



ASSOCIATION DES SECRETAIRES GENERAUX DES PARLEMENTS
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Secretaries General,

As previously announced, the Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments will come together virtually on Wednesday 26 May and Thursday 27 May for an exceptional meeting. Attached to the email you will find practical information about the organisation of the meeting which, due to the fact it is being held online, differs quite significantly from the usual format of ASGP meetings.

Programme

The **two plenary meetings** will take place on Wednesday 26 May and Thursday 27 May between 10am and 1pm (Geneva time).

Furthermore, members of the **Executive Committee** will meet on Tuesday 25 May between 10am and midday (Geneva time).

Attached to the email you will find a draft programme for the two-day event. The plenary meetings will enable the President to welcome new members and address issues such as planning for future changes to the ASGP rules and elections. There will also be some time dedicated to recent developments in the work of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Both days of the plenary meeting will address the general theme of 'the role and organisation of Parliaments in a time of pandemic'. Debates will be structured around sub-themes; these will be determined by the topics proposed by members who apply to speak on the speaking list. On each day there will be two debates, each lasting 70 minutes, with a 10-minute break in the middle.

During each 70-minute period, 12 Secretaries General will have the opportunity to make a 3-minute presentation on an aspect of their Parliament's response to the Covid-19 pandemic. To enable an interactive and lively debate, the Secretaries General on the speaking list will make their presentations in groups of 4, each followed by 10-minutes of open debate during which members may ask questions or comment on the theme and presentations.

Applying for the Speakers' list

Secretaries General who wish to give **a 3-minute presentation** must complete and return the attached application form to the secretariat.

Registration will open as soon as this email has been sent. Places on the speaking list will be allocated on a '**first come first served**' basis. We would like to emphasise that the number of places

on the speaking list is limited. There will be 24 places on the 26th of May and 24 places on the 27th of May. Therefore, 48 places in total. **As soon as we have received 48 applications, we will send an email notifying members that registration is closed, and the list is full.** If we do not receive 48 applications, registration will close on the 14 May to enable the secretariat to finalise the order of speakers and grouping of presentations.

To register your desire to make a 3-minute presentation, simply fill in the short application form attached to the email. You will be asked to provide the following details:

- **The theme of your speech.** For example, to talk about a particular innovation your Parliament has developed in response to Covid-19, adaptations to the legislative process, or the creation of new digital tools. By indicating the subject of your presentation, you will enable the secretariat to group speeches around similar themes and create a more coherent debate structure.
- **Preferred date.** If you are not available to attend both days, then please indicate on the application form whether you would like to make the speech on either the 26th of May or the 27th of May. Once your speaking place has been allocated, it will not be possible to change the date. If you do not have a preference, and are sure that you can attend both days of the plenary meeting, please write this on the form. The secretariat will then select the most appropriate place on the list, given the subject matter of your speech.

The secretariat will send the final programme, one week before the plenary meetings, which will include the order of speakers. We ask that speakers on the list practice their speech to ensure that it does not exceed the strict 3-minute limit.

Members who do not have a place on the speakers' list will have the opportunity to speak during the periods of open debate which will take place after every 4 speeches. When selecting speakers who wish to make a comment or ask a question in open debate, the President will give priority to those who do not have a place on the list. Interventions during open debate must be short to ensure a dynamic and interactive debate. To indicate your desire to speak during open debate, simply use the « raise hands » function on Zoom.

Interpretation

Given the particular circumstances of holding a virtual meeting, the Association has decided to provide interpretation into the following four languages: English, French, Arabic and Spanish.

Due to technical constraints, we cannot add any further interpretation channels. All speakers must therefore express themselves, live, in one of the four languages (this excludes simultaneous interpretation from your Parliament).

To ensure that every member has the opportunity to contribute, irrespective of linguistic barriers, we offer two further options:

- To nominate, amongst your staff, a representative who can speak on your behalf and answer any questions during the meetings in one of the four languages; and
- To provide a written contribution which will be published on the ASGP website. As always, we remind you that written contributions must be sent to the secretariat, in English and French, in a format compatible with Microsoft Word. In order to allow time for translation, contributions can be sent to the secretariat up to 1 month after the plenary meetings but no later than the end of June 2021. The option of sending a written contribution is open to all

members, irrespective of whether they had the opportunity to make a speech during the plenary meeting.

Connecting to the online meeting

The plenary meetings will be held on the online platform Zoom. There is one generic link for both days of the plenary meeting. To join the plenary meetings, simply click the link below:

[the Zoom link has been provided to Members by email]

You will also receive a copy of the Zoom link in an « outlook calendar invite » with details of the password and meeting identification number. Please accept the calendar invite if you will be attending the plenary meeting. This will give the secretariat an indication of the likely number of attendees.

After clicking the meeting link, you will enter the Zoom waiting room: the ASGP secretariat will verify your identity to ensure that only ASPG members and their staff are admitted to the plenary meeting.

To facilitate the identification process, we ask that you please use the following **naming convention** when joining the meeting « first Initial, family name, country (SG) ».

For example: P SCHWAB Switzerland (SG).

Members of staff attending the plenary meetings to observe and support, must use the following naming convention « Country staff ».

The Zoom meeting will be open for 30 minutes before the plenary, from 9.30am, to allow members time to test their equipment. It is important that you ensure you have good sound and video quality before the meeting commences.

Zoom etiquette

To ensure a smooth meeting and optimal sound quality for all participants, we invite you to respect the rules of Zoom etiquette attached to the email.

In particular, it is essential that you mute your microphones during the meeting at all times when you are not speaking.

To indicate your desire to speak during open debate, please use the « hands up » function. Once you have spoken, please remember to lower your hand, this will make it much easier for the President to identify which members are waiting to speak.

A guide to using Zoom is also attached to the email.

Administrative matters

As usual, registration for the ASGP plenary meetings is via the IPU form which can be found here: <https://registration.ipu.org/event/3dec7c90-8b77-4a09-8d8e-eb3f2cef05f2/summary>

We would be very grateful if you could email Daniel Moeller, before the plenary meetings, with any changes that you would like to make to the list of members.

For new secretaries general, a membership form is also attached to the email. Daniel can be contacted at the following address: moellerd@parliament.uk.

If you would like to be represented by one of your colleagues at this plenary meeting, in accordance with the rules of the Association, please notify President Philippe Schwab via letter with the name of your replacement. Letters can be sent via email addressed to moellerd@parliament.uk.

Our website (www.asgp.co.uk) contains biographies of our members. If your page requires any changes then please send updates to moellerd@parliament.uk.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any further questions regarding the plenary meetings or the activities of the ASGP in general.

Yours sincerely

Elektra Garvie-Adams

ASGP Co-Secretary

Perrine Preuvot

Co-secrétaire de l'ASGP