



INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION
106th Conference and related meetings
Ouagadougou, 9 - 15 September 2001



FEM/6/C.1
18 July 2001

**CONVOCAATION OF THE
SIXTH MEETING OF WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS**

"Ouaga 2000" Conference Centre, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, Sunday, 9 September 2001

Dear Madam President,
Dear Mr. President,

I am pleased to inform you that the Sixth¹ Meeting of Women Parliamentarians will be held at the *"Ouaga 2000" Conference Centre*, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, on Sunday, 9 September 2001, from 9.30 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 2.30 p.m. to 6 p.m. approximately.

The annotated provisional agenda, drawn up by the Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians at its session in Havana in April 2001, is annexed hereto.

As you know, Article 11.1 of the Statutes provides that each national delegation to the meetings organised by the Inter-Parliamentary Union should if possible include at least one woman MP, and the Gender Partnership Group is in the process of studying various options designed to ensure a better gender balance in the composition of national delegations. Accordingly, I wish to urge you to make a special effort to ensure that your parliament's delegation to the Ouagadougou Meetings includes one or more women MPs, unless this is impossible.

The discussions at the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians are public and men MPs wishing to follow them are cordially invited to do so. Rule 4.2 of the Rules of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians provides that the President may, subject to the agreement of the participants, give them the floor.

Yours sincerely,

Anders B. Johnsson
Secretary General

Encl: Annotated agenda

¹ The number of the session is calculated with effect from the date on which the Meeting was officially recognised in the Statutes of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, i.e. in September 1998. In reality, the first Meeting of Women Parliamentarians was held in Bonn in 1978.



INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION
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Ouagadougou, 9 - 15 September 2001



Meeting of Women Parliamentarians
Agenda

FEM/6/A.1
June 2001

Sixth Meeting of Women Parliamentarians

*Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso),
"Ouaga 2000" Conference Center, Sunday, 9 September 2001*

A. Practical and procedural arrangements

➤ **Inaugural ceremony of the 106th Conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union**

The Inaugural Ceremony of the 106th Conference and related meetings, including the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians, will take place on the premises of the Ouagadougou International Crafts Show (SIAO) on Sunday, 9 September, at 7 p.m..

➤ **Schedule**

The Meeting of Women Parliamentarians will comprise two sittings: from 9.30 a.m. to 1 p.m., and from 2.30 p.m. to 6.30 p.m. at the latest.

➤ **Rules**

The proceedings will be governed by the Rules of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians, as adopted by the Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union at its 164th session (Brussels, April 1999). The text of the Rules will be made available to the participants.

➤ **President of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians**

In accordance with Rule 8, the Meeting will be opened by the President of the Coordinating Committee who shall conduct the election of the President of the Meeting. As per Rule 7, the Meeting will be chaired by a woman Member of the host Parliament of the 106th Conference.

➤ **Participation and speaking rights**

Women Members of Parliament who are part of their delegation as delegates to the Ouagadougou Meetings can take the floor. Any woman Member of Parliament who accompanies the delegation in a capacity other than that of delegate can observe the proceedings of the Meeting but cannot take part in them (Rule 3 of the Rules of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians).

The debates are also open to men parliamentarians. Only those who form part of their delegation as delegates can take the floor, subject to the agreement of the participants and the Chairperson of the Meeting (Rule 4.2 of the Rules of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians).

Representatives of international parliamentary assemblies that are Associate Members of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and representatives of international organisations that enjoy observer status may also ask to take the floor.

➤ **Working languages**

The debates in plenary will be conducted in Arabic, English, French and Spanish. To the extent possible, the debates in discussions groups will be held with the assistance of available interpreters; however the documents will be available only in English and French.

➤ **Debating arrangements**

Notwithstanding time constraints and those imposed by the number of speakers, the President will seek to promote an active and spontaneous dialogue. Statements should therefore be brief (from one to three minutes).

