

International Parliamentarians' Congress (IPC)



ANNUAL REPORT 2024



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FOREWORD

The International Parliamentarians Congress (IPC) continues to emerge as a unifying platform for parliamentarians worldwide. The IPC Annual Report 2024 reflects our shared progress in advancing democratic values, strengthening inter-parliamentary dialogue, and addressing global challenges.

It highlights the growing relevance of parliamentary diplomacy in navigating today's complex geopolitical landscape and the importance of collective leadership in shaping inclusive policies.

I commend the efforts of our members and the leadership of the Secretary-General.

Together, we remain committed to shaping a future rooted in cooperation, sustainability, and peace.

His Excellency AbdelRahim Al Maaia
The President – IPC

It is a privilege to present the International Parliamentarians Congress (IPC) Annual Report 2024, a year marked by strategic growth expanded global presence and deepened multilateral engagement.

With representation from countries around the world, IPC strengthened its voice in global affairs through active participation in election observation, climate negotiations, and inter-regional cooperation. The collective efforts reaffirm our commitment to promoting democracy, sustainable development, and parliamentary diplomacy.

I am grateful to our members, partners, and the Secretariat for their dedication.

We look forward to building on this momentum for a more inclusive and cooperative future.

(Senator) Sitara Ayaz
The Secretary-General, IPC



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In a time of global challenges, the International Parliamentarians' Congress (IPC) plays a vital role in promoting parliamentary diplomacy and empowering lawmakers in international affairs. This Annual Report highlights IPC's dedication to peace, cooperation, and democratic values. Over the past year, IPC has strengthened its position as a global platform for inter-parliamentary dialogue and collaboration, making notable progress in regional cooperation, electoral integrity, human rights, and economic development, each initiative reinforcing IPC's foundational principles.

IPC notably expanded its membership to 63 countries across Africa, Europe, the Americas, Central Asia, and beyond, demonstrating its growing credibility and influence as a platform that unites Parliamentarians around shared values and collective action.

To uphold democratic integrity, IPC conducted Election Observation Missions in Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Russia, and the United Kingdom, reaffirming its dedication to free, fair, and transparent electoral processes. These missions not only enhanced public trust in democratic systems but also reinforced the IPC's role as a reliable observer of electoral practices.

In 2024, IPC strengthened its presence in regional cooperation and global parliamentary diplomacy by participating as an observer in the Annual Sessions of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA), the African Parliamentary Union (APU), the Non-Aligned Movement Parliamentary Network (NAM PN), and the 67th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPA). These forums served as strategic platforms for IPC to engage with diverse parliamentary institutions and promote inclusive legislative dialogue.

IPC deepened institutional partnerships through engagements with international and regional organizations such as the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), enabling dialogue on global challenges ranging from peacebuilding and humanitarian law to sustainable development.

A strong advocate of human rights and gender equality, IPC participated in the Eurasian Women's Forum and organized a focused workshop on International Humanitarian Law (IHL) in collaboration with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), highlighting its commitment to humanitarian principles and policymaker capacity building.

IPC's active role at the 29th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) – COP 29 underlined its focus on climate resilience, sustainable tourism, and economic cooperation, engaging parliamentarians in shaping environmentally conscious and investment-friendly frameworks.

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) brought together IPC's diverse membership, promoting institutional transparency, strategic reflection, and consensus-building for future initiatives.

Looking forward to 2025, IPC will focus on regional integration, food and health security, and road safety, while continuing to serve as a bridge between parliamentarians and global priorities.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

January 2024

- Election Observation Mission: General Elections of the People's Republic of Bangladesh 2024 1

February 2024

- Election Observation Mission: Presidential Elections of the Republic of Azerbaijan 2024 2
- 14th Plenary Session of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA) 3
- Elections of the President of the International Parliamentarians Congress (IPC) 4

March 2024

- Spring Festival by International Parliamentarians Congress (IPC) 5
- Election Observation Mission: Presidential Elections of the Russian Federation 2024 6
- The Third Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement Parliamentary Network (NAM PN) 7

April 2024

- First Official Visit of the International Parliamentarians Congress (IPC) President H.E. AbdelRahim Maaia to IPC Headquarters 8

May 2024

- 6th World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue Azerbaijan 9

July 2024

- Election Observation Mission: General Elections of the United Kingdom 2024 10
- Engagement with the Diplomatic Missions of the African Region 11

August 2024

- Bilateral Meeting and Diplomatic Reception for Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA) 12

September 2024

- Election Observation Mission: General Elections in the Republic of Azerbaijan 2024 13
- Meeting with the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic States (TURKPA) 14
- Meeting with the Minister of Ecology and Natural Sciences of the Republic of Azerbaijan 15
- Meeting with the Deputy Head of the State Tourism Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan 16
- Meeting with the Deputy Minister of Economy of the Republic of Azerbaijan 17
- Workshop on International Humanitarian Law for Policymakers 18
- Fourth Eurasian Women Forum 19
- IPC Presents Election Observation Report on Russian Presidential Elections to Ambassador H.E. Albert P. Khorev 20

October 2024

- 46th Conference of Speakers and 82nd Executive Committee meeting of the African Parliamentary Union (APU) 21
- The Annual General Meeting of International Parliamentarians Congress 2024 22

