



PARLIAMENT
OF AUSTRALIA

Australian Parliamentary Delegation

Luanda, Angola
23-27 October 2023

147th Assembly of the
Inter-Parliamentary Union

REPORT | NOVEMBER 2023



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Members of the Delegation

Leader of the Delegation

- The Hon Milton Dick MP, Speaker of the House of Representatives
Federal Member for Oxley, Queensland
Australian Labor Party

Delegates

- Senator the Hon Linda Reynolds CSC
Senator for Western Australia
Liberal Party of Australia
- Senator Deborah O'Neill
Senator for New South Wales
Australian Labor Party
- The Hon Warren Entsch MP
Federal Member for Leichhardt, Queensland
Liberal National Party of Queensland
- Mr Julian Hill MP
Federal Member for Bruce, Victoria
Australian Labor Party

Officials

- Dr Jane Thomson, Delegation Secretary
- Ms Elise Williamson, Senior Research Officer
- Ms Karen Bell, Program Manager, Office of the Speaker of the House of Representatives

147th IPU Assembly – Luanda, Angola

The 147th Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Assembly took place in Luanda, Angola from 23 to 27 October 2023. The Assembly was held in the National Assembly of Angola.

The overall theme of the Assembly was: *Parliamentary action for peace, justice and strong institutions (Sustainable Development Goal 16)*.

The Assembly was attended by delegates from 128 Member Parliaments as well as eight Associate Members and several observer organisations and agencies.

Of the 1,150 delegates who attended the Assembly, 619 were Members of Parliament (601 from Member Parliaments and 18 from Associate Member delegations). Delegates included 51 Presiding Officers and 42 Deputy Presiding Officers. Of the Members of Parliament who attended the Assembly, women comprised 216 (or 36.2 per cent) and young parliamentarians comprised 188 delegates (or 31.28 per cent).

	145 th Assembly October 2022 Rwanda	146 th Assembly March 2023 Bahrain	147 th Assembly October 2023 Angola
Total MPs	600	661	619
Total Women MPs	35%	34%	36.2%
Total Young MPs	32%	22%	31.28%

Attendance of women and young MPs at the last three IPU Assemblies

In accordance with contemporary Assembly practice, the 147th Assembly was an in-person event with adaptations for hybrid participation. In addition, the proceedings of the inaugural ceremony, Forum of Women Parliamentarians, Assembly general debate and all sittings of the Governing Council were live streamed with a total of 12,368 views.

The Australian delegation was led by the Hon Milton Dick MP, Speaker of the House of Representatives and included Senator the Hon Linda Reynolds CSC, Senator Deborah O'Neill, the Hon Warren Entsch MP, and Mr Julian Hill MP.



Australian delegation to the 147th IPU Assembly comprising Senator Reynolds, Mr Hill MP, Mr Speaker, Senator O'Neill and Mr Entsch MP

Background

The IPU is an international organisation of national parliaments. The IPU promotes democratic governance, institutions and values, working with parliaments and parliamentarians to articulate and respond to the needs and aspirations of the people. It works for peace, democracy, human rights, gender equality, youth empowerment, climate action and sustainable development through political dialogue, cooperation and parliamentary action.

Founded in 1889, there are currently 180 parliaments that are Members of the IPU and 15 Associate Members (mostly parliaments drawn from groups of nations or similar bodies).¹

Most IPU members are affiliated with one or more of the six geopolitical groups that are currently active in the IPU.

The IPU Strategy for 2022-2026 lists five strategic objectives:

1. Building effective and empowered parliaments.
2. Promoting inclusive and representative parliaments.
3. Supporting resilient and innovative parliaments.
4. Catalysing collective parliamentary action.
5. Strengthening the IPU's accountability.²

The IPU Assembly is the principal statutory body of the IPU and brings together parliamentarians to consider international issues and make recommendations for action. In accordance with its mandate to promote democracy, the IPU hosts events throughout the year. The major focus for the Australian delegation in relation to the IPU is participation in the twice-yearly assemblies.

Assembly

The 147th Assembly was formally opened on 23 October 2023. The Assembly's agenda included the following business:

- General debate on the theme: *Parliamentary action for peace, justice and strong institutions (Sustainable Development Goal 16)*.

