

# REPORT



**145<sup>th</sup> Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)**

**Kigali, Rwanda**

**FROM 19<sup>TH</sup> TO 24<sup>TH</sup> March, 2022**

**Attended by:**

*Hon. Speaker Roger Mancienne* – Head of Delegation

*Hon. Waven William*

*Ms. Emma Didon*

**The National Assembly delegation composed of the Members as listed below, submits its Report:**

Hon. Roger Mancienne  
**Head of Delegation**



Hon. Waven William  
**Member**



Ms. Emma Didon  
**IPU Desk Officer**



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## 1.0. Introduction

The Hon Speaker Roger Mancienne and the elected member for Grand Anse Mahe and Chairperson of the International Affairs Committee, Hon Waven William and Ms. Emma Didon, Research Officer/IPU Desk Officer attended the 145<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly in Kigali, Rwanda. The proceedings of the General Assembly officially began on the Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> October, 2022 to last until Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2022. The delegation began attending meetings however, since, Monday 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2022. These were meetings of geopolitical groups namely the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the African geopolitical group.



Both the Speaker, as head of the delegation and Hon. William participated actively in the various meetings and activities planned over the course of the five days at the Kigali Conference Centre (KCC). Assisted by the research officer/ IPU desk officer, Ms. Didon, several interventions were made in meetings and workshops of which Hon. William, as the Vice Chair of the Standing Committee for Sustainable Development, was invited to Chair their second meeting. Bilateral meetings with other parliaments and meetings with officials of the IPU were also held.

The theme of the General Debate of the Assembly – ‘Gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments as driver of change for a more resilient and peaceful world’, saw great participation from many countries especially those whose parliaments have benefitted greatly from gender parity policies within Parliament. As always, the Seychelles delegation managed to raise awareness on the specific concerns and grievances of SIDS, especially through the debate on the first emergency item addressing the impacts of climate change on vulnerable states and provisions for loss and damage.

## **2.0. Pre-commencement of the Assembly – Geopolitical group meetings - 10th October 2022**

### **2.1. SADC group meeting**

The meeting began with a brief welcoming remark from the panel followed by consideration of the Minutes from the last SADC Group Meeting held at the 144<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly in Bali, Indonesia and the report of the Executive Committee.

The main topic of discussion focused on the Consideration of the Emergency Item to be included in the Assembly agenda, submitted by Pakistan titled “Creation of a global fund of financing facility for climate-vulnerable countries to address loss and damage associated with climate change”. The SADC group however, diverted to raise other possible emergency items, namely on Africa’s representation in the United Nations Security Council and the impacts of the increase of fuel prices in Africa especially after OPEC announced their reduction of fuel production.

The Hon Speaker Mancienne lent his support to the emergency item brought forth by Pakistan. Hon William also made valuable suggestions on the possible amendment to the statutes addressing emergency items to enable a much wider scope to emergency items consideration based on importance and of recent nature globally.

The SADC group finally agreed that the emergency item from Pakistan should be dismissed of.

### **2.2. Meeting of the African geo-political Group of IPU**

The meeting was attended by Hon William and Ms Didon, it began with the adoption of the agenda, followed by presentation of the report of the African Group in the IPU Executive Committee by the Speaker of the Zimbabwean Parliament, who is also a member of the Executive Committee and the Governing Council.

The emergency item consideration referred to above was once again discussed by the Africa geopolitical group in a lengthier debate where divergent views were shared. There was much contention on whether this emergency item qualified as such and whether this was a global issue

as the explanatory note was specific to Pakistan. Hon William intervened by stating that the African continent should take this emergency item as an opportunity for the continent to address issues related to African adaptation and mitigation projects and to push for the fast tracking of the funding process for mitigation and loss and damage. He then recommended that with the upcoming COP 27, IPU take the opportunity to send a strong IPU communique to that effect. The latter was agreed upon by the geo-political group as a way to move forward on the topic.

Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> October, 2022

### 3.0. Programme for the 144<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly – General debate, meetings, workshops

#### 3.1. Inaugural Ceremony

The Inaugural Ceremony of the 145th IPU Assembly, attended by the Hon. Speaker Mancienne, Hon. William and Ms Didon took place late morning on Tuesday 11th October in the Main Auditorium of the Kigali Conference Centre.



The Ceremony began with the entrance of the guest of honour, H.E. President Paul Kagame followed by welcoming Remarks by the Hon Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, Hon. Donatille Mukabalisa. She addressed the importance of women in governance in line with this 145th Assembly's theme of gender sensitivity. SG Chungong also gave a welcoming address highlighting the joint work of the IPU and the Rwandan parliament in building a forward looking and gender sensitive institution. He commanded the nation on its achievements especially after the horrors and impacts of the genocide. SG Chungong also addressed the wellbeing of the African continent and the need to support one another for a more peaceful Africa.

