



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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133rd IPU ASSEMBLY AND RELATED MEETINGS

Geneva, 17 - 21 October 2015

22nd MEETING OF WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS

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133rd IPU ASSEMBLY AND RELATED MEETINGS

Geneva, 17 - 21 October 2015

22nd MEETING OF WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS

Geneva, 17 and 20 October 2015

Meeting of Women Parliamentarians
Agenda

FEM/22/A.1-Rev.1
15 October 2015

I. SCHEDULE OF MEETING AND DEBATING ARRANGEMENTS

The 22nd Meeting of Women Parliamentarians will take place on the premises of the CICG and will comprise two sittings. During its first sitting on Saturday, 17 October, from 2.30 p.m. to 6.00 p.m., the Meeting will aim to ensure that gender is mainstreamed in the work of the 133rd Assembly.

The second sitting, on Tuesday 20 October, will be held from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. and will focus on a debate on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and on the review of implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. It will also address on-going matters relating to the functioning of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians. The Meeting will host a Parity Debate on the next Global Parliamentary Report on the theme "Parliamentary oversight and political will", scheduled for 9:30 a.m. on that same day.

The Meeting should be an opportunity for active and spontaneous dialogue. Interventions should therefore be brief and not exceed three minutes. No list of speakers will be drawn up in advance. In plenary, participants will be able to indicate their wish to take the floor by completing the registration form they will find on their desks.

II. ANNOTATED PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Saturday, 17 October 2015

First sitting: 2:30 to 6 p.m.

1. **Adoption of the agenda**
2. **Gender activities at IPU Assemblies**
 - (a) Work of the Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians at its previous sessions
Participants will be informed of the Coordinating Committee's deliberations at its sessions of 30 March in Hanoi and of 17 October 2015, in Geneva.
 - (b) Work and recommendations of the Gender Partnership Group
 - (c) Any other business

Discussions under this item will conclude at 3 p.m.

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3. Contribution to the work of the 133rd Assembly with a view to providing an input from a gender perspective

a) Contribution to the work of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights

Women parliamentarians will be invited to discuss the following item of the agenda of the 133rd Assembly:

- Democracy in the digital era and the threat to privacy and individual freedoms

The Rapporteur of the Standing Committee, Ms. B. Jónsdóttir, will introduce the item.

The participants will elect, on the recommendation of the Coordinating Committee, a rapporteur who will present a report to the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians.

The Meeting will then ask her to prepare, in consultation with the President of the Coordinating Committee, amendments to be presented during the general debate of the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights (Sunday, 18 October).

Discussions under this item will conclude at 4:30 p.m.

b) Contribution to the General Debate at the 133rd Assembly

Women parliamentarians will be invited to discuss the topic “Women’s experiences as migrants and refugees: human rights and socioeconomic perspectives” as a gender dimension contribution to the theme of the General Debate of the Assembly on “The moral and economic imperative for fairer, smarter and more humane migration”.

Two panellists will be invited to address the gender dimensions of migration and the best ways to respond to the particular challenges women face as they migrate to work or to seek refuge.

1. CEDAW and the State's duty to fulfil the human rights of women in forced migration.
Ms Ismat Jahan, UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
2. Women’s experiences as migrant workers: opportunities and challenges.
Mr Laurent de Boeck, International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Discussions under this item will conclude at 6 p.m.

The debates will be launched by a panel and will be followed by a discussion with participants.

Tuesday, 20 October 2015

9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

**PARITY DEBATE ON THE NEXT GLOBAL PARLIAMENTARY REPORT on the theme
“PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT AND POLITICAL WILL”**

All delegates to the 133rd IPU Assembly are invited to participate in this debate.

Second sitting: 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

4. Future of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians and its Coordinating Committee

- a. Participants will receive a report from the Coordinating Committee on amendments to the Rules of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians and of its Coordinating Committee
- b. Follow-up on the campaign: *I am an MP. My power for women’s power*: Participants will discuss parliamentary initiatives that male and female parliamentarians can take to enhance women’s participation in parliament

Discussions under this item will conclude at 12 noon.

5. CEDAW and UNSCR 1325: Gender equality as an indispensable element of sustainable peace and security

A member of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women will inform the Meeting on recent developments in the work of the Committee and its cooperation with parliaments and the IPU. The briefing will be followed by a question and answer session. Participants will also debate on UN

Security Council Resolution on Women, Peace and Security on the occasion of its 15-year review taking place in 2015.

To launch discussions, two panelists will be invited to present their views:

1. Ms. Lia Nadaraia, CEDAW member: The CEDAW Convention and its General recommendation No. 30 as a benchmark to promote gender equality in the area of peace and security.
2. Mr. Ekwee Ethuro, President of the Senate of Kenya

Discussions under this item will conclude at 1 p.m.

6. Next Meeting of Women Parliamentarians



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133rd IPU ASSEMBLY AND RELATED MEETINGS

Geneva, 17 - 21 October 2015

Meeting of Women Parliamentarians
Item 2

FEM/22/2(b)-Inf.1
15 October 2015

Gender activities at the Inter-Parliamentary Union Assemblies

(b) Work and recommendations of the Gender Partnership Group

Status of the Participation of Men and Women in the 133rd Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and in Previous Assemblies

1. Women parliamentarians participating in the 133rd Assembly and related meetings, in Geneva

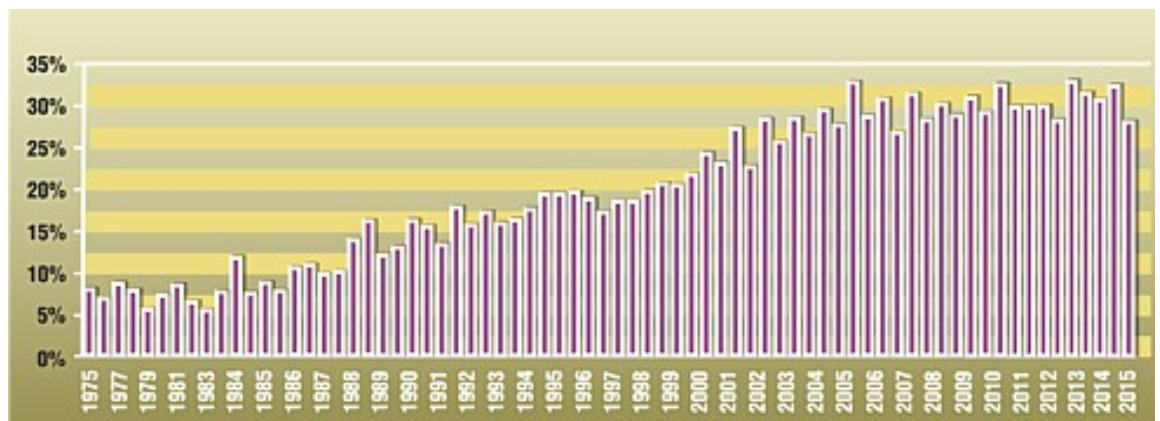
The names and titles of the women parliamentarians participating in the Geneva Meetings may be found in the provisional list of delegates, copies of which have already been placed in the delegates' pigeonholes.

2. Comparative proportion of men and women parliamentarians participating in the 133rd Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (as at 15 October 2015)

Countries	134
Associate members	6
Total number of participants	1399
Total number of parliamentarians	674
Number of women parliamentarians	212
Percentage of women parliamentarians	31.5%
Number of men parliamentarians	462
Percentage of men parliamentarians	68.5%

3. Changes in the participation of women parliamentarians in IPU Conferences/Assemblies since 1975

WOMEN MPs IN DELEGATIONS TO IPU ASSEMBLIES



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133rd IPU ASSEMBLY AND RELATED MEETINGS

Geneva, 17 – 21.10.2015

Governing Council
Item 10

CL/197/10(c)-R.1
5 October 2015

Reports on recent IPU specialized meetings

(c) 10th Meeting of Women Speakers of Parliament United Nations Headquarters, New York, 29-30 August 2015

The Tenth Meeting of Women Speakers of Parliament was held at UN Headquarters on 29 and 30 August 2015. Twenty-three parliaments headed by women Speakers were represented.

The Meeting was opened by Mr. S. Chowdhury, IPU President, in the presence of Mr. M. Chungong, IPU Secretary General. Ms. J. Williams, Nobel Peace Prize laureate and President of the Nobel Women's Initiative, delivered the Meeting's keynote address.

In light of the fact that the Beijing Platform for Action was adopted 20 years ago this year, the Meeting's chosen discussion topic was *Innovating for gender equality*. The aim of the talks was to identify new strategies and creative solutions to step up progress in achieving gender equality. The Speakers also discussed ways to ensure implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to make societies more democratic and peaceful.

Building on their discussions, and conscious of the fact there is no single solution to addressing the multitude of challenges faced by women with regard to gender equality, the women Speakers identified a number of spheres of appropriate action for reaching their goals. These ranged from harnessing collective action, to investing in women's empowerment, changing mentalities, prioritizing efforts to end violence against women, improving the oversight role of parliaments and advocating gender equality financing.

The Speakers also stressed that the positions which they held gave them a particular responsibility to lead by example. The Meeting adopted a report on its deliberations, which can be found in [Annex](#).

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Tenth Meeting of Women Speakers of Parliament **INNOVATING FOR GENDER EQUALITY:** *Making development, peace and democracy a reality for women and men*

United Nations Headquarters, New York, 29-30 August 2015
Organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Summary Report

by Ms. S.B. Hanoomanjee, Speaker of the National Assembly (Mauritius)

We, women Speakers of Parliament from 23 countries, gathered on 29 and 30 August 2015 on the occasion of our 10th Meeting of Women Speakers, organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

We debated the question of innovating for gender equality, with a view to identifying key strategies and action to step up progress in achieving that equality. Our debates also aimed to feed into the deliberations and outcome of the Fourth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament.

Gender equality is at the heart of democracy, peace and sustainable development. It is a matter of human rights, human dignity, justice and good governance. It is undeniable that progress has been achieved at many levels and in many spheres, but no country can claim to have realised full equality between men and women. Women account for half the world's population, two parliaments have a majority of women members (Rwanda and Bolivia) and one has equal numbers of men and women (Andorra). However, women make up only 22 per cent of parliamentarians worldwide and 16 per cent of Speakers of Parliament. Women continue to earn systematically less than men for doing the same work and millions of girls are prevented from attending school. The scourge of violence against women remains a key issue in every country across the world.

