

IPU 6th World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments

Panel 4: What role for parliaments in shaping our digital future?

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Dear colleagues,

When you return to your countries, I urge you all to read again Kafka's "The Trial".

The story is old — but we, politicians, are becoming like Kafka's protagonist: judged and condemned... without in many cases knowing why.

This is the danger we face today: a world where decisions about public life, reputation, and governance can be influenced by algorithms — without explanation, without accountability.

That's why transparency and oversight matter. The new Council of Europe Convention on Artificial Intelligence is a breakthrough: the world's first binding treaty to ensure AI respects human rights, Democracy, and the rule of law — across its entire lifecycle.

It was negotiated in Europe, but with partners from around the world — from Canada to Japan, from the U.S. to Uruguay. Because this is not just a European issue. It's a global one. And the treaty is open for any country to sign.

Now, parliaments have a vital role — and I urge you all to lean into this issue and bring the Convention to the attention of your fellow parliamentarians. Let it be discussed.

Let it be ratified. Because through this Convention, we can lay the foundation for a global mechanism — a modern safeguard for Democracy itself, against the threats that emerge from the misuse of artificial intelligence. Technology must serve humanity — not silence it.

Let us make sure the digital future is not Kafkaesque... but democratic, fair, and humane.

Thank you.