



Inter-Parliamentary Union  
For democracy. For everyone.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) is pleased to invite you to take part in a side event that will be held at the 61<sup>st</sup> Session on the Commission on the Status of Women:

## ***Violence against women in politics: Name it, investigate it, eliminate it***

Thursday 16 March 2017, from 4:45 to 6 p.m.  
Conference Room A<sup>1</sup> of the Conference Building, United Nations, New York

There is a growing awareness of gender-based violence that targets women voters and candidates in elections, women campaigners in political parties and civil society organizations, and women elected or serving as public officials.

Such violence in all its forms seriously impedes women's political rights, discourages women who want to work in such jobs, degrades political life and thus undermines the foundation of democracy.

A recent IPU study revealed widespread sexism, harassment and violence against women parliamentarians. It showed that 81.8 per cent of women parliamentarians surveyed had experienced some form of psychological violence from members of the public and fellow MPs. Among them, 44.4 per cent had received threats of death, rape, beatings or kidnapping. The prevalence of other forms of violence was also troubling, with sexual harassment at 20 per cent and physical violence at 25.5 per cent.

The side event will provide an opportunity to further identify the matters at play regarding violence against women in politics and to discuss the challenges raised. It will examine how this problem should be viewed in relation to violence against women in general. It will also address the need to name the problem, investigate it, monitor it and design efficient solutions to eliminate it. The IPU [survey](#) will be presented in addition to other international work focusing on violence against women in elections and in politics.

- Chair/Moderator:** **Ms. Margaret Mensah-Williams**  
President of the IPU Bureau of Women Parliamentarians  
Chairperson of the National Council of Namibia
- Keynote address:** **Dr. Dubravka Simonovic**  
United Nations Special Rapporteur on violence against women
- Panellists:** **IPU Representative**  
**UN Women representative**  
**NDI representative**

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<sup>1</sup> Conference Room A does not have interpretation facilities and the side event will be held in English only.