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Geneva, 22 May 2018

**Office of the
Secretary General**

Dear Madam Speaker,
Dear Mr Speaker,

In March 2018 Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the WHO Director-General, and I wrote to you to ask for your support in ensuring the ratification of the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products. The situation has become urgent as the Protocol needs to be ratified by a minimum of 40 countries before 2 July 2018 in order to enter into force. This deadline is fast approaching.

I have already received feedback from some parliaments about the steps being taken in response to our request to ratify the Protocol, for which I am most grateful. I would strongly urge all other parliaments to likewise advise me on the measures that you have been able to take.

The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) and the Protocol are key global instruments to counter the negative impact of tobacco on people's health and countries' economies. The Protocol in particular is necessary for the provision of a strengthened global normative framework to support appropriate country responses to counter the illicit trade in tobacco products. However, both instruments can only be effective if implemented at the country level. Parliaments especially are decisive to the process through the exercise of their legislative, oversight and budgetary powers.

It is part of our joint responsibility to make every endeavour to address tobacco as one of the leading preventable causes of death globally. Accordingly, I once again urge you to join our efforts in ensuring the ratification of the Protocol.

The IPU, together with our partners in the WHO and WHO FCTC Secretariat, stand ready to provide any technical advice or support should the need arise, and I look forward to hearing from you about the outcomes of any initiatives undertaken with respect to the Protocol.

Yours sincerely,

Martin Chungong
Secretary General