Participants are urged to refrain from reading out prepared statements and reporting on the situation in their own country. They are encouraged to debate ideas, illustrating their comments, where appropriate, with examples from their country.

No list of speakers will be drawn up in advance. Participants will be able to indicate their wish to take the floor by completing the registration form they will find on their desks and handing it to the ushers who will pass it to the President.

Regarding the debate on agenda item 3, the special speaking arrangements described hereunder shall apply.

➤ **Documents**

The Secretariat will make available in the meeting room a set of official documents prepared for the session and various IPU publications.

Participants wishing to present developments in their country with regard to gender issues can display documents on tables outside the meeting room. Such documents cannot be translated and reproduced by the Secretariat, to whom two copies should be given for the President.

B. Annotated provisional agenda

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda

In accordance with Rule 11, the provisional agenda was drawn up by the Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians during the Inter-Parliamentary Meetings held in Havana (Cuba) in April 2001.

Point 2 de l'ordre du jour provisoire

Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians

i) Work at Havana and Ouagadougou, and recommendations

Mrs. Viola Furubjelke, President of the Coordinating Committee, will report to the Meeting on the Committee's sittings on 6 April 2001 in Havana and on the morning of 9 September 2001, in Ouagadougou.

(iii) Election to fill vacancies

The Meeting will have to hold an election to fill the post of Regional Representative currently vacant in the Eurasia Group. It has before it the candidature of Mrs. Yadviga Grigorovich (Belarus).

Any other vacancy within the Committee that may occur between now and its next session will be announced as soon as possible.

Elections to fill vacancies within the Committee are held in accordance to Rules 31.2 and 32 of the Rules of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians.

Furthermore, the participants' attention is drawn to the Interim Report of the Secretary General to the Union's governing bodies, which specifies the posts to be filled at the Ouagadougou Meetings.

Item 3 of the provisional agenda

**Contribution to the work of the 106th Conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union:
Protecting and caring for children, the driving force of future society**

In discussing this item, participants will aim at contributing to the debates of the Second Study Committee and to the resolution which will be adopted on this subject by the 106th Conference at its closing sitting, on 14 September 2001. This resolution will be prepared bearing in mind the parliamentary contribution to the Special Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations on the issue of children, to be held in New York from 19 to 21 September 2001. Participants should pay particular attention to issues specific to the girl-child and to the idea of gender partnership.

In order to promote lively and direct exchanges among participants, the Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians agreed on the following debating arrangements:

- From the outset, participants will split into discussion groups, which will meet in rooms to be determined on the spot.
- Beforehand, the participants will elect, on the recommendation of the Coordinating Committee, a moderator and a rapporteur for each of the working groups formed.
- Furthermore, they will elect, also on the recommendation of the Coordinating Committee, a General Rapporteur who will be responsible for drafting, in consultation with the moderators and/or the rapporteurs of the discussion groups, the President of the Coordinating Committee and the President of the Meeting, the draft resolution of the Meeting to be submitted to the Second Study Committee of the Conference on the theme "*Protecting and caring for children, the driving force of future society*" (item 4 of the agenda of the 106th Conference).
- The Coordinating Committee recommends that discussion groups debate the themes listed in the box hereunder.
- The interpreters' teams available for the plenary session can work with two groups only. Any other group will have to deliberate in English only, without the assistance of interpreters. In fact, it will be impossible, for budgetary reasons, to recruit an additional team of interpreters.
- Each discussion group can debate until 1 p.m. Depending on when the group discussions begin, each group will have about two hours of work at its disposal.
- At the end of the discussion, each group will agree on the key ideas to be presented by the moderator or the rapporteur to the afternoon plenary Meeting of Women Parliamentarians.
- The draft resolution to be submitted to the Second Study Committee is to be deposited with the Secretariat before Tuesday, 11 September 2001 at 2.30 p.m.

Protecting and Caring for Children, the Driving Force of Future Society

NB: The following themes and sub-themes are merely indicative.

