



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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137th IPU Assembly

St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, 14–18 October 2017



26th SESSION OF THE FORUM OF WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS

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FEM/26/A.1-Rev.1

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ITEM 3 - Gender activities

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FEM/26/3(c)-Inf.1 - IPU cooperation with the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

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PARITY DEBATE - Holding the purse strings: Exercising oversight for the common good

Information note

E



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137th IPU Assembly

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FORUM OF WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS 26th SESSION

St. Petersburg, Saturday, 14 October 2017
(10.30 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 2.30 to 5.30 p.m.)

Forum of Women Parliamentarians
Agenda

FEM/26/A.1-Rev.1
11 October 2017

I. MEETING SCHEDULE AND SPEAKING ARRANGEMENTS

The 26th session of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians will be held in Dumsky Hall (ground floor), Tavrishesky Palace in St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, on Saturday, 14 October 2017, from 10.30 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 2.30 to 5.30 p.m.

The Session is meant to elicit spontaneous and active debate. Speaking time may not exceed three minutes. There will be no formal list of speakers. In plenary, participants will be able to request the floor by completing the form to be found on the desks.

II. ANNOTATED PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Election of the President of the 26th session of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians

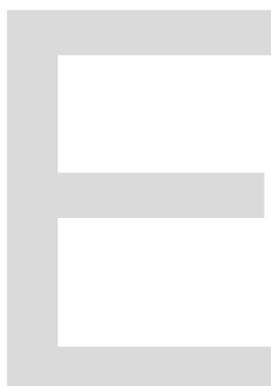
Welcome remarks

2. Adoption of the agenda

3. Gender activities

- (a) Report of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians
Participants will be briefed about the Bureau's deliberations at its sessions in Dhaka on 1 April 2017 and in Saint Petersburg on 14 October 2017.
- (b) Report of the Gender Partnership Group
Participants find out about the work and recommendations of the Group.
- (c) Update on recent IPU activity on gender equality
Participants will be briefed about the IPU's recent activity on gender equality.
- (d) Celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Declaration on Democracy.

The discussion will conclude by 11.30 a.m.



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4. **Contributing to the work of the 137th Assembly from a gender perspective**

Participants will be invited to discuss the following item on the agenda of the 137th Assembly:

- Sharing our diversity: The 20th anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Democracy (*Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights*)

Participants will split into two groups to discuss the following sub-themes:

Group 1: How can technology be at the service of democracy and gender equality?
Challenges and opportunities

The participants will be invited to discuss how to ensure that the whole population can enjoy the benefits that the Internet can bring to economic, social, cultural and environmental life. They will also share good practices developed to protect both freedom of speech and the right to physical and psychological integrity. They will discuss in particular means to stop online harassment and cyber-violence that targets women and girls as well as measures to combat trafficking in persons perpetrated through the Internet. The participants will also be invited to identify means and strategies to promote and increase the public participation of women and girls by using online means and tools.

Group 2: Educating for democracy and gender equality at all steps of the ladder: family, community and State

The participants will be invited to discuss how democratic values and principles can be furthered from generation to generation, focusing in particular on gender equality values and practices. They will share good practices experienced in education programmes on democracy in school curricula. They will also identify ways to anchor democratic and gender equality principles and values in family education. They will discuss in particular how to promote participation and empowerment in the learning experience of girls.

On the recommendation of its Bureau, the Forum will designate a chairperson and a rapporteur for each group. They will agree on recommendations that the rapporteurs will submit to the Forum of Women Parliamentarians at its afternoon sitting.

Each group will meet from 11.30 a.m. to 1p.m.

The Forum will resume its work at 2:30 p.m.

5. **Panel discussion Marking the fifth anniversary of the Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments**

A gender-sensitive parliament is one that responds to the needs and interests of both men and women in its structures, operations, methods and work. It is a parliament that embodies gender equality and that delivers on it.

The Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive parliaments was adopted by IPU Members at the 127th Assembly in Quebec, in 2012. As a tool to support parliaments in taking action to become more gender-sensitive institutions, the Plan of Action proposed concrete solutions to situations common to all countries while offering a wide range of options responding to individual situations.

5 years after the adoption of the Plan of Action, many parliaments have adopted measures to further equal representation of men and women on parliamentary committee membership, to open day care centers for members and staff's children or to enhance capacities to better address gender equality issues.

What has your Parliament done?

Participants in the Panel discussion are invited to share information on and lessons learned from advancements made and challenges encountered by their parliaments to enhance their gender sensitivity and their ability to deliver on gender equality.

The panel discussion will conclude by 4 p.m.

6. Hearing of the candidates for the post of IPU President

The participants will have an opportunity to hear the candidates for the post of IPU President. The hearing will begin at 4 pm.

7. Elections to the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians

The Forum will be called upon to fill the vacant seats on the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians. There are two vacancies: one regional representative each for Eurasia and the Twelve Plus groups. Elections will be held on the basis of candidatures submitted by those geopolitical groups.

8. Reports of the discussion group rapporteurs

The discussion group rapporteurs will present their reports. The Forum will then ask them to consult with the President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians and of the President of the Forum's 26th Session, and prepare amendments to be presented during the debate of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights (scheduled for Sunday 15 October from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 2:30 to 6:30 p.m.).

9. Venue and date of the 27th session of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians

The Forum of Women Parliamentarians will host a Parity Debate on the theme "**Holding the purse strings: Exercising oversight for the common good**". The Parity Debate will take place on Tuesday, 17 October 2017 from 11.00 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Dumsky Hall (ground floor), Tavrichesky Palace. It is open to all members of delegations, both male and female.



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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137th IPU Assembly

St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, 14–18 October 2017



Forum of Women Parliamentarians
Item 1

FEM/26/1-Inf.1
30 September 2017

Election of the President of the Meeting

Ms. Galina Karelova Curriculum Vitae

Born on 29 June 1950.

Education

D.Sc. in Sociology, PhD in Economics

Graduate of the Ural Polytechnic Institute named after S.M.Kirov (1972);

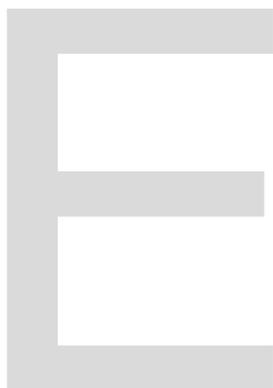
Postgraduate studies at the Ural Polytechnic Institute named after S.M.Kirov (1978).

Present positions:

- Deputy Chairperson of the Council of the Federation, Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation;
- Member of the Council of Federation Committee on Social Policy;
- Representative of the executive state body of the Voronezh Region.

Former positions:

- 1992 – 1993: Deputy Chairperson of the Sverdlovsk Regional Council of People's Deputies;
- 1994 – 1996: Member of the Council of the Federation of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation;
- 1996 – 1997: Deputy of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation;
- 1997 – 2003: Deputy, First Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Development of the Russian Federation;
- 2003 – 2004: Deputy Chairperson (Deputy Prime Minister) of the Government of the Russian Federation;
- 2004: First Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Development of the Russian Federation;
- 2004 – 2007: Head of the Social Insurance Fund of the Russian Federation;
- 2007 – 2014: Deputy of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation



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137th IPU Assembly

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Forum of Women Parliamentarians
Item 3

FEM/26/3(c)-Inf.1
15 August 2017

GENDER ACTIVITIES

(c) Update on recent IPU activity on gender equality

IPU cooperation with the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

I. The IPU and the CEDAW Committee

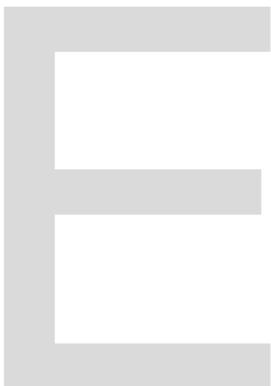
1. The IPU plays an active role in promoting the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol within the parliamentary community.

