

IPU E-BULLETIN

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How to Effect Change for Women in Parliament – Women Speakers Meet in Delhi – Women speakers of parliament from around the world will gather in the Indian capital, Delhi to focus on strategies to make parliaments more gender sensitive. The IPU organized meeting on 3-4 October will tackle issues such as how to achieve gender parity in parliaments by transforming the way parliaments and political parties work. Hosted by the Indian parliament and the Speaker of the Lok Sabha Meira Kumar, the meeting of women speakers will also examine the findings of IPU's latest global survey on Gender Sensitive Parliaments. In addition to clearly defining the meaning of a gender sensitive parliament, the survey outlines key actions in several areas including legislation that supports gender equality and fostering a parliamentary culture that respects women's rights and promotes equality.

[The high-level parliamentary meeting](#) will be officially opened by Indian President Pranab Mukherjee, Speaker Kumar and IPU President Abdelwahad Radi with keynote addresses given by UN Women Executive Director Michelle Bachelet and IPU Secretary General Anders Johnsson. This, the 7th time IPU has organized a meeting bringing together women speakers of parliament, will conclude with an outcome document.

UN Declaration Recognises Essential Role of Parliaments and IPU in Upholding Rule of Law – The essential role that parliaments play in upholding the rule of law in their respective countries was recognized in a Declaration adopted by UN member states in New York at the conclusion of a High-Level Meeting on 24th September. The [Declaration](#), the first of its kind, was also the first time the UN had acknowledged at the highest level the specific contribution of national parliaments to the issue, welcoming inter-action between parliaments, IPU and the UN on the subject. Considered as a cornerstone of democracy, the application of the Rule of Law is a critical focus of work for national parliaments the world over and for IPU.

The High-Level Meeting, attended by world leaders amongst others, was an important opportunity for States to commit further to the rule of law as a basis for fulfilling the UN's main goals of peace, human rights and development. The Declaration also reaffirmed States' commitment to the principles of the Charter of the UN, international law and justice. Questions nevertheless remained on how to follow up more concretely on the principles entrenched in the Declaration. It was one of several issues examined during a [parliamentary meeting](#) organized by IPU and the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) in New York in the aftermath of the High-Level Meeting. The event brought together MPs, UN officials and diplomats engaged on the issue.

A new publication [Rule of Law – A Guide for Politicians](#) which provides important information on the basic elements of the subject, is now available in English to help all MPs on this issue.

Tanzanian Parliamentary Leadership on HIV/AIDS Inspires Fellow MPs – IPU's Advisory Group on HIV/AIDS is building on Tanzania's success in tackling HIV/AIDS to boost parliamentary leadership to combat the disease around the world. A field mission to Tanzania earlier this month showed Advisory Group members a clear example of how

parliamentary leadership can bring tangible results in lowering the HIV prevalence rate, combating stigma and increasing funding for HIV/AIDS issues in Tanzania. Citing the Tanzania Parliamentary AIDS Coalition (TAPAC) which unites 75 per cent of all MPs on one issue and the creation of a Standing Committee on HIV/AIDS Affairs to mainstream HIV into all the work of the Tanzanian parliament, the HIV/AIDS Advisory Group is recommending the Tanzanian approach as a model for all parliaments wanting to strengthen their efforts in fighting the disease. Political leadership in particular is playing a critical role in fighting stigma, a key factor in discouraging voluntary HIV testing and counselling. The decision of Tanzanian President Kikwete and his wife to be publicly tested for HIV had led to an increase in voluntary testing, the Group noted.

Learning from the lessons of Tanzania, participating MPs from Belgium, Bahrain, Kenya, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, Tanzania and Zimbabwe will table a report on the field mission in their respective parliaments. Their involvement in IPU's HIV/AIDS Advisory Group has inspired some to take a lead in tackling the disease in their country. So far this year, Belgium and Saudi Arabia have adopted stronger laws to combat AIDS with Ecuador and Bahrain currently working on beefing up theirs.

Sharing Knowledge on Parliamentary Strategic Planning - IPU has facilitated a mission by parliamentary staff from Bangladesh to South Africa to learn how the African country is managing its transition to democracy through strategic planning of its parliamentary resources and skills.

In a country long divided by apartheid, the South African parliament, like many others in countries of transition, has used strategic planning to carry out democratic reforms aimed at making parliament more effective in its legislative, representative and oversight role.

Bangladesh, currently working to modernize and strengthen its parliament to improve democracy, will benefit from the South African model by identifying experiences and lessons adaptable to the Bangladeshi context.