

Canadian Group
Inter-Parliamentary Union



Groupe canadien
Union interparlementaire

Report of the Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Parliamentary Forum at the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

New York, New York, United States of America

July 18, 2023

Report

The Honourable David McGuinty, P.C., M.P., President of the Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IIPU), attended the Parliamentary Forum at the United Nations (UN) High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development in New York (United States of America) on July 18, 2023, organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). During the mission, Mr. McGuinty also held meetings with fellow IPU parliamentary delegates and IPU officers, attended side-events related to the HLPF and met with representatives of the Permanent Mission of Canada to the UN in New York. He was accompanied by Ms. Natalie Mychajlyszyn, Advisor.

THE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION

Established in 1889, the [IPU](#) is the international organization of national parliaments of sovereign states. The IPU is the focal point for global parliamentary dialogue, working for peace and co-operation as well as for the establishment of representative democracy. To this end, it:

- fosters contacts, co-ordination, and the exchange of experiences among parliamentarians of all member parliaments;
- considers questions of international interest and concern, and expresses its views on relevant issues in order to bring about action by parliaments and parliamentarians;
- contributes to the defence and promotion of human rights, which are essential aspects of parliamentary democracy and development; and
- contributes to better knowledge of the working of representative institutions, and to the strengthening and development of their means of action.¹

The IPU's activities are pursued according to its [Strategy 2022–2026](#), which was adopted in November 2021 during the 143rd Assembly of the IPU in Madrid, Spain.

As of the time of the Parliamentary Forum, 179 national parliaments are members of the IPU. The organization also has 14 associate members, including the European Parliament, the Parliamentary Assembly of La Francophonie and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.²

PARLIAMENTARY FORUM AT THE HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT³

The IPU's Parliamentary Forum at the HLPF on Sustainable Development is an annual event. It provides a parliamentary perspective on the ten-day long inter-governmental HLPF organized annually under the auspices of the UN's Economic and Social Council

¹ See: IPU, "[About us](#)"; and IPU, [Statutes and Rules](#).

² IPU, [Members](#).

³ A detailed report on the Parliamentary Forum was prepared by the IPU and is available on the event's [website](#).

(ECOSOC).⁴ With a different theme each year, the HLPF promotes focused dialogue and consultation among UN members and various stakeholders about sustainable development generally and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) specifically. It is one of several UN platforms that regularly review progress on implementing the SDGs by the 2030 deadline as well as offer opportunities for exchange of best practices.⁵ When conducting such reviews, these platforms use information submitted by UN members through the Voluntary National Review process.

The Parliamentary Forum reinforces the IPU's commitment to the SDGs, the realization of which is central to the organization's promotion of peace, democracy and development. Accordingly, sustainable development is a prominent theme in the IPU's work and one it feels is best served by multilateralism. The IPU's [Strategy 2022-2026](#) demonstrates the organization's commitment to harnessing multilateralism to meet the SDGs in various ways, including through the importance it places on its strategic objective, "Catalysing collective parliamentary action." More broadly, the Strategy states that the IPU aims to "further strengthen the parliamentary dimension of multilateralism and global governance including the voice of parliaments at the United Nations and other multilateral organizations" in order to "accelerate multilateral policy solutions to key global issues."

A. The 2023 Parliamentary Forum at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

Approximately 90 parliamentarians from 35 countries attended the [2023 Parliamentary Forum at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development](#). Held on July 18, 2023, the theme of the Forum was "The Mid-Point Toward the SDGs: Taking Stock of Parliamentary Action." Participants had the opportunity to discuss the role of parliamentarians in accelerating the implementation of the SDGs in three separate sessions:

- Parliaments and the SDGs: The institutional challenge;
- SDG 6: An illustration of parliamentary action; and
- Beyond [Gross Domestic Product]: Measuring and valuing what matters to people and the planet.

The discussions were also informed by the results of the IPU's survey of parliamentary practices in advancing the implementation of the SDGs, which were made available at the Parliamentary Forum in a document titled, "*Multi-country review of parliamentary*

⁴ The [Economic and Social Council](#) (ECOSOC) is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations (UN) established by the UN Charter. It is primarily dedicated to advancing sustainable development in the context of its three dimensions: economic, social and environmental.