2. As part of its cooperation with the CEDAW Committee (the Committee), the IPU Secretariat urges parliamentarians to keep track of whether their countries have ratified the CEDAW Convention and Optional Protocol as well as whether their countries may have issued any reservations. (This information is available at <http://indicators.ohchr.org/>; it is broken down by country and includes entries for any declarations or reservations made).

II. IPU involvement in the CEDAW reporting process

3. The Convention is an important benchmark for gender equality and comprehensive in scope. The IPU therefore endeavours to ensure that parliaments and their members provide effective oversight of the Convention and contribute to its full implementation. The IPU has consistently argued for more parliamentary involvement in the Convention's reporting obligations, particularly in the work required to follow up on the concluding observations of the Committee.

4. At each Committee session, the IPU presents a report on what it has done to promote respect for and implementation of the Convention, including disseminating information about the role played by parliaments in the reporting process. This is partly done by inviting parliaments from the countries whose periodic reports are to be reviewed at the next Committee session to fill in a questionnaire. The questions cover parliamentary involvement in the reporting process and in the follow-up to the Committee's concluding observations.



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5. The following is the list of State parties reporting to the CEDAW Committee in 2017 and 2018:

71st Session (22 October – 16 November 2018)

- Bahamas, Congo, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mauritius, Nepal, Samoa, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Detailed information is available at
http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/SessionDetails1.aspx?SessionID=1172&Lang=en

70th Session (2 – 20 July 2018)

- Australia, Cyprus, Liechtenstein, Mexico, New Zealand, State of Palestine, Turkmenistan

Detailed information is available at
http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/SessionDetails1.aspx?SessionID=1171&Lang=en

69th Session (19 February – 9 March 2018)

- Chile, Fiji, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Marshall Islands, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Suriname

Detailed information is available at
http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/SessionDetails1.aspx?SessionID=1157&Lang=en

68th Session (23 October – 17 November 2017)

- Burkina Faso, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Guatemala, Israel, Kenya, Kuwait, Monaco, Nauru, Norway, Oman, Paraguay, Singapore

Detailed information is available at
http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/SessionDetails1.aspx?SessionID=1079&Lang=en

67th Session (3-21 July 2017)

- Barbados, Costa Rica, Italy, Montenegro, Niger, Nigeria, Romania, Thailand

Detailed information is available at
http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/SessionDetails1.aspx?SessionID=1078&Lang=en

66th Session (13 February 3 March 2017)

- El Salvador, Germany, Ireland, Jordan, Micronesia (Federated States of), Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Ukraine

Detailed information is available at
http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/SessionDetails1.aspx?SessionID=1071&Lang=en

III. The CEDAW and parliaments

6. At its 41st session (June-July 2008), the Committee adopted a standard paragraph on parliaments. It was to be added into its concluding observations in order to draw the attention of State parties to the importance of involving parliaments not only in the reporting process under article 18 of the Convention but also in the implementation of all the provisions of the Convention. At its 45th session (January—February 2010), the Committee issued a statement on its relationship with parliamentarians that aimed to clarify and strengthen the role of national parliaments vis-à-vis the Convention. The note is also aimed at clarifying the relationship between the Committee and the IPU. (See the annex for the text of the statement).

ANNEX

Statement adopted by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women

National parliaments and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

1. At its forty-first session, the Committee adopted a standard paragraph on “Parliament” in its concluding observations in order to draw to the attention of State parties, the importance of involving its parliament in the reporting process under article 18 of the Convention and the implementation of all the provisions of the Convention.

2. The aim of the present note is to clarify and strengthen the role of national parliaments vis-à-vis the Convention. The note is also aimed at clarifying the relationship between the Committee and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU).

I. Role of Parliaments in the process of ratification of the Convention and its Optional Protocol and withdrawal of reservations

3. The procedure for ratification/accession to international instruments as well as the withdrawal of reservations varies from State to State. In most States, approval by Parliament is necessary before the deposit of the instrument of ratification to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Similarly, decisions concerning reservations as well as their withdrawals are also taken in Parliament. This Parliamentary procedure also applies to the Convention and its Optional Protocol. Consequently, Parliaments have a strategic role to play with respect to the ratification/accession of the Convention and its Optional Protocol. As the Convention and its Protocol have not attained universal ratification, Parliament can play a significant role in encouraging their State in becoming a party to the Convention and its Protocol. Similarly, as the Convention is the treaty body with the largest number of reservations, Parliament can also play a significant role in their withdrawal.

II. Parliaments and the implementation of the Convention

4. Parliaments and their members have a vital role to play in ensuring respect for the principles enunciated in the Convention and they have a wide range of tools at their disposal to do so. In discharging their traditional duty of overseeing the work of Government, Parliament can ensure that States parties comply fully with the provisions of the Convention. Parliaments and their members have a fundamental responsibility in their role of “constituency”, which is the basis of the legal system. The functions of Parliaments — notably legislative and budgetary functions and oversight of the executive branch of the Government — are at the heart of the implementation of the principles and rights enshrined in the Convention. The implementation of the Convention includes the incorporation of the principle of non-discrimination against women in national legislation, including in the Constitution of the State party. It also imposes an obligation on the State Party to condemn discrimination against women, to abolish all discriminatory laws and to adopt, whenever appropriate, temporary special measures to accelerate de facto equality between women and men. It also obligates States Parties to adopt appropriate policies and establish mechanisms aimed at promoting equality between sexes. As such, Parliamentarians can take active measures to ensure that national laws, policies, actions, programmes and budget reflect the principles and obligations in the Convention.

The budgetary functions and the monitoring of governmental action are vital for a better implementation of laws relating to equality between sexes, through the approval of adequate budgets and a regular oversight of the impact of governmental measures with respect to the condition of women.

Parliament, as an organ representing the population as a whole, reflects the diversity of opinion and interests in the country by reason of its privileged access to the whole population. As such, Parliamentarians can be key players in raising awareness of the Convention and its Protocol to the population at large and to women in particular.

III. Role of Parliaments in the drafting of reports and follow-up to the concluding observations of the Committee

5. States are not legally obliged to involve Parliaments in the drafting of reports under article 18, as it is the State which has the primary responsibility of doing so. However, as the Convention is binding on all branches of Government, it is desirable that States parties involve Parliament in the reporting process under Article 18 of the Convention, the implementation of the Convention and the follow up to the concluding observations of the Committee. States parties are strongly encouraged to establish an appropriate mechanism to facilitate collaboration between Parliament and Government with regard to the input of its Parliament in the elaboration of reports, and its role in following up on the concluding observations of the Committee. The monitoring role of Parliament with respect to the compliance by the State of its international obligations, could considerably enhance the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee.

6. Consequently, it is necessary for States parties to urge Parliament, many of which now have some structures in place, such as Parliamentary Committees focusing on human rights including gender equality, to take an active part in the work of the Committee in general, as well as in the implementation of its provisions in their own country.

IV. Action of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and its relationship with the Committee

7. IPU has always strived to bring a parliamentary dimension to international cooperation and the work of the Committee. It is playing a key role in disseminating the Convention and its Optional Protocol among parliamentarians. During its conferences and the sessions of its Assembly, the organization regularly invites States that have not ratified the Convention and its Optional Protocol to do so. It also encourages States parties that have made reservations to the Convention to withdraw them and to fulfil their obligations. The Secretary- General of IPU writes to the presidents of the legislative assemblies to inform them about the upcoming consideration of the report of their country by the Committee. Once the Committee's concluding observations are available, a letter is sent to the parliament concerned to bring to its attention the recommendations adopted. In 2003 IPU, with the assistance of the Division for the Advancement of Women, published a practical guide for the use of parliamentarians on the Convention and its Optional Protocol. Every year, IPU organizes briefings on the Convention, addressed to women parliamentarians in particular. IPU also provides, in collaboration with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, technical assistance programmes in order to build the capacities of parliaments and help them fulfil their role regarding the implementation of Convention and its Optional Protocol. Since 2006, IPU also provides Committee with country specific information including data on the political participation of women in Parliament and in Government as well as at the local level with regard to States whose reports are under consideration by the Committee.

