



**Parliament of Australia**

**Parliamentary Delegation**

**to**

**144<sup>th</sup> Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly**

**Nusa Dua, Indonesia**

**20-24 March 2022**

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## **Members of the Delegation**

### **Leader of the Delegation**

Senator Hollie Hughes  
Senator for New South Wales  
Liberal Party of Australia

### **Delegates**

Senator Deborah O'Neill  
Senator for New South Wales  
Australian Labor Party

### **Officials**

Ms Sophie Dunstone (virtually)  
Delegation Secretary

Ms Toni Matulick (virtually)  
Senate Clerk Assistant (Committees)

Ms Rachel Callinan (virtually)  
Senate Clerk Assistant (Procedure)

## 144<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly – Nusa Dua, Indonesia

The 144<sup>th</sup> Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Assembly took place in Nusa Dua, Indonesia from 20 to 24 March 2022. The overall theme of the Assembly was *Getting to zero: Mobilizing parliaments to act on climate change*. The Assembly was attended by 778 delegates, 404 of whom were parliamentarians from 101 Member Parliaments. Of the 404 parliamentarians that attended, 154 were women (38.1%) and 110 were young MPs (27.2%). A total of 30 Presiding Officers and 28 Deputy Presiding Officers were in attendance. 11 Associate Members and a number of observers were also represented.<sup>1</sup>

The Australian delegation was led by substitute member Senator Hollie Hughes and included Senator Deborah O'Neill. The Australian delegation was 100% female, well above the total percentage of women represented at the Assembly (38.1%).

### Background

The IPU is the international organisation of parliaments of sovereign states. The IPU works with parliaments to promote democratic governance, institutions and values and aims to improve lives by building strong national parliaments that can deliver better outcomes for citizens. It does this by:

- equipping members of parliament and parliaments to make changes through their own work;
- building on the expertise of its members;
- encouraging dialogue and bringing together members of parliament from across the world; and
- considering questions of international interest and concern.

Founded in 1889, there are currently 178 parliaments that are members of the IPU and 14 associate members (mostly parliaments drawn from groups of nations, or similar bodies).<sup>2</sup> Most IPU members are affiliated with one of six geopolitical groups that are currently active in the IPU.

The IPU Strategy for 2022-2026 lists five objectives:

- Building effective and empowered parliaments;
- Promoting inclusive and representative parliaments;
- Supporting resilient and innovative parliaments;
- Catalysing collective parliamentary action; and
- Strengthening the IPU's accountability.<sup>3</sup>

The IPU Assembly is the principal statutory body of the IPU and brings together parliamentarians to consider international issues and make recommendations for action.

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<sup>1</sup> A list of member states and observers is available in the *Results of the Proceedings of the 144<sup>th</sup> Assembly* available at: <https://www.ipu.org/event/144th-assembly-and-related-meetings#event-sub-page-25792/>

<sup>2</sup> A list of current members of the IPU is available on the IPU website: <https://www.ipu.org/about-us/members/>

<sup>3</sup> Inter-Parliamentary Union, *Strategy 2022-2026*, available on the IPU website: <https://www.ipu.org/resources/publications/about-ipu/2022-01/strategy-2022-2026>

While the IPU is constantly active in promoting democracy, the major focus for the Australian delegation is participation in the twice-yearly assemblies.

## Assembly

The 144<sup>th</sup> Assembly was formally opened on Sunday, 20 March 2022. The Assembly's agenda included the following items:

- Election of the President and Vice-Presidents of the 144th Assembly
- Consideration of requests for the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda
- General Debate on the theme *Getting to zero: Mobilizing parliaments to act on climate change*
- *Rethinking and reframing the approach to peace processes with a view to fostering lasting peace* (Standing Committee on Peace and International Security)
- *Leveraging Information and Communication Technology as an enabler for the education sector, including in times of pandemic* (Standing Committee on Sustainable Development)
- Reports of the Standing Committees
- Approval of the subject items for the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security and for the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development for the 146th Assembly and appointment of the co-Rapporteurs.<sup>4</sup>

In his opening address to the Assembly, IPU President, Mr. Duarte Pacheco of Portugal, highlighted the invasion of Ukraine, resulting in a major humanitarian catastrophe in Europe and ongoing repercussions around the world. He also noted that the climate crisis is the most urgent challenge facing the international community and was therefore chosen as the overall theme of the Assembly. He spoke of the growing number of cases before the IPU's Committee on Human Rights of Parliamentarians, as well as the ongoing plight of parliamentarians in Afghanistan, Myanmar and other parliaments in crisis.