November 2024

- 67th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference of Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) 23
- 29th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) - COP29 24

December 2024

- Session on the Significance of Parliamentary Forums at the 10th National Parliamentary Development Course 25
- IPC's Article Featured in the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association's Journal, "The Parliamentarian" 26



7TH JAN 2024 | DHAKA, BANGLADESH **ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION BANGLADESH**

Bangladesh held its general elections on 7th January 2024, marking a critical moment in the country's democratic process. In line with its commitment to supporting electoral transparency and strengthening democratic institutions, the International Parliamentarians Congress (IPC) deployed an official election observation mission to Dhaka, Bangladesh to observe the elections as an international organization. This mission followed IPC's accreditation by the Election Commission of Bangladesh, an important milestone reflecting the organization's growing recognition as a credible international actor in election observation.



The mission was led by IPC Member H.E. AbdelRahim Maaia from the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. During the election observation mission, the IPC delegation engaged constructively with election officials, attended preparatory briefings, and observed the polling process at various locations in Dhaka. The delegation noted the professional conduct of election personnel, the orderly management of polling stations, and the enthusiastic participation of voters.

Following the mission, IPC prepared a detailed election observation report outlining its findings and recommendations. IPC commended the Election Commission for its commitment to transparency and fairness. H.E. Maaia emphasized the importance of international observation in promoting democratic values and strengthening global governance.





7TH FEBRUARY 2024 | BAKU, AZERBAIJAN **PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION OF AZERBAIJAN**

The Republic of Azerbaijan has demonstrated its commitment to transparency by welcoming international election observation missions and granting accreditation to a range of international organizations and countries for its 2024 presidential elections. In this spirit of openness, the International Parliamentarians Congress (IPC) was accredited by the Central Election Commission of Azerbaijan to observe the electoral process on 7th February 2024.

The IPC delegation comprised Mr. Soro Fobeh, IPC Member from Côte d'Ivoire; Ms. Asmaou Berry, IPC Member from Guinea; and Ms. Mehk Butt, Manager of Communications at IPC. The mission conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the elections in Baku and Sumqayit through polling station visits, stakeholder engagements, and participation in election-day activities.

The delegation noted an orderly electoral process, well-managed polling stations, and active citizen participation. A press briefing was held in Baku to share the mission's initial observations with the public and media.

Following the observation, IPC prepared a detailed election observation report outlining its key findings and recommendations. Head of Delegation Mr. Fobeh commended Azerbaijan's efforts to uphold fairness and transparency while stressing the importance of ongoing progress in strengthening democratic practices.





22ND – 23RD FEBRUARY 2024 | BAKU, AZERBAIJAN **IPC PARTICIPATES IN ASIAN PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY (APA) 14TH PLENARY SESSION IN BAKU**

The International Parliamentarians Congress (IPC) participated in the 14th Plenary Session of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA) held in Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan. The session, held under the theme “Fostering Regional Cooperation for Sustainable Development in Asia,” brought together parliamentary representatives from across the region to collectively address key regional challenges.

Represented by IPC Secretary General Senator Sitara Ayaz and Ms. Mehk Butt, Manager Communications, the IPC delegation participated as an official observer organization, following its observer status granted during APA’s 13th Plenary Session. Senator Sitara Ayaz delivered a keynote intervention highlighting the critical importance of inter-parliamentary collaboration in advancing sustainable development goals, a message that resonated with delegates from numerous member states.

In addition to participating in the plenary proceedings, the IPC delegation held bilateral meetings with prominent parliamentary leaders, including the Speaker of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, the Deputy Speaker of Qatar’s Shura Council, and a representative from the Russian Federation. These discussions explored avenues for cooperation and deepened inter-parliamentary engagement on regional priorities.

IPC’s involvement in the APA’s 14th Plenary Session reaffirmed its commitment to promoting regional integration, addressing pressing social and economic issues, and contributing to sustainable development through strengthened parliamentary diplomacy.





24TH FEBRUARY 2024 | HYBRID ELECTIONS FOR THE PRESIDENT OF IPC



In accordance with the Constitution of the International Parliamentarians Congress (IPC), presidential elections were held in February 2024 to elect the organization's President for the next term. The elections were conducted through an online voting process from 24th to 26th February 2024, ensuring accessibility and participation from IPC members across all regions.

IPC members cast their votes electronically within the designated timeframe. Following the closure of the voting process, ballots were securely counted and verified. His Excellency Abdel Rahim Maaia, a member from the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, received the highest number of votes among the nominated candidates.

Subsequently, IPC officially announced H.E. Abdel Rahim Maaia as the newly elected President. Currently serving as the First Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives of Jordan, H.E. Maaia brings extensive experience in parliamentary leadership and international cooperation to the role.



9TH MARCH 2024 | ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN **SPRING FESTIVAL**

The International Parliamentarians Congress (IPC) hosted a Spring Festival Reception at the residence of its Secretary General, Senator Sitara Ayaz, in Islamabad. The event was organized to mark the seasonal transition and served as an opportunity to engage with members of the diplomatic corps, representatives of international organizations, and IPC's institutional partners.



