
World e-Parliament Report 2008



United Nations



Inter-Parliamentary Union

GlobalCentre  ICTParliament
Global Centre for Information and Communication Technologies in Parliament

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Foreword

Information and communication technologies (ICT) have become essential tools in supporting the work of legislative bodies throughout the world. As they have grown in sophistication, ICT have acquired the necessary flexibility to assist parliaments in their most important responsibilities: making laws, overseeing the executive and communicating with citizens.

While these developments are opening new avenues of cooperation among legislatures, the newest web technologies have already started to affect the traditional citizen-parliament relationship by enabling participation through the exchange of user generated content.

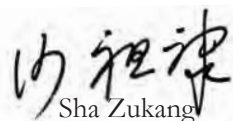
In today's "wired world" parliaments must be able to harness ICT to be more representative, transparent, accessible, accountable and effective in their many functions. As parliaments employ new technologies, they must also address many of the issues that are inherent in global efforts to achieve an equitable and inclusive information society that supports the democratic process. The ways in which parliaments make decisions on the use of ICT in their own environment will in fact influence the nature of the information society within their country, and their ability to contribute to it.

In preparing the World e-Parliament Report 2008, the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union have joined hands through the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament to address some of these issues.

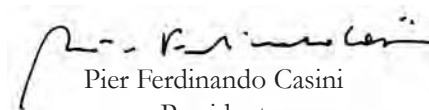
The World e-Parliament Report 2008 is the first of its kind and draws on information generously provided by more than one hundred assemblies from around the world. Its purpose is not to rank legislatures by e-parliament levels, but rather to stimulate an international debate on these topics by offering an overview of issues for a broad range of interested readers, at a time when inter-parliamentary cooperation is increasing.

The Report offers to parliaments an authoritative baseline so that they can conduct their own assessment on the use of ICT in their daily work, draw lessons from the different practices presented therein, and see how they can improve their processes. It also provides civil society, business and the academia with a useful instrument to evaluate the complexities of using ICT in such a multifaceted institution as parliament. Moreover, the Report may help the international community to make the right decision when considering supporting legislatures through capacity development initiatives and technical assistance.

The World e-Parliament Report 2008 is a tangible contribution of the United Nations, through its Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and the Inter-Parliamentary Union to the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit on the Information Society, bringing to it a unique and innovative parliamentary dimension from a much needed global perspective.



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