Gender inequality holds all our countries back. The struggle to overcome it must therefore be a priority for each and every one of us – both men and women – as we embark on and commit to the achievement of the SDGs.

The power of collective action

We strongly believe in the power of change and collective action.

For this power of change to make a meaningful impact, women's share in politics has to be equal to that of men. There can be no democracy without decision-making equality between men and women in all spheres and at all levels. Efficient policymaking is handicapped by not being sufficiently representative and inclusive.

Affirmative action has paved and continues to pave the way for progress. Maximizing its impact will require political will and effective enforcement. Parliaments and Governments need to open up all policy areas, including finance and defence, to the contribution of women. We also need to ensure that the work environment is conducive to the participation of men and women and to transform institutions such as parliaments into gender-sensitive environments.

The power of change is also contingent on our collective action. Solidarity among women has proven to be the key to many successes on the road to gender equality. Experience-sharing and strategizing together are the first step. Developing platforms for common action, such as women's parliamentary caucuses, is another.

We firmly believe, however, that collective action for gender equality is not the exclusive preserve of women: men, boys and girls are also key stakeholders and partners. As women leaders, we invite our male colleagues to be at the forefront of our collective engagement for equality. We recognize the value of campaigns such as the IPU's *My power for women's power* campaign and UN Women's *He for She* campaign, as platforms to generate the exchange of ideas and common action.

We call on men Speakers and men parliamentarians to become advocates for gender equality, to persuade boys and men that our countries and our world can only benefit from equal opportunities and rights and to lead by example by condemning all forms of discrimination, stereotyping and violence against women.

Investing in women's empowerment

Empowering women is a determining factor of progress. As long as inequalities between men and women remain in the economic sphere, the family, schools, universities, the world of science or in access to technology, none of our countries will reach their full development potential. Gender-sensitive policies need to become the norm instead of the exception.

Women's rights cannot be forgotten even before they become a reality. Yet many women are not aware of their human rights. Education and awareness-raising are critical to building knowledge among women about their socio-economic, cultural, civic and political rights. This knowledge has to reach all women, in particular the most vulnerable groups such as rural women, women with disabilities and the poor.

The economic empowerment of women is a priority, without which women cannot reach their potential and contribute to their country's development, especially as they are more vulnerable to abuse and discrimination. We need to craft policies and legislation that secure access for women to property, land rights and loans.

Changing mentalities

The swift progress we desire for gender equality implies challenging mindsets and changing mentalities.

There are persistent and deep cultural practices and beliefs that constitute major challenges to achieving gender equality in all areas of life and all countries. We need to step up both our collective and individual efforts to change mentalities and challenge traditional social and gender roles.

Communication is at the heart of change. The media and social media could be better used to communicate more on gender equality. These can be powerful vehicles for change if used in a responsible and non-discriminatory manner that avoids stereotyping. Our parliaments should develop stronger communications strategies on gender equality, open spaces for debates on electronic platforms and reach out more proactively to grass-roots communities.

More attention needs to be paid to working closely with communities, in order to bridge the gap which citizens often feel lies between them and their representatives. Bringing parliaments, and in particular women Speakers, to the people will help change mentalities. We should develop further those initiatives aimed at facilitating access to Speakers (such as Speaker time) and at enhancing interaction between MPs and citizens (such as rural parliaments).

The most pressing priority is to reach out to girls and boys and to educate them about gender equality. We firmly believe that gender equality should be part of school curricula. Educating boys and girls about human rights and gender equality from an early age would help to instil a culture of non-violence and respect in relations between the sexes. Educational materials used in schools must also be reviewed in order to eliminate stereotyping. Beyond the education system, young people need to learn by seeing men and women in positions of responsibility, as well as men and women in their own communities, who lead by example and promote equality and respect in what they say and do.

We have the power to open a space for debate. As leaders and women Speakers, we have the responsibility to place sensitive issues squarely on the political and public agenda: this will allow us to tackle taboos and encourage dialogue and the exchange of ideas. Issues that have been perceived until now as private matters, such as marital rape or child marriage, should be on the public agenda if we want to curb existing practices and behaviours that hold women back. Debate is the starting point for building understanding and effecting a change in mentality. We should lead the way in prompting such dialogue.

Ending violence against women - a priority

Violence against women is the most extreme violation of women's rights. No nation is exempt: the latest global and regional estimates by the World Health Organization show that one out of every three women has experienced some form of sexual violence.

Whether in the public or the private sphere, violence against women and girls in all its forms robs them of their dignity, violates their fundamental rights, damages their health, reduces their productivity and prevents them from achieving their full potential. It also has significant consequences for peace and security and a negative impact on development.

Addressing violence against women is a complex issue that requires profound change. It means looking at power relations, addressing patriarchy, changing mentalities, and challenging the social roles and stereotypes that we have internalized, including those related to men. It also means enabling women to take ownership of their lives, their bodies and their destinies.

Addressing violence against women requires crafting comprehensive policies and legislation that address all forms of violence and include prevention, criminalization and reparation. More generally, a legal framework that is non-discriminatory, supports women's empowerment and addresses all forms of discrimination contributes to achieving gender equality and eradicating violence against women. Parliamentary and governmental action can build on international and regional commitments such as the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.

Discrimination and violence against women and girls are exacerbated during conflict. Tackling the root causes of such practices will ultimately make for more peaceful societies.

The year 2015 marks the 15th anniversary of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. This provides a perfect opportunity to take stock of progress made, build on best practices and ensure renewed commitment on this issue. Only a small group of countries have so far developed national action plans on this resolution. We need to take this up in our respective countries and see to it that appropriate legislation and resources are secured to facilitate the implementation of this and other resolutions on women, peace and security.

In light of the alarming reports of current violations of women's rights in conflict situations, we must take urgent action at the national, regional and international levels to protect women and ensure that survivors of conflict receive the support they require.

Prevention should be enhanced through the training of peace-keeping missions on gender equality and violence against women. Participants in such missions should be held to the highest standards and be held accountable for any crimes committed. Peace-keeping missions should include a gender unit to better meet the needs of women and girls who face increased risk of violence in conflict situations. Some countries have innovated by sending all-female peace units to conflict areas, sending a strong signal about priorities to be addressed.

Early-warning systems should be developed or strengthened to prevent violence. In specific contexts such as camps, initiatives which focus on men and provide them with support and attention have proved useful.

First and foremost, additional efforts must be deployed to ensure that victims of violence have access to justice and reparation and that perpetrators are prosecuted. Post-conflict trauma should be given more attention as part of a common strategy to provide victims with medical care and counselling which will help them to rebuild their lives.

Achieving gender equality and ending violence against women is the responsibility of both men and women. It is a public issue. Men are part and parcel of the solution: they should take an active part in the debate and stand up for women's rights. The silent majority of non-violent men must speak out now and assume their responsibilities alongside women.

Oversight role of parliaments

As women Speakers and parliamentarians, our action for gender equality has to be vocal both at the local and the global level. We hold our governments to account on all matters and should use our oversight powers to promote gender equality. We need to question policies and legislation from a gender perspective and to mainstream gender equality in the functioning of our parliaments.

To take up this task, it is crucial to be able to rely on sex-disaggregated data and gender-impact studies. Such tools can better inform our debates and decision-making in all matters before us. Assessment of the implementation of policies, legislation and plans of action are key steps in gender equality policymaking. We need to draw conclusions and policy orientations based on lessons learned. Here again, political will and commitment among politicians are crucial ingredients.

Financing for gender equality

It is undeniable that advancing gender equality will require adequate financing. Gender budgeting needs to become a norm as it can provide a comprehensive and coordinated framework to set gender equality objectives, allocate adequate resources and monitor progress.

Development cooperation can and should embody gender equality and further its cause. International financial institutions can greatly contribute to placing gender equality at the heart of development policies, programmes and plans.

We are convinced that joint, coordinated and strong action will bring about change. We request the parliamentary community to work together to achieve gender equality in one generation.



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133rd IPU ASSEMBLY AND RELATED MEETINGS

Geneva, 17 – 21.10.2015

Implementation of the IPU Strategy for 2012-2017

(b) Strategic Objective 2 - Advance Gender Equality

The document provides a brief overview of results achieved between March and September 2015. It draws particular attention to the IPU's research and capacity-building work in the field of gender equality. Special initiatives were also carried out to (i) celebrate the 30th anniversary of the IPU's Meeting of Women Parliamentarians; (ii) mark the 10th Meeting of Women Speakers of Parliament; (iii) contribute to the Beijing +20 Review; and (iv) set new sustainable development objectives (SDGs) – all major milestones for 2015.

Key highlights

2015 was a year of many global milestones. For the United Nations they included the setting of new development objectives and the Beijing +20 review, in February 2015. For the IPU, they included two major events: the 30th anniversary of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians and the 10th Meeting of Women Speakers of Parliament.

These four milestones are reflected in the strategic planning for IPU's gender programme, which have included a series of activities to promote a strong parliamentary perspective in assessing the fulfilment of key international commitments for gender equality and identifying priorities for further policies and other measures to achieve it. These activities have emphasized the importance of leadership by women as well as men in the advancement of gender equality.

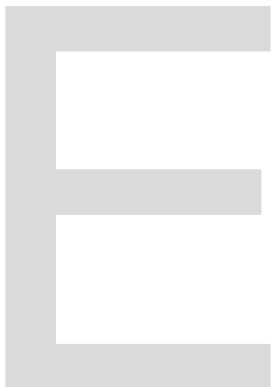
The following activities were carried out as the main components of Strategic Objective 2:

Research and data

The IPU contributed to the definition of indicators on women's participation in politics for the new Sustainable Development Goal 5, on gender equality.

It produced two tools to raise awareness among policy-makers, activists and the general public about women's participation in politics: an analysis on *Women in Parliament: 20 years in review*, as input for the Beijing +20 review, and its Map on Women in Politics 2015, jointly produced with UN Women.

The IPU continued publishing its monthly statistics on women in parliament (<http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm>) and developing a database on electoral quotas for women (www.quotaproject.org), a joint initiative with International IDEA and Stockholm University. By providing concrete examples of electoral gender quotas, highlighting good practice and pinpointing pitfalls to avoid, the database continues to provide a strong basis for IPU to assist parliaments in reforming electoral legislation.