Antonio Guterres addressed the Union in a short video where he congratulated the Rwandan for being first country having a female majority in the world. IPU president gave heartfelt thanks to



the Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies and especially to H.E. President Kagame. He congratulated the delegates present for being resilient despite the ongoing covid 19 pandemic.

President Duarte commanded the successful spirit of reconciliation in Rwanda. He also addressed the escalating consequences of climate change and the increased violation of human rights worldwide.



The guest of honour was the last to speak with his addressed focusing on gender parity. President Kagame stated that gender parity is "Achieved when it is acknowledged as the right of everyone everywhere", describing women as the backbone of peaceful resolutions. Collaboration between parliaments is needed to work on the challenges of achieving peace, democracy and sustainable development as no country or region can boast of having it all. President Kagame concluded by Thanking the IPU for honouring Rwanda by choosing it to host the Assembly.

**Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2022**

### 3.2. The Governing Council

On the morning of Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> October, the Hon Speaker Mancienne, attended a meeting of the 210<sup>th</sup> Session of the Governing Council. The first matter addressed the election of the presiding officer of the 145<sup>th</sup> Assembly where here, the Speaker of the Chamber of Representatives of Rwanda, Hon Mukabalisa was unanimously elected as the President of the 145<sup>th</sup> Assembly. Other items on the Agenda included Reports of the SG and President of the IPU, the IPU's financial situation and its 2023 budget, reports on the IPU's specialized meetings, activities of the committees and other bodies amongst other pertinent discussions.

### 3.3. Meeting of the Sustainable Development Committee



Hon William was not present in the meeting of the Governing council as he was attending the meeting of the Sustainable Development. Hon William made an intervention on the debate on the theme of the next resolution entitled 'Parliamentary efforts in achieving negative carbon balances of forests.' He called on the parliamentarians to claim their roles as law makers and oversight work in support of environmental driven legislation and campaigns. Indicating recent calamity that took place in Pakistan as examples of how man made actions along with the effects of climate change can have on unprotected terrain due to poor planning.

### 3.4. Start of the General

The general debate themed ‘Gender equality and gender sensitive parliaments as drivers for a more resilient and peaceful world’ was opened by President Pacheco where he expressed his gratitude to the Rwandan parliament for its hospitality and its exemplary status as a gender sensitive parliament with over 60% of female parliamentarians. He shared his hope that the parliaments present learn from each other and adopt best practices on the topic so to achieve gender parity in parliaments worldwide, not in 40 years but much earlier.



Keynote speeches were then given by the UN Under-Secretary-General and UN Women Executive Director Sima Bahous, Mr Wessel van den Berg from the Equimondo: Center for Masculinities and Social Justice; the President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians, Hon L. Vasylenko; the United Nations envoy on Youth and; the President of the Board of the Forum of Young Parliamentarians, Hon Albazar. Following these, the debate on the theme was officially launched by President of the Assembly.

### 3.5. Meeting with President Pacheco

The Seychelles delegation briefly met with President of the IPU, the Rt. Hon Duarte Pacheco on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> October. President Pacheco remarked on Seychelles active participation in the Union. He highlighted the importance of dialogue between nations describing the IPU as a good platform for that where different perspectives are acknowledged, and compromises found.



The topic of Seychelles hosting an IPU meeting was once again addressed as it had been in the 144<sup>th</sup> Assembly in Bali. With the Speaker present this time around, the feasibility of this was briefly discussed where Seychelles' capacity as hosts as well as the target group for the meeting were considered. Mr Speaker expressed his gratitude to the IPU for considering the Seychelles for such an opportunity. Both parties affirmed that discussion on such will continue and exchanges of important information.



### 3.6. Hon Speaker's Speech on the General Debate

The Hon Speaker Mancienne addressed the IPU Assembly following his meeting with President Pacheco on the theme of the debate 'Gender equality and gender sensitive parliaments as drivers for a more resilient and peaceful world'. Mr Speaker began his speech by recognising the importance of women in national progress and saluted the women of Seychelles who are active contributors and participants in the public service.



He did confess however, that Seychelles has much to do in encouraging women participation in politics, with only about 24% of women holding seats in parliament. Acknowledging the various social responsibilities placed on females in Seychelles, the Hon Speaker expressed that a natural progression to women in politics is preferable and indeed possible for Seychelles. Work has already begun to sensitise young girls of the importance of their representation and this idea is in no way objected to in the National Assembly of Seychelles nor the rest of the country.

### 3.7. Debate on the emergency item

The Assembly convened to discuss the emergency item in plenary where now, three more items were added in addition to the one already submitted by Pakistan.

‘Creation of a global fund or financing facility for climate-vulnerable countries to address loss and damage associated to climate change.’

