



Inter-Parliamentary Union

For democracy. For everyone.

137TH INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION ASSEMBLY

14–18 OCTOBER 2017,
ST PETERSBURG



GENERAL INFORMATION

The 137th Assembly of Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and related meetings will be held at the *Tavrishesky Palace and Parliamentary Centre* in St Petersburg, Russian Federation, from 14 to 18 October 2017.

1. REGISTRATION

IPU Members and Observers are requested to register their delegates to the 137th IPU Assembly via the online registration portal to be found on the official IPU website at www.ipu.org.

2. LANGUAGES

English and French are the official languages of the IPU. The IPU Secretariat provides simultaneous interpretation in its four working languages – Arabic, English, French and Spanish – for the plenary sessions of the Assembly and for the sessions of the Governing Council and the four Standing Committees.

Four other interpretation channels have been reserved for Chinese, Japanese, Portuguese and Russian at sittings of the Assembly and the Governing Council, and for some sittings of the Standing Committees. These booths are provided free of charge and may be used by the interpretation teams for these languages.

Additional simultaneous interpretation booths may be requested directly from the Russian Parliament Secretariat for the 137th IPU Assembly at the address indicated in section 15(g) and no later than 17 July 2017. The related costs are to be borne by the requesting party. All such requests will be handled on a first-come-first-served basis.

3. HOTEL RESERVATIONS

Information on the official hotels for the 137th IPU Assembly can be found in the attached Hotels Brochure (Annex 1). Hotel reservations will be processed on a first-come-first-served basis. It is therefore recommended to reserve early and no later than *31 August 2017*.

Delegates should make their reservations online **directly with the hotels** according to the information on the accredited hotels available on the official Assembly website at www.ipu137russia.org or in the Hotels Brochure.

At the same time, please forward the Hotel Reservation Form (attached as Form-1) to the 137th IPU Assembly Secretariat at the Russian Parliament. This form can also be downloaded from the Assembly website at www.ipu137russia.org. It is to be completed and sent to the email address or fax number below:

Email: info@ipu137russia.org

Fax: +7 (812) 242 12 20

Information concerning hotel policies on reservations, cancellations and no-shows can be found both on the website of the hotel concerned and that of the 137th Assembly.

4. VISA REQUIREMENTS

To obtain a Russian visa, the applicant is required to submit in advance to a Russian diplomatic representation or consular office the following set of documents:

- **a valid passport** (diplomatic, official, ordinary). There should be no doubt as to the authenticity and ownership of the passport. The passport should not contain any unexplained erasures or corrections; photo without a seal or hologram; or ripped pages. The passport must be valid for at least 6 months beyond the intended departure date from Russia
- **visa application form**. The form must be completed and printed out from the link at the section marked "Consular Information – Visa" on the website of the relevant Russian embassy or consulate, or at www.visa.kdmid.ru
- **one photograph**, size 3.5 x 4.5 cm

- **health insurance.** It must cover the full period of the applicant's stay in the Russian Federation. This rule does not apply to the holders of diplomatic or official passports
- **an invitation** from the Council of States of the Russian Federation and/or the IPU Convocation sent to all IPU Members and Permanent Observers

The above items should be sent directly to a Russian embassy or consulate either personally or through a nominated representative. Note verbales should be attached from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or Parliament of the Assembly delegate's country of citizenship; the Assembly delegate's Ministry of Foreign Affairs or Parliament; or from the Assembly delegate's parent international organisation. In exceptional circumstances, visas may be issued directly at the consular offices of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the airports in Moscow and St Petersburg (in this case, visa requests should be sent to the Russian authorities at least two weeks in advance).

It is strongly recommended to refrain from using tourist agencies or passport/visa services to avoid any problems in the transmission of documents.

No consular or express processing fees apply for visa requests by Assembly delegates. Visas are issued within a maximum of three days, and in exceptional cases, may be issued on the same day that the relevant documents are submitted. Citizens who are subject to entry restrictions into the Russian Federation or those who are uncertain whether they are subject to any such restrictions (e.g., their name appearing on a sanctions list, administrative breaches, etc.) must submit to a Russian embassy or consulate the complete set of documents 14 days prior to the presumptive date of entry into Russia, so as to allow for enough time for the visa processing.

Citizens of visa-exempt countries who are seeking to enter the Russian Federation, but are uncertain whether any entry restrictions apply to them should also submit the complete set of documents to a Russian embassy or consulate *14 days prior to their presumptive date of entry*.

Citizens of countries which have concluded intergovernmental visa-free travel agreements with the Russian Federation are visa exempt. Information about the entry of foreign nationals into Russia is attached.

Please see the attached Diplomatic Missions of Assembly Member States in St Petersburg, and Moscow Diplomatic Missions of the Russian Federation Abroad (Annex 2).

Information on Russian Federation Entry Visa Requirements for Nationals of IPU Members (Annex 3) is attached.

Detailed instructions on visas on arrival are available on the Assembly website at www.ipu137russia.org.

5. CUSTOMS REGULATIONS

For information on customs formalities, go to the Russian Federation customs website: www.customs.ru.

6. ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

In order to facilitate the official welcome service, participants are requested to provide accurate arrival and departure information for their delegation, including arrival and departure dates and times, as well as flight details. The Arrival and Departure Form is attached as Form-2. It can also be downloaded from www.ipu137russia.org.

The Arrival and Departure Form must be completed and returned to the 137th IPU Assembly Secretariat at the Parliament of the Russian Federation no later than *30 September 2017*. Any changes thereto should also be communicated promptly to the 137th IPU Assembly Secretariat.