The IPU president urged the IPU's Member Parliaments to be accountable for their own performance and continue to innovate, rejuvenate and improve, particularly in relation to gender parity and increase youth engagement in politics.<sup>5</sup>

## Debates at the Assembly and other activities

A key focus of Assembly business is two major debates in the Plenary: the General Debate, and debate on the emergency item.

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<sup>4</sup> A list of the agenda items for the 144<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly is available on the IPU website: <https://www.ipu.org/event/144th-assembly-and-related-meetings#event-sub-page-documents/>

<sup>5</sup> Inter-Parliamentary Union, *144<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly and related meetings: Results and Proceedings*, p. 4, available on the IPU website: <https://www.ipu.org/event/144th-assembly-and-related-meetings#event-sub-page-25792/>

## General Debate

The topic of the General Debate was *Getting to zero: Mobilizing parliaments to act on climate change*.

Both Senators Hughes and O'Neill contributed to the General Debate. Both senators' addresses reiterated Australia's commitment to addressing climate change, as a party to the Paris Agreement and pledge to reach net zero emissions by 2050.<sup>6</sup>

The outcome document from the General Debate was endorsed by the 144<sup>th</sup> Assembly on 24 March 2022.



Senator Hollie Hughes participating in the General Debate.

## Emergency Item

The IPU Rules provide that any member country may propose a topic as an emergency item to be debated. The matter must relate to a major event of international concern on which it appears necessary for the IPU to express its opinion. The request must receive a two thirds majority of the votes cast in order to be accepted for debate.<sup>7</sup>

On 21 March 2022, the President informed the Assembly that the following three requests for the inclusion of an emergency item had been proposed:

- *Russian and Belarusian aggression against Ukraine* (Ukraine)
- *The role of parliaments in supporting a peaceful resolution to the Russian-Ukrainian conflict* (Indonesia)

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<sup>6</sup> The Australian delegation's contribution to the general debate is published online—see *List of Speakers* no.2: <https://www.ipu.org/event/144th-assembly-and-related-meetings#event-sub-page-documents/>

<sup>7</sup> Assembly Rule 11-2(a).

- *Peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine, respecting international law, the Charter of the United Nations and territorial integrity (New Zealand)*

Ukraine, which presented its proposed emergency item via Zoom, withdrew this proposal in support of New Zealand’s proposal. Poland opposed the proposal submitted by Indonesia, expressing its support for New Zealand’s proposal. South Africa opposed the proposal submitted by New Zealand and expressed its support for Indonesia’s proposal. The Assembly proceeded with a roll-call vote, with the New Zealand proposal ultimately selected.

The text of the emergency item, as adopted by the Assembly, is available at <https://www.ipu.org/event/144th-assembly-and-related-meetings#event-sub-page-25792/>.



Australia votes on the Emergency Item.

## **Governing Council**

The Governing Council (GC) is the administrative and policy making body of the IPU and it ordinarily meets during the twice-yearly assemblies. During the 144<sup>th</sup> Assembly, the 209<sup>th</sup> session of the GC was held across three meetings. At its first meeting on 21 March 2022, the GC proposed that Dr. P. Maharani, Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia, be elected President of the 144th IPU Assembly.

The GC took note of the activities of the President of the IPU, Mr Pacheco. This covered his bilateral meetings during the 143rd Assembly in Madrid, visits to various countries to strengthen relations with Members, press conferences to increase the IPU’s visibility, initiatives to promote universal membership of the IPU, and a visit to Ukraine.