First discussion group

Children's health with a special focus on HIV/AIDS and its consequences on their lives and future

Second discussion group

Protecting children against exploitation and abuse

- Child labour including its worst forms
- Sexual abuse: rape, pornography, prostitution
- Sale of children
- Violence at home and at school
- Drugs
- Child soldiers

Third discussion group

Caring for children, their development and their future

- Promoting and protecting the dignity of the child
- Providing a positive emotional and material environment for the child
- Providing adequate and gender-sensitive education
- Fostering children's development: games, sports and culture
- Ensuring fair justice for minors with an emphasis on the child's human rights
- Providing a support structure for war and AIDS orphans

All subjects should be studied bearing in mind the need to adhere to and implement relevant treaties and a number of non-binding international agreements, such as:

- The Convention on the Rights of the Child
- The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict
- The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography
- The Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour
- The Additional Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, to the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime
- The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
- The Beijing Platform for Action and the Beijing Plus Five Outcome Document (especially the chapters on the girl-child)
- The Stockholm Agenda for Action against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children

Supplementary to the discussions on the above-mentioned themes, participants will surely wish to take part in the discussions which will take place on Wednesday, 12 September 2001, from 10.30 a.m. to 1 p.m. (informal meeting room) on «Violence Against Women: Excision». An information note on this event will be distributed during the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians.

Item 4 of the provisional agenda

Action by the Inter-Parliamentary Union to promote partnership between men and women

(i) Work and recommendations of the Gender Partnership Group

Participants will be informed of the stage reached in the work of the Gender Partnership Group with regard to the results of new consultation of the IPU members launched by the Group concerning the its latest proposals (see the Gender Partnership Group's report to the Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in Havana, CL/168/13(h)-R.1) and the request addressed by the Secretary General to all the members of the Organisation through circular letter GRP/2001/DSG.7 of 14 May 2001). The briefing on the proceedings of the Group will be followed by a debate.

ii) Matters relating to the reform of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Participants will be informed of the stage reached in the work of the Executive Committee on this subject, following the consultation of the members of the Inter-Parliamentary Union it carried out on its vision for the Organisation in the future and its proposals on the corresponding structures (see the report submitted to the Council in Havana, CL7168/10-P.1). In this regard, they could bear in mind the recommendations formulated by the Gender Partnership Group in its above-mentioned report.

iii) Activities of the Focal Points

Activities of the IPU Focal Points appointed in various national parliaments to follow questions relating to the status of women will be presented. The presentation will be followed by a debate.

iv) Specialised meetings and other initiatives

Participants will be informed of planned IPU meetings and initiatives for which it is important to take into account the question of parity and of gender partnership. The presentation will be followed by a debate.

Item 5 of the provisional agenda

Action by the Inter-Parliamentary Union to strengthen the parliamentary dimension of the United Nations efforts to promote partnership between men and women

Participants will be briefed on the status of cooperation between the IPU and the United Nations in this field. Subject to confirmation, they will have the opportunity to dialogue with a senior official of the United Nations.

Debates will focus mainly on the following items:

- National, regional and international follow-up to the Beijing Platform for Action and the Final Document of the "Beijing+ 5" Special Session of the UN General Assembly
- Ratification and application of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol
- Ratification and implementation of other treaties on the status of women.

Item 6 of the provisional agenda

Place, date and agenda of the Sixth Meeting of Women Parliamentarians

The Seventh Meeting will be held in Marrakech (Morocco) on Sunday, 17 March 2001.

The presidency of the Meeting will be subject to the provisions of Rule 7 of the Rules of the Meeting.

In accordance with the provisions of Rule 11 of the Rules of the Meeting, the Coordinating Committee will draw up the provisional agenda at its sitting on Friday, 14 September 2001 "*in the light of the work and proposals of the previous Meeting of Women Parliamentarians*" and the recommendations of the Executive Committee for the agenda of the 107th Conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.