Set against the vibrant backdrop of spring-themed décor, the evening provided a warm and festive atmosphere for informal dialogue and mutual exchange. Guests enjoyed a diverse selection of traditional and international cuisine, celebrating both cultural diversity and the spirit of togetherness.

This gathering reflected IPC's commitment to fostering meaningful partnerships and promoting inter-institutional goodwill.





15TH MARCH 2024 | MOSCOW, RUSSIA

OBSERVING DEMOCRACY: IPC'S MISSION TO THE RUSSIAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS 2024



The Russian Federation held its presidential elections from 15th to 17th March 2024, inviting international election observers as part of its commitment to maintaining transparency in the electoral process. The International Parliamentarians Congress (IPC) was officially accredited by the Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation to observe the elections.

In line with IPC's mandate to support democratic governance, IPC Secretary General, Senator Sitara Ayaz, undertook the mission. The delegation conducted on-ground observation across various polling stations in Moscow, engaging with electoral officials and assessing the procedures.

Following the mission, IPC compiled and published a comprehensive election observation report, documenting its findings and offering insights into the electoral environment, administrative arrangements, and public participation.





25TH MARCH 2024 | GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

3RD CONFERENCE OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT PARLIAMENTARY NETWORK (NAM PN)

The International Parliamentarians Congress (IPC) participated as an observer at the Third Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement Parliamentary Network (NAM PN), held on 25th March 2024 in Geneva alongside the 148th IPU Assembly. The conference was held under the theme “Revitalizing Parliamentary Action in Combating Climate Change.”

Represented by Assistant Secretary General Mr. Ijlal Ali Khan, IPC reaffirmed its commitment to addressing climate change through parliamentary cooperation. As an accredited observer since 2023, IPC engaged in productive exchanges with NAM and IPU representatives, exploring future collaboration on global challenges.

The IPC reiterated its commitment to combating climate change and fostering sustainable development, emphasizing the importance of collective action and parliamentary strategies to address this urgent issue.





23RD APRIL 2024 | ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN VISIT OF PRESIDENT OF IPC



His Excellency AbdelRahim Maaia, the newly elected President of the International Parliamentarians Congress (IPC), visited the IPC Headquarters in Islamabad for the first time in his capacity as President from April 23rd to 26th, 2024. This visit marked a significant milestone following his election in February 2024.

During his four-day visit, H.E. Maaia met with various high-level officials to be formally introduced, including Federal Law Minister Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar, as well as the Ambassadors of Saudi Arabia and Jordan to Pakistan. These engagements provided an opportunity to strengthen bilateral ties and explore avenues for enhanced collaboration between IPC and these countries.

A key highlight of the visit was an official gathering organized by IPC, where the diplomatic missions of all countries in Islamabad were invited to meet with the IPC President. The event provided a platform for fostering collaboration and building stronger international ties, further reinforcing IPC's global mission.

In addition, an official dinner was also hosted by Senator Mohammad Abdul Qadir in honor of the IPC president.





1ST – 3RD MAY 2024 | BAKU, AZERBAIJAN

IPC PARTICIPATES IN 6TH WORLD FORUM ON INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE IN BAKU

The International Parliamentarians Congress (IPC) was honored to participate in the 6th World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue, held in Baku, Azerbaijan. Organized under the theme of promoting mutual understanding, dialogue, and cooperation among civilizations, the forum served as a critical global platform for exchanging ideas on cultural diversity, sustainable development, and peacebuilding.



A two-member IPC delegation, comprising Senator Sitara Ayaz, Secretary General IPC, and Mr. Naeem Ahmed, Chief Technical Advisor IPC, represented the organization at this important international gathering.

Secretary General Senator Sitara Ayaz delivered a keynote address on “The Role and Best Practices of the Legislature in the Protection of Cultural Heritage,” emphasizing the vital legislative responsibilities in safeguarding cultural identities and heritage sites. She also actively contributed to a panel discussion on “Sustainable Pathways for a Greener Future,” where she discussed global strategies for promoting environmental sustainability through effective policymaking.





4TH JULY 2024 | LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM **UNITED KINGDOM GENERAL ELECTIONS**



The United Kingdom held its General Elections in July 2024. The International Parliamentarians Congress (IPC), having previously observed the UK General Elections in 2019, was once again accredited to observe the electoral process in 2024.

A two-member IPC delegation, comprising Assistant Secretary General Mr. Ijlal Ali Khan and IPC Member H.E. Mr. Soro Fobeh from Côte d'Ivoire, was deployed to monitor the elections. On election day, July 4, 2024, the delegation visited multiple polling stations, assessing the conduct, transparency, and accessibility of the electoral process.

This observation mission reaffirmed IPC's commitment to promoting democratic values, supporting transparent electoral practices, and strengthening international parliamentary cooperation through impartial election observation.