The GC took note of the [Annual Impact Report](#) by the Secretary General on the activities and results of the IPU over the period that covered by the previous strategy, for 2017-2021. The GC also approved the IPU Communications Strategy 2022-2026, which seeks to boost communication efforts to help the IPU achieve its strategic objectives. Additionally, the GC adopted an amendment to the Rules of the Committee on Middle East Questions regarding the gender balance of its membership. The GC also approved the recommendations contained in the reports on the activities of the IPU's committees and other bodies and endorsed the new appointments to those bodies.

The GC considered the Financial Report and Audited Financial statements for 2021. The GC approved the Secretary General's financial administration of the IPU and the financial results for 2021. It was noted that although voluntary contributions have increased, the number of Members that are in arrears remains a concern. There are currently ten members at risk of potential suspension of their IPU rights as a result.

The GC endorsed the recommendations of the Executive Committee with regard to the following membership concerns:

- to suspend admission of new observers until such time as it had more complete details from the candidates;
- to allow the Afghanistan and Myanmar parliaments (previously suspended from the IPU) to participate in the IPU in a non-voting observer capacity;
- to accept the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela as an observer to the IPU if the delegation was composed of members from both parliaments (elected in 2015 and 2020);
- to retain Burkina Faso's membership;
- to monitor the situation on the following countries and provide an update at the next session: Chad, Eswatini, Guinea Bissau, Haiti, Libya, Mali, Palestine, South Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and Yemen.

## Meetings of geopolitical groups

The IPU has six geopolitical groups that meet immediately prior to and during the Assembly to consider IPU agenda items and, where possible, agree a group position. Candidatures for positions on IPU committees are also considered and submitted through the geopolitical groups. Most member countries are members of at least one geopolitical group. Australia is a member of two geopolitical groups—the Asia Pacific Group and the Twelve Plus Group.<sup>8</sup>

### Asia Pacific Group<sup>9</sup>

The Asia Pacific Group did not meet during the 144<sup>th</sup> Assembly.

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<sup>8</sup> The IPU Statutes stipulate that members that belong to more than one geopolitical group should indicate which geopolitical Group they represent for the purposes of submitting candidatures for positions within the IPU. Australia usually exercises its voting rights through the Asia Pacific Group.

<sup>9</sup> The membership of the Asia Pacific Group is available on the IPU website: <https://www.ipu.org/about-us/members/geopolitical-groups/asia-pacific-group>.



## **Twelve Plus Group<sup>10</sup>**

The Twelve Plus group met six times during the 144<sup>th</sup> Assembly. The group heard reports from the standing committees, discussed the debating topics for the Assembly, and considered resolutions of the IPU.

The group held a side event on 20 March 2022 on the situation in Ukraine. The group called for the IPU Executive Committee to submit to the GC, for decision and opinion, voting and participation in the IPU by the Federal Assembly of Russia. Unfortunately, the Australian delegation was unable to attend this side event in person, but contributed to the ongoing discussion regarding the Ukrainian crisis.

## **Forum of Women Parliamentarians**

The 33<sup>rd</sup> session of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians took place on 20 March 2022. The Forum included 129 participants, including 64 parliamentarians (55 women and 9 men) from 60 countries and international organisations.

Participants considered gendered perspectives of the two draft resolutions on the agenda of the 144<sup>th</sup> Assembly, *Rethinking and reframing the approach to peace processes with a view to fostering lasting peace* and *Leveraging Information and Communication Technology as an enabler for the education sector, including in times of pandemic*. The Forum subsequently proposed amendments to the two draft resolutions and expressed support for amendments proposed by national delegations. Most of the proposed amendments were included in the relevant draft resolution.

The Forum held a panel discussion on parliamentary experiences in promoting women's, children's and adolescents' health in time of the COVID-19 pandemic and pandemic recovery. Additionally, the Forum made recommendations that a taskforce be created in response to the IPU's resolution on *Peaceful resolution of the war in Ukraine, respecting international law, the Charter of the United Nations and territorial integrity—be gender balanced*.

