbook on parliaments' role in addressing disasters and climate related risks. These are resources that we think are part of our mandate and our service to our member parliaments, and we hope that this tool will be utilized, including in the regions that are concerned today by our meeting. Of course, the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is the custodian of the Paris Agreement and we are going to continue working with them to strengthen parliaments' ability to respond to the challenges of climate change in the context of the Agreement. Recently, we have developed a joint policy with the UN Environment Program (UNEP) for parliamentarians on the green economy as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Let me say that there is a lot that has been said. As H.E. Ban Ki-moon has said, what we need to do now is implement. We need to take action now and urgently, and parliaments have that role to play. We want to see more robust action by parliaments; they have to use their legislative, budgetary, oversight and representation functions to make a difference today. Parliamentarians should seize the opportunities created through the Paris Agreement to drive transformational change for a healthier planet. This is very crucial, and you can be reassured, Saber and your colleagues of the climate vulnerable nations of the world, that the IPU will stand by you. The IPU is there to help address the needs of all: the small, the not so small, the vulnerable, the mighty. It's a global organization, and I am looking forward to developing cooperation so that together, we can mobilize parliamentary goodwill and commitment in support of climate-friendly initiatives. Thank you very much for this opportunity to partner with you for this very important event. Thank you.