CONCEPT NOTE

BRINGING THE FUTURE TO THE PRESENT
The Democracy of the Future, Artificial Intelligence and Parliaments

Background

Multiple global forces of interrelated changes are currently disrupting our world, presenting complex challenges that require appropriate paradigms, conceptual frameworks and methodologies to address them. Navigating such contexts effectively necessitates anticipatory capacities and competencies. In recent years, the concept of anticipatory governance has garnered significant attention as a means for societies to proactively frame, define, make decisions and take actions that explicitly incorporate the future into the present in a literate, creative and evolutionary manner. While definitions, approaches and methodologies may vary, the central idea remains: integrating a futures-literate analysis opens up alternatives, expands choices, seizes opportunities and minimizes threats.

Parliaments have a critical role to play in ensuring that anticipatory governance is embedded throughout the entire parliamentary governance architecture, guiding policy and legislation oversight as well as decision-making. They can also ensure the institutionalization of anticipatory governance through measures which build and reinforce a culture based on anticipatory capacities and competences to 'use the future' in multiple ways depending on contexts and purposes (strategic foresight is one of these).

The rapid evolution of artificial intelligence (AI) and its relationship with democracy is one key trend of increasing importance to parliaments and those working within them. AI comes in many guises. One aspect to consider is the challenges posed to regulation. Another is the potential for AI to be incorporated into the tasks of parliament, to enhance its efficiency, improve decision-making processes and enable innovation. Concerns remain around a range of issues including, but not limited to, transparency, disinformation, and manipulation and privacy. Considering these complexities, it is imperative for parliaments to hold in-depth and nuanced discussions on AI and other technologies and their impact on society and link to democracy.

The Uruguayan Parliament, in cooperation with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), is honoured to host the Second World Summit of the Committees of the Future in Montevideo, Uruguay from 25 to 27 September 2023. The purpose of the Summit is to continue the path started by Finland during the first World Summit held in Helsinki, where participating parliamentarians recognized the fundamental importance of incorporating the future in present decision-making. There was a consensus that in the context of global challenges, inter-parliamentary dialogue favours the recognition of emerging challenges and common interests. Such a dialogue provides a great opportunity for cooperation and a collective exchange of knowledge, enabling us to better address complexities and uncertainties.

The World Summit of Committees of the Future is an essential parliamentary event that emphasizes the critical role of parliaments and anticipatory parliamentary practice in governance. It fosters collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and the development of new skills and competencies related to the "use of the future" in the present for more accurate decision-making when dealing with complexities, uncertainties, ambiguities, and novelties. The Summit also creates a space for networking between parliamentary committees of the future that can generate significant contributions to the United Nations Summit of the Future in 2024.

Focus and objectives

The Summit will focus on the theme *Bringing the future to the present* and the interaction between the parliaments of today, the democracy of tomorrow and Artificial Intelligence (AI). The topic will offer an opportunity to reflect and have an exchange on the challenges posed by AI and other technologies to democracy, decision-making and responsible anticipation.

The aim is to examine conditions that can strengthen democracy in the context of a hybrid world that is characterized by both the analog and digital. This unprecedented environment presents challenges, risks and opportunities that require parliaments to work with anticipatory, interdisciplinary and complex frameworks, using creativity, collective intelligence and deep reflection.

The Summit will aim to go beyond the surface of threats and promises of AI which tend to polarize and cluster debates. AI has the potential to transform many aspects of society, including how we work, communicate and make decisions. As a result, it is important to carefully consider the implications of these developments for democratic institutions and values, as well as for human rights and social justice. By examining these issues in a thoughtful and comprehensive way, the Summit will aim at discussing and identifying policies and practices that ensure that the benefits of AI are realized while minimizing any negative impacts on individuals and society as a whole.

The goal is to explore new ways of approaching the challenges posed to democracy by AI and other emerging technologies. Such an exploration would help contribute significantly to the discussion on the new conditions brought about by digitization and algorithmic modelling, among others, and identify new possibilities for the transformative potential of these technologies while upholding and protecting the principles of democracy.

By focusing on these issues, the Summit will also provide an opportunity to delve deeper into the needs and required changes in parliament to better anticipate the future and integrate it in its daily work.

Methodology

The Summit will adopt a research-learning-action format in which participants generate collective knowledge and action via a series of panel discussions and workshop activities. Each workshop will build on a plenary discussion with expert panellists.

To support the collective construction of knowledge and the "use of the future", experts will co-design and facilitate the process, promoting an environment of high interaction and exchange between participants.

Participants

This event is open to **all parliamentarians and parliamentary staff** from national parliaments, including those that are already practicing a systematic use of the future in some of their areas, as well as those interested in incorporating these practices. Delegation should be composed of a maximum of four Members of Parliament and parliamentary staff. Parliaments are encouraged to send gender-balanced delegations and include parliamentarians who represent different political affiliations and if possible young MPs as well.

Languages

The language of the event will be Spanish; simultaneous English, French, and Arabic interpretation will be provided.

Registration

Please register on line by 31 August 2023 on https://parlamento.gub.uy/documentos-generales/1211/2023 and/or https://www.ipu.org/events/current-and-future-events