## **Standing Committees**

There are four standing committees of the IPU. A summary of their activities during the 144<sup>th</sup> Assembly follows.

### **Standing Committee on Peace and International Security**

The Standing Committee on Peace and International Security held three meetings from 21 to 23 March 2022.

The participants contributed to the debate on the draft resolution on the theme *Rethinking and reframing the approach to peace processes with a view to fostering lasting peace*. The drafting committee considered 83 proposals for amendments tabled by 16 Member Parliaments and the

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<sup>10</sup> The membership of the Twelve Plus Group is available on the IPU website: <https://www.ipu.org/about-us/members/geopolitical-groups/twelve-plus-group>.

Forum of Women Parliamentarians. Over half of these amendments were approved. The Committee adopted the consolidated draft resolution by consensus on 23 March 2022.

On 24 March 2022, the resolution was submitted to and adopted by the Assembly.

### **Standing Committee on Sustainable Development**

The Standing Committee on Sustainable Development met twice during the Assembly on 21 and 23 March 2022.

The participants contributed to the debate on the draft resolution on the theme *Leveraging Information and Communication Technology as an enabler for the education sector, including in times of pandemic*. The Committee considered 64 amendments submitted by 13 Member Parliaments and the Forum of Women Parliamentarians. The committee adopted the consolidated draft resolution on 23 March 2022. On 24 March 2022, the resolution was submitted to and adopted by the Assembly.

The Committee approved the theme of the next resolution, entitled *Reconnecting local communities with a local sustainable inclusive economy to achieve the targets of SDG 8*.

### **Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights**

The Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights held two sittings, one on 22 March 2022 and the other on 23 March 2022.

At its first meeting, the Committee held a preparatory debate on the theme of its next resolution, *Parliamentary impetus to local and regional development of countries with high levels of international migration and to stopping all forms, including state-sponsored, of human trafficking and human rights abuses*. At its second meeting, the committee held a debate on the theme *The role of parliaments in reconciling health measures during a pandemic with the preservation of civil liberties*.

### **Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs**

The Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs met on 23 March 2022. The session consisted of two panel discussions with high-level UN officials.

The first panel focused on the UN country team and its work in supporting Indonesian development. The committee discussed the difficult living conditions for poor and marginalized people in Indonesia. Specific problems include the lack of participation by women in public life, violence against women, the difficult situation of HIV/AIDS infected persons and, in general, the lack of women's empowerment.

The second panel focused on the United Nations High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). The 2022 HLPF's main theme centred on building back better from the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Other Meetings

In addition to the Forum of Women Parliamentarians and the four standing committees, a number of other subsidiary bodies to the IPU met during the Assembly:

- Forum of Young Parliamentarians of the IPU
- Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians
- Committee on Middle East Questions
- Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law
- Gender Partnership Group
- Advisory Group on Health
- Group of Facilitators for Cyprus
- High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism.

At the 142<sup>nd</sup> IPU Assembly, Senator O’Neill was elected a representative of the Asia Pacific Group on the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law.<sup>11</sup>

At a meeting on 23 March 2022, the Committee discussed the humanitarian situations in Afghanistan, Myanmar and Ukraine. Additionally, the Committee considered initiatives taken by states to end statelessness, how it may encourage implementation of the pledges made by states at the Global Refugee Forum, and reviewed activities to mark the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Additional Protocols to the Geneva Convention.

Bilateral and multilateral meetings complement the Australian delegation's attendance at statutory assemblies. During the 144<sup>th</sup> Assembly, the Australian delegation met with delegations from Indonesia, Israel, New Zealand, Poland, Timor-Leste and Britain. These facilitated discussion on common issues facing parliaments, with a core focus on strengthening parliamentary cooperation and international partnerships. In addition, the Australian delegation, together with the delegations from Britain and New Zealand, visited the memorial for victims of the 2002 Bali bombing tragedy and laid a wreath in their honour.

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<sup>11</sup> [\*Australian Parliamentary Delegation—142<sup>nd</sup> Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly, Virtual session, 24 to 28 May 2021—Report, November 2021\*](#), p. 7.