25TH JULY 2024 | ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN

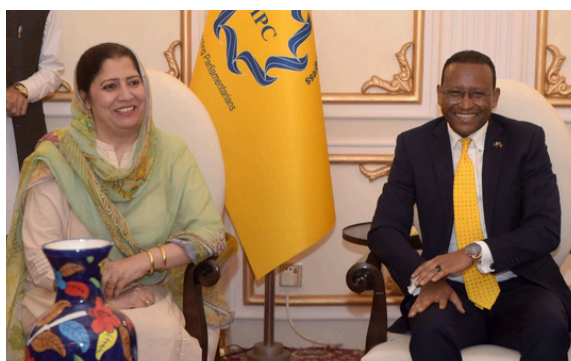
IPC HOSTED THE NETWORKING LUNCH WITH DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS OF AFRICAN REGION, PRESENT IN ISLAMABAD PAKISTAN

The International Parliamentarians Congress (IPC) organized a special engagement event for the Diplomatic Missions of the African Region based in Islamabad. The event featured a courtesy call followed by a networking lunch, attended by representatives from Morocco, Sudan, Ethiopia, Libya, Egypt, Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Nigeria, South Africa, and Kenya.

The Secretary General of IPC, Senator Sitara Ayaz, formally welcomed the distinguished guests and delivered a comprehensive briefing on IPC's mission, activities, and growing engagement with the African continent. She emphasized IPC's commitment to strengthening ties with African parliamentarians and enhancing collaboration across a range of shared interests.

Special Advisor to IPC for the African Region, Major General (Retd.) Muhammad Tayyab Azam, also addressed the gathering, outlining IPC's vision to deepen partnerships with African nations, particularly in the areas of governance, economic development, and social progress.

The diplomatic representatives appreciated IPC's outreach and reaffirmed their interest in adopting closer cooperation. The event concluded with a productive exchange of ideas, setting the stage for future collaboration between IPC and the African region.





20TH AUGUST 2024 | ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN **IPC INVITED THE CICA SECRETARY-GENERAL KAIRAT SARYBAY AT IPC SECRETARIAT AND HOSTED AN OFFICIAL DINNER IN HIS HONOUR**

During the visit of the Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA) H.E. Kairat Sarybay to Pakistan, the International Parliamentarians Congress (IPC) hosted a series of engagements with him. A bilateral meeting was held at the IPC Secretariat between Senator Sitara Ayaz, Secretary General of IPC, and H.E. Kairat Sarybay, Secretary General of CICA. The discussions focused on exploring avenues for enhanced cooperation between the two organizations, particularly in promoting regional peace, security, and parliamentary collaboration across Asia.

Following the meeting, IPC hosted a distinguished dinner reception at the Islamabad Club in honor of H.E. Kairat Sarybay. The event brought together ambassadors, representatives of international organizations, business leaders, senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), and the Head of the World Health Organization (WHO) in Pakistan, among other dignitaries.

In her remarks, Senator Sitara Ayaz highlighted the significance of fostering international partnerships and reiterated IPC's commitment to collaborating with CICA on shared objectives. The gathering concluded with a vote of thanks, recognizing the contributions of all participants and reaffirming IPC's role in advancing international cooperation.





1ST SEPTEMBER 2024 | BAKU, AZERBAIJAN

IPC OBSERVES AZERBAIJAN'S SNAP GENERAL ELECTIONS

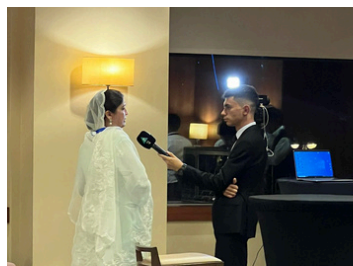
Having established strong and growing ties with the Republic of Azerbaijan, the International Parliamentarians Congress (IPC) was honored to observe the country's snap general elections held on 1st September 2024. This observation followed IPC's earlier participation in the presidential elections of Azerbaijan in the same year, reflecting the deepening engagement between IPC and Azerbaijan.

A four-member IPC delegation, led by Secretary General Senator Sitara Ayaz, was deployed to monitor the electoral process. The delegation also included Mr. Duarte Pacheco, former President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and Ambassador-at-Large of IPC, Mr. Fida Hussain Malik, Special Advisor of IPC on Climate Change and SDGs, and Ms. Mehk Butt, Manager Communications at IPC.

