



**WSIS
FORUM 2026**

**6-10 July 2026
Geneva, Switzerland**

Session Outcome Document

High-Level Parliamentary Dialogue on Digital Governance

IPU, ITU, UNDP and CPA

Friday 10 July 2026, 10:15–11:15

<https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2026/Agenda/Session/429>

Key Issues discussed:

- **Parliaments must be central to digital governance, not passive downstream stakeholders.** Speakers stressed their role in translating WSIS commitments into law, budgets, scrutiny and citizen representation.
- **Digital transformation is a governance and rights issue, not only a technological agenda.** The discussion linked digital policy to accountability, transparency, the rule of law, inclusion and the protection of human rights.
- **Durable frameworks depend on design, enforcement and cooperation.** Drawing on the EU AI Act, speakers argued for rules that do not date as technology evolves, independent and well-resourced regulators, and cross-border cooperation to turn commitments into workable law.
- **Parliamentary capacity is a binding constraint.** Members need a baseline of knowledge to scrutinise digital and AI policy without becoming technical experts, with deeper support for parliaments with fewer resources, including in the Global South.
- **Children's rights and online safety should be a priority area.** Child protection can provide a unifying issue across political divides and should be more consistently embedded in global digital governance discussions.
- **Inclusive leadership must be at the center of digital governance.** The discussion highlighted the importance of ensuring that parliaments and decision-making spaces reflect the diversity of the societies they represent. Strengthening the leadership and participation of women parliamentarians and other underrepresented groups is essential to ensure that digital policies respond to a broader range of experiences, priorities, and concerns.
- **A gap persists between executive and parliamentary support, raising questions of accountability.** Governments often receive technical assistance while legislatures do not, and speakers asked who is answerable to citizens when automated systems shape rights and services. Stronger reporting back to parliaments on international fora, knowledge-sharing and parliamentary networks were highlighted as key to closing this gap.

Key Outcomes of the session:

- **Insights:** the session affirmed parliaments as essential to the delivery of the WSIS agenda, identified parliamentary capacity as the main constraint, and converged on issues considered shared “red lines”, including child protection and non-consensual deepfakes.
- **Initiatives:** partners highlighted the value of sharing parliamentary learning across regions, including through resources that track parliamentary action on AI, and pointed to cross-UN efforts to embed children's rights in digital governance.
- **Commitments:** the IPU, UNDP and CPA signaled continued joint work to support parliamentary engagement with WSIS and the Action Line roadmaps towards 2027, and a shared push to report back from international forums inside parliaments.

Key Recommendations and Forward-Looking Actions:

- **Embed parliaments in WSIS implementation and review.** Recognise legislatures as central actors in turning global commitments into national law, budgets, oversight and citizen-facing outcomes.
- **Close the capacity gap for legislatures.** Extend technical assistance and capacity-building to parliaments, from a shared baseline for all members to deeper support for those with specific responsibilities, prioritising parliaments with fewer resources.
- **Invest in inclusive parliamentary leadership for the digital era.** Beyond technical capacity building, there is a need to strengthen confidence, networks, and leadership opportunities for women parliamentarians and diverse voices so they can meaningfully engage in shaping digital governance frameworks and oversight mechanisms.
- **Strengthen knowledge-sharing between parliaments.** Support regional networks, peer learning, structured reporting back from international forums, and practical toolkits that help legislatures better understand and appreciate WSIS Action Lines in their own national contexts.