Meeting of the Australian and Timor-Leste delegations.



Meeting of the Australian and Israeli delegations.



The delegations from Australia, Britain and New Zealand lay wreaths at the memorial for victims of the 2002 Bali bombing tragedy.

## Concluding remarks

The delegation appreciates the opportunity to continue Australia's longstanding commitment to and participation in IPU Assemblies and associated meetings. It provides the chance to develop and progress parliament-to-parliament relations, build on bilateral and multilateral relationships, and promote parliamentary democracy.

The delegation wishes to acknowledge the work of staff of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Canberra and in Indonesia, who provided advice and briefing materials. The committee particularly appreciated the work of Tom Coghlan and his colleagues who supported the delegation at the Assembly.

Once again, the delegation was able to rely on excellent briefing materials prepared by the Parliamentary Library and acknowledges the work of Nigel Brew and his colleagues. The delegation also thanks Erin Lloyd and colleagues from the International and Parliamentary Relations Office who arranged travel and accommodation. Finally, the delegation acknowledges the support of Ms Sophie Dunstone, Ms Toni Matulick and Ms Rachel Callinan.

*Senator Hollie Hughes  
Delegation Leader*

## Attendance at the 144<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly

### Monday, 21 March 2022

Senator Hughes arrived in Nusa Dua

Assembly—Start of the General Debate on the theme *Getting to zero: Mobilizing parliaments to act on climate change*

Standing Committee on Peace and International Security—Debate and start of drafting in plenary on the draft resolution on *Rethinking and reframing the approach to peace processes with a view to fostering lasting peace*

Panel discussion on Leveraging parliamentary budgeting powers for children

Twelve Plus group meeting

Senator Hughes attended a dinner with the New Zealand delegation

### Tuesday, 22 March 2022

Twelve Plus group meeting

Senator O'Neill arrived in Nusa Dua (delayed due to attendance at the funeral of Senator Kimberley Kitching)

Assembly—Debate on the emergency item, and the continuation of the General Debate

Standing Committee on Peace and International Security – Completion of drafting in plenary of the resolution on *Rethinking and reframing the approach to peace processes with a view to fostering lasting peace*

Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights—Debate on the draft resolution to be adopted at the 145th Assembly on *Parliamentary impetus to local and regional development of countries with high levels of international migration and to stopping all forms, including state-sponsored, of human trafficking and human rights abuses*

Workshop on health security preparedness

ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights (APHR) Side event—*Jailed for being elected*

Panel discussion on *international cooperation to prosecute corruption and recover stolen assets*

Standing Committee on Sustainable Development – Drafting in plenary of the resolution on *Leveraging Information and Communication Technology as an enabler for the education sector, including in times of pandemic*

Dinner with the New Zealand and United Kingdom delegations

## **Wednesday, 23 March 2022**

Twelve Plus group meeting

Assembly—Continuation of the General Debate; adoption of the resolution in the emergency item; Special session on accountability and the implementation of the IPU; and the conclusion of the General Debate

Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights—Panel discussion on *The role of parliaments in reconciling health measures during a pandemic with the preservation of civil liberties*

Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law

Standing Committee on Peace and International Security – Adoption of the draft resolution on *Rethinking and reframing the approach to peace processes with a view to fostering lasting peace*

Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs

Standing Committee on Sustainable Development—Adoption of the draft resolution on Leveraging Information and Communication Technology as an enabler for the education sector, including in times of pandemic

Bilateral meeting with the Israeli delegation

Bilateral meeting with the Indonesian delegation

## **Thursday, 24 March 2022**

Twelve Plus group meeting

Bilateral meeting with the Timor-Leste delegation

Wreath laying at the Bali Bombings memorial, Kuta

Lunch with the New Zealand and United Kingdom delegations

Bilateral meeting with the Polish delegation

Governing council

Assembly—adoption of resolutions; reports of standing committees; outcome document of the General Debate; and closing of the IPU.

Departure of the Australian delegation