The IPU also continued to support information sharing on women in politics and to showcase women's leadership through the International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics website (www.iknowpolitics.org), together with International IDEA, the National Democratic Institute, UNDP and UN Women. The iKNOWPolitics website hosted e-discussions on three themes: "Beijing +20"; the question "Do women make political parties more successful?" and "Creating a work-life balance for women in politics".

The research and data on women in parliaments have elicited great interest among researchers, activists, politicians and partner organizations. They are an important source of information and good practices for the efforts of such actors to develop and implement more proactive measures to increase the number of women in parliament, develop gender sensitive parliaments and thus improve equality in politics.

Access and effectiveness

At the national level, the IPU has implemented projects to support women's participation in particular parliaments, with emphasis on countries emerging from transition.

In June 2015, IPU provided support to women members of Tunisia's first parliament since that country's recent transition. In partnership with International IDEA, a training session on team building was organized to support synergy among women MPs from different political parties. A session on women's parliamentary caucuses provided guidance, facilitated experience-sharing among women parliamentarians and identified steps for the establishment of a women's caucus.

In Mali, IPU organized a training workshop to enhance the leadership capacity and skills of women parliamentarians, facilitating their identification of priorities for parliamentary work and strengthening their solidarity and ability to work together in re-building national cohesion and enhancing equality.

The Parliament of Kenya called on IPU to help craft a framework for implementing a constitutional provision limiting parliamentary membership for either gender to no more than two-thirds. IPU's expert mission to Nairobi met with key parliamentary and government officials and civil society representatives, provided guidance on needed legislative provisions and presented its recommendations to the Speakers of both houses of Kenya's parliament. In a plenary session of the country's Senate, both men and women MPs expressed their deep satisfaction with IPU's support and their willingness to implement IPU's recommendations. A bill drawing on those recommendations was tabled in summer.

Gender-sensitive parliaments

Based on the Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments, adopted at its 127th Assembly, IPU has developed a methodology to help parliaments assess their level of gender-sensitivity and adopt reforms to embody and champion gender equality.

IPU's Plan of Action on gender-sensitive parliaments and related self-assessment continues to inspire other international organizations. Partner UN agencies draw regularly on IPU support in seeking to mainstream gender in their own parliamentary development programmes. With respect to the Americas, in September 2015 the IPU presented the concept of gender-sensitive parliaments and described its work in this area at the Plenary Assembly of ParlAmericas, as input for the latter's new five-year project to strengthen parliaments in the region. That project has an important focus on gender mainstreaming and women's political empowerment.

Discrimination and violence against women

The IPU and the National Assembly of Mali have launched a two-year initiative to improve the status of women and strengthen their rights. The project aims to support parliamentary bodies responsible for gender issues and back parliamentary efforts to develop the legislative and political framework needed to improve women's status. Training workshops on leadership for women MPs and on better enabling both male and female MPs skills to advocate gender equality and fight violence against women and girls were the first in a series of capacity-building activities. The project will continue this fall with support targeting women's participation in decision-making and the elimination of female genital mutilation and other forms of violence against women (VAW).

The IPU has continued to inform the deliberations of the UN Committee for the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women by providing reports on women's participation in parliament and government in the States reporting to the Committee.

It has also helped parliaments develop and/or implement legislation on violence against women. As a follow up to the IPU regional seminar for Asia-Pacific Parliaments, which focused on ending violence against girls, the Parliament of Bangladesh is now engaged in substantive work on child marriage, with IPU support. Following an MP capacity-building workshop on child marriage and birth and marriage registration, MPs will make a community outreach visit on the same topics in October 2015.

IPU – a forum of exchange and mobilisation for women in parliament

At the Meeting of Women MPs held during the 132nd IPU Assembly in Hanoi, men and women parliamentarians celebrated the Meeting's 30th anniversary by issuing a call for action, entitled "My Power for Women's Power". The call renewed their commitment to advancing gender equality through parliamentary work. Several parliaments have since taken up the cause and provided the IPU with lists of signatories to the call for action.

The 10th Meeting of Women Speakers of Parliament took place in New York on the eve of the Fourth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament. It brought together 25 women Speakers from 24 countries, with discussion focused on innovation for gender equality.

List of current activities to strengthen gender equality through parliaments

- Providing expertise and support to increase women's participation in politics and decision-making positions in Kenya, Mali and Turkey.
- Supporting women parliamentarians and women parliamentary caucuses in Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Mauritania and Tunisia.
- Supporting parliaments in Namibia and Maldives in implementing CEDAW and addressing discrimination against women.
- Building parliamentary capacity in Bangladesh and Mali to address harmful practices against girls, in particular child marriage and female genital mutilation.
- Assisting parliaments in reviewing a draft law on VAW in Mauritania and in enforcing existing law on domestic violence in Maldives.
- Building the capacity of parliamentarians for the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security in Arab countries.
- Conducting research on harassment and discrimination against women in parliament.
- Producing a self-assessment toolkit on gender-sensitive parliaments.



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133rd IPU ASSEMBLY AND RELATED MEETINGS

Geneva, 17 - 21 October 2015

Meeting of Women Parliamentarians
Item 2

FEM/22/2(c)-Inf.1
9 October 2015

Gender activities at the Inter-Parliamentary Union Assemblies

Statistical data on the status of women in national parliaments

Delegations will find enclosed documents and statistical data giving the status of women in national parliaments as at **1 September 2015**.

These pages may be found on the Union's Internet site (www.ipu.org). Delegations will note that these documents have been established by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, on the basis of information provided by national parliaments. However, these statistics may be out of date. The Secretariat would therefore appreciate any information which complements or updates the data supplied.

- **Please address any requests for changes in the enclosed data to Ms Valeria Sistek at the Secretariat of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.**

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WORLD CLASSIFICATION									
Rank	Country	Lower or single House				Upper House or Senate			
		Elections	Seats*	Women	% W	Elections	Seats*	Women	% W
1	Rwanda	9 2013	80	51	63.8%	9 2011	26	10	38.5%
2	Bolivia	10 2014	130	69	53.1%	10 2014	36	17	47.2%
3	Cuba	2 2013	612	299	48.9%	---	---	---	---
4	Seychelles	9 2011	32	14	43.8%	---	---	---	---
5	Sweden	9 2014	349	152	43.6%	---	---	---	---
6	Senegal	7 2012	150	64	42.7%	---	---	---	---
7	Mexico	6 2015	498	211	42.4%	7 2012	128	43	33.6%
8	South Africa ¹	5 2014	396	166	41.9%	5 2014	54	19	35.2%
9	Ecuador	2 2013	137	57	41.6%	---	---	---	---
10	Finland	4 2015	200	83	41.5%	---	---	---	---
11	Iceland	4 2013	63	26	41.3%	---	---	---	---
"	Namibia	11 2014	104	43	41.3%	11 2010	26	6	23.1%
"	Nicaragua	11 2011	92	38	41.3%	---	---	---	---
12	Spain	11 2011	350	144	41.1%	11 2011	266	90	33.8%
13	Mozambique	10 2014	250	99	39.6%	---	---	---	---
"	Norway	9 2013	169	67	39.6%	---	---	---	---
14	Andorra	3 2015	28	11	39.3%	---	---	---	---
"	Belgium	5 2014	150	59	39.3%	7 2014	60	30	50.0%
15	Ethiopia	5 2015	546	212	38.8%	5 2010	135	22	16.3%
16	Timor-Leste	7 2012	65	25	38.5%	---	---	---	---
17	Denmark	6 2015	179	67	37.4%	---	---	---	---
18	Netherlands	9 2012	150	56	37.3%	5 2015	75	26	34.7%
19	Angola	8 2012	220	81	36.8%	---	---	---	---
20	Slovenia	7 2014	90	33	36.7%	11 2012	40	3	7.5%
21	Germany	9 2013	631	230	36.5%	N.A.	69	28	40.6%
22	Burundi	6 2015	121	44	36.4%	7 2015	43	18	41.9%
23	Argentina	10 2013	257	93	36.2%	10 2013	72	28	38.9%
24	United Republic of Tanzania	10 2010	350	126	36.0%	---	---	---	---
25	Uganda	2 2011	386	135	35.0%	---	---	---	---
26	Serbia	3 2014	250	85	34.0%	---	---	---	---
27	Costa Rica	2 2014	57	19	33.3%	---	---	---	---
"	Grenada	2 2013	15	5	33.3%	3 2013	13	2	15.4%
"	The F.Y.R. of Macedonia	4 2014	123	41	33.3%	---	---	---	---
28	El Salvador	3 2015	84	27	32.1%	---	---	---	---
29	Algeria	5 2012	462	146	31.6%	12 2012	144	10	6.9%
30	Zimbabwe	7 2013	270	85	31.5%	7 2013	80	38	47.5%
31	New Zealand	9 2014	121	38	31.4%	---	---	---	---
32	Portugal	6 2011	230	72	31.3%	---	---	---	---

