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IPU Statement

Mr. Martin Chungong
IPU Secretary General

Arab Regional Parliamentary Forum
on the 2030 Agenda

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Mr. Tabet, Deputy Executive Secretary of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Mr. Abdel Shafi, Regional Hub Director of the Bureau for Arab States of the United Nations Development Programme,

Honourable Members of Parliament,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am delighted to welcome you to the Arab Regional Parliamentary Forum on the 2030 Agenda, which, this year, focuses on the importance of strengthening parliamentary engagement in climate action. I would have wished to be there live, but unfortunately, due to prior commitments I was unable to travel to Beirut.

Let me start by warmly thanking our partners, UN ESCWA and UNDP, for the precious collaboration and work done in organizing this meeting at the UN House. This is the third Forum we are jointly organising for the Arab region.

Honourable Members of Parliament,
Ladies and gentlemen,

The climate change is a threat that is not just limited to one country or region. Its catastrophic repercussions transcend the natural and political borders of our world. They are destroying ecosystems, harming the health of populations, keeping people in poverty, jeopardizing economies and wiping out years of progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

Never in history has it been more pressing to address climate change and its interlinked crises.

To be credible and effective, international commitments - like the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement - must be transposed into national legislation, supported by appropriate budget allocation and robust oversight of government performance.

Parliaments can play a crucial role in these efforts.

They are not only well placed to scrutinize how governments are responding to these issues, but they can also use their powers to influence policies and budgets, and ensure they incorporate the SDG framework in its entirety.

Parliaments can strengthen national ownership and make sure that the needs of marginalised and vulnerable groups are duly addressed.

Political will, regional cooperation and strategic action plans to accelerate the realization of the SDGs through parliaments' work, are not only very much welcomed but also indispensable.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Given the urgency to act, IPU Members have stressed the need to contribute to global efforts to restore the planet's ecological health and ensure that all people benefit from sustainable development.

On 13 November, parliamentarians gathered at the Meeting organised by the IPU and the Egyptian House of Representatives on the occasion of the 27th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27).

Parliaments are key actors in translating international commitments into national legislation and action, this is why we regularly organise Parliamentary Meetings around the COP conferences.

At the last one held in Egypt, I was very much pleased to see that parliamentarians reaffirmed their commitment and recommended several practical measures to confront this serious phenomenon, like for example:

- a) working to adopt laws and legislative models that support climate change mitigation and adaptation and the transition to a green economy;
- b) widening the use of tools such as green budgeting;
- c) strengthening parliamentary oversight in this area
- d) fostering global and regional cooperation to ensure well-coordinated activities in response to climate-related challenges.

I hope that you will seize the precious opportunity given by this Forum to benefit from the rich knowledge of experts, share your experiences, and discuss tangible ways to ensure that the wellbeing of people and planet is at the centre of national plans.

The IPU is fully committed to supporting your parliament, in collaboration with our partners ESCWA and UNDP, also at the national level. It is only through cooperation and partnerships that we can succeed.

I wish you a very successful meeting.

Thank you.