⁵ The SDGs are a set of 17 goals established in the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), a document adopted as a resolution of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly on 25 September 2015. The SDGs are accompanied by 169 targets and over 230 indicators aimed at ending poverty, reducing inequalities, protecting the environment and setting the world on a more sustainable path by 2030. The UN Secretary-General also releases annual reports on progress regarding the implementation of the SDGs. In addition, the SDGs are reviewed by the heads of state and government of UN members every four years at an [SDG Summit](#) under the auspices of the UN General Assembly.

practices in advancing the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals: Summary of key findings.” The Parliament of Canada participated in the survey.⁶

1. Canadian activities at the 2023 Parliamentary Forum

Mr. McGuinty was a featured panelist during the session, “SDG 6: An illustration of parliamentary action.” In his remarks, he summarized the recommendations made by parliamentary delegates at the IPU’s February 2023 Annual Parliamentary Hearing on SDG 6 (clean water and sanitation). He emphasized in particular the significance of the recommendation on engaging in multilateralism, noting that work related to SDG 6 raises transboundary issues and involves multiple jurisdictions. He also observed that access to water and sanitation intersects with issues that relate to the other 16 SDGs. As well, he underscored the importance of acting on a recommendation calling on parliaments to hold governments to account regarding commitments relating to SDG 6. On this note, he observed that the Parliament of Canada’s ability to properly assess the government’s implementation of its water and sanitation commitments is challenged by competing priorities on the parliamentary agenda. Moreover, he acknowledged that, when such assessments are carried out, they are not always sources of pride, as the ongoing challenges First Nations communities face in accessing safe drinking water attest. He concluded that parliamentarians broadly and individually can contribute to the implementation of the SDGs by encouraging positive discussions about the opportunities they create.

Mr. McGuinty also intervened during the Parliamentary Forum’s session, “Beyond GDP: Measuring and valuing what matters to people and the planet.” He shared his experience from the time before he was elected to office when he was involved in developing a matrix of practical concepts to be used by government officials for measuring and reporting on changes in Canada’s sustainable development indicators and their links with determining the country’s wealth.

In light of his election to the Bureau of the IPU’s Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs in March 2023, **Mr. McGuinty** also took the opportunity to exchange views about the committee’s workplan with a fellow committee member from Japan. He also discussed various IPU priorities with delegates from Germany, Italy, Tanzania, Algeria and Indonesia.

ADDITIONAL MEETINGS

During his time in New York, Mr. McGuinty met with Canada’s Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York, Ambassador Bob Rae. They discussed various matters relating to Canada’s priorities at the UN, the IPU’s partnership with the UN, the work of the IPU’s Standing Committee on UN Affairs as well as ongoing efforts at the UN and the IPU to strengthen multilateralism and global governance.

Mr. McGuinty also met with the IPU Secretary-General, Mr. Martin Chungong, to exchange views on recent efforts to strengthen the parliamentary dimension at the UN.

⁶ Please refer to the event’s [website](#) to access the Parliamentary Forum’s full programme, its final report prepared by the IPU and the survey results.

Mr. McGuinty and the President of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians, Ms. Cynthia Lopez Castro (Mexico), had a bilateral meeting to discuss current priorities at the IPU and various agenda items at its upcoming Assembly.

As part of the various activities of the HLPF open to members of the Canadian national delegation, Mr. McGuinty attended the side event sponsored by Canada entitled, "Leveraging social innovation to advance the SDGs." He also attended a reception organized by the Permanent Mission of Canada for members of the Canadian delegation to the HLPF which was hosted by Ambassador Rae and attended by ministers and officials representing various levels of government from across Canada and representatives of various civil society groups. The Government of Canada submitted its second Voluntary National Review at the 2023 HLPF.

Respectfully submitted,

The Hon. David McGuinty, P.C., M.P.

President of the Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union
ACTIVITY	Parliamentary Forum at the United Nations High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
DESTINATION	New York, New York, United States of America
DATES	July 18, 2023
DELEGATION	
SENATE	
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Hon. David McGuinty, P.C., M.P.
STAFF	Ms. Natalie Mychajlyszyn, Advisor
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 1,434.27
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 2,220.48
HOSPITALITY	\$ 17.00
PER DIEMS	\$ 723.30
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$ 0.00
MISCELLANEOUS	\$ 0.00
TOTAL	\$ 4,395.05