



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

12th Summit of Women Speakers

Women Speakers: Working so every voice counts

Centro Empresarial Torres CAINCO, Santa Cruz, Bolivia
6-7 December 2017

Organized by the Chamber of Deputies of Bolivia and the Inter-Parliamentary Union



AGENDA

DAY 1 Wednesday, 6 December 2017

9:00 – 9:30 a.m. Registration

Opening Ceremony

Welcome addresses

- 09:30 – 10:00 a.m.
- Ms. Gabriela Montaña Viaña, Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies of the Plurinational State of Bolivia
 - Ms. Gabriela Cuevas Barron, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

10:00 – 10:30 a.m. **Keynote address (TBC)**

10:30 – 10:45 a.m. Group photo for Women Speakers of Parliament

10:45 – 11:00 a.m. Coffee Break

11:00 a.m.– 1:00 p.m. **Session 1: Diagnosing women's under-representation**

Twenty-two years ago, in Beijing, the world committed to achieving gender equality in political decision-making. Despite progress achieved since then, the global proportions of women in political decision-making positions remain well below the 50/50 goal. In 2015, the world recommitted to achieving gender equality through implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and in particular Goal 5 on gender equality. At their Summit in 2016, the women Speakers of Parliament called to action to increase and accelerate women's participation with a view to attaining gender equality in politics and in parliaments by 2030.

Moving beyond analyzing women's political participation from a descriptive angle, this first session of the Summit aims to explore the root causes of women's under-representation in politics. It will focus on assessing advancements made and remaining and new challenges that face women aspiring to participate in politics.

The session will address the following key questions:

- *How are power relations between men and women impacting women's participation?*
- *To what extent has culture evolved when it comes to women's political leadership?*
- *Where are we with stereotypes against women's political leadership?*
- *What new resistances are emerging with regards to women's political participation?*
- *Are we investing enough efforts to support the next generation of women politicians?*
- *What role can women Speakers play to counter old and new resistances to women's political participation and leadership?*

Presentations and statements by Women Speakers and invited panelists will be followed by an open debate.

1:00 – 2:30 p.m. Lunch

2:30 – 4:30 p.m.

Session 2: Inclusive societies and inclusive parliaments

Inclusivity and representativeness of parliaments are keystones of democracy. As representative institutions, parliaments should be inclusive of the diversity of society: men and women from all walks of life, of different ages, of diverse personal, professional and economic backgrounds, of different origins and colours.

This need for diversity is not only enshrined in Human Rights conventions and called for by the IPU in its resolutions and standards but it is also requested by the people in pro-democracy movements or through disinterest in politics and boycott of elections. The very basis of government by the people for the people is hence to be revived.

Representative institutions are role models for inclusivity in society at large. They can provide a strong signal that all people have a place and a say at all steps of the ladder: family, community and State.

This second session of the Summit aims to identify what needs to change or to be enhanced to make parliaments more representatives. This can be through electoral reforms to open parliament to a more diverse representation or through innovative means to articulate the needs and interests of all people in the work of parliament. Beyond parliament, the session will explore the action needed to foster inclusive societies that are stable, safe and just for all and that enable all people to participate in social, economic, cultural and political life on the basis of equality, equity and dignity.

The session will address the following key questions:

- *What is needed to foster inclusive societies?*
- *What experiences have been developed to make parliament more inclusive?*
- *How political parties can better attract and promote diversity in their membership, leadership and among candidates to elected office?*
- *What makes people better connect or reconnect with parliament?*
- *What technological innovations have been introduced to better open up the work of parliament to people's contribution?*
- *How a gender-sensitive parliament is also a more efficient and modern parliament?*

Presentations and statements by Women Speakers and invited panelists will be followed by an open debate.

Evening

Reception in honour of the women Speakers of Parliament

Day 2 - Thursday, 7 December 2017

9:00 – 11:15 a.m.

Session 3: Solutions to violence in politics and in parliament

As women enter in the political arena, they face targeted gender-based violence be it in the form of harassment, intimidation, sexual assaults and others. The IPU study based on the experience of 55 women MPs from the 39 countries conducted in 2016 revealed that over 81.8 % of the respondents reported having experienced some form of psychological violence. In all, 44.4 % of those surveyed said they had received threats of rape, beatings, kidnapping or death.

How can we speak about democracy when violence in politics is rife, and when individual rights and freedoms are flouted, including the right to participate fully, freely and entirely safely in political processes?

Parliaments must ensure respect for these human rights and freedoms, while banning all kind of harassment, hate speech, intimidation and violence. It is however a balance that remains fragile and is sometimes being upset.

Beyond the violence that women face in politics, the democratic space is worryingly shrinking in many parts of the world. Violence is exercised against opponents, minority and indigeneous representatives and others. In conflict, insecurity and post conflict situations violence against women is further exacerbated and impacts heavily on their participation in politics. Last but not least, lack of civility in parliament and sometimes physical violence head the news too often.

This session of the Summit will highlight the different types of harassment and violence

in the political world and how they are interrelated. It aims to identify solutions to violence that women politicians face. It will also consider solutions to violence in parliament and in politics at large.

The session will focus in particular on the role that Speakers of Parliament can play in ensuring that parliaments are workplaces free from violence for all.

The session will address the following key questions:

- *What differentiate violence in politics from violence against women in politics?*
- *Who is responsible when it comes to putting an end to violence against women in politics? What role for legislators, institutions, the media and others?*
- *What solutions can be brought when violence is exercised in parliament?*

Presentations and statements by Women Speakers and invited panelists will be followed by an open debate.

11:15 – 11:30

Coffee break

11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Session 4: Follow up to the Abu Dhabi Declaration

In December 2016, the Summit of Women Speakers of parliament was held in Abu Dhabi. As an outcome of the Summit, women speakers adopted the Abu Dhabi Declaration in which they encouraged more widespread use of digital technology to make parliaments more transparent and accessible. They also proposed that parliaments develop or modify existing future-oriented strategic plans, which include steps to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. They also stressed the imperative of associating youth with parliamentary work through representation and participation in policymaking.

Women Speakers also agreed to promote and uphold human rights and the principle of tolerance in efforts to combat terrorism and violent extremism and advance peace and security. They also stressed that action to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls and the promotion of women's economic empowerment were central to resolving problems and challenges to society as a whole. They reiterated their commitment to achieving gender equality in politics and in parliament by 2030. They also advocated that each parliament assess institutional gender sensitivity.

The women Speakers agreed to work in partnership to realize the Abu Dhabi Declaration. They urged the IPU to follow-up on the proposals and commitments included in the Declaration. They also called to promote continued and strategic partnerships with government authorities, scientists, academia, youth and representatives from the private sector and civil society.

This session aims to provide an opportunity to the women Speakers to report back on steps taken to implement the Abu Dhabi Declaration in their respective parliaments and countries. It will help pinpointing possible challenges encountered and good practices developed in implementing the Declaration. It will also allow women speakers to identify next steps in following up to the Declaration.

Presentations and statements by Women Speakers will be followed by an open debate.

1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Lunch

2:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Session 5: Roundtable for women Speakers of Parliament (closed session)

The Roundtable session aims to offer a platform for women speakers to agree on the Summit's conclusions and main recommendations. It will also provide an opportunity to discuss future meetings of women Speakers.

4:00 – 4:15 p.m.

Coffee break

4:15 – 5:00 p.m.

Closing session

The Summit will close with key conclusions and actionable recommendations.

Closing speeches:

- *Ms. Gabriela Montaña Viaña, Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies of the Plurinational State of Bolivia*
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- *Ms. Gabriela Cuevas Barron, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union*
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