



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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136th IPU Assembly

Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1- 5 April 2017



FORUM OF WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS 25th SESSION

Dhaka, 1 April 2017
(9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 2 to 6 p.m.)

Forum of Women Parliamentarians
Agenda

FEM/25/A.1
20 February 2017

I. SCHEDULE OF MEETING AND DEBATING ARRANGEMENTS

The 25th session of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians will be held at the Bangabandhu International Conference Center in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The Forum will meet on Saturday 1 April 2017, from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and from 2 to 6 p.m.

The Forum should provide 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 request the floor by completing the form on their desks.

II. ANNOTATED PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Election of the President of the 25th session of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians (FEM/25/1-Inf.1)

Welcome remarks

2. Adoption of the agenda

3. Gender activities (FEM/25/3(c)-Inf.1, CL/200/7(e)-R.1, CL/200/7(j)-R.1, FEM/25/3(d)-Inf.1)

- (a) Report of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians
Participants will be informed of the deliberations of the Bureau at its sessions of 23 October 2016 in Geneva and 1 April 2017 in Dhaka.
- (b) Report of the Gender Partnership Group
Participants find out about the work and recommendations of the Group.
- (c) Briefing: recent IPU activities on gender equality
Participants will be briefed on recent IPU work on gender equality.
- (d) Follow-up to the IPU 2012 Plan of Action on Gender-sensitive Parliaments
Presentation of the self-assessment toolkit: [Evaluating the gender sensitivity of parliaments](#), followed by a debate on opportunities and challenges for parliaments in conducting a gender-sensitive self-assessment exercise.

The discussion will conclude by 11:00 a.m.

#IPU136

4. Contributing to the work of the 136th Assembly from a gender perspective (FEM/25/4-Inf.1)

Participants will be invited to discuss the following item on the agenda of the 136th Assembly:

- Promoting enhanced international cooperation on the SDGs, in particular on the financial inclusion of women as a driver of development (*Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade*)

Participants will split into two groups to discuss the following sub-themes:

Theme 1: Reforming regulatory frameworks and changing unfavourable cultural norms: a must for the financial inclusion of women

Many obstacles lie on the way to the financial inclusion of women. Discriminatory legislation, gender-based violence, gender stereotypes and discriminatory social norms and customs all limit women's access to financial inclusion and economic empowerment. Policies and legislation must be gender-sensitive so as to provide financial services and economic empowerment that work for women.

The group will discuss how to eliminate obstacles to women's access to financial services and economic empowerment. It will explore how social and economic policies should be designed, implemented and monitored to facilitate women's financial inclusion. It will consider how gender-sensitive budgeting can support this endeavour. The group will also discuss how to ensure that financial inclusion is grounded in a favourable environment for women that is promoted by the State and through development cooperation. Discussions may focus on how to eliminate discrimination in rights related to family, land, property and freedom of movement. Participants may look at eliminating discrimination in labour and social security regulations, especially in the informal sector and care economy, where women are most represented. Discussions may also cover ways of tackling discriminatory social norms and customs that prevent women from accessing financial services and support.

Participants will be invited to share good practices and creative initiatives happening in their own countries.

Theme 2: Promoting access to financial services and opportunities for the most vulnerable women

Women make up 70 per cent of the world's poor. The Sustainable Development Goals promise to address the needs of the most vulnerable and to leave no one behind. If financial inclusion is to be an effective strategy for drastically reducing the feminization of poverty, we must ensure that the financial services offered actually reach and really benefit the most vulnerable and marginalized women. Programmes to improve women's access to financial services and support to their economic empowerment should therefore take into account the reality and rights of all women. That should include rural women, women in crisis situations, and women facing multiple layers of discrimination based on ethnicity, marital status, HIV status, migrant or refugee status, age, disability etc.

The group will discuss and share good practices on how to adapt and expand access for all women to financial services. That could include formal credit, micro-credit, saving accounts, health insurance, social benefits, childcare services and support. The group will also discuss how to reach out to and raise the awareness of groups of marginalized women about economic opportunities and financial services from which they could benefit. Participants will also address the importance of providing different groups of women with targeted training and mentorship programmes.

The group will be invited to share good practices and creative initiatives happening in their own countries.

On the recommendation of its Bureau, the Forum will designate a chairperson and a rapporteur for each group. They will agree on recommendations that the rapporteurs will submit to the Forum of Women Parliamentarians at its afternoon sitting.