¹ Inter-Parliamentary Union, *About us*, <https://www.ipu.org/about-us> (accessed 10 November 2023).

² Inter-Parliamentary Union, *Strategy 2022-2026*, <https://www.ipu.org/resources/publications/about-ipu/2022-01/strategy-2022-2026> (accessed 10 November 2023).

- Resolution on *Orphanage trafficking: The role of parliaments in reducing harm*.
- Motion – *Bringing gender equality to the UN General Assembly*.
- Decisions regarding the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.
- Election of the President of the IPU.
- Reports of the Standing Committees and IPU specialised meetings.

In his address at the inaugural ceremony on 23 October, the IPU President, Mr Duarte Pacheco thanked the President of the Republic of Angola, His Excellency João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço and President of the National Assembly of Angola, the Hon Carolina Cerqueira for hosting the Assembly.

Speaking of global events, Mr Pacheco drew attention to the war in Ukraine and acknowledged the work of the members of the IPU Task Force on the peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine for their courage and efforts to achieve peace in that country. He also drew attention to the situation in the Middle East, noting that the Committee on the Middle East Question had been meeting regularly in emergency session in response to the conflict.

Mr Pacheco also focused on climate change. He noted that the previous months had been the hottest on record in some parts of the world and reflected on extreme weather events impacting daily life. Mr Pacheco concluded that these events leave us with fundamental questions about what the future will look like.

Debates at the Assembly and other activities

The two major debates in the Plenary – the general debate and the debate on the emergency item – are the key focus of Assembly business.

On 24 October, the Hon Milton Dick MP, Speaker of the House of Representatives contributed to the general debate on behalf of the Australian delegation. In his contribution, Mr Speaker drew attention to the IPU's 2022-2026 Strategy which prioritises action towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and specific commitments to improve the representation of women, youth and minorities in Parliament. He noted that these issues were amongst his own priorities as Speaker of the House of Representatives and current Chair of the Asia-Pacific Group.

Mr Speaker described several activities that he initiated during the year as Chair of the Asia-Pacific Group including an Asia-Pacific Group webinar series focused on youth engagement with parliament, as well as women's leadership and engagement

with parliament in the Asia-Pacific region. The webinar series provided a forum for delegates across the Asia-Pacific region to discuss common challenges, consider best practice and share solutions, with Mr Speaker noting that 13 speakers provided presentations and 61 delegates from 18 countries across the Asia-Pacific region participated.

In relation to diversity, equality, and inclusion in the parliamentary workplace, Mr Speaker highlighted the record number of women elected to the Australian Parliament in 2022, with the upper house becoming a female-majority chamber for the first time in Australia’s history.



Mr Speaker making his contribution to the General Debate

On the matter of building confidence in Australia’s public institutions, Mr Speaker brought attention to the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) which commenced operations in July 2023. He noted that the NACC has the power to investigate all public Commonwealth officials including ministers, parliamentary, staffers and statutory office holders.

Mr Speaker also highlighted the importance of fostering trust in our public institutions amongst Australia’s 3 million young people. To this end, he drew attention to the fact that more than 2.4 million students have participated in Australia’s Parliamentary

Education Office programs over its 31 years of operation. To complement this work, in 2022, Mr Speaker launched a new initiative to make civics education accessible to students regardless of their location. As part of this project, he has visited over 40 schools in rural and remote parts of Australia where students would otherwise not have the opportunity to travel to Parliament.

On 26 October, Senator Reynolds also contributed to the general debate. In her contribution, she highlighted the importance of SDG 16 regarding human trafficking and specifically orphanage trafficking. The Senator brought attention to the fact that today, over 50 million people are trafficked into slavery of whom an estimated eight million vulnerable children have been trafficked into group homes, often referred to as orphanages.