The other items of emergency brought forth are as follows.

- Chile and the members of the GRULAC: ‘Condemnation of the invasion of Ukraine and of the subsequent annexation of territories in defence of the territorial integrity of all States’
- Iraq: ‘Preserving Iraq’s sovereignty, rejecting repeated attacks and not interfering in its internal affairs.’
- Ukraine: ‘Condemnation of the illegal annexation of the Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, Donetsk and Luhansk regions by the Russian Federation, the targeting of civilians and other war crimes resulting from the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine.’

The Authors of the items all had an opportunity to intervene on behalf of the intervention. However, Iraq and Ukraine chose to withdraw their proposals after which a Voting by roll call took place on the two remaining propositions by Chile and Pakistan.

The results were as follows:

Pakistan: 645 For, 433 Against, 120 Abstention.

Chile: 717 For, 119 Against, 362 Abstention.

As Chile saw the favourable voting of over two-thirds of the Assembly, their proposal was accepted as the emergency item to be concluded in the agenda of the 145<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly.

### Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2022

#### 3.8. Bilateral with Pakistan

Mr Speaker and his delegation met with the Pakistan delegation upon their request on the afternoon of Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> October. Introductions were made and much political relatability between Speaker Mancienne and Senator Mushahid were established.

Senator Mushahid thanked Seychelles for supporting Pakistan’s emergency item the day before. Speaker Mancienne enquired on the progress of the recovery efforts on the devastating floods that hit Pakistan in June this year on which the emergency item originated. He also asked of the political impacts of the flood. The aim of the meeting for the Pakistani delegation was to discuss the countries’ point of interest which are tourism, trade, climate change and environment, and parliamentary cooperation.



Both parties expressed their willingness and eagerness of the partnership ahead with Senator Mushahid extending an invitation to Speaker Mancienne to visit Pakistan. Hon William and Hon Wajeeha Quamar of the National Assembly of Pakistani parliament was also present.

### 3.9. Workshop on Climate Change

Speaker Mancienne and Hon William attended a Climate change workshop that afternoon. There, Mr Speaker raised concern on the increased sea-level rise, which is one of biggest concerns of the future, for Seychelles and other small island states as they are at risk of being wiped out. He called on developing countries of mass consumption and GHG emitters to consider ways of scaling down activities that enhance temperature rise.



Hon William reiterated the need to relook at the subject of financing of loss and damage to vulnerable countries, especially since the subject has been on the table for 31 years now. He expressed and highlighted the need for IPU member states to seize the opportunity at COP 27 to make headway on this matter.





### 3.10. Meeting with SG Chungong

The Hon Speaker Mancienne sat with the Secretary General of the IPU, Mr Martin Chungong for their first meeting on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October. Following introductions, Mr Speaker expressed his gratitude and stated that Seychelles takes pride in being able to join and participate in the international forum. Hon William attended briefly and departed after a few minutes to chair the Sustainable Development Committee meeting.



The SG kick started the meeting off by affirming his commitment to ensuring that the IPU serves all its members in an equitable manner specifically for the SIDS and their vulnerable status to climate change. He highlighted IPU's goal of prioritising climate change as the real challenge to the global committee and that this could be done with more representation of SIDS in IPU's

governing structures especially when there are vacancies. This is especially needed now that more focus is given to the conflict in Ukraine. SG Chungong believes that certain global issues cannot crowd the plight of SIDS and their issues.

To that, Speaker Mancienne expressed his support on the global attention on Ukraine hoping that this will increase the global commitment to peace and security. He strongly agreed that climate change is an issue that needs an increased element of follow up from the IPU and the international community, describing it as an existential issue that will outlive all armed conflict if nothing is done.



With that, SG affirmed his support to the idea of Seychelles hosting a SIDS saying that he is committed to creating such a space seeing that he believes that Seychelles has potential to build influence as it always took the lead on SIDS meetings in prior IPU Assemblies where Hon William has in fact, always been present.

### 3.11. Second meeting of the Sustainable Development Committee

Hon William co-chaired the second meeting as Vice Chair of the Sustainable Development Committee on Friday 14th October. The theme of debate was ‘Reconnecting local communities with a local sustainable inclusive economy to achieve the targets of SDG 8’. The discussions were very objective and saw much participation.

Hon William contributed to the discussion by explaining that reconnecting the local economic activities to a sustainable national economy to achieve the targets of SDG 8, will be good for some countries categorized as developed but problematic for others relegated into the vulnerability status by the covid pandemic.

More so now by the negative economic impacts of the Ukraine-Russia conflict, leading to issues of food and energy security. He explained that certain vulnerable countries not achieving SDG 8, there will be a domino effect on the achievability of the other SDGs. In addition, he stressed on the need to seriously consider creating a segment for financing loss and damages, within the current mitigation and adaptation funds offered to vulnerable countries in the framework of an agreed criteria under the Climate Action Funds.