"	Tunisia	10 2014	217	68	31.3%	---	---	---	---
33	Cameroon	9 2013	180	56	31.1%	4 2013	100	20	20.0%
34	Italy	2 2013	630	195	31.0%	2 2013	321	91	28.3%
35	Austria	9 2013	183	56	30.6%	N.A.	61	18	29.5%
36	Sudan	4 2015	426	130	30.5%	6 2015	54	19	35.2%
"	Switzerland	10 2011	200	61	30.5%	10 2011	46	9	19.6%
37	Guyana	5 2015	69	21	30.4%	---	---	---	---
38	Nepal	11 2013	599	177	29.5%	---	---	---	---
39	United Kingdom	5 2015	650	191	29.4%	N.A.	782	192	24.6%
40	Trinidad and Tobago	5 2010	42	12	28.6%	6 2010	31	6	19.4%
41	Luxembourg	10 2013	60	17	28.3%	---	---	---	---
42	Afghanistan	9 2010	249	69	27.7%	1 2015	102	18	17.6%
43	Belarus	9 2012	110	30	27.3%	8 2012	58	19	32.8%
44	Philippines	5 2013	290	79	27.2%	5 2013	24	6	25.0%
45	Australia	9 2013	150	40	26.7%	9 2013	76	29	38.2%
46	Iraq	4 2014	328	87	26.5%	---	---	---	---
"	South Sudan	8 2011	332	88	26.5%	8 2011	50	5	10.0%
47	France	6 2012	577	151	26.2%	9 2014	348	87	25.0%
"	Kazakhstan	1 2012	107	28	26.2%	10 2014	47	3	6.4%
48	Croatia	12 2011	151	39	25.8%	---	---	---	---
"	Honduras	11 2013	128	33	25.8%	---	---	---	---
"	Turkmenistan	12 2013	124	32	25.8%	---	---	---	---
49	Suriname	5 2015	51	13	25.5%	---	---	---	---
50	Canada	5 2011	304	77	25.3%	N.A.	83	31	37.3%
"	Singapore	5 2011	99	25	25.3%	---	---	---	---
51	Mauritania	11 2013	147	37	25.2%	11 2009	56	8	14.3%
52	Lao People's Democratic Republic	4 2011	132	33	25.0%	---	---	---	---
"	Lesotho	2 2015	120	30	25.0%	3 2015	33	8	24.2%
53	Viet Nam	5 2011	498	121	24.3%	---	---	---	---
54	Israel	3 2015	120	29	24.2%	---	---	---	---
55	Poland	10 2011	460	111	24.1%	10 2011	100	13	13.0%
56	Equatorial Guinea	5 2013	100	24	24.0%	5 2013	73	10	13.7%
57	Estonia	3 2015	101	24	23.8%	---	---	---	---
58	China	3 2013	2959	699	23.6%	---	---	---	---
59	Lithuania	10 2012	141	33	23.4%	---	---	---	---
60	Kyrgyzstan	10 2010	120	28	23.3%	---	---	---	---
61	Greece	1 2015	300	69	23.0%	---	---	---	---
62	Peru	4 2011	130	29	22.3%	---	---	---	---
63	Eritrea	2 1994	150	33	22.0%	---	---	---	---
64	Dominica	12 2014	32	7	21.9%	---	---	---	---
"	Guinea	9 2013	114	25	21.9%	---	---	---	---

65	Republic of Moldova	11 2014	101	22	21.8%	---	---	---	---
66	Bosnia and Herzegovina	10 2014	42	9	21.4%	1 2015	15	2	13.3%
67	Cabo Verde	2 2011	72	15	20.8%	---	---	---	---
"	Dominican Republic	5 2010	183	38	20.8%	5 2010	32	3	9.4%
"	Monaco	2 2013	24	5	20.8%	---	---	---	---
68	Albania	6 2013	140	29	20.7%	---	---	---	---
69	Pakistan	5 2013	340	70	20.6%	3 2015	104	19	18.3%
70	Madagascar	12 2013	151	31	20.5%	---	---	---	---
71	Bulgaria	10 2014	240	49	20.4%	---	---	---	---
72	Cambodia	7 2013	123	25	20.3%	1 2012	61	10	16.4%
73	Bangladesh	1 2014	350	70	20.0%	---	---	---	---
"	Czech Republic	10 2013	200	40	20.0%	10 2014	81	15	18.5%
"	Liechtenstein	2 2013	25	5	20.0%	---	---	---	---
74	Colombia	3 2014	166	33	19.9%	3 2014	102	23	22.5%
"	Saudi Arabia	1 2013	151	30	19.9%	---	---	---	---
75	Kenya	3 2013	350	69	19.7%	3 2013	68	18	26.5%
76	United States of America	11 2014	434	84	19.4%	11 2014	100	20	20.0%
77	Tajikistan	3 2015	63	12	19.0%	3 2015	32	2	6.3%
78	Slovakia	3 2012	150	28	18.7%	---	---	---	---
79	Panama	5 2014	71	13	18.3%	---	---	---	---
80	Sao Tome and Principe	10 2014	55	10	18.2%	---	---	---	---
81	Latvia	10 2014	100	18	18.0%	---	---	---	---
82	Turkey	6 2015	550	98	17.8%	---	---	---	---
83	Togo	7 2013	91	16	17.6%	---	---	---	---
84	United Arab Emirates	9 2011	40	7	17.5%	---	---	---	---
85	Montenegro	10 2012	81	14	17.3%	---	---	---	---
86	Indonesia	4 2014	555	95	17.1%	---	---	---	---
87	Morocco	11 2011	395	67	17.0%	10 2009	270	6	2.2%
"	Venezuela	9 2010	165	28	17.0%	---	---	---	---
88	Barbados	2 2013	30	5	16.7%	3 2013	21	5	23.8%
"	Malawi	5 2014	192	32	16.7%	---	---	---	---
"	Saint Lucia	11 2011	18	3	16.7%	1 2012	11	3	27.3%
"	San Marino	11 2012	60	10	16.7%	---	---	---	---
89	Democratic People's Republic of Korea	3 2014	687	112	16.3%	---	---	---	---
"	Ireland	2 2011	166	27	16.3%	4 2011	60	18	30.0%
"	Republic of Korea	4 2012	300	49	16.3%	---	---	---	---
90	Uruguay	10 2014	99	16	16.2%	10 2014	31	9	29.0%
91	Fiji	9 2014	50	8	16.0%	---	---	---	---
"	Libya	6 2014	188	30	16.0%	---	---	---	---
"	Uzbekistan	12 2014	150	24	16.0%	1 2015	100	17	17.0%
92	Chile	11 2013	120	19	15.8%	11 2013	38	6	15.8%

93	Azerbaijan	11 2010	122	19	15.6%	---	---	---	---
94	Paraguay	4 2013	80	12	15.0%	4 2013	45	9	20.0%
95	Chad	2 2011	188	28	14.9%	---	---	---	---
96	Mongolia	6 2012	76	11	14.5%	---	---	---	---
97	Gabon	12 2011	120	17	14.2%	12 2014	99	18	18.2%
98	Somalia	8 2012	275	38	13.8%	---	---	---	---
99	Guinea-Bissau	4 2014	102	14	13.7%	---	---	---	---
"	Romania	12 2012	401	55	13.7%	12 2012	168	13	7.7%
100	Russian Federation	12 2011	450	61	13.6%	N.A.	170	29	17.1%
101	Burkina Faso	11 2014	90	12	13.3%	---	---	---	---
"	Guatemala	9 2011	158	21	13.3%	---	---	---	---
"	Niger	1 2011	113	15	13.3%	---	---	---	---
"	Saint Kitts and Nevis	2 2015	15	2	13.3%	---	---	---	---
102	Bahamas	5 2012	38	5	13.2%	5 2012	16	4	25.0%
103	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	12 2010	23	3	13.0%	---	---	---	---
104	Malta	3 2013	70	9	12.9%	---	---	---	---
105	Djibouti	2 2013	55	7	12.7%	---	---	---	---
"	Jamaica	12 2011	63	8	12.7%	9 2007	21	6	28.6%
"	Zambia	9 2011	158	20	12.7%	---	---	---	---
106	Cyprus	5 2011	56	7	12.5%	---	---	---	---
107	Sierra Leone	11 2012	121	15	12.4%	---	---	---	---
"	Syrian Arab Republic	5 2012	250	31	12.4%	---	---	---	---
108	Ukraine	10 2014	422	51	12.1%	---	---	---	---
109	India	4 2014	543	65	12.0%	1 2014	243	31	12.8%
"	Jordan	1 2013	150	18	12.0%	10 2013	75	8	10.7%
110	Mauritius	12 2014	69	8	11.6%	---	---	---	---
111	Georgia	10 2012	150	17	11.3%	---	---	---	---
112	Antigua and Barbuda	6 2014	18	2	11.1%	6 2014	17	7	41.2%
113	Liberia	10 2011	73	8	11.0%	12 2014	30	3	10.0%
114	Ghana	12 2012	275	30	10.9%	---	---	---	---
115	Armenia	5 2012	131	14	10.7%	---	---	---	---
116	Malaysia	5 2013	222	23	10.4%	N.A.	65	15	23.1%
117	Hungary	4 2014	198	20	10.1%	---	---	---	---
118	Brazil	10 2014	513	51	9.9%	10 2014	81	13	16.0%
119	Botswana	10 2014	63	6	9.5%	---	---	---	---
"	Japan	12 2014	475	45	9.5%	7 2013	242	38	15.7%
120	Gambia	3 2012	53	5	9.4%	---	---	---	---
121	Cote d'Ivoire	12 2011	251	23	9.2%	---	---	---	---
122	Democratic Republic of the Congo	11 2011	492	44	8.9%	1 2007	108	5	4.6%
123	Mali	11 2013	147	13	8.8%	---	---	---	---

124	Kiribati	10 2011	46	4	8.7%	---	---	---	---
125	Bhutan	7 2013	47	4	8.5%	4 2013	25	2	8.0%
126	Bahrain	11 2014	40	3	7.5%	12 2014	40	9	22.5%
127	Congo	7 2012	136	10	7.4%	10 2014	72	14	19.4%
128	Benin	4 2015	83	6	7.2%	---	---	---	---
129	Tuvalu	3 2015	15	1	6.7%	---	---	---	---
130	Myanmar	11 2010	420	26	6.2%	11 2010	215	4	1.9%
"	Swaziland	9 2013	65	4	6.2%	10 2013	30	10	33.3%
131	Samoa	3 2011	49	3	6.1%	---	---	---	---
"	Thailand	8 2014	197	12	6.1%	---	---	---	---
132	Maldives	3 2014	85	5	5.9%	---	---	---	---
133	Nigeria	3 2015	360	20	5.6%	3 2015	108	7	6.5%
134	Nauru	6 2013	19	1	5.3%	---	---	---	---
135	Sri Lanka	8 2015	225	11	4.9%	---	---	---	---
136	Haiti	11 2010	95	4	4.2%	11 2010	20	0	0.0%
137	Belize	3 2012	32	1	3.1%	3 2012	13	5	38.5%
"	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	5 2012	290	9	3.1%	---	---	---	---
"	Lebanon	6 2009	128	4	3.1%	---	---	---	---
138	Comoros	1 2015	33	1	3.0%	---	---	---	---
"	Marshall Islands	11 2011	33	1	3.0%	---	---	---	---
139	Papua New Guinea	6 2012	111	3	2.7%	---	---	---	---
140	Solomon Islands	11 2014	50	1	2.0%	---	---	---	---
141	Kuwait	7 2013	65	1	1.5%	---	---	---	---
142	Oman	10 2011	84	1	1.2%	10 2011	83	15	18.1%
143	Micronesia (Federated States of)	3 2015	14	0	0.0%	---	---	---	---
"	Palau	11 2012	16	0	0.0%	11 2012	13	3	23.1%
"	Qatar	7 2013	35	0	0.0%	---	---	---	---
"	Tonga	11 2014	26	0	0.0%	---	---	---	---
"	Vanuatu	10 2012	52	0	0.0%	---	---	---	---
"	Yemen	4 2003	300	0	0.0%	4 2001	111	2	1.8%

* Figures correspond to the number of seats currently filled in Parliament.

