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## IMPLEMENTATION OF THE IPU STRATEGY FOR 2012-2017

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 9: IMPROVE OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT, GOVERNANCE AND INTERNAL OVERSIGHT

#### GENDER MAINSTREAMING AT IPU

Document adopted by the IPU Governing Council at its 193<sup>rd</sup> session  
(Geneva, 9 October 2013)

The current document aims to outline the IPU's general position on and commitment to gender-mainstreaming and identify avenues for achieving set objectives. It sets out what the IPU wants to achieve and how it intends to do so on a strategic level. The document will guide the Organization in consolidating, coordinating and developing its action to achieve gender equality. It may also serve to support Member Parliaments' efforts to mainstream gender into their own work.

This document is to be supplemented by a more detailed plan of action, which will identify clear roles, targets and activities.

#### The IPU's longstanding commitment to gender equality

1. The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) recognizes gender equality<sup>1</sup> as a key component of democracy. In its 1997 Universal Declaration on Democracy, the IPU highlights the direct link between democracy and the balanced participation of men and women in politics, and in particular in parliament. The IPU has consistently championed the need for democracy to include half of the world's population and respond to the needs of both men and women.<sup>2</sup> Only then can democracy be considered truly representative and sustainable.
2. The advancement of gender equality is one of the key objectives set out in the IPU Strategy for 2012-2017, adopted in 2011. Through this Strategy, the Organization demonstrates its commitment to achieving the equal participation of men and women in politics and upholding respect for women's rights and gender equality. In particular, the IPU aims to:
  - (i) increase in the number of women in parliament worldwide;
  - (ii) support and enhance women parliamentarians' contribution to the work of parliament; and
  - (iii) strengthen parliament's capacity to mainstream gender equality into its work and defend women's rights issues.

<sup>1</sup> See Annex 1 for glossary of terms.

<sup>2</sup> See Annex 2 for IPU documents and resolutions on gender equality.

3. The IPU recognizes that the achievement of gender equality requires dual action: (1) addressing discrimination against women and supporting women's empowerment, which the IPU achieves through its Gender Partnership Programme; and (2) ensuring that the objective of gender equality is taken into account throughout the Organization and its work. The IPU therefore works specifically for women's political empowerment and rights, and mainstreams gender equality into its work.

#### **Gender mainstreaming: Definition and overall goal**

4. Complementing the work of the Gender Partnership Programme and recognizing gender equality as a cross-cutting issue, the IPU works to promote gender mainstreaming across all areas of its work. The IPU Strategy provides a mandate for gender mainstreaming at the IPU, not only as a means through which to achieve gender equality, but also to strengthen the work of the IPU as a more effective instrument of parliamentary cooperation.
5. The IPU recognizes that gender mainstreaming is a process of assessing and taking into account the implications for women and men of any planned action – including legislation, policies or programmes – at all levels and in all spheres. The concept is understood to encompass strategies that put gender issues at the centre of broad policy and programme decisions, institutional structures and resource allocation.
6. The overall goal of mainstreaming gender at the IPU is to transform the Organization into a model for gender equality. That means:
  - An organization that achieves gender equality in participation, within its structures, bodies and Secretariat at all levels;
  - An organization that contributes to gender equality in all of its outputs;
  - An organization that has gender-sensitive policies; and
  - An organization that has a gender-sensitive membership and Secretariat.

#### **Strategy to mainstream gender**

7. To achieve this overall goal, the IPU will pursue the following objectives:

##### **Objective 1: Framework: Institutionalize gender equality at the IPU**

- Monitor and review the Statutes and Rules, as well as other institutional documents, including the budget, to ensure that gender equality is adequately included and that gender mainstreaming is facilitated.
- Create a gender-sensitive work environment.
- Monitor and review human resource practices and policies to align them with the gender needs and interests of both men and women.

##### **Objective 2: Actors: Promote equality in representation and participation, and build capacity**

- Monitor and review the representation and participation of IPU Members and Secretariat staff from a gender perspective.
- Adopt measures to achieve gender equality in representation and participation at all levels.
- Improve the knowledge and competencies of Members and Secretariat staff, including management, on gender equality, gender-sensitive parliaments and gender mainstreaming.

##### **Objective 3: Methods and procedures: Develop mechanisms for gender mainstreaming**

- Develop processes to mainstream gender equality, including on-going consultations with women and men to include their perspectives in the design and implementation of IPU programmes and projects.

