



The UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and the Office for North Africa of the UN Economic Commission for Africa are pleased to invite you to take part in a joint side event. It will be held during the 60<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women and will be entitled:

***Implementing Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security in the Arab Region***

Over the past five years, the Arab region has experienced successive waves of revolutionary uprisings and unrest in many countries. Most of these upheavals have resulted in unprecedented acts of violence, insecurity and protracted armed conflicts. All these conflicts have endangered the human security of the civilian population at large. But they have had especially dire consequences for women and girls, one of the most pronounced and critical being that women have become prey to sexual exploitation, abuse, and increasingly serious forms of gender-based violence, including rape, human trafficking, and child and forced marriages.

Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security addresses the particular challenges that women face in conflict settings. It mandates the protection of the rights of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations. It also mandates the participation of women in peacekeeping, peacebuilding, conflict resolution, post-conflict reconstruction and decision-making processes, and the provision of relief and recovery services targeted at women and girls. These areas are generally known as the four pillars of SCR 1325, or the “Four Ps”: prevention, participation, protection, and provision of relief and recovery.

Parliaments can play a fundamental role in the implementation of these four pillars. They can adopt legislation and shape policies needed to fully achieve the *women, peace and security* agenda. These might include: affirmative action laws, such as quotas to increase the participation of women in decision-making positions within peace missions or the military; policies to secure women’s training on conflict resolution, peacebuilding and peacemaking processes; laws that entrench and strengthen human rights protection and gender equality. Parliaments can also contribute to implementation by ensuring that national actions plans are prepared, adopted and fully funded, and that adequate oversight mechanisms are in place. However, most countries in the Arab region lack such important legal and policy frameworks.

In response to this situation, the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia in partnership with the Office for North Africa of the UN Economic Commission for Africa, and the Inter-Parliamentary Union have implemented a fully-fledged project to spread a better understanding of and increase compliance with UN Security Council resolution 1325 in the Arab region. In the period 2013–2015, the project developed specific tools for MPs and built the capacity of parliamentarians in nine Arab countries to implement resolution 1325 through legislation, policymaking, budgeting and building partnerships.

./..

Building from the lessons learned from that project, this side event will discuss how parliaments can make the difference in implementing resolution 1325 in the Arab region. It will also be the occasion to identify best practices in order to ensure the region's optimal compliance with the resolution and to address the needs of women and girls either during conflict or efforts to prevent conflict.

**Chair:** **Ms. Margaret Mensah-Williams**  
Chairperson of the National Council of Namibia and President of the IPU  
Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians

**Moderators and panellists:**

**Ms. Mehrinaz El Awady**  
Acting Director, Center for Women, UN Economic and Social Commission for  
Western Asia  
**Ms. Houda Mejri**  
Gender Officer, Focal Point for Participatory Governance and Citizen's  
Engagement, Office for North Africa of the UN Economic Commission for  
Africa  
**Ms. Brigitte Filion**  
Programme specialist, IPU Gender Partnership Programme  
**Ms. Salma Nims**  
Secretary General, Jordanian National Commission for Women

**Date and time: Monday 14 March 2016, 6.30pm to 7.45 p.m.**  
**Location: the Ex-Press Bar of the General Assembly Building**

**N.B. The side event will be held in English only, as the Ex-Press Bar does not have interpretation facilities.**