1 - South Africa: The figures on the distribution of seats do not include the 36 special rotating delegates appointed on an ad hoc basis, and all percentages given are therefore calculated on the basis of the 54 permanent seats.



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133rd IPU ASSEMBLY AND RELATED MEETINGS

Geneva, 17 - 21 October 2015

Meeting of Women Parliamentarians
Item 3

FEM/22/3b)-Inf.1
29 September 2015

Contribution to the work of the 133rd Assembly with a view to providing an input from a gender perspective

3b) Contribution to the General Debate at the 133rd Assembly

Women's experiences as migrants and refugees: human rights and socioeconomic perspectives

On 17 October 2015, the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians will hold a panel discussion on the gender dimensions of migration in order to address the theme of the 133rd IPU Assembly General Debate, "The moral and economic imperative for fairer, smarter and more humane migration". The main conclusions of the discussion will feed into the Assembly's subsequent General Debate and its outcome document.

The discussion will focus on: (a) the gender-specific push and pull factors of women's labour and forced migration, (b) the particular opportunities and challenges migration represents for women and (c) measures to protect women's human rights as migrants, asylum seekers or refugees.

In recent years, women have been increasingly migrating for economic reasons. However they are mainly employed in the informal economy which rarely offers the same guarantees as other types of work. As domestic workers, women are particularly exposed to abuse by recruiters and employers, and may find it difficult to seek protection from the State. Female migrants who work abroad often face separation from their family but can also provide hope by ensuring their relatives' livelihood.

In many instances, women migrate to flee persecution for political or other reasons. They are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence during conflict and as they flee. Other specific threats they face include trafficking, forced marriage and so-called "honour" crimes. These risks and the traumatic experiences of women, either at home or during migration, require specific attention in asylum procedures, as well as in resettlement, reception and integration schemes.

Two panellists will be invited to address the gender dimensions of migration and the best ways to respond to the particular challenges women face as they migrate to work or to seek refuge.

1. CEDAW and the State's duty to fulfil the human rights of women in forced migration.
Ms Ismat Jahan, UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
2. Women's experiences as migrant workers: opportunities and challenges.
Mr Laurent de Boeck, International Organization for Migration (IOM)

This sitting of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians will be held on Saturday, 17 October, tentatively from 4.30 to 6 p.m.

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MPs attending the meeting are invited to address the following questions:

1. What can parliaments do to ensure that migration and asylum-related laws and policies are responsive to the specific needs of women and girls?
2. How can migrant women's contributions to host societies and countries of origin best be highlighted and valued?
3. Which countries of origin, transit and destination provide the best examples of support to migrant women through gender-sensitive social, economic and legal measures?
4. What can parliaments do to foster international cooperation and concerted action on women's migration?



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133rd IPU ASSEMBLY AND RELATED MEETINGS

Geneva, 17 - 21 October 2015

PARITY DEBATE ON "PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT AND POLITICAL WILL"

organized by the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians

Tuesday, 20 October 2015

09:30 - 11:30, Room 2, level 0, CICG

Over the past years, the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians has placed particular emphasis on the need to engage more with men and to strengthen balanced discussions among men and women. To help achieve these aims, the Meeting will be hosting parity debates.

The Parity debate is a new concept. Parity requires that (1) participating delegations are gender balanced and (2) women and men MPs share their views on an equal basis. The focus of Parity debates is not necessarily a gender equality issue in itself; instead, participants will be asked to keep in mind gender dimensions of other questions discussed, constantly asking themselves if there is a difference for men and women, in terms of situations, roles and impacts, and how solutions can also contribute to advancing gender equality. It is also expected that, as equal numbers of men and women will speak in the debates, the different and complementary views and experiences of both genders will necessarily emerge, ensuring that gender equality concerns are mainstreamed in the discussions.

The first Parity debate will be organized at the 133rd IPU Assembly. It will focus on the political will to hold governments to account, thereby contributing to preparations for the second IPU-UNDP Global Parliamentary Report on *Parliament's power to hold government to account: Realities and perspectives*.

Parliamentary oversight is one of the basic functions of most parliaments. It serves an important role in a democracy, by holding government to account for its policies on behalf of the people. It is also highly political. This discussion will focus on the role of individual parliamentarians – men and women - in carrying out oversight. Particular attention will be paid to the political will to ensure, through effective oversight, that laws, policies and budget allocations meet the needs of both men and women.

Effective oversight requires a conducive political and institutional environment. At the most basic level, there needs to be a common understanding that it is right and proper for parliament to question the government, and that this oversight delivers better policy and results for citizens. Environmental factors such as the system of government, the electoral system and the strength political parties are all powerful influences on the way oversight takes place.

Institutional capacity for oversight varies greatly. The types of oversight tools available to parliamentarians (questions, inquiries, interpellations, reports) differ from one country to another, as does the capacity of the parliamentary administration to support parliamentarians with independent research and budgetary analysis, including capacity to carry out gender impact analysis.

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Arguably, however, the political will of parliamentarians to use the tools at their disposal is the most important factor in the effectiveness of parliamentary oversight. Ultimately, it is individual parliamentarians who have the role and responsibility to hold government to account on behalf of the people.

Political will is never something that can be taken for granted. To better understand the notion of “the political will to hold government to account”, and how it can be increased, it is useful to identify the motivations, incentives and disincentives for parliamentarians to carry out oversight.

The session will be structured around these key questions:

- Is oversight the responsibility of all parliamentarians, or only those from the opposition? What does the political will of parliamentarians to carry out oversight depend on?
- Do women and men parliamentarians have the same responsibility to oversee government action on gender equality? Does their electorate hold women and men parliamentarians accountable in the same way?
- Are there issues where oversight takes place across party lines, for example on matters of gender equality or human rights? On the contrary, are certain issues, such as national security or the intelligence agencies, effectively excluded from parliamentary oversight?
- As a parliamentarian, how do you explain your oversight activities to citizens? What value do citizens place on oversight, and what would make it seem more valuable?

The discussion will draw out the challenges and obstacles that parliamentarians – men and women – face when carrying out oversight. It will aim to identify good practices that tend to reinforce the role of individual parliamentarians and to increase the effectiveness of parliamentary oversight.

The discussion will be moderated by a member of parliament who will put the key questions to panelists before seeking the views of participants in the session. There will be no formal list of speakers; participants will request the floor by raising their hand. In the spirit of interactive debate, prepared speeches are strongly discouraged. In the spirit of the Parity debate, the composition of the panel will be gender balanced as will the order of speakers invited to intervene from the floor.

This session will contribute to the preparation of the second Global Parliamentary Report on “Parliament’s power to hold government to account: Realities and perspectives”. It will complement the debates that will be held on 21 October (at 2.30 pm) on *“Powerful parliaments: building capacity for effective parliamentary oversight”*.



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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My power for women's power

Call for action

If you are an MP, use the power you have to make the world we want
Join women MPs everywhere to create a better world for all women and all girls

We parliamentarians celebrating the 30th anniversary of the IPU Meeting of Women Parliamentarians,

Believe we can and must create a better world for all women and all girls through our action.

We legislators, representatives of the people, overseers of governments, commit to a world that treats women and girls as equals of men and boys at all ages, in all spheres.

Through parliaments, we have the power to fight injustice, inequalities and discrimination in all our work and at all times;

We commit to adopting laws to anchor equality in our societies;

We commit to using our budgetary and oversight powers to make these laws a reality for women and empowering women and girls in all spheres and by all means.

We undertake to reform politics to enhance opportunities for women as leaders and decision-makers both in the public and private sectors.

We commit to lead by example and create gender-sensitive parliaments that embody and deliver on gender equality.

We know the power of women's solidarity and the power of MPs united around a common cause.

If you are an MP, join the women MPs of the world.

If you are an MP, be the power you have and sign.

I am an MP, my power for women's power

 **#WomenMPs**



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

133rd IPU ASSEMBLY AND RELATED MEETINGS

Geneva, 17 - 21 October 2015

Meeting of Women Parliamentarians
Item 4

FEM/22/4(b)-Inf.1
7 October 2015

Future of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians and its Coordinating Committee

(b) Follow-up on the campaign: *I am an MP. My power for women's power*

My power for women's power From a call for action to concrete action

I have signed the call – what can I do next?

1. *Make my commitment visible/vocal*

- ➔ Publish the call for action on my website / Facebook page / Twitter account or on my parliament's website in the language of my country
- ➔ Raise awareness on the call for action in my parliament and among my men and women colleagues
- ➔ Publicize the call for action in the media through interviews and radio and TV programmes
- ➔ Publicize and showcase my individual commitments and actions
 - On my website/Facebook page/Twitter account
 - Via IPU (@IPUparliament, #womenMPs, #mypowerforwomen or postbox@ipu.org)

2. *Take action*

➔ ***Legislate for equality:***

- Launch and co-sponsor legislative initiatives to advance gender equality, enhance women's political participation and combat violence against women
- Initiate or support proposals to amend discriminatory legislation
- Consult and engage key stakeholders, in particular civil society and women's groups, on the creation or revision of specific legislation on gender equality

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→ **Ensure government action delivers to both men and women:**

- Request that gender equality objectives be clearly stated in governmental policies
- Request the collection and provision of sex disaggregated data
- Question policies, plans and budgets in terms of their impact on both men and women
- Ask for gender impact assessments of laws and policies
- Ensure adequate budgets and human resources are allocated to enforce laws and implement programmes
- Hold consultations and public hearings with key stakeholders, in particular civil society and women's groups, on progress made and difficulties encountered in implementing laws and policies

→ **Represent and give voice to all:**

- When meeting constituents, make sure to meet women, girls, men and boys without forgetting the marginalized and the vulnerable among them
- In committee work, request that women's organizations and associations are heard alongside other stakeholders, on any subject matter

→ **Empower women in politics and in society:**

- Support more women to run at the next election, to act as party leaders and to chair parliamentary committees
- Raise awareness on gender equality among men and women colleagues and constituents, and among boys and girls; discuss with them social norms and stereotypes with a view to changing mentalities and finding the means to reconsider the traditional roles of men and women
- Support women in communities by listening to them and empowering them
- Condemn violence against women, harassment, discrimination and inequalities

→ **Make my parliament more gender-sensitive:**

- Organize a debate on gender-sensitive parliaments to raise awareness among men and women MPs and to promote implementation of the Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments (IPU, 2012)
- Propose a self-assessment exercise to evaluate how gender-sensitive my parliament is
- Use every opportunity to raise the awareness of fellow members of parliament, the Speaker and party whips on the importance of having more women in decision-making positions in parliament, as heads of delegations, chairs of committees, and directors of departments.
- Review internal policies and rules to make sure they are responsive to the needs and interests of both men and women and that they favour an environment free from discrimination, harassment and inequalities

- Build expertise on gender equality inside parliament
- Encourage partnership between both sexes when promoting gender equality

I have signed the call – what IPU can do for me?