The [Luanda Declaration](#) on the same topic was adopted by the Assembly on 27 October. Of the general debate, the declaration notes:

Our discussion highlighted the critical role of good governance as a societal good in its own right and as a means to the attainment of all the Sustainable Development Goals that were adopted in 2015. Good governance is the glue that binds people to each other and to their institutions, nurturing solidarity, civic engagement and political citizenship. At the same time, as defined under SDG 16, good governance enables sound policymaking and direct accountability to the people, without which we will not succeed in our shared struggles against poverty, inequality, conflict and environmental degradation, including the climate emergency, that are being experienced in every corner of the world.³

Emergency Item

The IPU rules provide that any member country may propose a topic as an emergency item to be debated during an Assembly. The matter must relate to a major event of international concern on which it appears necessary for the IPU to express its opinion. The request must receive a two-thirds majority of the votes cast to be accepted for debate.

³ IPU, Luanda Declaration. 'Parliamentary action for peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16)'. Endorsed by the 147th IPU Assembly, Luanda, 27 October 2023, <https://www.ipu.org/event/147th-assembly-and-related-meetings#event-sub-page-31305/> (accessed 10 November 2023).

During the Assembly, the following four proposals were submitted for consideration as an emergency item:

- Countering Islamophobia and the rise of extremist Islamophobic events through understanding and education, the promotion of tolerance and interfaith harmony, and fostering an environment that encourages respect and empathy amongst different faith communities proposed by Pakistan.
- Stopping the war and violations of human rights in Gaza proposed by Algeria and Kuwait on behalf of the Arab Group and Indonesia, Iran and South Africa.
- Multifaceted approach to the Question of Palestine: Parliamentary diplomacy and Sustainable Development Goal 16 proposed by Malaysia.
- Towards a common ground for peace proposed by Canada, Argentina, Austria, Croatia, Finland, France, Italy, Netherlands, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

When the emergency items were considered, Pakistan and Malaysia withdrew their respective proposals. The IPU then conducted a roll-call vote in relation to the two remaining proposals.

For the first time in IPU's history, neither proposal achieved the required two-thirds majority and the IPU did not proceed with an emergency item.

Governing Council

The Governing Council is the administrative and policy making body of the IPU and ordinarily meets during the twice-yearly assemblies.

During the Assembly, the Governing Council met twice on 24 and 27 October. In his impact report to the Governing Council, IPU Secretary General, Mr Martin Chungong noted that over the previous nine months, the IPU had organised 32 national support activities in 12 countries to build the capacity of parliaments institutionally as well as to consider key themes. Over the review period, the IPU also produced eight publications.

In relation to communications and outreach, the IPU database of parliamentarians now contains close to 22,000 contacts, which is a significant increase from last year's 12,000 contacts.

On 27 October, Mr Speaker was elected by the Governing Council to the Executive Committee by declaration. Mr Speaker was the endorsed candidate of the Asia-Pacific Group for the position and will serve a four-year term on the committee.

At the 147th Assembly, the Governing Council approved two important IPU policies:

- [Policy to prevent and address harassment, including sexual harassment, at IPU Assemblies and other IPU events.](#)
- [Code of Conduct for IPU Governance Officials.](#)

IPU Presidential election

The outgoing 30th IPU President, Mr Duarte Pacheco completed his term of office at the 147th Assembly in Luanda. On the last day of the Assembly, the Governing Council held a secret ballot vote to determine the 31st President, who will serve a three-year term.

To ensure geographical representation, it is customary for the presidency to be rotated on a geographical basis across the respective geopolitical groups. As a parliamentarian from Portugal, Mr Pacheco is from the Twelve Plus Group. In accordance with the rotation, all candidates for the vacancy were from the Africa Group.

There were initially five candidates for the position of IPU President. After a candidate from Zimbabwe withdrew his candidature in the lead up to the Assembly, the four remaining candidates for the position were as follows:

- Rt Hon Dr Tulia Ackson, United Republic of Tanzania.
- Mrs Adji Diarra Mbergane Kanoute, Senegal.
- Hon Ms Marwa Abdbashir Hagi, Somalia.
- Rt Hon Catherine Gotani Hara MP, Malawi.⁴

In accordance with Rule 30 of the IPU Statutes and Rules, a secret ballot was held on 27 October. Rule 35.1 (b) requires that, if no candidate obtains an absolute majority during the first round of voting, the candidate that obtains the least number of votes will be eliminated, and additional rounds of voting will take place until one of the candidates achieves an absolute majority.