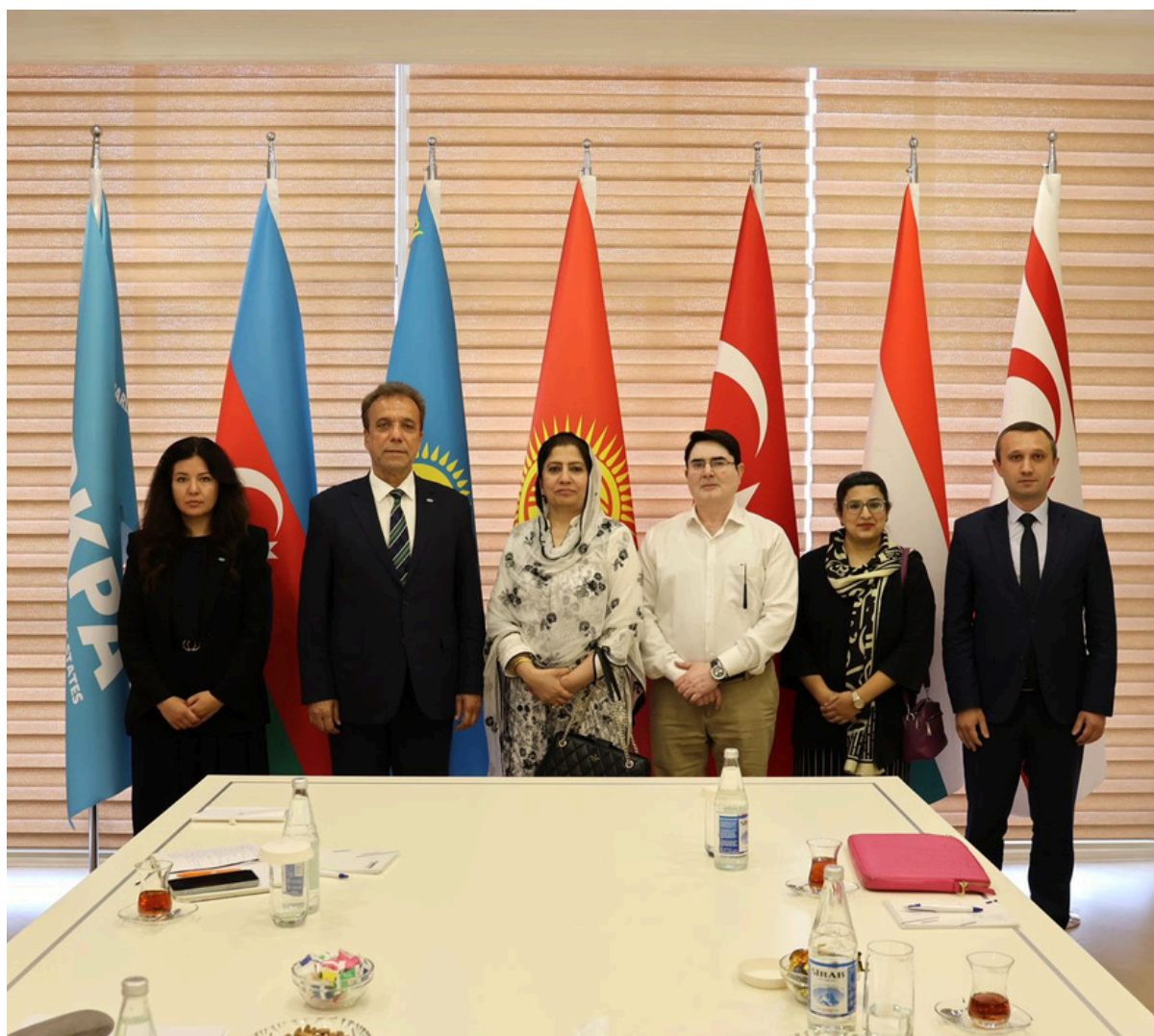
The delegation visited several polling stations across Baku and the Sabunchu district, closely observing the voting and vote-counting processes. Their findings highlighted a transparent and orderly conduct of the elections, with no major irregularities reported.

Following the observation, IPC held a press conference where Secretary General Senator Sitara Ayaz commended the government and the people of Azerbaijan for their strong commitment to democratic participation and good governance. She particularly praised the successful conduct of both the presidential and general elections within the same year, highlighting it as a remarkable achievement in strengthening democratic processes.

The election observation report has been published.



3RD SEPTEMBER 2024 | BAKU, AZERBAIJAN **MEETING WITH THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF TURKIC STATES (TURKPA)**



During the IPC delegation visit to Azerbaijan, the IPC delegation held several important bilateral meetings, including a productive session with H.E. Mr. Mehmet Süreyya Er, Secretary General of TURKPA, at the TURKPA Secretariat. Discussions centered on strengthening regional connectivity and the potential to organize a dedicated conference on this topic. The possibility of organizing the conference across various IPC member countries was explored to strengthen its impact. Both organizations agreed on the need for close coordination to ensure bilateral engagements.



4TH SEPTEMBER 2024 | BAKU, AZERBAIJAN **MEETING WITH THE MINISTER OF ECOLOGY AND NATURAL SCIENCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN**

The IPC delegation also held a meeting with H.E. Mukhtar Babayev, Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan, during their visit to Baku. IPC expressed its congratulations to Azerbaijan on its presidency of COP-29 and reaffirmed its commitment to contributing to climate discussions at the conference. The delegation emphasized the importance of collaborating with the Ministry of Ecology, working together on climate-related issues, and organizing a post-COP-29 conference to implement the outcomes of the event. IPC looks forward to playing a key role in advancing global climate action.





4TH SEPTEMBER 2024 | BAKU, AZERBAIJAN **MEETING WITH THE DEPUTY HEAD OF THE STATE TOURISM AGENCY OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN**

The IPC delegation also held a meeting with Ms. Azada Huseynova, Deputy Head of the State Tourism Agency. The discussions focused on enhancing tourism relations, leveraging the IPC platform to connect with global tourism organizations, and formalizing collaboration through an MOU. Additionally, the delegation discussed participating in Tourism Day at COP-29, a new initiative, and offering technical support for sustainable tourism projects, including carbon credit opportunities.