- ➔ Inform the global parliamentary community of individual pledges, actions and other follow-up activities held at the national level
- ➔ Give visibility to actions taken during IPU Assemblies, with regular monitoring of the implementation of this plan of action at the Meetings of Women Parliamentarians
- ➔ Collect individual pledges/actions and make them available on a dedicated section of its website
- ➔ Provide legal advice and technical and financial support to parliaments wishing to move to action to advance gender equality and empower women
- ➔ Provide information and examples of good practices developed in the field of parliamentary action for gender equality and women's empowerment
- ➔ Support actions to make parliaments more gender-sensitive by organizing parliamentary debates and performing self-assessment exercises



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133rd IPU ASSEMBLY AND RELATED MEETINGS

Geneva, 17 - 21 October 2015

Meeting of Women Parliamentarians
Item 5

FEM/22/5-Inf.1
29 September 2015

CEDAW and UNSCR 1325: Gender equality as an indispensable element of sustainable peace and security

Information note

The IPU Meeting of Women Parliamentarians holds regular discussions on the role of parliaments in advancing gender equality and women's human rights.

It is proposed that the October 2015 Meeting focus on UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (UNSCR 1325), so as to mark the 15th anniversary of this landmark text. The resolution calls for women's participation in peace processes, the protection of women and girls from violence, and the advancement of gender equality as part of state building and preventing further violence. As of June 2015, only 49 countries had adopted a national action plan to implement UNSCR 1325. The Meeting of Women Parliamentarians will take stock of progress made and of the remaining challenges to putting this resolution into effect. The discussion will contribute to the 15-year review of UNSCR 1325 and give new impetus to national parliaments to guide action at the national level.

The United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) also provides a solid basis to promote the role of women in peace efforts, to prevent gender-based violence and to advance gender equality in conflict and post-conflict settings. In its general recommendation No 30, the CEDAW Committee acknowledges the importance of putting CEDAW at the centre of actions designed to implement UNSCR 1325.

A one-hour discussion will be held on Tuesday 20 October (tentatively from 12 to 1 p.m.) on how to enhance the implementation of UNSCR 1325. To launch discussions, two panelists will be invited to present their views:

1. Ms. Lia Nadaraia, CEDAW member: The CEDAW Convention and its General recommendation No. 30 as a benchmark to promote gender equality in the area of peace and security.
2. Mr. Ekwee Ethuro, President of the Senate of Kenya

Each panelist will be asked to make a 5-minute presentation. MPs will then comment, ask questions and give accounts of domestic-level implementation of Resolution 1325.

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133rd IPU ASSEMBLY AND RELATED MEETINGS

Geneva, 17 - 21 October 2015

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29 September 2015

State parties reporting to the CEDAW Committee in 2016 and reporting or having reported in 2015

65th Session (24 October - 18 November 2016)

- Antigua and Barbuda
- Argentina, Seventh periodic report
- Armenia, Combined fifth and sixth periodic reports
- Bangladesh, Eighth periodic report
- Belarus
- Bhutan, Combined eighth and ninth periodic reports
- Burundi, Combined fifth and sixth periodic reports
- Canada, Combined eighth and ninth periodic reports
- Estonia, Combined fifth and sixth periodic reports
- Honduras, Combined seventh and eighth periodic reports
- Netherlands, Sixth periodic report
- Switzerland, Combined fourth and fifth periodic reports

Detailed information is available at
http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/SessionDetails1.aspx?SessionID=1027&Lang=en.

64th Session (4 – 22 July 2016)

- Albania, Fourth periodic report
- France, Combined seventh and eighth periodic reports
- Mali, Combined sixth and seventh periodic reports
- Myanmar, Combined fourth and fifth periodic reports
- Philippines, Combined seventh and eighth periodic reports
- Trinidad and Tobago, Combined fourth to seventh periodic reports
- Turkey, Seventh periodic report
- Uruguay, Combined eighth and ninth periodic reports

Detailed information is available at
http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/SessionDetails1.aspx?SessionID=1019&Lang=en.

63rd Session (15 February - 4 March 2016)

- Czech Republic, Sixth periodic report
- Haiti, Eighth and ninth periodic reports
- Iceland, Seventh and eighth periodic reports
- Japan, Seventh and eighth periodic reports
- Mongolia, Eighth and ninth periodic reports
- Sweden, Eighth and ninth periodic reports
- United Republic of Tanzania, Combined seventh and eighth periodic reports
- Vanuatu, Combined fourth and fifth periodic report

Detailed information is available at
http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/SessionDetails1.aspx?SessionID=1007&Lang=en.

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62nd Session (26 October - 20 November 2015)

- Lebanon, Fourth and fifth periodic reports
- Liberia, Seventh and eighth periodic reports
- Madagascar, Sixth and seventh periodic reports
- Malawi, Seventh periodic report
- Portugal, Eighth and ninth periodic reports
- Russian Federation, Eighth periodic report
- Slovakia, Fifth and sixth periodic reports
- Slovenia, Fifth and sixth periodic reports
- Timor-Leste, Combined second and third periodic reports
- United Arab Emirates, Second and third periodic reports
- Uzbekistan, Fifth periodic report
- Yemen, Seventh and eighth periodic reports

Detailed information is available at

http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/SessionDetails1.aspx?SessionID=970&Lang=en.

61st Session (2 - 24 July 2015)

- Bolivia, Combined fifth and sixth periodic reports
- Croatia, Combined fourth and fifth periodic reports
- Gambia, Combined fourth and fifth periodic reports
- Namibia, Combined fourth and fifth periodic reports
- Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Fourth to eighth periodic reports
- Senegal, Combined third to seventh periodic reports
- Spain, Seventh and eighth periodic reports
- Viet Nam, Combined seventh and eighth periodic reports

Detailed information is available at

http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/SessionDetails1.aspx?SessionID=944&Lang=en.

60th Session (16 February - 6 March 2015)

- Azerbaijan, Fifth periodic report
- Denmark, Eighth periodic report
- Ecuador, Combined eighth and ninth periodic reports
- Eritrea, Fourth and fifth periodic reports
- Gabon, Sixth periodic report
- Kyrgyzstan, Fourth periodic report
- Maldives, Combined fourth and fifth periodic reports
- Tuvalu, Combined third and fourth periodic reports

Detailed information is available at

http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/SessionDetails1.aspx?SessionID=901&Lang=en



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133rd IPU ASSEMBLY AND RELATED MEETINGS

Geneva, 17 - 21 October 2015

Meeting of Women Parliamentarians
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FEM/22/5-Inf.2
29 September 2015

Status of ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and of its Optional Protocol

In the context of its cooperation with the CEDAW Committee, the IPU Secretariat keeps track of the status of ratification of the CEDAW Convention and of its Optional Protocol.

This information is provided in the annex to this document.

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CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

States having signed, ratified, acceded or succeeded to the Convention
Convention entered into force on 3 September 1981 - total States parties at 29 September 2015: 189

State	Signature	Ratification, Accession (a), Succession (d)
Afghanistan	14 Aug 1980	5 Mar 2003
Albania	.	11 May 1994 a
Algeria	.	22 May 1996 a
Andorra	.	15 Jan 1997 a
Angola	.	17 Sep 1986 a
Antigua and Barbuda	.	1 Aug 1989 a
Argentina	17 Jul 1980	15 Jul 1985
Armenia	.	13 Sep 1993 a
Australia	17 Jul 1980	28 Jul 1983
Austria	17 Jul 1980	31 Mar 1982
Azerbaijan	.	10 Jul 1995 a
Bahamas	.	6 Oct 1993 a
Bahrain	.	18 Jun 2002 a
Bangladesh	.	6 Nov 1984 a
Barbados	24 Jul 1980	16 Oct 1980
Belarus	17 Jul 1980	4 Feb 1981
Belgium	17 Jul 1980	10 Jul 1985
Belize	7 Mar 1990	16 May 1990
Benin	11 Nov 1981	12 Mar 1992
Bhutan	17 Jul 1980	31 Aug 1981
Bolivia	30 May 1980	8 Jun 1990
Bosnia and Herzegovina	.	1 Sep 1993 d
Botswana	.	13 Aug 1996 a
Brazil	31 Mar 1981	1 Feb 1984
Brunei Darussalam	.	24 May 2006 a
Bulgaria	17 Jul 1980	8 Feb 1982
Burkina Faso	.	14 Oct 1987 a
Burundi	17 Jul 1980	8 Jan 1992
Cambodia	17 Oct 1980	15 Oct 1992 a
Cabo Verde	.	5 Dec 1980 a
Cameroon	6 Jun 1983	23 Aug 1994
Canada	17 Jul 1980	10 Dec 1981
Central African Rep.	.	21 Jun 1991 a
Chad	.	9 Jun 1995 a
Chile	17 Jul 1980	7 Dec 1989
China	17 Jul 1980	4 Nov 1980
Colombia	17 Jul 1980	19 Jan 1982
Comoros	.	31 Oct 1994 a
Congo	29 Jul 1980	26 Jul 1982
Cook Islands	.	11 Aug 2006 a
Costa Rica	17 Jul 1980	4 Apr 1986
Côte d'Ivoire	17 Jul 1980	18 Dec 1995
Croatia	.	9 Sep 1992 d
Cuba	6 Mar 1980	17 Jul 1980
Cyprus	.	23 Jul 1985 a
Czech Rep.	.	22 Feb 1993 d
Dem. People's Rep. of Korea	.	27 Feb 2001 a
Dem. Rep. of the Congo	17 Jul 1980	17 Oct 1986
Denmark	17 Jul 1980	21 Apr 1983
Djibouti	.	2 Dec 1998 a
Dominica	15 Sep 1980	15 Sep 1980
Dominican Rep.	17 Jul 1980	2 Sep 1982
Ecuador	17 Jul 1980	9 Nov 1981
Egypt	16 Jul 1980	18 Sep 1981
El Salvador	14 Nov 1980	19 Aug 1981
Equatorial Guinea	.	23 Oct 1984 a
Eritrea	.	5 Sep 1995 a
Estonia	.	21 Oct 1991 a
Ethiopia	8 Jul 1980	10 Sep 1981
Fiji	.	28 Aug 1995 a
Finland	17 Jul 1980	4 Sep 1986
France	17 Jul 1980	14 Dec 1983
Gabon	17 Jul 1980	21 Jan 1983
Gambia	29 Jul 1980	16 Apr 1993
Georgia	.	26 Oct 1994 a
Germany	17 Jul 1980	10 Jul 1985