⁴ IPU, 147th Assembly and related meetings, *Election of the IPU President*, <https://www.ipu.org/event/147th-assembly-and-related-meetings#event-sub-page-29834/> (accessed 10 November 2023).

During the first round of voting, an absolute majority was achieved by Rt Hon Dr Tulia Ackson of Tanzania and she was thereby elected the 31st President of the IPU.

Cremer Passy Prize

In the lead-up to the 147th Assembly, Australia nominated the Hon Mr Samuelu Penitala Teo, Speaker of the Parliament of Tuvalu for the Cremer Passy Prize for advocacy on climate action. The nomination was endorsed by the Asia-Pacific Group.

On 27 October, the Hon Mr Teo was announced as the recipient of the prize. As Australia had nominated him for the position, Mr Speaker made a presentation on the work of the Hon Mr Teo to the Assembly.

Mr Speaker drew attention to the fact that the Hon Mr Teo had been a strong advocate on climate change action over his long parliamentary career, which first began in 1998. With the impact of climate change serving as an unprecedented threat to the nationhood of Tuvalu, Mr Speaker noted that the Hon Mr Teo has been tireless in his efforts on behalf of the small Pacific nation, and the entire Pacific region, to secure international support for climate action.



Mr Speaker with the IPU President presenting the Cremer Passy Prize to the Hon Samuelu Penitala Teo, Speaker of the Tuvalu Parliament as the IPU Secretary General applauds.

IPU regional offices – Uruguay and Egypt

In June 2023, the IPU and Government of Uruguay signed an agreement to establish an IPU Regional Office in Montevideo. In accordance with the agreement, the IPU is

granted the status of an international organisation in Uruguay, entitled to related privileges and immunities. The signing of this agreement completes the first step of the establishment of a regional office in the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC) region.

In relation to the proposed second regional office in Egypt, exchanges have taken place between the IPU and Egyptian Government and negotiations are ongoing between the two parties regarding recognition of the IPU as an international organisation with the related privileges and immunities.

148th Assembly and beyond

The Governing Council approved the dates for the 148th IPU Assembly which will take place on 23 to 27 March 2024 in Geneva, Switzerland.

The location of the 149th IPU Assembly in October 2024 has not been determined, however the 150th IPU Assembly will take place in Uzbekistan in March 2025.

Meeting of geopolitical groups

The IPU has six geopolitical groups:

- Africa Group – comprising 52 members.
- Arab Group – comprising 21 members.
- Asia-Pacific Group – comprising 36 members.
- Eurasia Group – comprising 10 members.
- Group of Latin America and the Caribbean – comprising 24 members.
- Twelve Plus Group – comprising 47 members.⁵

The geopolitical groups meet immediately prior to and during the Assembly to consider IPU agenda items and, where possible, agree a group position. Candidates for positions on IPU committees are also considered and submitted through geopolitical groups.

⁵ About the IPU, *Geopolitical Groups*, <https://www.ipu.org/about-ipu/members/geopolitical-groups> (accessed 10 November 2023).

Most member countries are members of at least one geopolitical group. Australia is a member of two geopolitical groups – the Asia-Pacific Group and the Twelve Plus Group.⁶

Asia-Pacific Group

In 2023, Australia became the Chair of the Asia-Pacific Group (APG). In its capacity as Chair, Australia called a meeting of the APG for Monday, 23 October 2023. The meeting was chaired by Mr Speaker on behalf of the Australian delegation.

The meeting was attended by 18 delegations including four of the eight Pacific Islander delegation members of the IPU: Fiji, Timor-Leste, Tonga and Tuvalu.

During the meeting, briefings from APG members of the IPU Executive Committee were received. The APG also considered a report of the ASEAN+3 Group meeting and endorsed candidates for positions on IPU committees, including Mr Speaker who was endorsed by the APG to serve on the IPU Executive Committee.

During the meeting, the IPU President, Mr Pacheco addressed the group. In addition, Mr Speaker invited the candidates for IPU President to address the group and take questions from the floor.



Mr Speaker and Chair of the Asia-Pacific Group presiding over the Asia-Pacific Group meeting on 23 October with the IPU President, Mr Pacheco in attendance.