4TH SEPTEMBER 2024 | BAKU, AZERBAIJAN **MEETING WITH THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF ECONOMY OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN**



The IPC delegation had a fruitful discussion with H.E. Elnur Aliyev, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Economy of Azerbaijan. The conversation focused on strengthening economic relations, particularly boosting trade and investment in the African region. Both parties emphasized the importance of enhancing bilateral and multilateral cooperation and explored ways to utilize the IPC platform to facilitate economic integration and collaboration, especially within the African context.





11TH SEPTEMBER 2024 | ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN **IPC AND ICRC ORGANIZE WORKSHOP ON INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW FOR POLICY MAKERS IN ISLAMABAD.**

Islamabad, 11th-12th September 2024 – The IPC, in collaboration with the ICRC, organized a two-day workshop on International Humanitarian Law (IHL) at the IPC Secretariat. The event aimed to enhance the capacity of parliamentarians and legal officials in implementing International Humanitarian Laws.

The workshop, attended by parliamentarians from all six provincial assemblies and officials from the Ministry of Law and Justice, featured ICRC experts who provided insights into IHL and its practical application in Pakistan. Discussions focused on humanitarian access, civilian protection, and aligning national laws with international standards.

The closing ceremony included remarks from Mr. Nicolas Lambert (ICRC) and Senator Sitara Ayaz (IPC), both emphasizing continued collaboration. Senator Mushahid Hussain also contributed to the discussions at the closing ceremony.





18TH SEPTEMBER 2024 | ST. PETERSBURG, RUSSIAN
FEDERATION

FOURTH EURASIAN WOMEN FORUM

Senator Sitara Ayaz, Secretary-General of IPC, participated in the 4th Eurasian Women's Forum, held from 18th to 20th September 2024 in St. Petersburg. The forum, themed "Women for Strengthening of Trust and Global Cooperation," focused on empowering women leaders and fostering international collaboration. Senator Ayaz engaged in various sessions and bilateral meetings, including with key officials such as the Chairman of the International Affairs Committee of the Russian Federation and the Deputy Speaker of Zimbabwe.

The event fosters partnerships and dialogue among influential women, advancing global issues like sustainable development, gender equality, and peace. Senator Sitara Ayaz's participation reinforced IPC's commitment to supporting women's leadership in shaping international cooperation.





26TH SEPTEMBER 2024 | ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN **IPC PRESENTS ELECTION OBSERVATION REPORT ON RUSSIAN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS TO AMBASSADOR H.E. ALBERT P. KHOREV**



Senator Sitara Ayaz, Secretary General of the International Parliamentarians Congress (IPC), visited the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Islamabad to present IPC's Election Observation Mission (EOM) report on the Russian Presidential Elections held in March 2024. Accompanied by Mr. Naeem Murtaza, Chief Technical Advisor to IPC, and Mr. Fida Hussain Malik, Special Advisor on Climate Change and SDGs, the IPC delegation shared key observations with Ambassador Albert P. Khorev.

The report was also provided for submission to the Russian Election Commission. The meeting highlighted future collaboration opportunities, emphasizing regional connectivity and inter-parliamentary cooperation.



8TH OCTOBER 2024 | N'DJAMENA, CHAD **46TH CONFERENCE OF SPEAKERS AND 82ND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE APU AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Senator Sitara Ayaz, Secretary-General of the International Parliamentarians Congress (IPC), led a delegation including Manager Communication IPC Ms. Mehk Butt to the 46th Conference of Speakers and the 82nd Executive Committee meeting of the African Parliamentary Union (APU). IPC, an observer organization of APU for the past three years, is participating in the conferences and contributing through its experiences. The themes of the 46th Conference of APU was promoting youth empowerment in African countries for peace and security, and fostering economic development through natural resource management, economic diversification, and industrialization.

The delegation of IPC held productive meetings with APU Secretary-General H.E. Idi Gado Boubacar, Chad's 1st Vice-President Ali Kolotou Tchaïmi, and H.E. Adeli Edji Tarsoui, President of the Finance Committee of Chad's Parliament. The discussions focused on deepening bilateral cooperation and enhancing parliamentary engagement. During the conference, IPC also met with various IPC members present there, holding meetings, and discussing IPC. Additionally, IPC welcomed 32 new members, with Burkina Faso joining as a new member country.





9TH OCTOBER 2024 | N'DJAMENA, CHAD AND HYBRID **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF IPC**

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the International Parliamentarians Congress (IPC) was held on October 9th, 2024, in Chad, with more than fifty members attending in person, and additional members joining virtually, ensuring widespread participation.

The AGM served as a vital platform for discussing key organizational updates, IPC initiatives, and planning future activities. This hybrid format facilitated inclusive engagement, emphasizing IPC's dedication to fostering global collaboration and dialogue among parliamentarians from diverse regions, strengthening its international presence.





6TH – 8TH NOVEMBER 2024 | SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA

67TH COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE

The IPC was honoured to receive the invitation from the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) to attend the 67th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference held in Australia. The theme of the conference, “Engage, Empower, Sustain: Charting the Course for Resilient Democracy,” resonated with IPC’s mission of promoting strong democratic practices and parliamentary engagement across the globe.