State	Signature	Ratification, Accession (a), Succession (d)
Ghana	17 Jul 1980	2 Jan 1986
Greece	2 Mar 1982	7 Jun 1983
Grenada	17 Jul 1980	30 Aug 1990
Guatemala	8 Jun 1981	12 Aug 1982
Guinea	17 Jul 1980	9 Aug 1982
Guinea-Bissau	17 Jul 1980	23 Aug 1985
Guyana	17 Jul 1980	17 Jul 1980
Haiti	17 Jul 1980	20 Jul 1981
Honduras	11 Jun 1980	3 Mar 1983
Hungary	6 Jun 1980	22 Dec 1980
Iceland	24 Jul 1980	18 Jun 1985
India	30 Jul 1980	9 Jul 1993
Indonesia	29 Jul 1980	13 Sep 1984
Iraq	.	13 Aug 1986 a
Ireland	.	23 Dec 1985 a
Israel	17 Jul 1980	3 Oct 1991
Italy	17 Jul 1980	10 Jun 1985
Jamaica	17 Jul 1980	19 Oct 1984
Japan	17 Jul 1980	25 Jun 1985
Jordan	3 Dec 1980	1 Jul 1992
Kazakhstan	.	26 Aug 1998 a
Kenya	.	9 Mar 1984 a
Kiribati	.	17 Mar 2004 a
Kuwait	.	2 Sep 1994 a
Kyrgyzstan	.	10 Feb 1997 a
Lao People's Dem. Rep.	17 Jul 1980	14 Aug 1981
Latvia	.	14 Apr 1992 a
Lebanon	.	16 Apr 1997 a
Lesotho	17 Jul 1980	22 Aug 1995
Liberia	.	17 Jul 1984 a
Libya	.	16 May 1989 a
Liechtenstein	.	22 Dec 1995 a
Lithuania	.	18 Jan 1994 a
Luxembourg	17 Jul 1980	2 Feb 1989
Madagascar	17 Jul 1980	17 Mar 1989
Malawi	.	12 Mar 1987 a
Malaysia	.	5 Jul 1995 a
Maldives	.	1 Jul 1993 a
Mali	5 Feb 1985	10 Sep 1985
Malta	.	8 Mar 1991 a
Marshall Islands	.	2 Mar 2006 a
Mauritania	.	10 May 2001 a
Mauritius	.	9 Jul 1984 a
Mexico	17 Jul 1980	23 Mar 1981
Micronesia (Fed. States of)	.	1 Sep 2004 a
Monaco	.	18 Mar 2005 a
Mongolia	17 Jul 1980	20 Jul 1981
Montenegro	.	23 Oct 2006 d
Morocco	.	21 Jun 1993 a
Mozambique	.	21 Apr 1997 a
Myanmar	.	22 Jul 1997 a
Namibia	.	23 Nov 1992 a
Nauru	.	23 Jun 2011 a
Nepal	5 Feb 1991	22 Apr 1991
Netherlands	17 Jul 1980	23 Jul 1981
New Zealand	17 Jul 1980	10 Jan 1985
Nicaragua	17 Jul 1980	27 Oct 1981
Niger	.	8 Oct 1999 a
Nigeria	23 Apr 1984	13 Jun 1985
Norway	17 Jul 1980	21 May 1981
Oman	.	7 Feb 2006 a
Pakistan	.	12 Mar 1996 a
Palau	20 Sep 2011	
Panama	26 Jun 1980	29 Oct 1981
Papua New Guinea	.	12 Jan 1995 a
Paraguay	.	6 Apr 1987 a

State	Signature	Ratification, Accession (a), Succession (d)
Peru	23 Jul 1981	13 Sep 1982
Philippines	15 Jul 1980	5 Aug 1981
Poland	29 May 1980	30 Jul 1980
Portugal	24 Apr 1980	30 Jul 1980
Qatar		29 Apr 2009 a
Rep. of Korea	25 May 1983	27 Dec 1984
Rep. of Moldova	.	1 Jul 1994 a
Romania	4 Sep 1980	7 Jan 1982
Russian Federation	17 Jul 1980	23 Jan 1981
Rwanda	1 May 1980	2 Mar 1981
Saint Kitts and Nevis	.	25 Apr 1985 a
Saint Lucia	.	8 Oct 1982 a
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	.	4 Aug 1981 a
Samoa	.	25 Sep 1992 a
San Marino	26 Sep 2003	10 Dec 2003
Sao Tome and Principe	31 Oct 1995	3 Jun 2003
Saudi Arabia	7 Sep 2000	7 Sep 2000
Senegal	29 Jul 1980	5 Feb 1985
Serbia	.	12 Mar 2001 d
Seychelles	.	5 May 1992 a
Sierra Leone	21 Sep 1988	11 Nov 1988
Singapore		5 Oct 1995 a
Slovakia		28 May 1993 d
Slovenia		6 Jul 1992 d
Solomon Islands		6 May 2002 a
South Africa	29 Jan 1993	15 Dec 1995
South Sudan		30 Apr 2015
Spain	17 Jul 1980	5 Jan 1984
Sri Lanka	17 Jul 1980	5 Oct 1981
State of Palestine		2 Apr 2014

State	Signature	Ratification, Accession (a), Succession (d)
Suriname		1 Mar 1993 a
Swaziland		26 Mar 2004 a
Sweden	7 Mar 1980	2 Jul 1980
Switzerland	23 Jan 1987	27 Mar 1997
Syrian Arab Rep.		28 Mar 2003 a
Tajikistan		26 Oct 1993 a
Thailand		9 Aug 1985 a
The F.Y.R. of Macedonia	.	18 Jan 1994 d
Timor-Leste	.	16 Apr 2003 a
Togo	.	26 Sep 1983 a
Trinidad and Tobago	27 Jun 1985	12 Jan 1990
Tunisia	24 Jul 1980	20 Sep 1985
Turkey	.	20 Dec 1985 a
Turkmenistan	.	1 May 1997 a
Tuvalu	.	6 Oct 1999 a
Uganda	30 Jul 1980	22 Jul 1985
Ukraine	17 Jul 1980	12 Mar 1981
United Arab Emirates	.	6 Oct 2004 a
United Kingdom	22 Jul 1981	7 Apr 1986
United Rep. of Tanzania	17 Jul 1980	20 Aug 1985
United States of America	17 Jul 1980	.
Uruguay	30 Mar 1981	9 Oct 1981
Uzbekistan	.	19 Jul 1995 a
Vanuatu	.	8 Sep 1995 a
Venezuela	17 Jul 1980	2 May 1983
Viet Nam	29 Jul 1980	17 Feb 1982
Yemen	.	30 May 1984 a
Zambia	17 Jul 1980	21 Jun 1985
Zimbabwe	.	13 May 1991 a

