

**Speech of the IPU President, Mr. Saber Chowdhury,
at the high-level segment of COP21**

8 December 2016

Parliaments are constitutionally mandated institutions that represent people. We are here as Inter Parliamentary Union - the world organization of parliaments representing 167 national parliaments, embracing 45,000 MPs who represent 6.5 billion people across the world.

IPU, along with the National Assembly and the Senate of France, organized a two-day meeting to promote parliamentary action and cooperation on climate change. The UNSG and the President of COP21 were present amongst others. An outcome document of the meeting has been prepared and we are in the process of adopting a Parliamentary Plan of Action on Climate Change.

Parliaments are pushing hard for a legally binding agreement in COP21. Mr. Fabius has assured us that there will be a reference to the important role of IPU and parliaments in the Paris Agreement, as was indeed the case with two other UN agreements this year – the Sendai Framework for DRR and the SDGs.

Parliaments are critical when it comes to the implementation of agreements given that they enact laws, appropriate resources, exercise robust oversight and hold governments to account.

We urge governments to act now:

- Firstly, with urgency, as deferred action may be too little, too late.
- Secondly, act decisively and with much higher levels of ambition, on the basis of science to keep temperature rise to below 2°C.
- Thirdly, act with honesty, as deep emission cuts and transition to a green economy are not consistent with huge fossil fuel subsidies which, as projected by IMF, would have a cost of USD 5 trillion in 2015 (6.5% of global GDP).

Choice is our most prized possession.

More than ever, this choice needs to be exercised prudently, so that we can ensure the world we want and the future our people deserve.

We are the first generation to understand fully what causes climate change and we are the last generation that needs to take the requisite action. If we fail to do so, we fail ourselves and future generations. That is not an option.