



In cooperation with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)

## Arab Region Parliamentary Forum on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

UN House, Beirut, 24 – 25 January 2019  
Main Conference Hall, B1 Level

### Preliminary Programme of Work

Day 1 – Thursday 24 January 2019	
08:30 – 09:00	Registration
09:00 – 09:30	<p><b>Opening session</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mr Mounir Tabet, Acting Executive Secretary, ESCWA</li> <li>- Mr Khaled Abdel Shafi, Director, Regional Hub in Amman, UNDP</li> <li>- Mr Rami Ahmad, Advisor to the President and Special Envoy on SDGs, Islamic Development Bank Group</li> </ul>
09:30 – 10:30	<p><b>Session 1 – Setting the scene: the 2030 Agenda, three years into implementation</b> Moderator: Ms Dima Al-Khatib, Policy and Programme Coordinator, Regional Hub in Amman, UNDP</p> <p>The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a universal vision of how the world should be. It is a framework for all development players to work together to achieve common development goals. Since its adoption in September 2015, the 2030 Agenda has progressively become a reference framework and an incentive for enhanced partnerships at the local, national, regional and global levels. The Agenda underscores parliament as a key stakeholder whose engagement is critical to delivering on the principles and commitments of the Agenda.</p> <p>This session sets the stage for the Regional Parliamentary Forum discussions, updating participants on the global progress since implementation started three years ago. It will review global and regional processes and set the context for the 2019 global thematic focus on empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality.</p> <p>The session includes a presentation and follow-up questions and answers (Q&amp;A) to ensure a common understanding of the programme of work and objectives to be achieved.</p> <p><b>Speaker:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ms Maisaa Youssef, Sustainable Development Officer, Unit on 2030 Agenda, ESCWA (20 minutes)</li> </ul> <p>▪ <b>Q&amp;A</b></p>
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee break



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11:00 – 12:30	<p><b>Session 2 – Role and functions of parliament from a 2030 Agenda lens</b></p> <p>Moderator: Mr Rami Ahmad, Advisor to the President and Special Envoy on SDGs, Islamic Development Bank Group</p>
	<p>The 2030 Agenda acknowledged the role of parliaments in implementing the Agenda and monitoring the progress towards achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs). Parliamentarians can exercise their representation, law making, budgeting and oversight functions to ensure that national plans and policies are aligned with the SDGs and national developmental priorities and are implemented in an efficient and responsive manner leaving no one behind.</p> <p>This session will look at the role of parliaments from a 2030 Agenda lens and focus on mechanisms available to parliamentarians that enable them to engage effectively with the 2030 Agenda. The discussions will be informed by the findings of IPU’s global survey of parliaments’ experiences to adapt to the 2030 Agenda.</p> <p><b>Keynote speech:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Parliamentary experience in engaging with the 2030 Agenda – the case of Indonesia (15 minutes)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ms Nourhayati Ali Assegaf, Chairperson of the Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation, House of Representatives, Indonesia</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Parliamentary experience in engaging with the 2030 Agenda – the case of Tunisia (10 minutes)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ms Leila Ouled Ali, Member of the Assembly of People's Representatives, Tunisia</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>The role of parliament in the 2030 Agenda: key findings from the global IPU survey (15 minutes)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ms Aleksandra Blagojevic, Program Manager for International Development, IPU</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>The role of parliament in the 2030 Agenda: tools, mechanisms and their applications (10 minutes)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mr Ali Elswawi, Parliamentary Expert and Professor of Political Science, Cairo University, Egypt</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Discussion</b></li> </ul>
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch break