**OPTIONAL PROTOCOL TO THE CONVENTION
ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN**

Total States parties: 106 at 29 September 2015

Participant	Signature	Ratification, Accession (a), Succession (d)	Participant	Signature	Ratification, Accession (a), Succession (d)
Albania		23 June 2003 (a)	Mali		5 December 2000 (a)
Andorra	9 July 2001	14 October 2002	Mauritius	11 November 2001	31 October 2008
Angola		1 November 2007 (a)	Mexico	10 December 1999	15 March 2002
Antigua and Barbuda		5 June 2006 (a)	Mongolia	7 September 2000	28 March 2002
Argentina	28 February 2000	20 March 2007	Montenegro		23 October 2006 (d)
Armenia		14 September 2006 (a)	Mozambique		4 November 2008 (a)
Australia		4 December 2008 (a)	Namibia	19 May 2000	26 May 2000
Austria	10 December 1999	6 September 2000	Nepal	18 December 2001	15 June 2007
Azerbaijan	6 June 2000	1 June 2001	Netherlands	10 December 1999	22 May 2002
Bangladesh	6 September 2000	6 September 2000	New Zealand	7 September 2000	7 September 2000
Belarus	29 April 2002	3 February 2004	Niger		30 September 2004 (a)
Belgium	10 December 1999	17 June 2004	Nigeria	8 September 2000	22 November 2004
Belize		9 December 2002 (a)	Norway	10 December 1999	5 March 2002
Benin	25 May 2000		Panama	9 June 2000	9 May 2001
Bolivia	10 December 1999	27 September 2000	Paraguay	28 December 1999	14 May 2001
Bosnia and Herzegovina	7 September 2000	4 September 2002	Peru	22 December 2000	9 April 2001
Botswana		21 February 2007 (a)	Philippines	21 March 2000	12 November 2003
Brazil	13 March 2001	28 June 2002	Poland		22 December 2003 (a)
Bulgaria	6 June 2000	20 September 2006	Portugal	16 February 2000	26 April 2002
Burkina Faso	16 November 2001	10 October 2005 (a)	Rep. of Korea		18 October 2006 (a)
Burundi	13 November 2001		Rep. of Moldova		28 February 2006 (a)
Cabo Verde		10 October 2011 (a)	Romania	6 September 2000	25 August 2003
Cambodia	11 November 2001	13 October 2010	Russian Federation	8 May 2001	28 July 2004
Cameroon		7 January 2005 (a)	Rwanda		15 December 2008
Canada		18 October 2002 (a)	Saint Kitts and Nevis		20 January 2006 (a)
Chad	26 September 2012		San Marino		10 September 2005 (a)
Chile	10 December 1999		Sao Tome and Principe	6 September 2000	
Colombia	10 December 1999	23 January 2007	Senegal	10 December 1999	26 May 2000
Congo	29 September 2008		Serbia		31 July 2003 (a)
Cook Islands		27 November 2007 (a)	Seychelles	22 July 2002	1 Mar 2011
Costa Rica	10 December 1999	20 September 2001	Sierra Leone	8 September 2000	
Côte d'Ivoire		20 January 2012 (a)	Slovakia	5 June 2000	17 November 2000
Croatia	5 June 2000	7 March 2001	Slovenia	10 December 1999	23 September 2004
Cuba	17 March 2000		Solomon Islands		6 May 2002
Cyprus	8 February 2001	26 April 2002	South Africa		18 October 2005 (a)
Czech Rep.	10 December 1999	26 February 2001	South Sudan		30 Apr 2015
Denmark	10 December 1999	31 May 2000	Spain	14 March 2000	6 July 2001
Dominican Rep.	14 March 2000	10 August 2001	Sri Lanka		15 October 2002 (a)
Ecuador	10 December 1999	5 February 2002	Sweden	10 December 1999	24 April 2003
El Salvador	4 April 2001		Switzerland	15 February 2007	29 September 2008
Equatorial Guinea		16 October 2009 (a)	Tajikistan	7 September 2000	22 July 2014
Finland	10 December 1999	29 December 2000	Thailand	14 June 2000	14 June 2000
France	10 December 1999	9 June 2000	T.F.Y.R. of Macedonia	3 April 2000	17 October 2003
Gabon		5 November 2004 (a)	Timor-Leste		16 April 2003 (a)
Georgia		30 July 2002	Tunisia		23 September 2008
Germany	10 December 1999	15 January 2002	Turkey	8 September 2000	29 October 2002
Ghana	24 February 2000	3 Feb 2011	Turkmenistan		20 May 2009 (a)
Greece	10 December 1999	24 January 2002	Ukraine	7 September 2000	26 September 2003
Guatemala	7 September 2000	9 May 2002	United Kingdom		17 December 2004 (a)
Guinea-Bissau	12 September 2000	5 August 2009	United Rep. of Tanzania		12 January 2006 (a)
Hungary		22 December 2000	Uruguay	9 May 2000	26 July 2001
Iceland	10 December 1999	6 March 2001	Vanuatu		17 May 2007 (a)
Indonesia	28 February 2000		Venezuela	17 March 2000	13 May 2002
Ireland	7 September 2000	7 September 2000	Zambia	29 September 2008	
Italy	10 December 1999	22 September 2000			
Kazakhstan	6 September 2000	24 August 2001			
Kyrgyzstan		22 July 2002			
Lesotho	6 September 2000	24 September 2004			
Liberia	22 September 2004				
Libya		18 June 2004			
Liechtenstein	10 December 1999	24 October 2001			
Lithuania	8 September 2000	5 August 2004			
Luxembourg	10 December 1999	1 July 2003			
Madagascar	7 September 2000				
Malawi	7 September 2000				
Maldives		13 March 2006 (a)			



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133rd IPU ASSEMBLY AND RELATED MEETINGS

Geneva, 17 - 21 October 2015

Meeting of Women Parliamentarians
Item 5

FEM/22/5-Inf.4
29 September 2015

Statement adopted by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women

National parliaments and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

1. At its forty-first session, the Committee adopted a standard paragraph on “Parliament” in its concluding observations in order to draw to the attention of State parties, the importance of involving its parliament in the reporting process under article 18 of the Convention and the implementation of all the provisions of the Convention.
2. The aim of the present note is to clarify and strengthen the role of national parliaments vis-à-vis the Convention. The note is also aimed at clarifying the relationship between the Committee and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU).
 - I. **Role of Parliaments in the process of ratification of the Convention and its Optional Protocol and withdrawal of reservations**
 3. The procedure for ratification/accession to international instruments as well as the withdrawal of reservations varies from State to State. In most States, approval by Parliament is necessary before the deposit of the instrument of ratification to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Similarly, decisions concerning reservations as well as their withdrawals are also taken in Parliament. This Parliamentary procedure also applies to the Convention and its Optional Protocol. Consequently, Parliaments have a strategic role to play with respect to the ratification/accession of the Convention and its Optional Protocol. As the Convention and its Protocol have not attained universal ratification, Parliament can play a significant role in encouraging their State in becoming a party to the Convention and its Protocol. Similarly, as the Convention is the treaty body with the largest number of reservations, Parliament can also play a significant role in their withdrawal.
 - II. **Parliaments and the implementation of the Convention**
 4. Parliaments and their members have a vital role to play in ensuring respect for the principles enunciated in the Convention and they have a wide range of tools at their disposal to do so. In discharging their traditional duty of overseeing the work of Government, Parliament can ensure that States parties comply fully with the provisions of the Convention. Parliaments and their members have a fundamental responsibility in their role of “constituency”, which is the basis of the legal system. The functions of Parliaments — notably legislative and budgetary functions and oversight of the executive branch of the Government — are at the heart of the implementation of the principles and rights enshrined in the Convention. The implementation of the Convention includes the incorporation of the principle of non-discrimination against women in national legislation, including in the Constitution of the State party. It also imposes an obligation on the State

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Party to condemn discrimination against women, to abolish all discriminatory laws and to adopt, whenever appropriate, temporary special measures to accelerate de facto equality between women and men. It also obligates States Parties to adopt appropriate policies and establish mechanisms aimed at promoting equality between sexes. As such, Parliamentarians can take active measures to ensure that national laws, policies, actions, programmes and budget reflect the principles and obligations in the Convention.

The budgetary functions and the monitoring of governmental action are vital for a better implementation of laws relating to equality between sexes, through the approval of adequate budgets and a regular oversight of the impact of governmental measures with respect to the condition of women.

Parliament, as an organ representing the population as a whole, reflects the diversity of opinion and interests in the country by reason of its privileged access to the whole population. As such, Parliamentarians can be key players in raising awareness of the Convention and its Protocol to the population at large and to women in particular.

III. Role of Parliaments in the drafting of reports and follow-up to the concluding observations of the Committee

5. States are not legally obliged to involve Parliaments in the drafting of reports under article 18, as it is the State which has the primary responsibility of doing so. However, as the Convention is binding on all branches of Government, it is desirable that States parties involve Parliament in the reporting process under Article 18 of the Convention, the implementation of the Convention and the follow up to the concluding observations of the Committee. States parties are strongly encouraged to establish an appropriate mechanism to facilitate collaboration between Parliament and Government with regard to the input of its Parliament in the elaboration of reports, and its role in following up on the concluding observations of the Committee. The monitoring role of Parliament with respect to the compliance by the State of its international obligations, could considerably enhance the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee.

6. Consequently, it is necessary for States parties to urge Parliament, many of which now have some structures in place, such as Parliamentary Committees focusing on human rights including gender equality, to take an active part in the work of the Committee in general, as well as in the implementation of its provisions in their own country.

IV. Action of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and its relationship with the Committee

7. IPU has always strived to bring a parliamentary dimension to international cooperation and the work of the Committee. It is playing a key role in disseminating the Convention and its Optional Protocol among parliamentarians. During its conferences and the sessions of its Assembly, the organization regularly invites States that have not ratified the Convention and its Optional Protocol to do so. It also encourages States parties that have made reservations to the Convention to withdraw them and to fulfil their obligations. The Secretary-General of IPU writes to the presidents of the legislative assemblies to inform them about the upcoming consideration of the report of their country by the Committee. Once the Committee's concluding observations are available, a letter is sent to the parliament concerned to bring to its attention the recommendations adopted. In 2003 IPU, with the assistance of the Division for the Advancement of Women, published a practical guide for the use of parliamentarians on the Convention and its Optional Protocol. Every year, IPU organizes briefings on the Convention, addressed to women parliamentarians in particular. IPU also provides, in collaboration with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, technical assistance programmes in order to build the capacities of parliaments and help them fulfil their role regarding the implementation of Convention and its Optional Protocol. Since 2006, IPU also provides Committee with country specific information including data on the political participation of women in Parliament and in Government as well as at the local level with regard to States whose reports are under consideration by the Committee.

V. Recommendations

8. The Committee recommends that States parties ensure the full participation of Parliament and its members in the reporting process and the full implementation of the Convention and its Protocol.

9. Given the key role of Parliament, the Committee recommends that States parties ensure that Parliamentarians, as representatives of the people, be made aware and informed of the Committee's work so

that they may take it into account in their legislative functions and relay it to their constituencies and to the public at large.

10. The Committee recommends that State parties ensure that all relevant information is made available to Parliamentarians on a regular basis through appropriate Parliamentary support services.

11. The Committee further recommends that information received by Government on its obligations as a State party and other matters of concern are brought to the attention of Parliamentarians.

12. The Committee recommends that whenever members of the Committee are invited to visit a State party, it is desirable that the State party organize meetings with Parliamentarians.

13. The Committee encourages States parties to include in their reports, information on all parliamentary initiatives in the elaboration of laws in order to ensure full incorporation of CEDAW provisions into domestic legislation.

14. The Committee reiterates the importance of strengthening the national machinery dedicated to equality at the level of Parliament, such as Commissions on gender equality, missions and information on inquiries relating to violence against women, and improvement of legislation on equality between women and men.

15. The Committee draws the attention of States parties to the fact that institutional linkages and informal relations with civil society and women's organizations are fundamental to the promotion of women's rights by the Parliament.

16. The Committee encourages States parties to include in their delegation before the Committee for the examination of their report, members of Parliament as well as a special advisor in charge of relations between the Government and the Parliament in order to improve the visibility of parliamentary responsibilities.

17. The Committee calls on State parties to evaluate its collaboration with its national Parliament and other Parliaments and to take appropriate measures to enhance cooperation between Parliaments in order to exchange best practices on the implementation of the Convention.