



Inter-Parliamentary Union

For democracy. For everyone.

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Intervention by Ambassador Mokhtar Omar, Senior Adviser to the IPU Secretary General

Intervention by Ambassador Mokhtar Omar, Senior Adviser to the IPU Secretary General under Item 12a - Cooperation with UN-Water, global and regional partners and other multilateral environmental agreements at the 18th meeting of the IWRM under the Water Convention

Wednesday 21 June 2023, 10.20–11.10 a.m.

3-minute intervention

- The IPU, the global organisation of national parliaments, has had as its core mission since its inception in 1889, to promote peace through parliamentary diplomacy and dialogue. We want to secure the role of parliamentarians as important stakeholders in global challenges and UN strategies.
- Recently, the IPU has worked to find different ways of achieving tangible results for peace in the face of sustained conflict across the world, including on water. Climate change has only accelerated challenges linked to water security, posing a threat to livelihoods, ecosystems, and peace. The IPU has taken the approach of turning water-related conflict into reasons for coexistence by using science as a neutral platform for dialogue based on scientific values in the search for solutions.
- The Committee on Middle East Questions aims to support the Israeli-Palestinian peace process through political dialogue. In response to the difficulty in achieving peace, the Committee held two round tables on water in 2016 and 2017, producing several tangible results. Following these positive outcomes, in October 2017, the Committee agreed to establish the Science for Peace Schools.
- The Science for Peace project was established to bridge the scientific and political worlds by initiating dialogue and create a community of parliamentary experts to address global challenges. The project is designed to encourage representatives from parliaments from around the world to work together and experience scientific cooperation.
- The first session was held in Geneva from 5 to 9 December 2022, at CERN, focusing on water management and the exploration of new and renewable sources of water. The School aimed to contribute to a positive environment for technical cooperation, proposing alternative technologies and modalities to lessen tensions around water scarcity, encouraging coexistence between nations.
- During the Schools, we received a presentation from the UNECE secretariat on the Water Convention and the importance of maintaining good transboundary water cooperation. The aim was to raise awareness of the Convention, and address gaps in its implementation, integrating it into legislative processes.
- The Schools first edition resulted in an agreement by participants on the necessity of implementing two regional collaborative projects on water in the Sahel region and in the State of Palestine. The edition also served as a launch pad for the establishment of a community of parliamentary experts.
- To continue implementing the Schools' outcomes, the Science for Peace Parliamentary meeting will be held from 11 to 13 September 2023 at the ICISE in Quy Nhon, Viet Nam.
- The IPU will continue to cooperate with the UNECE in promoting the Water Convention to the parliamentary community, including at the Science for Peace Parliamentary meeting in September 2023, and work with parliamentarians to address gaps in its implementation.