



ASSOCIATION DES SECRETAIRES GENERAUX DES PARLEMENTS
ASSOCIATION OF SECRETARIES GENERAL OF PARLIAMENTS

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London, 30 June 2023

Dear Secretaries General,

The secretariat of the Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments (ASGP) is delighted to provide details for the next meeting of the Association, which will take place in Luanda, Angola from Monday 23 October and Thursday 26 October 2023.

The meetings will take place over four days, which includes a cultural excursion organised by the host parliament on Monday 23 October and a joint IPU-ASGP session which will take place on the afternoon of Wednesday 25 October on the theme of 'Digital transformation in Parliaments'.

LOCATION AND TRANSPORT

The meetings will take place at the National Assembly buildings in Luanda. The Assembly of the Interparliamentary Union (IPU) will take place in the same location.

REGISTRATION

As usual, participants must register with the secretariat of the IPU in order to appear on the list of participants and to receive a security pass for the conference centre.

Online registration will be open from 10 July 2023. The deadline to complete registration with the IPU is 2 October 2023.

HEALTH MEASURES

Any Covid related health measures which apply to IPU participants will also be required of members of the ASGP. It is necessary to present a certificate of vaccination against covid-19 or, where this is not possible, a negative PCR test result, taken in the 48 hours prior to arrival.

Vaccination against yellow fever is also mandatory for entry into Angola.

CULTURAL PROGRAMME

The ASGP cultural programme will take place on Monday 23 October, participants will return from the excursion in good time to attend the IPU inaugural ceremony at 7pm that evening.

The aim of the excursion is to enable ASGP members to meet informally and learn a little more about the culture of our hosts.

Our hosts are still finalising the programme, further details about the visit will be provided in the coming weeks. Members wishing to take part in the cultural programme will be required to fill in, and return, a registration form which will be emailed to Members and put on the ASGP website.

At its meeting in Bahrain, the Executive Committee agreed to limit the number of extra people allowed to attend the cultural programme, dinners and associated ASGP events to the ASGP member plus 1 person, or 2 people if there is also an interpreter.

MEETINGS OF THE ASSOCIATION

The timetable for plenary meetings of the ASGP are as follows:

Tuesday 24 October	Morning session from 11 to 12.30 Afternoon session from 14.30 to 17.30
Wednesday 25 October	Morning session from 10 to 12.30 IPU-ASGP joint session 14.30-16.00 Afternoon session from 16.00 to 17.30
Thursday 26 October	Morning session from 10 to 12.30 Afternoon session from 14.30 to 17.30

The Executive Committee will meet on Tuesday 24 October, Wednesday 25 October and Thursday 26 October **at 9am** in the plenary meeting room.

During the session, you are asked **to consult the agenda, texts of communications and general debate contributions via the website on your tablet or computer**. In line with decisions taken by the IPU for environmental and cost reasons, **no paper copies will be provided**.

INTERPRETATION

Interpretation will be provided in the ASGP's official languages English and French and, thanks to the generous support of the Association of Secretaries General of Arab Parliaments, in Arabic too.

I would like to draw to your attention that, as in Bahrain, simultaneous interpretation will be provided remotely. If you wish to arrange interpretation into an additional language, please get in contact with the secretariat. Due to technical restrictions, the number of language channels is limited so please get in touch as soon as possible.

If you wish to speak during the conference, you must use one of the languages for which interpretation is provided. **Consecutive interpretation is not permitted at ASGP meetings as it prevents free flowing debate and is too time consuming**. Interventions which do not respect this rule will be refused.

PARTICIPATING IN THE ASGP AGENDA

The ASGP discusses and agrees general debate topics and themes ahead of each ASGP conference. The draft agenda for Angola was decided at the last meeting in Bahrain. All members are welcome to suggest general debate titles or themes for the next meeting.

The ASGP holds two types of General Debate:

- **Open general debate:** a moderator introduces the debate topic in a 10-minute speech. Afterwards, the debate is opened to the floor and all members can speak spontaneously in response to the topic by raising their hands. Each person may speak for a maximum of 5-minutes. Members can also notify the moderator in advance of their wish to speak (but this is not required).
- **General debate with informal discussion groups:** a moderator introduces the debate topic in a 10-minute speech. Afterwards, the members split into language specific groups (English, French, Spanish, Arabic) to discuss the topic. Each group nominates a rapporteur who will then summarise the ideas from their group in a speech to the main plenary.