⁶ The IPU Statutes stipulate that members that belong to more than one geopolitical group should indicate which geopolitical group they represent for the purposes of submitting candidatures for positions within the IPU. Australia usually exercises these rights through the Asia-Pacific Group.

In his capacity as Chair of the APG, on 23 October Mr Speaker attended a Joint Meeting of the Chairpersons of Geopolitical Groups and Presidents of Standing Committees where he provided an update to the group on the activities of the APG.

On the last day of the Assembly, Senator O'Neill on behalf of Mr Speaker and Chair of the APG provided the concluding statement to the plenary on the activities of the APG.



Senator O'Neill providing the Asia-Pacific Group update on behalf of Mr Speaker

Twelve Plus Group

The Twelve Plus Group met on four occasions during the Assembly.⁷ During its meetings, the group considered the draft resolutions before the Assembly and endorsed candidates to fill Twelve Plus Group vacancies on various IPU committees and other bodies.

⁷ The Twelve Plus Group met on 22 October, 24 October, 25 and 26 October 2023.

Forum of Women Parliamentarians

The Forum of Women Parliamentarians met twice during the 147th Assembly, on 23 October. The Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, of which Senator Reynolds is a member also met twice during the Assembly, on 23 October and 27 October.

At its first meeting on 23 October, the Forum of Women considered, from a gender perspective, the draft resolution on *Orphanage trafficking: the role of parliaments in reducing harm*. As the Rapporteur of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights which sponsored the draft resolution, Senator Reynolds presented the draft orphanage trafficking resolution to the forum and led a debate on the matter. The debate at the Forum of Women led to agreement on two amendments to the draft resolution which were incorporated into the text.

At its second meeting, the forum held a panel discussion on *Women in Politics: To stay or not to stay?* The discussion considered the challenges faced by women when taking up a political decision-making position and when pursuing a political career.

Prior to the Assembly in June 2023, the Forum of Women held a round table on *Parliaments and women's rights: Implementing CEDAW, realizing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights for all*, organised jointly by the IPU and United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNOCHA). To coincide with the event, the IPU and UNOCHA jointly published a revised edition of Handbook for Parliamentarians number 36, *The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol: Handbook for Parliamentarians*.



Senator Reynolds, Mr Hill MP and Mr Entsch MP with Handbook for Parliamentarians No. 36.

The Bureau of Women Parliamentarians also met to consider the Forum's discussions and take stock of the results of the 147th Assembly from a gender perspective.

The Bureau also discussed ways to support women parliamentarians subject to gender-based violence and other forms of human rights violations with the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians.

Standing Committees

In accordance with the IPU 2022-2026 Strategy adopted by the IPU Governing Council, the Standing Committees of the IPU agreed to focus their work until 2026 on specific focus areas.

These focus areas provide a guide when setting the agenda and workplan for the Standing Committees.

Standing Committee	Focus areas
Standing Committee on Peace and International Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. • Violent conflict prevention, crisis response and sustainable peace. • Improving multilateral management of peace and security challenges.
Standing Committee on Sustainable Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change. • Sustainable development.
Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements in the functioning of parliaments. • Democracy and human rights in the digital era. • A more inclusive, fairer world.

The Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs is setting its agenda through a different process and will adopt short motions and engage in campaigns.

Standing Committee on Peace and International Security

On 24 October, the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security conducted an expert hearing on: *Addressing the social and humanitarian impact of autonomous weapon systems and artificial intelligence*. Mr Hill attended the expert hearing and participated in the debate that followed on behalf of the Australian delegation.

The committee also held a panel discussion at the same meeting on: *Inventory of tools for MPs to engage in dialogue, legislation, oversight and prevention in the pursuit of peace*.

On 26 October, the committee held elections and conducted a discussion on: *The role of parliaments in promoting a culture of transparency, anti-corruption and citizen engagement to restore trust in national and international institutions and strengthen peace*.

Standing Committee on Sustainable Development

The Standing Committee on Sustainable Development met on 25 October to debate the theme of the 148th Assembly, *Partnerships for climate action: Promoting access to affordable green energy, and ensuring innovation, responsibility and equity*.