14:00 – 15:45	<p><b>Session 3 – Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality: what role for parliaments?</b></p> <p>Moderator: Mr Oussama Safa, Chief of Participation and Social Justice Section, Social Development Division, ESCWA</p>
	<p>The 2019 edition of the HLPF will be held under the theme of “Empowering People and Ensuring Inclusiveness and Equality”, which has also been adopted as the regional theme for the Arab Forum for Sustainable Development 2019 (AFSD-2019). This session will explore what the theme means for the Arab region. It will offer a peer learning platform to explore how Members of Arab Parliaments have contributed to shaping people-centred policies that promote inclusiveness and equality and empower people, discuss the challenges they have faced, and the resources they have been able to draw upon, within and outside the parliamentary institution, to carry out their various functions.</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Introduction</b> (10 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mr Oussama Safa, Chief of Participation and Social Justice Section, ESCWA</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Empowering People and Ensuring Inclusiveness and Equality: parliamentary experiences</b> (10 minutes per speaker) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mr Christoph Hoffmann, MP and Member of the Parliamentary Committee for Economic Cooperation, Bundestag, Germany</li> <li>- Mr Naief Al Taleb Alhareery, MP and Member of the Culture, Education, and Scientific Research Committee, People’s Assembly, Syrian Arab Republic</li> <li>- Ms Amina Maelainine, Deputy Speaker, Member of the Committee on Justice, Legislation and Rights, Morocco</li> <li>- <b>TBD</b>, Member of National People's Assembly, Algeria</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Discussion</b></li> </ul>
15:45 – 16:00	<i>Coffee break</i>
16:00 – 17:30	<p><b>Session 4 – National budgets: parliament and achieving SDGs in Arab countries</b></p> <p>Moderator: Mr Yassine Jaber, Chair of the Foreign Affairs and Immigrants Committee and Member of the Committee for Finance and Budget, Lebanese Parliament</p> <p>Financing the 2030 Agenda is a critical element in the means of implementation, and one of the most challenging; it highlights the importance of integrated national budgeting for sustainable development. Parliaments in most political systems are entrusted with scrutinizing the budget and monitoring its implementation to ensure that it responds to development priorities and addresses their constituencies’ needs. This session will discuss means to examine the budget from an SDG lens throughout the budget cycle and the particular resources and mechanisms available to parliamentarians. Building on experience sharing and highlighting good practices from the Arab region and beyond, the discussion will also address the challenges that parliaments across the region face with the specific function of budgeting, and the changes needed to strengthen this role and ensure more effectiveness.</p>

Speakers:

- **General framework and parliamentary experiences in budgeting for the 2030 Agenda** (10 minutes)
  - Ms Mona Fattah, Sustainable Development Officer, Unit on 2030 Agenda, ESCWA
- **Parliamentary mechanisms to budget for sustainable development** (10 minutes)
  - Ms Sara Salman, Population Affairs Officer, ESCWA
- **Budgeting for the SDGs: parliamentary experiences** (10 minutes per speaker)
  - Mr Mongi Rahoui, MP and Chairman of the Finance, Planning and Development Committee, Assembly of People's Representatives, Tunisia
  - Mr Azmi Shuaibi, Board Member, Arab Parliamentarians Against Corruption, and Former Member of the Palestinian Legislative Council
- **Discussion**

Day 2 – Friday 25 January 2019

09:00 – 10:30

**Session 5 – Strengthening Arab Parliaments for more effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda: engaging with stakeholders**

Moderator: Mr Mustapha Barghouti, Member of Parliament, Palestinian Legislative Council and President of the Palestinian Medical Relief Society

The achievement of the SDGs rests on the adoption of a holistic, multisectoral, whole of society, whole of government approach. It also depends heavily on reliable evidence and good quality data for policy-making that empowers the most vulnerable and ensures inclusiveness, equality and empowerment for all. Parliamentarians are required to engage closely with other governmental and nongovernmental development actors including national statistical offices (NSOs), supreme audit institutions (SAIs), civil society organizations (CSOs), academic institutions, and the media among others. This engagement not only contributes to effective law-making but also provides MPs with invaluable resources and expertise they often require to carry out their work, particularly in light of limited institutional resources available to them. As such, this panel will sensitize participants to the positive implications of forging good working relations and partnerships with other development actors and will highlight institutional arrangements and good practices from the region.