Delegates are required to present their passport to customs and immigration officials. The Airport Reception/Protocol Team will be on hand at Pulkovo International Airport and Moskovsky Railway Station in St Petersburg for any assistance.

There will be a welcome desk for all participants at Pulkovo International Airport and Moskovsky Railway station in St Petersburg to facilitate transit, arrival, departure and transfers between the airports and the hotels.

7. LUGGAGE TAGS AND STICKERS

Luggage tags and stickers are provided in order to facilitate the welcome process on arrival. Delegates are requested to ensure that each of their pieces of luggage is labelled with a tag and a sticker.

8. TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Transport to/from the official hotels will be provided at Pulkovo International Airport and Moskovsky Railway Station in St Petersburg. Transfers will also be provided for all official events for the duration of the Assembly.

9. INFORMATION DESKS

Information desks will be open from 10 to 18 October 2017 at Pulkovo International Airport and Moskovsky Railway Station in St Petersburg, as well as in the lobbies of the official hotels.

10. SECURITY

The host Parliament will take the necessary measures to ensure security and safety for Speakers of parliaments, delegates, invited guests and their belongings during the 137th IPU Assembly until departure from the Russian Federation.

The host Parliament will be responsible for security and safety at the 137th IPU Assembly venue, hotels, restaurants and other relevant sites.

Delegates are requested to display their 137th IPU Assembly ID badge **AT ALL TIMES**, both at the Assembly venue and at all official events to which they are invited.

Colour photographs with a resolution of 480x640 pixels or higher in JPEG (jpg) format, 300 dpi, for all individual participants **should be sent via email to: info@ipu137russia.org** by 1 September 2017. The file name must contain the name of the participant, as well as the participant's title and country name.

ID badges will be colour-coded to assist security personnel. Loss of the badge must be reported immediately to the Registration and Information Desk. Delegates are requested to present their badge for security inspection at the Conference Centre entrance.

11. MEDICAL SERVICE

First-aid services and medical staff will be available at the respective hotels and Assembly venues. All other medical services will be at the participants' own expense. Participants are advised to purchase adequate health insurance. Further information on medical services is available on the Assembly website at www.ipu137russia.org.

12. INSURANCE

Participants are advised to purchase their own all-risk insurance.

13. PRESS SERVICE

A Press Centre will be open at the Assembly venue throughout the event. It will correspond with national and international press, radio and television. The press service will be under the responsibility of the IPU Communications official and the Media Relations representative, nominated by the host Parliament.

Journalists wishing to cover the meetings are requested to follow the accreditation procedure provided by the Press Service in order to receive the necessary accreditation and identity badge.

14. ON-SITE SERVICES

The following services will be available at the Assembly venue:

- postage
- banking and currency exchange
- international telephone and fax, Internet and typing pool, restaurants and cafes; and
- travel centre

15. OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

a. Weather

The average temperature in St Petersburg in October varies between +2°C and +10°C (35°F...50°F); and it is often rainy.

b. Electricity

The power supply in Russia is 220 volts, 50/60 hertz. The sockets contain two round pins. If your electric devices operate at a lower voltage, or are equipped with different plug types, you will need a voltage converter/adaptor.

c. Time zone

The local time is GMT+3.

d. Currency and banking services

The official currency is the Russian rouble (RUB) consisting of banknotes and coins. The exchange rate is approximately 1 US dollar (USD) = 60 RUB.

Money can be exchanged at banks or currency exchange bureaus.

Most major credit cards are widely accepted. However, it is advisable to carry cash and to ask if credit cards are accepted.

e. Emergency telephone numbers

IPU Assembly Secretariat	+7 (812) 406 7470
Police	112 (mobile), 102 (fixed phone)
Fire Brigade	112 (mobile), 101 (fixed phone)
Ambulance / First Aid	112 (mobile), 103 (fixed phone)

f. Mobile phones

The Russian mobile network is one of the best in the world. It is GSM-compatible and is compatible with most mobile telephones.

Local SIM cards are available for purchase.

g. Mail and messages

Delegates can have messages sent to:

Telephone	+7 (812) 406 7470
Fax	+7 495 697 8940
Email	info@ipu137russia.org

The message should clearly indicate the name of the addressee, as well as the Member Parliament / National Group or Organisation, as indicated below:

- Name (delegate's name)
- Delegation of (country / organisation)

Urgent messages may also be transmitted by phone or fax.

Delegates' mail and messages will be placed in their respective pigeonholes, which are located at the Tavrishesky Palace.

16. RECEPTIONS AND SOCIAL EVENTS

I. Reception for the IPU Executive Committee

Host	Chairperson of the Council of the Federation
Date	12 October 2017
Venue	Tavrishesky Palace

II. Inaugural Ceremony and Reception

Host	Chairperson of the Council of the Federation
Date	14 October 2017
Venue	ExpoForum

III. Reception in honour of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians

Host	Chairperson of the Council of the Federation or Chair of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians
Date	15 October 2017
Venue	Marble Palace

IV. Embassy Night

Date	16 October 2017
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V. Cultural Evening (Cultural Exchange Gala)

Host	Chairperson of the Council of the Federation
Date	17 October 2017
Venue	Mariinsky Theatre

VI. Reception

Host	Governor of St Petersburg or Chairperson of the Council of the Federation, heads of delegations
Date	18 October 2017
Venue	Yusupovsky Palace

17. PROGRAMME FOR ACCOMPANYING PERSONS AND GUESTS

The host Parliament will arrange a city tour, which will include visits to cultural and historical sites for accompanying persons.