V. Recommendations

8. The Committee recommends that States parties ensure the full participation of Parliament and its members in the reporting process and the full implementation of the Convention and its Protocol.

9. Given the key role of Parliament, the Committee recommends that States parties ensure that Parliamentarians, as representatives of the people, be made aware and informed of the Committee's work so that they may take it into account in their legislative functions and relay it to their constituencies and to the public at large.

10. The Committee recommends that State parties ensure that all relevant information is made available to Parliamentarians on a regular basis through appropriate Parliamentary support services.

11. The Committee further recommends that information received by Government on its obligations as a State party and other matters of concern are brought to the attention of Parliamentarians.

12. The Committee recommends that whenever members of the Committee are invited to visit a State party, it is desirable that the State party organize meetings with Parliamentarians.

13. The Committee encourages States parties to include in their reports, information on all parliamentary initiatives in the elaboration of laws in order to ensure full incorporation of CEDAW provisions into domestic legislation.
14. The Committee reiterates the importance of strengthening the national machinery dedicated to equality at the level of Parliament, such as Commissions on gender equality, missions and information on inquiries relating to violence against women, and improvement of legislation on equality between women and men.
15. The Committee draws the attention of States parties to the fact that institutional linkages and informal relations with civil society and women's organizations are fundamental to the promotion of women's rights by the Parliament.
16. The Committee encourages States parties to include in their delegation before the Committee for the examination of their report, members of Parliament as well as a special advisor in charge of relations between the Government and the Parliament in order to improve the visibility of parliamentary responsibilities.
17. The Committee calls on State parties to evaluate its collaboration with its national Parliament and other Parliaments and to take appropriate measures to enhance cooperation between Parliaments in order to exchange best practices on the implementation of the Convention.



Inter-Parliamentary Union

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137th IPU Assembly

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Governing Council
Item 10

CL/2017/10(d)-R.1
10 August 2017

Reports on recent IPU specialized meetings

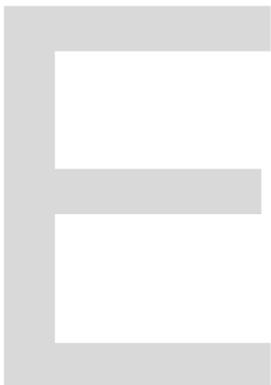
**(d) Regional Conference on violence against women and girls for
Central and Eastern Europe on *Making laws work
to end violence against women and girls***

Bucharest (Romania), 12-14 June 2017

The Regional Conference took place in Bucharest from 12 to 14 June 2017. It provided a platform for more than 150 members of parliaments, non-governmental organizations and government officials from 25 countries, as well as members of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, to share best practices in implementing laws on violence against women and girls. The conference was jointly organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the Romanian Chamber of Deputies, Global Rights for Women, and Vital Voices, with the support of the Senate of Romania.

Discussions focused on causes and consequences of domestic violence and sexual violence; international and regional frameworks on ending violence against women and girls; coordination of essential services for victims and accountability for offenders. The conference also included two multi-session learning tracks where the participants had an opportunity for in-depth sharing of good examples in the civil and criminal justice system, as well as in multi-sectoral collaboration in implementing laws on violence against women and girls. The Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) was at the centre of discussions on best practices as it offers concrete guidelines for combating violence against women, includes the requirement of a multi-sectoral approach and also recognizes and formally invites parliaments to participate in monitoring measures taken to implement its provisions.

The conference was successful in laying the foundation for wider cooperation among all those involved in preventing and eliminating violence against women and girls. The participants adopted an outcome document (see [Annex](#)) which highlights several strategies on how to ensure effective implementation of laws and policies to ensure that women and girls can live free from gender-based violence. Those strategies include: multisectoral collaboration for a strong community-coordinated response; a focus on victims in terms of providing them with a safe space to report violence, an array of services geared to their needs, and tools to counter intimidation; ensuring that the criminal justice system bears the burden of holding abusers accountable; educating children on human rights and gender equality; and, engaging men in this movement of change.



#IPU137



Making laws work to end violence against women and girls

Bucharest (Romania), 12-14 June 2017

Regional Conference for Central and Eastern Europe jointly organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the Romanian Chamber of Deputies, Global Rights for Women and Vital Voices, with the support of the Senate of Romania

OUTCOME DOCUMENT

Presented by Ms. Rozália-Ibolya Biró
Member of the Chamber of Deputies of Romania, Chairperson of the Committee on Foreign Policy, Rapporteur of the Regional Conference

We, members of parliament, non-governmental organization representatives and government officials from Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Tajikistan, Turkey and Ukraine, as well as members of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, have gathered in Bucharest, Romania, from 12 to 14 June 2017 for the Regional Conference on *Making laws work to end violence against women and girls*. The conference was jointly organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the Romanian Chamber of Deputies, Global Rights for Women, and Vital Voices, with the support of the Senate of Romania.

We come from different countries, from different backgrounds, and work in different sectors, but we all share the common objective of enabling women to live free from violence. We recognize the critical role of parliaments, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) advocating for legal reform and providing support to survivors, and legal government officials - including law enforcement officials, prosecutors and judges - in the eradication of violence against women and girls (VAWG) and greatly welcome this regional conference that has brought us together for the first time.

A key methodology of the conference was for participants to work in delegations composed of parliamentarians, representatives of NGOs and government officials from their countries. Each delegation formulated action plans to apply the knowledge gained at the conference when they return to their respective countries. In this way, we hope that the conference will have a concrete, lasting impact.

Violence against women is a serious human rights violation. It occurs in the broader context of gender-based discrimination and unequal power relations between men and women in both the public and private spheres. Violence against women and girls not only deprives them of their dignity and integrity, but it also prevents them from realizing their full potential for themselves and for society. Thirty-five per cent of women worldwide have experienced physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence. No country is free from this violence.

We believe that Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Agenda - *Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls* – which includes the elimination of violence against women as a target, should be addressed not only as a goal in itself, but also as a key enabler for achieving all the SDGs. We are fully committed to ensure effective implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in our respective countries.

Furthermore, international and regional human rights instruments exist that recognize governments' obligation to protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all women and girls so as to ensure that they are free from violence. We applauded the fact that all countries in our region have ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and that most have signed and ratified the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. We urged those that have not yet done so to deposit their instruments of ratification. We encouraged parliaments and civil society organizations to actively engage in monitoring the implementation of these conventions in their respective countries.

We recognized and commended the very important achievements made in the region towards legal and policy reforms. Valuable efforts have been made to bring national legislation in line with international human rights instruments; however, passing laws and developing policies is not enough. Their implementation remains the key challenge. Without it, these laws and policies will not fulfil their intended objective of preventing violence, protecting and support victims, and holding perpetrators accountable.

The regional conference afforded an opportunity to discuss ways to overcome gaps and challenges in our work, to inspire and empower each other and move towards common policies to improve the systems' response to VAWG in our countries.

Each one of us is an essential component of the drive to improve the implementation of laws and policies aimed at eradicating VAWG. However, real progress in achieving the goals of ensuring survivors' safety, strengthening offenders' accountability and kindling in the minds of all members of the community intolerance for violence against women and girls can only result from our combined efforts. This regional conference has provided a valuable springboard for increasing this inter-sectoral collaboration, dialogue and partnership among us.

Our debates focused on: 1) The fundamentals of domestic violence and sexual violence; 2) International and regional frameworks on ending violence against women and girls; 3) Coordination of essential services for victims and accountability for offenders. The conference also included two multi-session learning tracks where we had an opportunity for in-depth sharing of good practices in the civil and criminal justice system, as well as in multi-sectoral collaboration in implementing laws on violence against women and girls.