- Develop tools to facilitate gender mainstreaming.
  - Set annual gender equality targets and objectives in all sectors of the IPU's work and develop gender indicators
  - Develop effective monitoring and reporting mechanisms for the IPU's work and programmes to determine its contribution to greater gender equality.
8. The building blocks for mainstreaming gender will include:
- Gender analysis: The IPU will carry out gender assessments prior to the development and implementation of projects and activities. It will also adopt a systematic approach to examining the different impacts of policies, programmes and legislation on women and men.
  - Gender planning: The IPU will develop a plan for incorporating the knowledge gained through gender analysis into all aspects, including its bodies, structures and policies, its Secretariat, and its programmes.
  - Gender-specific action: The IPU will take action to redress gender-based inequalities and discrimination identified through gender analysis.
  - Gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation: The IPU will develop a process for reviewing the extent to which its bodies, structures and policies, its Secretariat and its programs are meeting gender equality targets.
  - Capacity-building: The IPU will promote the understanding of gender mainstreaming and gender concepts among staff and management, and develop specialized knowledge on gender-related topics among key staff.
  - Knowledge-sharing: The IPU will collect and organize data and subsequently share this knowledge with a wider audience and its partners.

#### **Implementation, monitoring and evaluation**

9. This document will apply to all sectors and aspects of the IPU's work, including Assembly-related work, programme work, international outreach and relations work, communications and administration.
10. The IPU will develop a plan of action with specific targets, timeframes and budgets to implement gender mainstreaming at the IPU. The plan of action will be presented at the 130<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly and will be regularly reviewed and updated. The IPU will also collect relevant baseline data to set appropriate targets and indicators and to monitor progress.
11. The Secretary General will be responsible for the implementation of gender mainstreaming at the IPU, as set out in this document and the plan of action, and will report annually on the status of implementation to the Executive Committee and Member Parliaments. The Secretary General will benefit from the support of senior management and the Gender Partnership Programme.
12. The Gender Partnership Group will be tasked with monitoring and evaluating progress in consultation with the Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians.

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## Annex 1

### Glossary of terms\*

- **Gender:** the social attributes associated with being male and female and the relationships between women, men, girls and boys. These attributes and relationships are socially constructed. The concept of gender also includes expectations about the characteristics, aptitudes and likely behaviours of both women and men, and when applied to social analysis, reveals socially constructed roles. Sex and gender do not mean the same thing. While sex refers to biological differences, gender refers to social differences, which can be modified since gender identity, roles and relations are determined by society.
- **Equality between women and men or gender equality:** the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men.
- **Gender mainstreaming:** the process of assessing and taking into account the implications for women and men of any planned action – including legislation, policies or programmes – at all levels and in all spheres. The concept is understood as strategies that put gender issues at the centre of broad policy and programme decisions, institutional structures and resource allocation. Mainstreaming gender equality into the work of parliament should contribute to effective implementation and oversight of policies that address the needs and interests of both men and women.
- **Gender analysis:** a systematic way of looking at the different impacts of development, policies, programs and legislation on women and men that entails, first and foremost, collecting sex-disaggregated data and gender-sensitive information about the population concerned. Gender analysis can also include the examination of the multiple ways in which women and men, as social actors, engage in strategies to transform existing roles, relationships, and processes in their own interest and in the interest of others.
- **Gender-sensitive parliament:** a parliament that responds to the needs and interests of both men and women in its structures, operations, methods and in its work. Gender-sensitive parliaments remove the barriers to women's full participation and offer a positive example or model to society at large.
- **Gender-sensitive budgeting:** an approach that aims to mainstream gender in economic policy-making and seeks to transform the entire budgetary process. Gender budgeting refers not only to expenditures earmarked for women, but also to an analysis of the entire budget from a gender perspective, including security, health, education, public works, etc. to ensure that the allocations and resulting impacts respond to the needs of both women and men.

## Annex 2

### The IPU's commitment to achieving gender equality: Documents and resolutions

The IPU has reiterated its commitment to the achievement of gender equality in the following documents:

- Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments (adopted unanimously by the 127<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly (Quebec City, October 2012)
- Declaration adopted by the 3<sup>rd</sup> World Conference of Speakers of Parliament (Geneva, July 2010)
- IPU Strategy for 2012 -2017

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\* Definitions taken from UN/OSAGI, UNDP and UNESCO as quoted in UNDP, Quick Entry Points to Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality in Democratic Governance Clusters, New York, 2007; UN INSTRAW, Glossary of gender-related terms and concepts; IPU, Equality in Politics: A Survey of Women and Men in Parliaments, Geneva, 2008; and IPU, Gender-sensitive Parliaments: A Global Review of Good Practice, Geneva, 2011.

- Plan of Action to correct present imbalances in the participation of men and women in political life (Paris, March 1994).

and resolutions:

- "How parliaments can and must promote effective ways of combating violence against women in all fields" (Nairobi, May 2006)
- "Beijing + 10: An evaluation from a parliamentary perspective" (Geneva, October 2004)
- "Education and culture as essential factors in promoting the participation of men and women in political life and as prerequisites for the development of peoples" (Havana, April 2001)
- "Promoting greater respect and protection of human rights in general and in particular for women and children" (Beijing, September 1996)
- "Parliamentary action for women's access to and participation in decision-making structures aimed at achieving true equality for women" (Madrid, April 1995).