Speakers:

- **Parliament and National Statistical Offices** (10 minutes)
  - Mr Qassem Al Zoubi, General Manager, Department of Statistics, Jordan
- **Parliament and civil society organizations** (10 minutes)
  - Ms Asma Khader, President, Sisterhood is Global Institute, Jordan
- **Parliament and government** (10 minutes)
  - Ms Wissal Hossein, Deputy Secretary General for Technical Affairs, National Population Council, Sudan

**Day 2 – Friday 25 January 2019**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Parliaments and parliamentary monitors (ex. "Nouabook") (10 minutes)</b></li> <li>- Mr Ismail Ilsouk, Executive Director, SimSim-Participation Citoyenne, Morocco</li> <li>▪ <b>Parliaments and supreme audit institutions (10 minutes)</b></li> <li>- Mr Qasim Mutar, Board of Supreme Audit, Iraq</li> <li>▪ <b>International partners - Reverse Linkage approach on knowledge transfer across countries (10 minutes)</b></li> <li>- Mr Ahmed Farouk Diken, Senior Technical Cooperation Coordinator, Islamic Development Bank</li> <li>▪ <b>Discussion</b></li> </ul>
10:30-11:00	<i>Coffee break</i>
11:00 – 12:30	<p><b>Session 6 - Voluntary National Reviews: towards a stronger role of parliaments</b></p> <p>Moderator: Ms Dima Jamali, Member of Parliament and Chair of the Sustainable Development Committee, Lebanese Parliament</p>
	<p>By 2018, a total of 102 countries had submitted their Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) to the HLPF including 10 Arab states with six more planned for 2019. VNRs are part of the follow-up and review (FUR) of the 2030 Agenda and present countries with an opportunity to accelerate implementation at the national level. The VNR is also linked to regional FUR mechanisms; namely the AFSD which provides countries with a platform for dialogue between governments and other stakeholders. While the 2030 Agenda mentions that the VNRs are state-led, it strongly recommends that a multi-stakeholder and inclusive approach be adopted for conducting the review including civil society, private sector, academia, parliamentarians and others. However, the involvement of parliaments in the VNR process varied substantially across country reports. This session will attempt to highlight the important role the parliament could play in the VNR process and engage the audience in a collective thinking exercise on means to strengthen this role.</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Voluntary National Reviews of the 2030 Agenda: what role for parliaments? (10 minutes)</b></li> <li>- Ms Hania Sabbidin Dimassi, Unit on 2030 Agenda, ESCWA</li> <li>▪ <b>Results of the global review on engagement of parliaments with follow-up and review (10 minutes)</b></li> <li>- Ms Aleksandra Blagojevic, Program Manager for International Development, IPU</li> <li>▪ <b>Challenges and opportunities in countries (10 minutes per speaker)</b></li> <li>- Mr Abdalbasit Saeed, Member of Parliament, National Assembly, Sudan</li> <li>- Mr Ahmad Mesleh, Director General of Committees, Palestinian Legislative Council</li> <li>▪ <b>Discussion</b></li> </ul>

**Day 2 – Friday 25 January 2019**

12:30 – 14:00	<i>Lunch break</i>
14:00 – 15:30	<p><b>Session 7 – Roundtable discussion of practical steps to enhance parliament’s engagement with the 2030 Agenda and follow-up and review</b></p> <p>Moderator: Mr Ali Elsawi, Parliamentary Expert and Professor of Political Science, Cairo University, Egypt</p>
	<p>This session will take the form of an open, interactive discussion on mechanisms to enhance the parliament’s role in the implementation and follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda. Discussions will build on the main outcomes of the Forum’s sessions while focusing on the challenges facing parliaments in the Arab Region and means to enhance parliamentary work for achieving sustainable development and national priorities. The "Draft action plan on strengthening the role of parliaments and parliamentarians in the implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda", which was adopted during the first edition of the Parliamentary Forum, will be referenced to guide the discussion.</p> <p>Rapporteurs: ESCWA, UNDP and IsDB</p>
15:30 – 16:00	<p><b>Closing Session: the way forward and final remarks</b></p> <p>Building on the discussions in previous sessions, this session will wrap up the forum and present future action and proposed solutions that the organizing partners will work on implementing within the timeline leading to the Arab Forum for Sustainable Development-2019 (AFSD-2019) which will be convened in April, the High-level Political Forum (2019 HLPF) to be convened in July, and the next edition of the Arab Region Parliamentary Forum in 2020.</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mr Rami Ahmad, Advisor to the President and Special Envoy on SDGs, Islamic Development Bank Group</li> <li>- Mr Khaled Abdel Shafi, Director, Regional Hub in Amman, UNDP</li> <li>- Mr Mounir Tabet, Acting Executive Secretary, ESCWA</li> </ul>