There is no one solution to putting an end to violence against women. It is within the reach of parliaments, NGOs and government officials to develop key strategies and responses. The following is by no means an exhaustive summary of the range of experiences and detailed practices that were examined during the regional conference. Rather, it aims to highlight the main strategies and elements that can contribute to achieving progress.

1. The lack of efficient cooperation between actors, the tendency to blame victims for violence and the insufficient understanding of the constant danger and oppression they face when trying to escape their abusers were some of the issues that we addressed. We need to develop multi-sectoral coordination, collaboration and partnership for a strong community coordinated response (CCR), through country and community-tailored intervention programmes, including those based on the Duluth Model, in which various agencies meet regularly and are guided by victims' stories and input, policies and protocols are agreed upon that will enhance victim safety and offender accountability.
2. We highlighted the importance of having a common theory of violence that is shared among agencies, a prerequisite to achieving effective coordination. A common understanding in a CCR that most domestic violence and sexual violence are an exercise of power and control over victims will enable effective responses of police, prosecutors, judges and other actors. We also shared the need for a victim-centred response to the violence.
3. Only a small number of cases of violence against women are ever reported and an even smaller number are ever prosecuted. Even when cases are prosecuted, convictions are difficult to obtain. We need to better understand and meet the needs of the victims by

providing easy and gender-sensitive accessible services so as to ensure that more women feel that it is safe to report violence and seek justice. This means that we need to listen to the survivors and include their voices, as well as those of the specialized organizations that support them, in our efforts in the areas of law, policy development, implementation and monitoring. Legal professionals must be trained to understand the dynamics of domestic and sexual violence to be able to apply the law appropriately.

4. We identified the need to provide victims with a comprehensive array of services to enable them to meet their needs. These included victims' access to civil and criminal protection orders, psychosocial services, housing and economic sustainability, and the opportunity to pursue criminal charges against perpetrators. It is particularly important to make these options readily accessible and to remove barriers that inhibit access to these remedies. Indeed, a number of requirements, including that victims must press criminal charges, obtain medical reports, or produce witnesses in order to be granted protective measures, are burdensome and could be counterproductive.
5. We discussed the severe problem of victim intimidation and suggested the use of danger assessments and safety plans as tools that can help address this widespread concern. Victims may be unwilling or unable to pursue criminal charges or avail themselves of other mechanisms within the justice system. In such situations, it is imperative to treat victims with respect and offer them services that reduce their reliance on their abuser. The legal system should allow for pursuing criminal charges even without the participation of victims.
6. Investment in a justice system based on the protection of women survivors and their rights is vital. Participants unanimously agreed that the burden of holding abusers accountable is on the criminal justice system. Furthermore, requiring victims to engage in mediation with the abuser is not only dangerous, but also in violation of the Istanbul Convention.
7. For policies to be successful, sustained and effective awareness-raising campaigns are vital. All citizens, whether men or women, boys or girls, must understand that there is nothing private about VAWG and that it cannot be truly eliminated without an understanding that its tolerance in any form is unacceptable.
8. Change starts at birth. Education is a powerful equalizer; it is the key to transforming mentalities, addressing stereotypes and discrimination and building a culture of equality. Educating boys and girls on human rights and gender equality from an early age will help to instil respect and non-violence in relations between the sexes.
9. Effective implementation will be possible only when we mobilize and engage men in this movement of change. We have to count on men and boys to embody a new social construct of non-violent men and relationships built on respect.

In order to inspire action on violence against girls and women, we will bring this outcome document to the attention of our colleagues through all possible channels. We undertake to bring the document to the attention of other relevant stakeholders. We also urge the IPU to bring our conclusions and recommendations to the attention of the global parliamentary community and ensure follow-up through its programmes and assemblies.



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FEDERAL NATIONAL COUNCIL
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Global Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament

Abu Dhabi – 12–13 December 2016

Abu Dhabi DECLARATION

United for Shaping the Future, for a better world



Inter-Parliamentary Union

For democracy. For everyone.



We, women Speakers of Parliament from more than 30 countries, met on 12 and 13 December 2016 in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, for the Global Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament, organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the UAE Federal National Council for the purpose of shaping the future of parliaments for a better world.

(i) *Affirming* the 38 provisions of the Declaration of the Fourth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament entitled *Placing democracy at the service of peace and sustainable development: Building the world the people want*; and *reiterating* the principles and recommended actions of the summary report of the Tenth Meeting of Women Speakers of Parliament entitled *Innovating for Gender Equality: Making development, peace and democracy a reality for women and men*,

(ii) *Cognizant* of the challenges our world is facing today, and of the geopolitical, socio-economic, environmental and technological megatrends, which are accelerating the pace of change, and which are likely to affect quality of life for generations to come,

(iii) *Committed* to contributing to the realization of the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement, the results of the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Marrakech and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction,

(iv) *Also committed* to contributing to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, as well as to addressing all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls,

(v) *Emphasizing* that today's megatrends are intertwined and interdependent, and that tackling them requires a holistic approach, which encompasses geopolitical, socioeconomic, environmental, demographic and technological responses,

(vi) *Stressing* our willingness and duty to work together to address the challenges we face, as well as our conviction that parliamentarians must form a united front and work towards a better future with the other branches of power, the private sector, civil society and the community at large,

(vii) *Asserting* that solutions to the challenges that our world faces cannot be realized without democratic governance, respect for human rights and the achievement of



gender equality at all levels throughout the world; and *recalling* that the attainment of gender equality is not only a question of human rights but also a matter of efficiency that would harness all the potential and talent required for innovation and transformation,

(viii) *Recognizing* that young people should be included as active participants in the decisions we make,

(ix) *Convinced* of the need to take account of the interests and aspirations of future generations in our parliamentary work, and *committed to* working for change through collective action,

We stand:

(1) **“United for Shaping the Future”** by committing to work together and forge partnerships across government, the private sector and society at large in order to address the challenges that our world faces;

We agree that:

(2) Peace and security. Our parliaments are crucial in the promotion and maintenance of peace and security. As representative institutions, through their legislative and oversight functions, they can take effective measures to prevent violence and conflict as well as to promote conflict resolution through peaceful means, including dialogue and reconciliation, with full respect for international law. Inter-parliamentary dialogue and cooperation can advance peace across nations. Winning the war on terrorism will require parliaments to come together and work with governments, civil society - including youth -, religious groups and leaders. Promoting peace and security is underpinned by democratic governance and institutions, the protection and promotion of human rights and the values of tolerance, inclusiveness, diversity, equality and dialogue.

(3) Inclusive society. Regardless of gender, age, race, class, geography or religion, inclusive societies should empower their members. Marginalization can lead to violent extremism and even terrorism. While the world has made progress, much work remains to be done on every front, especially in the critical area of gender equality. To achieve a more inclusive society, parliaments must be more proactive in addressing discrimination and eliminating violence against women and girls. They should ensure that every woman, child and adolescent across the world survives, thrives and reaches their full potential. They should promote girls' education. Parliaments must also advance tolerance, economic equity, equal access to education and employment, women's economic empowerment, and equal participation in the political process, including decision-making institutions.



(4) Economic prosperity and well-being. Megatrends across many sectors affect economic prosperity and well-being. Such trends include transformative innovation in science and technology, changing geopolitical landscapes, resource scarcity, insecurity, hyper-urbanization and aging populations. Major challenges for the global economy continue to include: high and persistent unemployment rates, especially among young people; high indebtedness in developed and developing countries; slow growth; and rising inequality. As such, parliaments need to develop holistic frameworks and action plans that tackle these challenges, address inequalities, take advantage of the opportunities created by the megatrends mentioned above and promote equitable and sustainable economic growth across and within nations.

