



Inter-Parliamentary Union

For democracy. For everyone.

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**Office of the
Secretary General**

Dear Madam Speaker,
Dear Mr. Speaker,

We are pleased to inform you that the IPU has issued the report “Parliamentary action on universal health coverage in times of COVID-19”, enclosed to this letter. It is the first report on the implementation of the IPU resolution [Achieving universal health coverage by 2030: The role of parliaments in ensuring the right to health](#), which was adopted in October 2019.

The report highlights that the COVID-19 pandemic has reversed many of the development gains achieved over the past 25 years, including on universal health coverage (UHC). Parliaments reported challenges such as the diversion of resources away from UHC, the disruption of essential health services, and new barriers to healthcare coverage access to vulnerable and marginalized populations.

However, it is encouraging that parliaments remain committed to UHC and some countries have been able to use the pandemic as an opportunity to accelerate its implementation. The report illustrates how investments in UHC enables better preparedness and response to health emergencies and highlights the roles that parliaments can play in this regard. Now more than ever there is a need to prioritize UHC to strengthen health systems and ensure equity in access to health.

Countries worldwide committed to UHC as part of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and reiterated their commitment through the IPU resolution on UHC. Parliaments play a crucial role in turning internationally agreed development goals into reality for their countries and people. The SDGs offer a globally agreed roadmap to deliver on resilience for people, planet and the economy, and should be at the heart of recovery efforts from COVID-19.

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The IPU continues to mobilize parliaments to share good practices and solutions to inform the global parliamentary community and draw lessons for parliamentary action on health. We encourage you to keep the IPU abreast of developments on UHC. In order to address some of the gaps identified in the report, we are pleased to share a questionnaire to collect information on current legislative processes on UHC and parliamentary practices on establishing a legal framework to advance UHC and the right to health. The information collected through this questionnaire will inform the next report on the implementation of the IPU resolution on UHC to be prepared at the end of 2021.

The questionnaire can also be accessed and completed at the following link:
<https://trello.com/c/Z34jEa4D>

We hope you will find the report useful and will continue sharing with the IPU your Parliament's initiatives, best practices, and challenges in making UHC a reality for the people.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Martin Chungong', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Martin Chungong
Secretary General