### **Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October, 2022**

#### **3.12. Second meeting of the Africa geo-political group**

The Africa geopolitical group met once again on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October to discuss various concerns relating to matters of procedure. The Chair of the Africa group, Hon Speaker of Tanzania wisely decided to call this meeting to address all the issues and for a more convenient Africa group working strategy within IPU, such as:

The mode and frequency of meetings of the group prior to the IPU Assemblies particularly to discuss the emergency items (arrival of delegates prior to the Africa geopolitical group)

Advance communication to Africa IPU member states to ensure greater inclusive participation.

- Possible amendment consideration of the IPU Rules and Statute governing submission and consideration of an emergency item.
- The membership composition of the Steering committee as an important deciding body of IPU.
- Time management of the meetings
- The establishment of the President of the Assembly should be done at least a year prior to the Assembly so that, as the host, the President can effectively prepare.

- The IPU regional office pilot project

### 3.13. Bilateral meeting with the Georgian delegation

The Georgia delegation, comprising of 5 people including their Speaker, Hon Shalva Papuashvili, organised a meeting with the Hon Speaker Mancienne on Friday 14th October 2022. The initial aim of the meeting for the Georgian delegation was to build bilateral cooperation between the two parliaments and seek support from the National Assembly on some pertinent topics.



To begin, Speaker Papuashvili speaks of the security issue surrounding Ukraine and how it is resonant to the 2008 Russo-Georgian where two of its territories were occupied by Russia. These occupied Georgian territories have resulted to millions of Georgians being displaced, for that reason he called to Speaker Mancienne to advocate for the resolve of the UN resolution on Internally Displaced Persons by Seychelles Foreign Affairs Ministry (FAD), effectively joining the world's society's voice against Russian expansionism. He also requested that the Speaker follow up on Georgia's MOU with Seychelles



On deepening their parliamentary cooperation, Speaker Papuashvili spoke of building a friendship group and opportunities of peer reviews and parliamentary exchanges to mutually bolster the Secretariat of the National Assemblies. The two parties found relatability in their size with the Georgian delegation highlighting the importance of forming ties with small countries to their foreign policy.

#### 3.14. The Accountability segment done by Hon William

Hon William participated in the accountability segment of the assembly under the theme of the previous Assembly in Nusa Dua ‘Getting to zero: Mobilising parliaments to act on climate change’. His intervention focused on the work of the National Assembly Secretariat as well as the International Affairs Committee and his own work in his constituency.

Hon William began by highlighting the sustainability work of the Environmental Policy Implementation Committee (EPIC) of the National Assembly’s Secretariat. These include, rain water harvesting, using solar energy to generate electricity and cut costs and the adoption of the mangrove area around the precinct which is a continuous project.

In addition to this, Hon William made mention of the various follow up meetings of the IAC, of which he is the Chairperson. These included meetings with firstly the Minister for Agriculture, Climate Change, and Environment on the outcomes of COP 26 for Seychelles and secondly the meeting with the country’s disaster risk management department on the Mid Term Review of the Sendai Framework. Third, he noted the series of meetings IAC held with the agencies related to biosecurity and biosafety specifically related to environmental impacts and food security.

Hon William concluded his intervention with the launching of the Environmental Protection Association in his constituency of Grand Anse Mahe, which he spearheaded. There, residents were mobilised to join in district clean ups, beach vegetation restoration and an anti-littering awareness campaign through educational DIY boards positioned in key areas of the district.

#### 4.0. Visit to the Kigali Genocide Memorial

Following the inaugural ceremony, the Seychelles delegation visited the Kigali Genocide Memorial to better understand and see how a turbulent history helped build Rwanda to the peaceful nation it is today.

The visit began with a short film starring survivors of the genocide who give accounts of their experiences during that time

### 5.0. Limitations

#### 5.1. SIDS Meeting

The Seychelles delegation once again attempted to hold the SIDS meeting at the 145<sup>th</sup> Assembly, this time, engaging Fiji. The small pacific island once actively co-chaired the meetings with Seychelles at previous assemblies. Unfortunately, the meeting did not materialise. It was observed that Fiji was not as enthused to join as they were also reluctant to respond to communiques on meeting proposals.

## **5.0. Recommendations**

The following recommendations are commitments that the IPU NAS desk officer must initiate on behalf of the 145th IPU Assembly delegation and to present to the National Assembly of Seychelles.

- Business card for IPU desk officer
- National Assembly of Seychelles hosting a SIDS/Climate IPU meeting
- Friendship Group with Georgia

This follows the meeting of which Georgia requested that we follow up on the earlier requests sent to the NAS to establish a friendship group between the two parliaments.