(5) Climate change and resource scarcity. Our parliaments can and should promote the ratification of the Paris Agreement and take all necessary action to implement it. They should implement the IPU Parliamentary Action Plan on Climate Change. Parliaments must enact practical and appropriate legislation and establish regulatory frameworks to progressively reduce their nations' carbon footprints, while continuing to grow their economies and to create opportunities for all, including the most marginalized. Through their legislative and oversight work, parliaments must promote the innovation needed to provide clean energy on a massive scale. They must contribute to protecting and ensuring the rational use of water resources. Parliaments must also consider legislation that will protect natural habitats, biodiversity and the overall ecosystem. Internationally, parliaments need to ensure funding that will preserve and rehabilitate the carbon sinks of the world.

(6) Citizen participation. Parliaments now have tremendous opportunities to dramatically increase citizen participation through mobile communication platforms and social media; but they also need to enact appropriate legislation and work with governments and the judiciary to limit the abuse of mobile communications for criminal purposes or by terrorist organizations for political gain.

(7) Advancing tolerance. Intolerance leads to violence, discrimination and terrorism. Parliaments can and should contribute to promoting tolerance through: legislation, policy-making and parliamentary debates; and by working with governments, the judiciary, civil society and religious leaders. Parliaments should lead by example, by acting with propriety as representative and inclusive institutions in their composition, processes and procedures.

(8) Innovations in science and technology. Our quality of life could improve significantly as a result of scientific and technological innovation. However, this could come at a significant cost, unless parliaments begin to find ways of addressing the ethical and moral implications of technological advances, including: human rights such as privacy;



global issues such as security; economic issues such as the digital divide leading to a larger knowledge divide; and employment such as humanoid robots replacing humans.

We commit to:

(9) *Placing* the well-being of our people, peace, prosperity, and the integrity of both our planet and humanity at the core of our parliamentary strategic objectives, and making them central to our development efforts;

(10) Through parliamentary action, making a contribution that *responds* to the needs of all people, including those on the economic and social margins, and *improves* the health and socio-economic well-being of all, particularly women and girls.

(11) *Using* the opportunities offered by the digital era to open up parliaments, *engaging* citizens in parliamentary processes and *increasing* international cooperation so as to narrow the digital divide between developed and developing countries.

(12) *Proposing* to the IPU to consider an international parliamentary declaration on tolerance aiming at promoting and upholding human values and the principle of tolerance to advance peace and security and combat terrorism and violent extremism;

(13) *Working* with all stakeholders, executive bodies, private sector and civil society representatives, especially young people, in order to implement the Sustainable Development Goals, which is our agenda for the future;

(14) *Sharing* knowledge and experiences so as to promote democratic standards, tolerance and mutual respect, and to prepare for the future;

Action imperatives:

(15) Focusing on the future. (a) Encourage the IPU to consider establishing a structure on the future which would assess future changes and global trends as well as their impact on people's lives, and which would mobilize efforts of parliaments and stakeholders in responding to these challenges; (b) Consider establishing in every parliament an appropriately resourced structure for horizon-scanning, such as a committee on the future and/or administrative unit on the future, which would inform parliament's legislative and oversight work regarding the implications of megatrends that affect our world, and which would act as a means to ensuring a better quality of life for future generations.

(16) Strategic planning. (a) Develop new or modify existing strategic plans to better meet the challenges of the future, in light of the megatrends and challenges that we



face today and are likely to face in the future. Strategic planning efforts should include measures to ensure that parliaments are fit for purpose and able to contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals; (b) Encourage parliaments to review existing strategic plans to reflect the conclusions of our Summit; (c) Encourage the IPU to consider developing a global Code of ethics for parliaments in order to address the ethical implications of technological advances.

(17) Promoting youth empowerment. (a) Develop regulations, mechanisms and processes within every parliament to increase youth representation and facilitate youth contribution to legislation and policymaking; (b) Promote youth economic empowerment through legislation, policies and action plans that create opportunities for education and employment; (c) Promote youth cultural empowerment through relevant policies and strategies including education; (d) Contribute to bridging the technology gap among young people.

(18) Advancing gender equality and women's empowerment. (a) Increase and accelerate women's participation in every aspect of legislative and oversight work with a view to attaining gender equality in politics and in parliaments by 2030, including by using electoral gender quotas where applicable; (b) Review the functioning of our parliaments to ensure that they are gender-sensitive institutions and that they provide family friendly facilities; (c) Take action to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls; (d) Address pay gaps, inequality of access to economic opportunities and harassment in the work place; (e) Ensure that women and girls have access to health and education in all instances, including in times of war and conflict; and (f) Work in partnership with women and men to those ends.

(19) Following-up to the Abu Dhabi Declaration. Urge the IPU to follow-up on the proposals and commitments included in the Abu Dhabi Declaration and accommodate them in its work programme in such a manner as to promote continued and strategic partnerships with government authorities, scientists, academia, youth and representatives from the private sector and civil society.

(20) Institutionalizing our united efforts. (a) Within 3 months of this Declaration submit proposals for establishing a coordination mechanism within the IPU for discussion at the IPU Executive Committee meeting and at the Forum of Women Parliamentarians during the 136th IPU Assembly (Dhaka, Bangladesh, April 2017), in order to set timelines for the action imperatives listed above; (b) Mobilize financial resources to implement this Declaration; (c) Use IPU Assemblies to further the goals and actions of this Declaration.

We are profoundly grateful to the IPU, and the Federal National Council of the United Arab Emirates as the gracious host of this Summit, for bringing together leaders from



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across parliaments, governments, international organizations, the private sector and civil society in order to participate in our debates.

United we stand in shaping the future, for a better world.



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137th IPU Assembly

St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, 14–18 October 2017



Forum of Women Parliamentarians
Item 4

FEM/26/4-Inf.1
13 October 2017

Contributing to the work of the 137th Assembly from a gender perspective

Information note

I. Arrangements for the debate

1. In order to contribute to item 4 of the agenda of the 137th Assembly from a gender perspective, the Forum of Women Parliamentarians will divide into two working groups from 11:30 a.m. until 1 p.m. They will debate the following sub-themes of the draft resolution *Sharing our diversity: The 20th anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Democracy* (Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights):

Theme 1 – How can technology be at the service of democracy and gender equality? Challenges and opportunities	<i>Dumsky Hall</i>
Theme 2 – Educating for democracy and gender equality at all steps of the ladder: family, community and State	<i>Reading Room</i>

2. At the end of the discussion, each working group will agree on the key ideas that their rapporteur will present to the afternoon plenary sitting of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians.

3. Before the Forum splits into groups, the co-rapporteurs of the resolution of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights will present the draft resolution to the Forum.

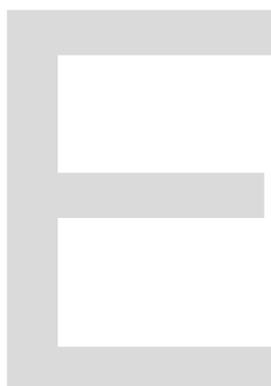
4. The rapporteurs of the working groups will be in charge of drafting gender-related amendments to the draft resolution of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights. The amendments will be drafted in consultation with the Chairs of the working groups. Amendments will be submitted on behalf of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians to the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights at its first sitting on Sunday, 15 October from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m..

Group 1 – How can technology be at the service of democracy and gender equality? Challenges and opportunities

On the one hand, technology has the potential of promoting wider access to economic, social and cultural goods. It also expands the space for the exercise of democracy and public participation. On the other hand, technology and the Internet in particular multiply the chances for harming one's freedoms and integrity.

Participants in Group 1 are invited to discuss the following main issues:

- How to ensure that the whole population can enjoy the benefits that the Internet can bring to economic, social, cultural and environmental life;
- What good practices can be developed to protect both freedom of speech and the right to physical and psychological integrity;



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- What are the means to stop online harassment and cyber-violence that targets women and girls as well as measures to combat trafficking in persons perpetrated through the Internet;

- What are the means and strategies to promote and increase the public participation of women and girls by using online means and tools.

Group 2 – Educating for democracy and gender equality at all steps of the ladder: family, community and State

The group will discuss how democratic values and principles can be furthered from generation to generation. It will focus in particular on education that encompasses gender equality values and practices, including the right of women to participate in democratic processes.