It also discussed preparations for the forthcoming Parliamentary Meeting at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) to be held in the United Arab Emirates. At its second meeting on 26 October, the committee held an expert hearing on the theme: *Ensuring global food security* and conducted elections.

Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights

The Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights met twice during the Assembly to consider a draft resolution on orphanage trafficking and hold elections.

As the Rapporteur of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights, Senator Reynolds submitted the draft resolution on orphanage trafficking and accompanying explanatory memorandum to the committee on behalf of the Australian delegation. The draft resolution took into consideration the contributions of delegations representing 30 member parliaments who participated in a debate on the proposal at the 146th IPU Assembly in Bahrain.

At its first meeting on 24 October, the committee considered 196 proposed amendments to the draft resolution provided by 27 country delegations. During the

meeting, Senator Reynolds as Rapporteur showed a video explainer on orphanage trafficking and provided materials on what parliamentarians can do as legislators to address orphanage trafficking.⁸ Senator Reynolds also provided an explanation for the provisions of the resolution and agreement was struck on each amendment.

At its second meeting on 26 October, the committee considered the amended resolution. Senator Reynolds thanked contributing delegations for their collaborative approach and the collegiate manner with which agreement was reached on the resolution. Thereafter, the committee adopted the resolution and explanatory memorandum.

On 27 October, as Rapporteur of the committee, Senator Reynolds presented the resolution to the Assembly and thanked contributing members. The Assembly unanimously adopted the resolution by acclamation.



⁸ Interparliamentary Taskforce on Human Trafficking, [Orphanage Trafficking: A Hidden Human Crisis on Vimeo](#), Interparliamentary Taskforce on Human Trafficking, [What you can do as a Legislator](#).

Senator Reynolds as Rapporteur to the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights explaining the resolution on Orphanage trafficking: The role of parliaments in reducing harm.

Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs

The Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs held two open meetings during the Assembly. On 24 October, the committee held two discussions on: *UN field presence in support of national development: The case of Angola* and *Bringing gender equality to the UN General Assembly*.

At its meeting on 26 October, the committee held elections and a panel discussion on the theme: *Reforming the Security Council for a stronger multilateral regime*.

Other committees and activities

In addition to the Forum of Women Parliamentarians and the four standing committees, a number of other subsidiary bodies of the IPU met during the Assembly, including:

- Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law
- Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians
- Working Group on Better Implementation of IPU Resolutions
- Forum of Young Parliamentarians of the IPU
- Committee on the Middle East Question
- Gender Partnership Group
- Advisory Group on Health
- Group of Facilitators for Cyprus
- High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism

Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law

The Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL) met on 24 October and considered recent developments with regard to specific IHL and refugee crisis situations which it has been monitoring for some years. These situations include recent developments regarding refugees and displaced persons in and from Afghanistan, Myanmar and Ukraine.

In 2023, the committee examined the situation of refugees related to the crises in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Nagorno Karabakh and Sudan. Given the current situation,

the committee also conducted a briefing on the humanitarian situation in Gaza and Israel.

The committee held a second, open meeting on 26 October to debate the theme: *The role of parliaments in tackling the humanitarian impacts of climate-related displacement.*



Senator O'Neill and fellow members of the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law

Committee on the Human Right of Parliamentarians

In 1976, the IPU set up a procedure for the treatment of complaints regarding human rights violations of parliamentarians, and entrusted the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians with implementing this procedure.

The committee seeks to protect and defend MPs who face abuse, mistreatment and even death by holding hearings, undertaking missions, and sending trial observers. In 2023, the committee sent trial observers to Pakistan and Zimbabwe and conducted a mission to Iraq.

The committee is currently considering cases in relation to 717 parliamentarians from 43 countries. The most common violation is that of limitations on the right to freedom of opinion and expression which are enshrined in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

On 27 October, the IPU Governing Council [adopted](#) decisions in relation to the cases brought to its attention by the committee from Africa (Congo, Eswatini, Senegal and Zimbabwe), the Middle East (Iraq) and Asia-Pacific (Myanmar, Pakistan, Philippines and Sri Lanka).

