

IPU E-BULLETIN

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IPU Backs International Efforts to Restore Democratic Rule in Mali - Condemning the serious human rights abuses by armed rebel groups in Northern Mali, the 127th IPU Assembly which concluded on 26th October in Quebec City, Canada, adopted an [emergency resolution](#) backing international military efforts to regain control of the area. IPU members strongly condemned the killings and abuses against civilians, in particular women and children, as well as the wanton pillaging and destruction of Mali's cultural and religious world heritage sites by Islamic armed groups who took control of over two-third of Malian territory early this year. The resolution urges Mali to fully cooperate with international forces when they are deployed and welcomed the French, European Union and United Nations commitments to re-establish security and constitutional rule in Mali. It also urges the Malian transitional government to hold free and fair elections once order is restored.

Quebec City Declaration on Citizenship, Identity, Linguistic and Cultural Diversity Adopted at IPU 127th Assembly - [The declaration](#), adopted by IPU members at the close of the week-long meeting in Quebec City, Canada, calls on parliaments to protect diversity and human rights as universal values, and to ratify, adopt and implement laws to safeguard them. It reaffirms IPU's commitment to freedom of thought, opinion and expression but condemned those that intimidated and incited extremism, hatred, racism and violence. The declaration covers a wide range of issues such as the marginalization of indigenous peoples, the problem of stateless individuals, ensuring effective legal protection and remedies for those suffering discrimination and the need for special measures to pave the way for women's full participation in politics and governance.

IPU Human Rights Missions to Maldives and Turkey – Members of IPU's Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians will soon be undertaking fact-finding missions to the Maldives and Turkey as part of renewed efforts to resolve cases involving the human rights abuses of parliamentarians there. [The decision](#) was taken by the Committee during the 127th IPU Assembly in Quebec City last week, with exact dates to be determined. The Committee is currently investigating the case of 19 opposition MPs in the Maldives, allegedly victims of excessive violence, arbitrary arrests and politically motivated criminal charges. In Turkey, the Committee will be looking at resolving the case of nine MPs, six of them Kurdish, imprisoned either for allegedly belonging to organizations conspiring to overthrow the ruling party or for being allegedly being involved in military coup plots.

Human Rights Committee Resolutions Touch Countries Across World – Thirty-seven cases involving 135 parliamentarians from 21 different countries were examined by IPU's Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians, which met during 127th Assembly. [Resolutions were passed on 20 of the cases](#), including that of Diomi Ndongala, an MP from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Ndongala was arbitrarily arrested in June this year when he was due to attend the signing of a charter on a new opposition party. He claims to have been held incommunicado by intelligence officers for almost four months, reappearing in mid-October in urgent need of medical care. His claim is denied by the authorities. IPU is calling on the DRC authorities to hold an independent enquiry on the case.

On a more positive note, two human rights cases were resolved involving Chad and Cambodia. IPU also welcomes the release in recent months of 18 members of the Palestinian Legislative Council from administrative detention and trusts that a remaining five Palestinian MPs will be similarly released.

Ambitious Plan of Action for Gender Equality in Parliaments - IPU members have committed to a comprehensive [Plan of Action](#) on gender-sensitive parliaments, aimed at radically transforming the way national institutions address gender equality. The action plan, a potentially far-reaching outcome of the 127th IPU Assembly, not only tackles women's access to parliaments through affirmative action, but also gender parity in the roles and ranks inside parliament; legal frameworks; the gender infrastructure and culture within parliament as well as the need to engage political parties on the issue. It highlights the use of special measures to ensure more women are selected by political parties to run for "winnable" seats; amending national electoral laws and constitutions to allow reserved seats and enacting, updating and implementing gender equality laws. Such a move by national parliaments would not only transform parliaments but also society as a whole. In a move that would similarly change the way parliaments have been run throughout time by helping MPs and parliamentary staff achieve a work-family balance, the action plan calls for parliaments to rearrange their sitting hours so MPs can spend more time with their families.

UK Parliament Hosts International Parliamentary Conference on Gender and Politics – Parliamentarians representing more than 60 countries will meet in London, UK, to address key issues surrounding women and politics. [The Conference on 6-8 November](#), jointly organised by the British Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (BGIPU) and the UK Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA UK), will focus on gender representation in parliament; the role of MPs in achieving representative democracy; legislation and gender issues and the economic empowerment of women. The conference will hear testimonials and case studies from around the world and will offer MPs a chance to build up skills in promoting gender equality in parliamentary committees, with the media and through social networks. All parliamentarians interested in following gender issues linked to parliament are invited to sign up to the Gender Parliamentary Reference Group (link: <https://agora.trustedarea.net>).