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Hon. FERNANDO NEGRÃO
Chairperson of the Committee
on Constitutional Affairs, Rights, Freedoms and Guarantees
Parliament of Portugal

6 October 2023
Brussels, Belgium

Honourable Chairperson,

On behalf of the INTER PARES | Parliaments in Partnership programme, I am delighted to invite you to join and speak at the **Joint Regional Workshop on Enhancing Parliaments' Role in Defending and Promoting Human Rights in Southern Africa**. Organized by INTER PARES in cooperation with the Southern Africa Development Community Parliamentary Forum (SADC PF), the workshop will take place in Lilongwe, Malawi on 8th and 9th November 2023.

As the Workshop is a hybrid event, we will also welcome virtual participation.

The workshop will bring together Members of the SADC PF Standing Committee on Democratisation, Governance and Human Rights, Members of the relevant committees of the EU Member States' Parliaments, experts of the field and representatives of the SADC PF Secretariat and International IDEA.

The Workshop will provide opportunity to:

- Enhance the knowledge of parliaments on innovative developments in the human rights protection and promotion through facilitating mutual learning between the national parliaments of EU Member States and SADC PF. This will include an introduction to the INTER PARES *Toolkit on Effective Human Rights Engagement for Parliamentary Bodies* and SADC PF's *Principles and Guidelines for Parliaments in the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in the SADC Region*.
- Explore ways for effective utilisation of these tools and create a platform for parliamentarians from the SADC region and the European Union to share examples of good practices, fostering a culture of cross-learning and benchmarking.
- Build commitment of parliaments to assume a key role in democratic strengthening globally.

We would like to invite you to speak at the **Discussion Panel One - Establishing and Strengthening Parliamentary Human Rights Committees**, which will take place on **Wednesday, 8 November 2023 between 12.00 to 13.00 CET**. The session will look into the



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mandate, functions, composition and working methods of human rights committees as well those resources that are critical for ensuring the effective functioning of the committees. Considering an extensive mandate and functions of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs, Rights, Freedoms and Guarantees of the Parliament of Portugal - including in conducting hearings, inquiries, engaging citizens in the process and other mechanisms - sharing of its experience and practices will greatly contribute to the workshop discussions.

We sincerely hope you will be able to accept this invitation. Please find attached the draft concept note and agenda for your reference.

The workshop is coordinated by Sophie Guruli, INTER PARES Senior Programme Officer. We will be at your disposal to respond to any questions or provide information related to the session and the overall programme.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Jonathan Murphy

Head of Programme

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Office of International IDEA to the EU

Avenue des Arts 41, 1040 Bruxelles

