



Inter-Parliamentary Union

For democracy. For everyone.

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To: Presidents of IPU Groups

Geneva, 9 November 2020

**Office of the  
Secretary General**

Dear Madam President,  
Dear Mr. President,

A parliamentary administration is an indispensable pillar of every parliament. The staff of these administrations provide elected members with essential services to allow them to carry out their functions. Administrators are also the oil that keeps each parliament's institutional machinery working smoothly.

How parliaments govern their administration – and how far they can do so autonomously – varies from country to country. In recent years, the IPU has carried out extensive research on this topic through global surveys and in-depth case studies. I am pleased to share with you the fruits of these efforts in our recently published *Comparative research paper on parliamentary administration*, available at: [www.ipu.org/resources/publications/reference/2020-09/comparative-research-paper-parliamentary-administration](http://www.ipu.org/resources/publications/reference/2020-09/comparative-research-paper-parliamentary-administration)

The paper includes a global overview of parliamentary administrations based on data collected since 2016. There is also a more detailed examination of thirteen case studies from a diverse sample of parliaments. In 2019, a draft version of this paper was shared with Secretaries General from around the world; dozens have provided valuable feedback. I wish to thank most warmly all parliaments that have contributed to this publication and have had a hand in its production.

More autonomous parliamentary administrations usually lead to stronger and more resilient parliaments, especially in the face of uncertainty. The parliamentary response to the current COVID-19 pandemic has only strengthened that view. Many parliaments have been able to adapt their working modalities quickly so as to continue their representative, legislative and oversight work. This is in no small measure thanks to parliamentary administrations.

I hope this paper will be an additional resource to enable parliaments to serve the people they represent more effectively. I invite you to share it widely and hope it will provide tangible benefits to your developmental efforts.

Yours sincerely,

Martin Chungong  
Secretary General