



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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153rd IPU Assembly

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Workshop

Critical minerals for shared prosperity: Strengthening parliamentary oversight

Tuesday, 6 October 2026, 14:30–16:00

Concept note

Background

Critical minerals have become one of the defining resources of our time. Minerals such as lithium, cobalt, copper, nickel and rare-earth elements are considered “critical” or “strategic” because they underpin the technologies on which modern economies increasingly depend – from electric vehicle batteries and wind turbines to solar panels and the electricity grids needed to deliver renewable power – while their supply chains remain vulnerable to disruption. The impact of these minerals, however, extends well beyond technology: the way they are extracted and processed can carry real environmental, social and human rights costs for the communities and ecosystems closest to mining sites. As countries work to meet the commitments they made under the Paris Agreement, demand for these minerals is set to rise sharply in the coming decades, and the [International Energy Agency estimates](#) that a pathway consistent with global climate goals would require the consumption of several times more mineral inputs by 2040 than is the case today.

This rising demand also means that critical minerals, if managed well and transparently, represent a genuine source of national wealth and a significant development opportunity. Because these resources are often framed as matters of national security or strategic interest, they can also be subject to less legislative scrutiny than other sectors. This makes the role of parliaments all the more important: ensuring that critical minerals are governed transparently is a key condition for the resource to genuinely contribute to a country’s long-term sustainable development. Encouragingly, a growing number of parliaments are already stepping up to this role through effective committee work, rigorous legislative scrutiny of mining and energy laws, and more effective revenue-monitoring mechanisms, demonstrating that with the right tools, critical minerals can become a genuine driver of shared prosperity.

Parliaments have a central role to play in ensuring that this new mineral wealth benefits the people it belongs to. Their oversight responsibilities cover the entire value chain: approving the legal frameworks that govern how licences are granted, scrutinizing the environmental and social terms attached to extraction projects, and holding governments accountable for how mineral revenues are collected and spent. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development’s [Foreign Bribery Report](#), roughly one in five transnational bribery cases occurs in the extractive sector alone – more than in any other single industry – underscoring why independent, well-informed legislative scrutiny of the critical minerals sector matters so much. On the environmental and human front, local communities living closest to mining sites often bear the heaviest burden through water degradation and displacement, making it essential for lawmakers to assess these risks and represent the populations affected. In carrying out this role, parliaments do not act alone: national Supreme Audit Institutions, civil society organizations and governments are increasingly recognized as strategic partners and key allies in strengthening transparency and accountability across the critical minerals value chain.

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It is in this context that the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) has taken the initiative to pursue its work on parliamentary oversight of strategic resources and topics, further to its work on oversight of military expenditure.

The IPU and the National Democratic Institute (NDI), together with the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, Resource Justice Network and Transparency International, have launched a joint initiative to better understand and strengthen legislative engagement on critical minerals. The initiative includes a desk review, an online survey circulated to parliaments in around 40 countries with critical minerals endowments, and a series of interviews with parliamentarians directly involved in oversight work. The results will feed into a forthcoming issue brief produced with the aforementioned partners, which will set out, in practical terms, the challenges parliaments commonly face and the good practices already emerging around the world to address them.

This side event offers a chance to bring that research into direct conversation with parliamentarians and other stakeholders. It is also an opportunity to reflect, in a constructive spirit, on how parliaments can become more effective guardians of this increasingly important sector.

Objectives

This side event aims to give parliamentarians and other stakeholders a shared space to reflect on the role of parliaments in overseeing the critical minerals sector. Building on the findings of the IPU-NDI initiative, it will bring together MPs, strategic partners and technical experts to identify common challenges and, most importantly, to highlight good practices that make parliamentary oversight more effective. The discussion is intended to be forward-looking, focusing on the concrete steps parliaments can take to turn oversight into a genuine driver of accountable, equitable resource management, while also addressing the human and environmental impacts of mineral extraction and processing.

Participants

The workshop is open to all participants of the 153rd IPU Assembly.

Languages

English, French, Spanish and Arabic.