Each group will meet from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

The Forum will resume its work at 2 p.m.

5. Debate. Women's political participation: a new impetus to break the glass ceiling (FEM/25/5-Inf.1)

Participants will hear a presentation on the 2017 IPU–UN Women Map on Women in Politics. They will also be briefed on the progress and setbacks of women in parliament in 2016. Participants will then be invited to debate recent developments in women's global and national political participation, and to identify how that participation might be enhanced.

The debate will conclude by 4 p.m.

6. Panel discussion. Empowering girls today to achieve Sustainable Development tomorrow (FEM/25/6-Inf.1)

Gender equality is a prominent feature of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. But if we are to deliver for women by 2030, we must start empowering girls now. In recent years, girls' access to education and health has improved. Nevertheless, they continue to face both gender- and age-based discrimination, violence and marginalization. Harmful practices such as child marriage and female genital mutilation continue to challenge both the present and future for girls. Gender equality objectives will only be met if we dedicate sufficient attention, political will and resources to the empowerment of girls today. Participants will be invited to share good practices and to identify priorities that parliaments should address in order to uphold girl's rights and ensure their empowerment.

The panel discussion will conclude by 5:30 p.m.

7. Reports of the discussion group rapporteurs

The discussion group rapporteurs will present their reports. The Forum will then ask them to consult with the President of the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians and of the President of the Forum's 25th Session, and prepare amendments to be presented during the debate of the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade (scheduled for Sunday 2 April from 2:30 to 6:30 p.m.).

8. Elections to the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians

The Forum will be called upon to fill the vacant seats on the Bureau of Women Parliamentarians. There are vacancies for one regional representative from each of the African, Asia-Pacific and Eurasia groups. Elections will be held on the basis of candidatures submitted by those geopolitical groups.

9. Venue and date of the 26th session of the Forum of Women Parliamentarians

**COMPOSITION AND OFFICERS OF THE BUREAU
OF WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS
(As at 20 February 2017)**

OFFICERS (March 2016–2018)

President	Ms. M. Mensah-Williams (Namibia)
First Vice-President	Ms. M. André (France)
Second Vice-President	Ms. N. Al Kharoosi (Oman)

REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

Expiry of term

African Group:

Ms. M. Mensah-Williams (Namibia)	Ms. J. Nze Mouenidiambou (Gabon)	March 2018
Ms. F. Adedoyin (Nigeria)	<i>Vacancy</i>	March 2020

Arab Group:

Ms. N. Al Kharoosi (Oman)	Ms. S. Kousantini (Tunisia)	March 2018
Ms. H. Alhelaissi (Saudi Arabia)	Ms. M. Azer Abdelmalak (Egypt)	March 2020

Asia-Pacific Group:

Ms. W. A. Khan (Bangladesh)	Ms. A. Khalid Parvez (Pakistan)	March 2018
Ms. S. Sirivejchapun (Thailand)	<i>Vacancy</i>	March 2020

Eurasia Group:

Ms. V. Petrenko (Russian Federation)	Ms. E. Shamal (Belarus)	March 2018
Ms. L. Gumerova (Russian Federation)	<i>Vacancy</i>	March 2020

Group of Latin American and the Caribbean:

Ms. A. Ocles Padilla (Ecuador)	Ms. J. Vicente (Dominican Rep.)	March 2018
Ms. E. Mendoza Fernández (Bolivia)	Ms. K. Beteta (Peru)	March 2020

Twelve Plus Group:

Ms. M. André (France)	Ms. P. Ernstberger (Germany)	March 2018
Ms. S. Ataulajhan (Canada)	Ms. P. Locatelli (Italy)	March 2020

MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Expiry of term

(ex officio, for the duration of their term on the Executive Committee)

Ms. F. Benbadis (Algeria)	October 2018
Ms. M.I. de Oliveira Valente (Angola)	October 2019
Ms. A. Habibou (Niger)	October 2019
Ms. G. Eldegard (Norway)	October 2019
Ms. Y. Ferrer Gómez (Cuba)	October 2020

PRESIDENTS OF THE FORUM OF WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS

Expiry of term

(ex officio for two years)

Ms. Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan (Viet Nam)	March 2017
Ms. N. Luo (Zambia)	March 2018