Thursday, 18 September 2025
A summary of the day's events

The day opened with reflections from delegates, who emphasised the growing importance of technology and Artificial Intelligence (AI) in strengthening citizen engagement, oversight, and access to information. Participants also noted the value of global collaboration in co-creating ideas and reflected on the Pan-African Parliament's (PAP) structure, stressing the need for PAP to move beyond non-binding outcomes to achieve its founding vision.

Group discussions highlighted challenges in parliamentary culture which included: barriers to access, and underlined the importance of structured dialogue, annual thematic engagements, and digital dashboards to make Parliaments more open to civil society. Somalia's delegation expressed hope that PAP's openness to civil society could be replicated in their own country.

The first formal panel focused on tools for parliamentary monitoring. Rashaad Ali, from PMG, showcased their extensive repository of Parliamentary information and the role of monitors in strengthening oversight, some of whom have gone on to become MPs. Naahila Parbhoo, of the Organisation Undoing Tax Abuse (OUTA), introduced Parlimeter; designed to enhance active citizenry, while Kenya's Gitungo Wamere demonstrated Mzalendo Trust's civic tech tools, including Dokeza for bill annotations and a promise tracker for electoral accountability. Zimbabwe's Munyaridzi Dodo presented Magamba Network's creative approaches, from satire and festivals to WhatsApp chatbots, rural digital kiosks, and free open-source tools that lower barriers to engagement, particularly for young people. These initiatives were praised for pushing monitoring "to another scale", and for their potential to generate gender-informed data.

The Open Parliament Index (OPI) was pre-released, measuring transparency, civic participation, and accountability across African parliaments using 48 indicators. The index, now expanded from West Africa to include Eastern and Southern Africa, and provided comparative data and fosters peer learning between Parliaments and Civil Society Office (CSOs).

Finally, delegates deliberated on the governance and structure of the African Parliamentary Monitoring Organisation Movement (APMOM). The regulatory framework was largely adopted, with agreements to formalise regional and continental networks, establish working documents, and select a future conference host from volunteer countries. Candidate host countries for the upcoming conference include Benin, Senegal, Zambia, Madagascar, Mozambique, and Seychelles. Closing remarks emphasised collaboration, innovation, and the formalisation of structures to strengthen CSO and parliament relations going forward.