



The Role of Parliaments in Enforcing Gender Equality and Women's Rights: 15 years after Beijing

A parliamentary event organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women on the occasion of the 54th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women



2 March 2010, UN Headquarters, New York

INFORMATION NOTE

During the 54th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) - whose priority theme is the 15-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995); the outcomes of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly (2000); and the links with achieving the Millennium Development Goals - the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women (UNDAW) are organising a parliamentary event entitled *The Role of Parliaments in Enforcing Gender Equality and Women's Rights: 15 years after Beijing*.

The meeting will take place on Tuesday **2 March 2010**, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. in the **new ECOSOC Chamber** at UN Headquarters in New York.

Objectives

In keeping with its policy of contributing to major international forums by seeking to introduce a parliamentary dimension into the proceedings of intergovernmental organisations, the IPU is organising this one-day event with UNDAW in order to provide a forum for debate between parliamentarians from all over the world, and to contribute to the deliberations of the 54th CSW.

The meeting will discuss achievements made at the national level in terms of women's rights, fifteen years after the Fourth World Conference in Beijing. It will focus in particular on how parliaments have supported change at the national level and what parliamentary mechanisms have been used and can be used to pursue enforcement of commitments made at Beijing. In so doing, the meeting will provide an opportunity to contribute to the debates at the CSW.

Expected outcome

At the close of the meeting, a brief message to the CSW will be issued, stressing areas for future priority action, with particular emphasis on how parliaments can and should enforce gender equality and women's rights.

Relevant documents

Background documents to be used throughout the meeting include:

- Written contributions of the panellists, when available;
- Documents of the 54th Session of the CSW;

Participants

The participants in the parliamentary event will include:

- Parliamentarians present in New York for the 54th Session of the CSW as members of their respective delegations. A letter of invitation will be sent by the IPU Secretary General to all Member and non-member parliaments of the IPU.
- Representatives of governments, relevant organisations and funds of the UN system, and civil society will also be invited.

Programme

9:30 – 10:00 a.m.	Registration of participants and distribution of documents
10:00 – 10.15 a.m.	Inaugural session
10.15 - 10.30 a.m.	Keynote address: Fifteen years after Beijing, how much progress has been achieved in terms of gender equality and women's rights?
10:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Session 1: Women in parliament: The first step for progress Session 2: Building a gender-sensitive national legal framework iKNOW politics presentation
1:00 - 3:00 p.m.	Lunch break
3:00 - 5.45 p.m.	Session 3: Respecting women's rights: From de jure to de facto equality Session 4: Building partnerships to achieve gender equality
5.45 – 6:00 p.m.	Closing session

Languages

Simultaneous interpretation will be provided in the four languages customarily used at IPU Assemblies, namely English, French, Spanish and Arabic.

Access badges for United Nations Headquarters

As is customary during General Assembly sessions, security arrangements are very strict and no one may enter the United Nations premises without a special badge (for delegates and visitors). In keeping with normal practice, delegations and diplomatic missions in New York will be invited to attend to all matters relating to visas, UN Badges, hotel reservations and transportation. Participants must therefore request their badge from their country's permanent mission to the United Nations.

Registration

Persons wishing to participate in this meeting are urged to register as soon as possible using the attached form. Once this form has been filled out, it should be sent directly to IPU Headquarters (Fax: +41 22 919 41 60; e-mail: postbox@mail.ipu.org).

Special events

- ❖ *Parliaments Take Action to End Violence against Women* (1 March, 1:15-2:45 p.m., Room C), organized by the IPU.
- ❖ *Getting the Balance Right: Quotas in Global Perspective* (9 March, 1:15-2:30 p.m. Room 7), a joint IPU, IDEA, and Stockholm University event.

N.B. Due to renovations currently being undertaken at UN Headquarters, these rooms do not have interpretation facilities and the meetings will be held in English only.