In recognition of this important event, Mr. Ijlal Ali Khan was nominated by the IPC Secretariat to attend and represent IPC. His participation reaffirmed IPC’s dedication to promoting global collaboration and deepening engagement with Commonwealth parliamentary leadership.





19TH - 22ND NOVEMBER 2024 | BAKU, AZERBAIJAN **IPC AT COP29: LEADING THE CHARGE FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND CLIMATE ACTION**



The IPC was honored to receive an invitation from the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the host country to attend COP-29. Additionally, the State Tourism Agency extended a special invitation to IPC to participate in a dedicated day for tourism during the event. Ms. Mehk Butt, Manager of Communications at IPC, attended the COP-29 sessions from November 19th to 22nd, including the closing session.

IPC actively engaged in key events at COP-29, such as the First Ministerial Meeting on Enhanced Climate Action in Tourism and various high-level roundtables focusing on decarbonization, adaptation, and innovative financial mechanisms for tourism climate resilience. IPC also visited different country pavilions and held meetings with international organization representatives. A briefing was provided to the media regarding IPC's engagement at COP-29.

Senator Sitara Ayaz, IPC Secretary-General, emphasized the significance of these efforts in promoting collaboration between policymakers and industry leaders to develop actionable climate solutions.



16TH DECEMBER 2024 | ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN **SESSION ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PARLIAMENTARY FORUMS AT THE 10TH NATIONAL PARLIAMENTARY DEVELOPMENT COURSE**

Senator Sitara Ayaz, Secretary-General of IPC, was invited to chair a session on the "Significance of Parliamentary Forums for Inter-Parliamentary Engagement" during the 10th National Parliamentary Development Course (NPDC) at the Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS) in Islamabad.

The session aimed to highlight the vital role of parliamentary forums in enhancing international collaboration and fostering dialogue among global parliamentarians. Senator Ayaz underscored the importance of such forums in promoting cooperation on key global issues, including climate change, security, and sustainable development, through shared experiences and best practices.





DECEMBER 2024 | ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN

IPC'S ARTICLE FEATURED IN THE COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION'S JOURNAL, THE PARLIAMENTARIAN

Mr. Naeem Murtaza, Chief Technical Advisor of IPC, contributed an insightful article to the December 2024 issue of the CPA journal, "The Parliamentarians". This contribution follows IPC's earlier article introducing the organization. In his piece, titled "Steering Towards Road Safety: A Legislative Call to Action in Pakistan," Mr. Naeem draws from his expertise to encourage the urgent need for legislative measures to improve road safety in Pakistan. His article emphasizes the role of parliamentarians in advancing road safety laws and policies to reduce traffic-related fatalities.

With increasing traffic volume, stronger laws, better enforcement, and awareness campaigns are essential. In 2023, IPC hosted a road safety conference attended by 100 parliamentarians from Pakistan and 21 from other countries, reinforcing IPC's commitment to improving road safety through legislative frameworks and global dialogue.

A LEGISLATIVE RESPONSE TO ROAD SAFETY IN PAKISTAN

STEERING TOWARDS ROAD SAFETY: THE NEED FOR A LEGISLATIVE RESPONSE IN PAKISTAN

The International Parliamentarians' Congress (IPC) has given road safety and the role of Legislators a key priority.

The construction of 'good', safe roads with reliable safe transport for citizens is acknowledged as one of the most pivotal contributors to the development of a country, leading to economic growth by stimulating trade and commerce, and benefiting societies in creating wealth, generating livelihoods in general, and assisting in alleviating poverty.

Roads are the most common means of travel for people, be it market access, commuting for work in urban and rural areas, children going to school, transportation of goods, domestic tourism or simply families travelling. All require safety for people travelling from one point to another. This mass movement of people and goods has brought about a need to institutionalize traffic management systems, dedicated law enforcement, responsible and safer road users, safer road infrastructure design, mandatory safety features for vehicles and safer passenger public mobility, as well as significantly increasing the role of First Responders as a post-crash response.

The silent crisis on our roads

In 2008, the United Nations cited road traffic crashes as one of the greatest threats to human mortality, surpassing many epidemics and life-threatening diseases, and recognising this as the fourth leading cause of death for humanity. As such, the United Nations tasked itself with the noble cause of reducing death and injuries, leading to the United Nations Decade of Action on Road Safety (2011–2020), followed by the Global Action Plan on Road Safety (2021–2030).

Five Pillars of the UN Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety (2019). The United Nations has identified and recognised five pillars as essential for addressing road traffic safety.

1. Road Safety Management
2. Safer Roads and Public Mobility
3. Safe Vehicles
4. Safer Road Users
5. Post-Crash Response



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According to the United Nations, some 1.3 million people globally die in road traffic crashes every year with an estimated 20 to 50 million victims with varied injuries. Today, this represents the death of one person every 25 seconds somewhere in the world, attributed to weak or negligible road safety measures.

Pakistan and Road Safety

As a developing country, Pakistan's safer infrastructure needs are critical, especially as construction on new roads and highways continues across the nation. The steady increase in a predominantly low-income population has raised the demand for two-wheeled modes of transport like motorcycles. The number of cars, buses and trucks is constantly on the rise, while public transport access is still limited. As a result, deaths and injuries caused by road traffic crashes are on the increase.