Working Group on Better Implementation of IPU Resolutions

As a member of the Working Group on Better Implementation of IPU Resolutions, Senator Reynolds attends meetings of the group throughout the year.

The working group met on 4 July in the lead-up to the Assembly to discuss the proposed development of a more robust and comprehensive monitoring system within the IPU. The meeting considered existing mechanisms of the IPU to monitor performance as well as opportunities to strengthen those mechanisms.

Bilateral and multilateral meetings

A significant benefit of attending the IPU Assembly is the opportunity for Australian parliamentarians to meet their international colleagues in both formal and informal settings. By assembling representatives from such a large number and diverse range of parliaments in one place, the IPU offers a unique opportunity for delegations as well as individual parliamentarians to discuss issues of mutual interest, to develop an understanding of different parliamentary models, share best practice and to strengthen parliament-to-parliament relationships.

The opportunities for informal discussions are complemented with bilateral meetings and multilateral meetings. During the 147th Assembly, the Australian delegation held a multilateral meeting with Pacific Island delegations from Fiji led by the Hon Ratu Naiqama Lalabalavu, Speaker of the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji and with Timor-Leste, led by Ms Veneranda Lemos, President of the IPU Group of the National Parliament of Timor-Leste.

The Australian delegation held bilateral meetings with the parliamentary delegations of Germany, Japan, Lithuania, Portugal and Ukraine. The delegation also held meetings with the IPU President, Mr Pacheco; World Health Organisation (WHO) Director of Health and Multilateral Partnership, Dr Gaudenz Silberschmidt; and International Parliamentarians' Congress Assistant Secretary General, Mr Ljilal Ali Khan.

Meetings between the four IPU Presidential candidates and the Australian delegation also took place throughout the Assembly.



Australian delegation led by Mr Speaker meeting with the Fiji delegation led by the Hon Ratu Naiqama Lalabalavu, Speaker of the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji

Other functions

The delegation attended a reception hosted by the Twelve Plus Group on 22 October. The delegation attended the inaugural ceremony on the evening of 23 October. On the evening of 23 October, Mr Speaker attended a dinner hosted by the President of Angola at the Presidential Palace and on 24 October, he attended a lunch for Speakers of Parliament.

On 25 October, the delegation attended a UK Embassy reception hosted by Ambassador, H.E. Roger Stringer MBE.

Each of these gatherings and events provided further opportunities for the Australian delegation to continue discussions with a wide range of parliamentary colleagues.



The Australian delegation at the 147th IPU Assembly

Acknowledgements and concluding remarks

The Australian delegation was extremely active during the 147th Assembly and acknowledges the valuable support provided to it during this time.

Ms Justine Jones, First Secretary (Policy), Australian High Commission, Pretoria, joined the delegation in Luanda and provided ongoing guidance and briefing material to delegates. The delegation acknowledges and thanks the Australian High Commissioner HE Ms Tegan Brink and Ms Jones for their support to the delegation.

The delegation would also like to thank the Deputy Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates, Mr Warren King, and Ms Petra Aitken, Visits and Public Diplomacy for assistance in Dubai.

The delegation appreciates the support provided by Mr Rob Willert and Mr Chris Robey from the Australian Federal Police who accompanied the delegates while in Luanda.

The delegation also wishes to acknowledge the work of Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) staff in Canberra who provided background briefing materials, including Ms Sarah Maddison and Ms Victoria Fitzgerald who coordinated the provision of the materials. The materials were invaluable to the delegation.

The Parliamentary Library also provided briefing materials to the delegation which were extremely helpful and informative. The delegation acknowledges the work of Mr Jerome Gavin and his colleagues at the Parliamentary Library for providing this material and thanks them for it.

The delegation appreciates the assistance and support of the International and Parliamentary Relations Office (IPRO). Ms Renae Onitiri arranged travel and accommodation and organised the pre-departure briefing for the delegation. The delegation thanks her and IPRO for its support.

Finally, the delegation would like to acknowledge the efforts of Ms Elise Williamson and the delegation secretary, Dr Jane Thomson who accompanied the delegation to support its work.

The Hon Milton Dick MP

Delegation Leader