Participants in Group 2 are invited to discuss the following main issues:

- Good practices experienced in education programmes on democracy in school curricula;
- Ways to anchor democratic and gender equality principles and values in family education;
- How to promote participation and empowerment in the learning experience of girls.



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137th IPU Assembly

St. Petersburg, Russian Federation

14 – 18 October 2017



Standing Committee on
Democracy and Human Rights

C-III/137/DR
13 July 2017

Sharing our diversity: The 20th anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Democracy

***Draft resolution submitted by the co-Rapporteurs Ms. S. Dev (India),
Mr. N. Schrijver (Netherlands) and Mr. I. Umakhanov (Russian Federation)***

The 137th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

- (1) *Acknowledging* the significance of the IPU's 1997 Universal Declaration on Democracy and *taking note of* the world parliamentary community's extensive use of the Declaration,
- (2) *Reiterating* that democracy, human rights and the rule of law are universal, interconnected and mutually reinforcing, and *recognizing* the will of the people as the source of legitimacy of sovereign States,
- (3) *Taking into account* the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights and on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the United Nations Declaration on Minorities and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action on human rights,
- (4) *Reaffirming* the core elements set out in the Universal Declaration on Democracy, including genuine partnership between men and women in the conduct of the affairs of society, an independent judiciary, free and fair elections, open and free media, parliamentary oversight, and the protection of the rights of minorities and vulnerable or marginalized groups,
- (5) *Referring to* existing IPU resolutions, including those on human rights (2004), civil society (2005), universal democratic and electoral standards (2007); freedom of expression and the right to information (2009), youth participation in the democratic process (2010), citizen engagement in democracy (2013), democracy in the digital era (2015), women's political participation (2016), the threat posed by terrorism to democracy and human rights (2016), as well as the IPU's Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments (2012),
- (6) *Noting* that there is no single model of democracy and that, as stated in the Universal Declaration on Democracy, democracy reflects the diversity of experiences and cultural particularities, without departing from internationally recognized principles, norms and standards,
- (7) *Also noting* the close relationship between democracy and sustainable development, and drawing attention to the importance of democratic governance for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

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- (8) *Confirming* the central role of parliaments in democracy, and the need for representative, transparent, accessible, accountable and effective institutions at all levels,
- (9) *Wishing* to foster active citizen engagement in the democratic process and in the activities of government at all levels, including among young people, and committed to achieving gender equality in political decision-making,
- (10) *Underscoring* the vital importance of a strong and freely operating civil society that helps keep governments accountable, as well as of effective political parties, open and free media, and access to independent scientific knowledge, and *reiterating* that freedom of expression is a cornerstone of democracy that permits the free flow of ideas,
- (11) *Noting* the new opportunities for democratic participation offered by digital media, as well as the challenges they can present, and *underscoring* the need to safeguard and promote fundamental rights, such as the right to privacy and the right to determine the disclosure and use of one's own personal data,
- (12) *Also noting* that peace and security are major enablers of democracy, and *expressing deep concern* about violent extremism and terrorism in all its forms, which aim to eliminate democracy, human rights and basic freedoms and which constitute a threat to peace and security,
- (13) *Recognizing* the importance of democratic principles in international relations and the important role of international and regional organizations in upholding these principles,
- (14) *Expressing* support for the 2007 UN General Assembly resolution 62/7 to designate 15 September as the International Day of Democracy,
1. *Reaffirms* that democracy is a universal value and that, as a system of government, democracy contributes to the fulfillment of human potential, the eradication of poverty, the development of open and peaceful societies and the improvement of relations among nations;
 2. *Reiterates* that building a democratic society requires respect for the principles of the rule of law, human rights, gender equality, and the protection of minorities and vulnerable or marginalized groups;
 3. *Calls on* parliaments and all public institutions to take action to uphold the principles and values established in the Universal Declaration on Democracy;
 4. *Reaffirms* the importance of the balance of powers between the legislative, executive and judicial arms of government, *underscores* the importance of securing the independence of parliaments and the judiciary through legislation, and *urges* parliaments to enhance their capacity to oversee the policies, administration and expenditure of the executive as part of a system of checks and balances;
 5. *Calls on* parliaments to work towards greater openness in government in order to strengthen citizen engagement in the democratic process, and *encourages* parliaments to continue to modernize their working methods to facilitate the participation of civil society and ordinary citizens in their deliberations;
 6. *Urges* parliaments to step up their efforts to achieve equality between men and women in decision-making and to ensure equality in all areas of life, including by introducing affirmative action in policies, legislation and budget allocation, providing for gender equality in the law and in practice, and ensuring gender-responsive democratic processes that duly include women's participation and perspectives;
 7. *Calls on* parliaments to enhance youth participation in politics and in parliament;

8. *Also calls on* parliaments to ensure that legislation is in place that fully protects freedom of expression so that politicians, journalists, human rights defenders and other ordinary citizens can speak publicly on matters of concern without fear of reprisals, to denounce any such reprisals and to do everything in their power to ensure the protection of persons at risk and the punishment of those responsible for such acts;
9. *Encourages* parliaments and political parties to denounce all forms of hate speech;
10. *Launches* an urgent appeal to parliaments to promote the inclusion of civic education in the national school curriculum, including education for democracy, human rights, gender equality, freedom of religion and sustainable development;
11. *Calls on* parliaments to enhance their contribution to achieving the SDGs, and to hold governments to account for progress in meeting development targets, in the spirit of leaving no-one behind;
12. *Urges* respect for democratic principles in inter-State relations as well as in international organizations, and *underlines* its conviction that principles of democracy must be applied to the international management of issues of common concern to humankind, in particular the human environment;
13. *Calls on* the IPU to continue to support efforts of parliaments to strengthen democracy and ensure good governance;
14. *Also calls on* IPU Member Parliaments to renew their efforts to implement the provisions of all IPU resolutions related to democracy, as well as the IPU Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments and *requests* the IPU to monitor and regularly report on progress as part of its overall strategy to promote democracy;
15. *Invites* the United Nations to examine the possibility of designating 30 June as the International Day of Parliamentarism in commemoration of the creation of the IPU on 30 June 1889.



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137th IPU Assembly

St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, 14–18 October 2017



Forum of Women Parliamentarians
Item 5

FEM/26/5-Inf.1
5 October 2017

Panel Discussion

Marking the fifth anniversary of the Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments

Saturday, 14 October 2017
2.30 – 4 p.m.

The IPU defines a gender-sensitive parliament as one that responds to the needs and interests of both men and women in its structures, operations, methods and work. It is a parliament that both embodies and delivers gender equality.

At the 127th Assembly held in Quebec City in October 2012, IPU Member Parliaments unanimously adopted the [Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments](#). The Plan of Action focuses on seven key areas for gender-sensitive reform, namely equality in participation; strong legal and policy frameworks; gender mainstreaming tools; gender-sensitive parliamentary infrastructure and culture; women's and men's shared responsibility for gender equality; political parties as gender equality champions, and gender-sensitive recruitment and staff development policies.

The Forum of Women Parliamentarians will review the progress made in these areas over the past five years and will consider the challenges that lie ahead in making parliaments into more gender-sensitive institutions.

The discussion will begin with introductory remarks from panellists, followed by an opportunity for participants to share their experiences.

Participants will be invited in particular to respond to the following questions:

- Has your parliament undertaken a **gender audit**, self-assessment or review? What have been the main results?
- Does your parliament have a **gender equality plan**? Are there any particular challenges in implementing this plan?
- Has your parliament adopted a **policy to address sexual harassment**?
- Has your parliament taken any measures to enhance the **gender-responsiveness** of its law-making and budget review processes?
- Have **gender quotas** been introduced for leadership positions or committee membership?
- Have **childcare or other family-friendly facilities** been established in your parliament?
- Is parliament providing **gender training** for male and female members and staff?