People who sustain life-threatening injuries are, perhaps, the least acknowledged. Post-crash medical care by the State is limited and most certainly a debilitating financial strain on families of the victims. Once the traffic crash victim is home, the entire responsibility for caring for the victim falls on the families and if the injured victim is also the primary breadwinner, this constitutes another level of trauma.

Comprehensive data on road traffic crashes, and consequential mortality and injuries, is not readily available. However, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates an annual number of some 30,000 deaths by road car crashes in Pakistan, of which some 60% involve motorized two wheelers. Human error is a major cause, as well as reckless driving, poor road infrastructure, inadequate traffic law enforcement and a lack of public awareness, while vehicle maintenance in the public sector is an ongoing factor. The solutions are quite visibly available through global best practice. This demands that the key stakeholders take action and adapt the requisite laws.



Call to Action

With the increase in the number of vehicles, traffic volume on roads has grown exponentially. This has created multiple hazards for road users, leading to an untenable situation resulting in more road traffic crashes. Loss of life is the most tragic consequence. The injured victims of road traffic crashes become an economic liability for affected families. They can lose the personal income of the primary earner who may not be able to work or may require life-long care. This increases poverty levels in low and middle-income countries, furthering the drain on public health systems and burdening governments financially.

Prioritising Road Safety and the Role of Parliamentarians

In many under-developed countries and developing countries, like Pakistan, Road Traffic Crashes (RTCs) are frequently under-recognised as a leading cause of mortality. The lack of comprehensive data, informal settlement between individuals involved, lower insured vehicles on the roads and a general apathy all contribute to the lack of awareness on how many lives are lost and livelihoods ruined. Road safety is therefore a very important subject for Members of Parliament to discuss in order to pave the way to desired legislation that will allow Pakistan, as well other countries with similar situations, to motion and approve Parliamentary Bills, allowing the authorities to implement the requisite laws that can contribute to reducing injuries and mortalities on our respective roads.

IPC Road Safety Conference for Parliamentarians

Keeping in view the sensitivity of the subject, the International Parliamentarians Congress (IPC) recognised the need for capacity building for effective legislative frameworks and took the initiative to organise the first conference for Parliamentarians on Road Safety. This IPC initiative took place in Islamabad, Pakistan, in 2023. In this respect, the IPC recognises the support for the conference through 'Mustehkam Parlmaan', an EU-funded project by GIZ, and the Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Services (PPS).

Spread over two days, the conference brought together some 100 Members of Parliament from the Federal Parliament and all Provinces of Pakistan, including their respective government stakeholders related to Road Safety, as well as 21 Members from

A LEGISLATIVE RESPONSE TO ROAD SAFETY IN PAKISTAN

Parliament from nine countries including Algeria, Azerbaijan, Chad, Guinea, Jordan, Libya, Spain, Portugal and Uganda.

The opening day's session included a keynote address by the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Hon. Dr. Aftab Ahmad, an inaugural address by the Chairman of the Senate of Pakistan, Hon. Mr. Mohammad Sadiq Sanjani and opening remarks by the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), Hon. Duarte Pacheco and the Secretary General of IPC, Senator Hon. Sitara Ayaz.

Discussions focused on the Five Pillars of the UN Global Action Plan and bringing forward deliberations, culminating with the Islamabad Declaration. Delegates shared best practices on preventive measures taken to reduce the number of deaths and injuries due to road traffic crashes. Two wheelers and pedestrians remained major victims of car crashes, with serious injuries leading to rising mortality rates, besides the sudden death traumas. Safe road infrastructure and safer vehicles were highlighted as often non-compliant. Delegates emphasised the importance of introducing legislation through Road Safety Bills and how this has helped their countries through effective law enforcement. However, in some countries, there has been an increase in the numbers of vehicles with younger, irresponsible and untrained drivers, which are offsetting their achievements in road safety.

Delegates also heard from experts that people who sustain life-threatening injuries are, perhaps, the least acknowledged. The importance of highly trained traffic police is vital to ensure effective enforcement of traffic rules and to ensure discipline and maintaining the flow of traffic on the roads. Training for all drivers on the roads is also important as untrained, under-age drivers are a major cause of car accidents on the roads. Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed from the Senate of Pakistan stated that Parliamentarians must take the lead in helping to reduce road traffic accidents, citing them as a major cause of deaths. He said most crashes take place in developing countries and stressed the need for a 'Save Lives Initiative', calling for the establishment and maintenance of universal standards for drivers, vehicles, policing and first responders. The conference provided a platform for Parliamentarians, experts and key stakeholders to collaborate and share their insights on road safety.

The Islamabad Declaration: A Unanimous Call to Action

The conference ended with the IPC Secretary-General, Senator Hon. Sitara Ayaz, presenting the 'Islamabad Declaration', a unanimous document outlining key steps to improve road safety in Pakistan. This declaration served as a call to action for all stakeholders to address road safety issues collaboratively and it will guide future road safety initiatives, contributing to improved road safety in Pakistan and worldwide. The IPC also committed to ongoing efforts to promote road safety globally.

For further information about the work of the International Parliamentarians' Congress (IPC), including on road safety, please visit www.ipcongress.org.



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