Members can provide a written contribution in response to a general debate which will be placed on the website. However, these written contributions are not published in the Constitutional and Parliamentary Review, which records only oral proceedings.

The themes on the agenda are selected to inspire members to make a 10-minute presentation, called a communication, on the issue. Any member can apply to make a 10-minute speech on a theme in the agenda using the registration form. Members are also welcome to suggest communication titles which are not linked to the existing themes. Presentation of a communication is followed by up to 10-minutes of spontaneous question and answer from colleagues.

HOW TO APPLY TO PRESENT A COMMUNICATION

The **deadline for submitting proposals for communications is Friday 6 October**. The Executive Committee reserves the right not to accept proposals that arrive after the deadline has expired. As there is limited space on the agenda, titles will be accepted on a first come first served basis. Communication titles should be sent to British Joint Secretary Elektra Garvie-Adams at garviadamse@parliament.uk, using the communication form attached to the convocation email.

Any Member presenting a 10-minute communication must send the written text of their speech, **in both French and English, in Microsoft Word format**, to the secretariat by **Wednesday 18 October** so it can be published on the ASGP website ahead of the meeting.

If you wish to use a PowerPoint presentation while speaking, please share this with the secretariat ahead of the conference.

I draw your attention to the decision of the Executive Committee, made during the 2016 session in Geneva, that **where written texts are submitted after the expiry of the deadline the presentation is likely to be postponed until a subsequent session**, or published on the website without the author having the opportunity to make an oral presentation.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Under Rule 30(3) of the Association:

“Each Chamber represented in the Association shall contribute annually to the budget of the Association a sum to be fixed by the Association.”

Furthermore, under Rule 30(6), the Executive Committee can decide to suspend the right to vote, or membership of the Association, from members or associate members who have not paid membership fees for several years.

At the start of the year, each member of the Association received their membership fee request for 2023. Please ensure that you have already paid your membership fee for 2023. Payment for 2023 should be completed before the opening of the session in Luanda, Angola.

ELECTIONS

Nominations will be open for two vacant posts as **ordinary members of the Executive Committee** during the Luanda conference. If more than two candidates apply, there will be an election.

Only members whose subscription payments are up-to-date will be allowed to stand as candidates for election.

Only ASGP members, honorary members and those who have been empowered to vote on behalf of an ASGP member, or honorary member, by proxy may vote in these elections. The rules for establishing a proxy vote are as follows:

- The proxy must be designated before the start of the meeting on the day the election is being held;
- The proxy must be designated by name in a letter signed by the member or honorary member, a form is available on the Association’s website;
- The proxy must be a member of the personnel of your parliament;
- Each person can only vote once; therefore, a proxy cannot be a voting member of the Association or a person who also holds the proxy for another person.

In Bahrain, the Executive Committee agreed that the exceptional rule, introduced due to the pandemic, that candidates not physically present at the meeting are able to stand for election to vacant posts, would no longer apply.

A further note, setting out in detail the process and rules for the elections, will be sent via email to all members and placed on the Associations’ website.

ATTENDANCE

I would be very grateful if you could let Daniel Moeller know, before the session, of any changes that you would like to appear in the list of members. New Secretaries General and Deputy Secretary Generals are requested to fill out the membership form which is attached to this email. Daniel can be contacted via email at moellerd@parliament.uk if you have any questions.

If you would like to be represented by one of your colleagues at the session, in line with the rules of the Association, please notify us in advance by means of a letter addressed to Mr Najib El Khadi, President of the ASGP. The letter should mention the name of the person who will act as substitute for you. The letter should be sent via e-mail (to garvieadamse@parliament.uk and ccapon@assemblee-nationale.fr).

ASGP WEBSITE

As discussed in Bahrain, the ASGP website is being updated and migrated to WordPress. It is possible that the existing website (www.asgp.co) may be temporarily inaccessible on the day of migration. We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause. The new website will be operational from September 2023 onwards.

Before the new website launches, the secretariat will send information to all members to ensure they are able to navigate the new site and locate papers for the Angola Conference. There will also be a short demonstration of the website's new features during the Angola conference.

If the details on your personal page on the website are not up-to-date, please send any missing information or changes to asgp@parliament.uk

Finally, please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any further questions about the forthcoming session, or about the ASGP in general.

Yours sincerely,

Elektra Garvie-Adams
British Joint Secretary of the ASGP