Participants are also welcome to provide written information about the measures and initiatives taken by their respective parliaments to become more gender-sensitive institutions. Please send such information in advance of, or following, the panel discussion to mdm@ipu.org.

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137th IPU Assembly

St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, 14–18 October 2017



Governing Council
Item 15

CL/201/15-P.1
24 May 2017

Election of the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

(Article 19 of the Statutes and Rules 6, 7 and 8 of
the Rules of the Governing Council)

Candidature

of

Ms. Gabriela CUEVAS BARRON (Mexico)

On 24 May 2017, the Secretary General received a communication from the President of the Mexican Senate and the President of the Chamber of Deputies of Mexico, submitting the candidature of Ms. Gabriela Cuevas Barron for the office of President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, which is to be filled at the 201st session of the Governing Council.

The text of this communication and the curriculum vitae of Ms. G. Cuevas Barron are to be found in Annexes I and II.

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Courtesy translation provided by Mexico

**COMMUNICATION ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE
MEXICAN SENATE AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES OF MEXICO**

Mexico City, 22 May 2017

Dear Mr. Chungong,

In regard to the upcoming election of the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), which will take place between the 14th and 18th October 2017, in Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation, and in the name of the Mexican Senate and Chamber of Deputies, we are pleased to jointly and formally announce the nomination of Mexican Senator Gabriela Cuevas Barron to the post of President of the IPU, in accordance to the provisions of Article 19 of the IPU Statutes, as well as the principle of geographical rotation. On this occasion, the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean is eligible for this post.

Senator Cuevas Barron's candidacy affords Mexico an opportunity to occupy the Presidency of the IPU for the first time, and also to promote the election of a woman for this important position; this has occurred only once during the IPU's 128 years of existence. We are convinced that the IPU Presidency will benefit from Senator Cuevas Barron's extensive experience. She has been elected to five terms at the federal and local levels, she understands the challenges of legislative work, and has been a relentless promoter of parliamentary diplomacy and of the linkage between the Mexican Congress and the IPU, particularly during her current position as Head of the Senate's Foreign Relations Committee.

It is important to note that Senator Cuevas Barron's candidacy is a State nomination; since, in addition to having the support of both Chambers of the Mexican Congress, it is also backed by the Mexican Government. In sum, her candidacy attests to Mexico's global vision for multilateralism, and the belief of the Mexican Congress in parliamentary diplomacy and the strengthening of friendly relations among Parliaments as central actors of a representative democracy, the protection of human rights, the promotion of peace and international security, and actions towards implementing the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Mexico is an influential global player and one of Latin America's leaders, due to its economic clout and its geographic location; meaning, additionally, that it belongs to multiple converging spaces with the rest of the world. Within the Mexican Congress, we believe that Senator Gabriela Cuevas Barron's candidacy for the IPU Presidency is an opportunity to continue strengthening the organization's role in dealing with global challenges, promoting parliamentary diplomacy and deepening the participation of women and young people in the construction of democracy on a global scale.

Please accept the assurances of our highest consideration.

(Signed)

Pablo ESCUDERO MORALES
President of the Mexican Senate
and
María Guadalupe MURGIA GUTIERREZ (Ms.)
President of the Chamber of Deputies of Mexico

Curriculum Vitae Gabriela Cuevas Barron

She has been a senator since 1 September 2012. She is the Chairperson of the Foreign Relations Committee, responsible for analysis of Mexico's foreign policy, approval of ambassadors and consuls general, approval of international treaties signed by the Executive and deployment of troops outside national territory. Her tenure has been characterized by a close working relationship with ambassadors and parliamentarians from different countries.

Within the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), Senator Cuevas Barron is the Head of the Delegation of the Mexican Congress to the IPU. From 2014 to 2016, she was a member of the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law, which she chaired during the period from 2014 to 2015. She is currently the internal auditor for the year 2017.

The most noteworthy results achieved in her work at the IPU include the drive (in coordination with the Bahrain Parliament) to obtain the unanimous adoption of the resolution entitled *The role of parliamentarians in protecting the rights of children, unaccompanied migrant children, and in preventing their exploitation in situations of war and conflict*. Moreover, in order to promote more gender-equitable laws, she developed (in conjunction with the Indian delegation) the subject of study and resolution called *Promoting enhanced international cooperation on the SDGs, in particular on the financial inclusion of women as a driver of development*.

Her participation in international parliamentary forums includes the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly, where she co-chaired the Committee on Political Affairs, Security, and Human Rights; her work at the Mexico-European Union Joint Parliamentary Committee, and the Pacific Alliance's Parliamentary Monitoring Committee.

Senator Gabriela Cuevas Barron's political career spans more than 20 years. Convinced of being a participant in Mexico's democratic consolidation and conscious of promoting citizen participation in the country's affairs, at age of 15 she joined the National Action Party, which was the main opposition force during Mexico's transition towards democracy. In the same vein, together with a group of young people, she founded the *Fundación Educa México, A.C.*, which is committed to improving education in Mexico.

Since 2001, Senator Cuevas Barron has focused her efforts, as a legislator at the local and federal levels as well as Head of a large District of Mexico City, on promoting laws and actions in favor of Human Rights, gender equity, the fight against corruption, transparency and environment protection. Senator Cuevas Barron's personal and professional initiatives have always been driven by an interest in promoting social justice and ensuring local impact on the daily lives of citizens.

Her work in the Senate has been marked by various highlights. She spearheaded the initiative to reform and harmonize the Mexican Constitution on asylum and recognition of refugee status, with international treaties to which Mexico is party, particularly in the area of human rights and international humanitarian law. Also noteworthy is her support for the reform to the Law of the Mexican Foreign Service that guarantees the right to identity of the thousands of migrants abroad who were not registered at the moment of birth in Mexico, through the issuance of birth certificates through the Mexican consulates.

Senator Cuevas Barron has also done extensive work on promoting respect for the human rights of Central American migrants who travel or stay in Mexico in search of better opportunities, particularly children and adolescents. In addition to the legal reform initiatives presented before the Senate of the Republic, as delegate of Mexico to the Forum of Presidents and Legislative Presidents of Central America and the Caribbean Basin (FOPREL) presented the proposed Framework Law on Protection and Assistance of migrant children and adolescents, which members of the organization will use as a basis for drafting their national legislation.

It is also important to mention Senator Cuevas Barron's work as a member of the Constituent Assembly of Mexico City. In that context, she chaired the Mayor's Committee with the aim of setting up a new model of local governance that ensures closeness, modernization, transparency and efficiency in public management.

In addition, she succeeded in incorporating into Mexico City's Constitution of 5 February 2017, the obligation for the City authorities to guarantee respect for and protection of the human rights of those foreign persons to whom the Mexican government has granted asylum or refugee status, strengthening the humanitarian spirit of the Mexican State to provide protection to people fleeing persecution and violence in their countries of origin.

In addition, Senator Cuevas Barron has served as a federal representative in the LXI Legislature (2009-2012); head of the local authority (equivalent to a mayor) of Miguel Hidalgo, Mexico City (2006-2009); representative in the Federal District Legislative Assembly (2003-2006); federal representative in the LVIII Legislature (2001-2003); advisor to the Undersecretary on Normativity and Media, in the Ministry of the Interior (2001); and research assistant at the *Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México* (2000-2001).

She studied Political Science at the *Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México* (2001) and has attended various seminars and courses in political communication, public management, and political theory at universities and training institutions in Mexico and abroad.

Senator Cuevas Barron features regularly in several Mexican (radio, television, and print) and international (print) media outlets. She has also published several articles and chapters on issues relating to human rights advocacy and women's empowerment.

She was born on 3 April 1979, in Mexico City.



