

ASSOCIATION DES SECRETAIRES  
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GENERAL OF PARLIAMENTS

**COMMUNICATION**

by

**Mr Pedro Agostinho DE NERI**  
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on

**“How are Secretary Generals appointed and how do we define the scope of the role?”**

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**Your Excellency, President of the Association of Secretary-Generals,  
Distinguished Secretary General,**

On behalf of the National Assembly of Angola, and on my own behalf, we would like to welcome you all at this important event that brings together the Secretary-Generals of IPU.

Allow us also to send a special greeting to the organizers of the Event, for the welcome and hospitality with which they have offered us since our arrival in this place.

It is with great pleasure that we will address a topic that is decisive for the life of parliaments: the procedures for appointing the Secretary-General and the role regarding this position. I will talk about the procedures in the National Assembly of Angola, on how effective administrative leadership, transparent processes and institutional modernization are articulated to raise the quality of legislative work and strengthen citizen trust in our institution.

**Dear Colleagues**

As you know, the Parliamentary Administration is the backbone of any parliament's efficient functioning. The position of General-Secretary is therefore an essential pillar, ensuring design, coordination, implementation, technical and administrative support to the organs and Members of Parliament.

This is a function that is not limited to internal organization but directly influences the **quality of the legislative process and parliamentary action.**

In this presentation, we will address two key points, namely:

- 1. Procedures for the appointment of Secretary-General in the National Assembly of Angola;**
- 2. The strategic role of the Secretary-General in parliamentary institutions.**

**1. Procedures for appointing Secretary-Generals**

Nomination procedures vary from parliament to parliament, reflecting different institutional traditions and political systems. However, there are common principles that guide these processes, such as:

- Appointment by the President of Parliament.**
- Election by the Bureau or the Plenary.**
- Selection based on technical and administrative criteria.**

Regardless of the method, it is essential to ensure that the Secretary-General has:

- Technical competence, administrative experience, integrity, and functional independence.**

In accordance with the Organic Law of the Functioning of the Services of the National Assembly of Angola (Law no. 1/24, September 19<sup>th</sup>), the Secretary-General is appointed by the President of the National Assembly, upon **approval of the Administrative Board**, under the regime of commission of service.

Moreover, the General-Secretary may not exercise private activities or hold other public office without authorization from the President. In his absence, he shall be replaced by a director appointed by the President on the proposal of the Secretary-General.

**Note that**, institutionally, the Secretary-General is treated as a Member of Parliament, except for parliamentary immunities, and receives a representation budget approved by the Plenary.

## **2. Strategic role of the Secretary-General in parliamentary institutions**

Dear Colleagues,

The Secretary-General is not only the manager; he is responsible for the institutional modernization and quality of technical support to the Parliament's organs and Members, thus being the pillar of the Parliament's effectiveness, transparency and credibility.

Thus, in a concise way, the key strategic functions are highlighted, namely:

### **2.1 Management of the Parliamentary Administration**

Ensure that all services operate smoothly, manage **human, financial and technological resources** rigorously, and promote **institutional modernization**. This includes budget planning, internal control, hiring management and organizational performance evaluation. More than mere management, this function of Secretary-General ensures **efficiency, transparency and quality** in supporting parliamentary activity.

In the National Assembly of Angola, the effort of administrative reorganization and improvement of technical support services to Members of Parliament has strengthened the institutional capacity and **credibility of the institution**. I can say that a well-run administration ensures continuity of legislative work and rapid response to institutional needs.

### **2.2 Management of human capital**

Let me stress that human capital is by far the most valuable asset of any institution. The Secretary-General therefore has a decisive responsibility in **promoting continuous training of employees, stimulating motivation and valuing each employee professionally and affirming, in all actions, a solid culture of ethics and professionalism**.

When we invest in people, the results speak for themselves, and we are able to achieve more **efficient technical support to Members of Parliament, superior legislative quality** and **increasingly consolidated institutional efficiency**. Therefore, investing in human capital is not a luxury; it is a strategic priority for strengthening parliaments.

### 2.3 Technological Upgrading

Leading the technological transformation of Parliaments is an urgent priority. By **digitizing administrative processes, implementing integrated management systems and platforms to support legislative activity**, we will make procedures more agile, traceable and accessible. This modernization reduces bureaucracy, increases transparency and puts information at the service of citizens.

### 2.4 Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Let me talk about AI and the role it can play in our parliamentary work. AI has the ability to empower essential technical tasks such as **advanced legislative research, support regulatory impact analysis, contribute to document writing and summarization, and automate repetitive flows** that are now time-consuming. It is up to the Secretary-General to promote the selective adoption of these tools, favoring those that increase productivity and the technical quality of parliamentary work, always with the safeguard that the final decision remains under human supervision.

**Note that** technology should complement, never replace, human decision-making.

### 2.5 Ethical use of AI

The use of technological innovation requires accountability. The integration of AI is only justified if it is accompanied by clear rules such as **strict protection of sensitive data, high standards of computer security, periodic audits and a requirement of explicability in the algorithms used**. There must be continuous human oversight and full transparency before the Members of Parliament, as well as instruments that ensure institutional accountability in case of failures.

Ethical use strengthens institutional trust and protects the integrity of Parliament.

### 2.6 Parliamentary International Relations

Finally, I would like to stress the importance of parliamentary international relations. The Secretary-General has a central role in **the technical preparation of missions, facilitating interparliamentary cooperation and coordinating participation in regional and global bodies**. A well-articulated secretariat elevates the international prestige of Parliament, promotes the exchange of good practices and allows us to bring into our national context innovative solutions adapted to our needs.

Angola's participation in international parliamentary bodies allows exchange of experiences and **adoption of good practices**.

## **2.7 Equidistance and Impartiality**

**Neutrality** is an essential principle for the healthy functioning of Parliament. The Secretary-General shall **ensure equal treatment of all Members, fully respect political pluralism and ensure institutional impartiality** in all his actions. This is the only way to strengthen the confidence of the Plenary and preserve the credibility of our Parliamentary Administration. In this way, the **trust and credibility** of the Parliamentary Administration is strengthened.

## **3. Future Perspectives**

The Secretary-General is a **strategic player in parliamentary democracy**. Its role extends beyond administrative management, namely, to ensure **institutional efficiency**, promote **technological and administrative innovation**, and ensure the **quality of legislative support**. Continuous modernization, training of qualified personnel and good governance are essential for a more effective **stronger, more transparent and closer to the citizen** National Assembly.

Finally, we thank you once again for the opportunity to share our experience with distinguished colleagues, knowing that investing in the excellence of the Secretariat-General means investing in the credibility of Parliament and the consolidation of democracy.

On behalf of the Angolan Parliament, we thank you for your attention.

**Thank you very much.**