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137th IPU Assembly

St. Petersburg, Russian Federation
14–18 October 2017



Governing Council
Item 15

CL/201/15-P.2
6 June 2017

Election of the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

(Article 19 of the Statutes and Rules 6, 7 and 8 of
the Rules of the Governing Council)

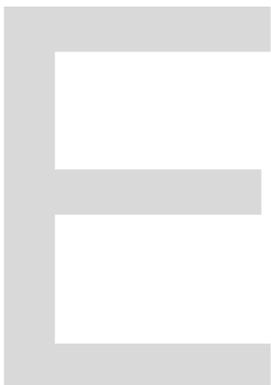
Candidature

of

Ms. Ivonne PASSADA (Uruguay)

On 5 June 2017, the Secretary General received a communication from the President of the General Assembly and the Senate of Uruguay concerning the candidature of Ms. Ivonne Passada, and a communication from the candidate herself, for the office of President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, which is to be filled at the 201st session of the Governing Council.

The text of these communications and Ms. I. Passada's curriculum vitae are to be found in Annexes I, II and III.



#IPU137

**COMMUNICATION ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL BY THE PRESIDENT
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND THE SENATE OF URUGUAY**

Montevideo, 5 June 2017

Dear Mr. Secretary General,

In view of the forthcoming election of the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, which will take place during the 137th IPU Assembly in St. Petersburg, from 14 to 18 October 2017, I am pleased to submit Senator Ivonne Passada's candidature, which, I should emphasize, has the full backing of both the Parliament and the Government of Uruguay.

In the context of the efforts to ensure rotation between the different geopolitical groups and given the fact heading the IPU now falls to the Group of Latin America and Caribbean, we hereby submit Senator Ivonne Passada's candidature to that office. With her long experience with the Inter-Parliamentary Union, notably as a member of its Executive Committee until October 2015, whereby she demonstrated her dynamism and sense of engagement, Ms. Passada has been GRULAC President since October 2016. Elected IPU Vice-President in 2012 and re-elected for a further term in 2013, she represented the Organization on numerous occasions. The manner in which she discharged her duties as a member of the sub-Committee on Finance and of the Gender Partnership Group and as a member of the Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians is testimony of her commitment to gender equality.

Ms. Passada was elected to the House of Representatives in 2005, and was re-elected for a further term in 2010, when she became Speaker (until 2011). She was thereafter elected to the Uruguayan Senate in 2015 and has since been the Senate Vice-President. It goes without saying that Senator Passada's rich political experience will be an asset in meeting the big challenges facing the IPU in protecting peace, democracy and human rights.

Thanking you in advance for your attention to this candidature, please accept, Mr. Secretary General, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed)

Raúl SENDIC
President of the General Assembly
and the Senate of Uruguay

**COMMUNICATION ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL
BY MS. IVONNE PASSADA, SENATOR, URUGUAY**

Montevideo, 5 June 2017

Dear Mr. Secretary General,

I have the pleasure to inform you that with the support of both my Parliament and my Government, I have decided to submit my candidature for the office of President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, which will be filled via the elections due to be held in October on the occasion of the 137th IPU Assembly in St. Petersburg.

I have made this decision based on my strong commitment to the Inter-Parliamentary Union where I have had long history of service starting in 2010. In that time, I have uninterruptedly attended all the IPU statutory Assemblies and have also held a number of senior positions, including as member of the Executive Committee between 2011 and 2015 and as Vice-President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union for two successive years (2012-2014). Owing to the duties I performed within the IPU Executive Committee, I served on the Sub-Committee on Finance and the Gender Partnership Group, and have also been an ex officio member of the Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians. In October 2016, I was elected President of the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean, and I am still serving in that capacity.

I consider it an honour to put the experience I have gained in the course of my political career, begun more than thirty years ago with my service within trade unions, and my extensive political experience, begun over a decade ago, including as Speaker of the House of Representatives from 2010 to 2011, to defending the principles of our Organization through parliamentary diplomacy and the IPU Strategy for 2017-2021, with a view to ensuring universal membership, the IPU being the world's oldest political body.

Moreover, given the IPU's stance throughout its history and the endeavour made to ensure a regular rotation, for the post of President, of the different geopolitical groups, a mechanism that must be maintained, we believe that this high office now falls to the Geopolitical Group of Latin America and the Caribbean (GRULAC), and should be held by a woman. It is noteworthy that the Organisation has had a woman President only once (1999-2002) and that in its 127 years of existence, it has been headed only three times by a representative from our region.

These being difficult times for our world owing to the many conflicts and natural disasters, our commitment to realizing the Sustainable Development Goals is stronger than ever. Democracy, peace, the protection of human rights and the advancement of gender equality are all fundamental principles which I am prepared to defend on assuming this high office.

Finally, allow me to reiterate that my candidature has the full backing of both the Parliament and Government of my country. They will provide me with all the support I need in the performance of my duties as President.

Thanking you in advance for your attention to my candidature, accept, Mr. Secretary General, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed)

Ivonne PASSADA (Ms.)
Senator, Uruguay



Senator Ivonne PASSADA
Uruguay

Activities in the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)

- President of the Group of Latin-America and the Caribbean (GRULAC) (2016-2018)
- Permanent Member of the Uruguayan IPU Group (2010–2015/2015-2020)
- Member, GRULAC Bureau (2011–2015)
- Vice-President of the IPU (2012–2013)
- Re-elected Vice-President of the IPU (2013–2014)
- Member, IPU Executive Committee (2011– 2015)
- Member, IPU Sub-Committee on Finance
- Member, IPU Gender Partnership Group
- Ex-officio Member, Coordinating Committee on Women Parliamentarians (2011-2015)
- Member, Preparatory Committee, 4th World Conference of Speakers of Parliaments (2014)
- Member, Sub-Committee on the future IPU-UN Cooperation Agreement (2014-2015)
- Joint President, Uruguayan IPU Group (2010 – 2011)
- Participated uninterruptedly in all IPU Assemblies and GRULAC sessions (2010 – 2017)

Parliamentary Activity

- Senator of the Republic (2015 – 2020)
- First Vice-President of the Senate (2015)
- Speaker of the House of Representatives (2010 – 2011)
- Elected as Member of the House of Representatives for the Department of Montevideo (MPP) (2005 – 2010) (2010 – 2015)
President, Political Committee of the Government School (2010 – 2015)
- President, Public Health Committee (2016)
- Member, Education and Culture Committee (2015–2020)
- Member, Labour Committee (2015–2020)
- Member, Special Committee on Public Security and Coexistence (2015-2020); Vice-President (2017)
- Member, Prison Conditions Committee, General Assembly (2015-2020); President (2017)

Political Party Activities

- Political Party: Broad Front (*Frente Amplio*) – MPP - Governing Party
- President, Social Affairs Committee, Broad Front Party (*Frente Amplio*)
- Founder of the Popular Participation Movement (*Movimiento de Participación Popular* - (MPP), Vice-President, Broad Front Party (*Frente Amplio*) (2012 – 2015)

Trade Union Background

At the end of the military dictatorship (1973 – 1985), she clandestinely joined the Uruguay Education Unions. She has been social and political activist; a prominent leader of the AFUTU Union [UTU (*Universidad del Trabajo del Uruguay*, Uruguay University of Work) Staff Union]; Member and General Coordinator of the PIT-CNT Bureau (Single Central of Workers); former Representative for the Education Unions of the Southern Cone; Member, the PIT-CNT, FA-EP-NM and Union Organizations Relations Committee (2003 – 2004); Member of Consultative Council of the Mexico-based Confederation of American Educators (CEA); General Coordinator for the Research Project on Educational Reforms in the Southern Cone, sponsored by the Education Unions of Canada - Quebec. Currently Member of the Advisory Board of American Parliamentarians (Education Sector), of the Confederation of American Educators (CAE).

Education

Sociology studies; technical and professional course on teaching prevention of work-related accidents; Professor, UTU, with focus on young people with learning difficulties and those likely to drop out of school; Teaching Associate at the UTU Headquarters in Malvin Norte, where she performed a variety of duties with the technical staff in charge of school drop-outs; she participated in those activities from 1984 to 2004.

Personal Data

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