



BEYOND BEIJING: TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY IN POLITICS

New York, 3 March 2005



A parliamentary event organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union
and the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women
on the occasion of the 49th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women

PARLIAMENTARY EVENT on the occasion of the 49th Session of the COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

PROVISIONAL ANNOTATED PROGRAMME

9 – 10 a.m.	<i>Registration of participants and distribution of documents</i>
10 – 10.45 a.m.	<i>Inaugural session</i>

10.45 a.m. - 1 pm Session one: Improving women's access to parliament

Key themes: progress and setbacks of women in political life; electoral systems, political parties (structures, positions, agendas), dissemination of information, work and family balance, gender-balanced candidate lists, quotas, critical mass, communication strategies, training and mentoring, solidarity among women, awareness raising, legislation change.

Theme 1: Women in Parliament: A review of the current situation

What progress and setbacks have been made by women in parliament in the last few years? How has international research on women in politics tended to explain these progresses and setbacks? Are there regional explanations for women's parliamentary advances?

Theme 2: Winning a seat: barriers, techniques and alternatives

To what extent are political parties facilitating or hindering women's entry into parliament? What examples of 'best practices' can be found? To what extent do political party structures still need to be changed to allow women's equal participation? Are quotas the way forward? To what extent do women succeed under quota systems, and which systems have proven most effective?

Theme 3: Women and politics in post-conflict situations

Why have women in post-conflict countries often been able to achieve higher levels of parliamentary representation than women in established democracies and can this trend be sustained? What are the specific needs of women parliamentarians in post-conflict countries?

General discussion

1 p.m.- 3 p.m.	<i>Lunch break</i>
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3 p.m. - 5.30 p.m. Session two: Strengthening parliament's capacity to address the Beijing objectives

Key themes: gender-sensitive parliaments, institutional change, caucuses and committees, leadership and capacity training, work and family balance, women's issues, transparent criteria for promotion, mentoring and political campaigning, public speaking and self-assertion, inclusive processes.

Theme 4: Gender-sensitive parliaments: mechanisms and challenges

To what extent are parliaments "gender-sensitive"? Does the parliament need to become a less aggressive, combative arena before more women will participate? How effectively do parliamentary committees on gender issues mainstream a gender perspective into the work of the parliament? Can women act in concert through all-party caucuses?

Theme 5: Gender issues as "people's issues": The role of male parliamentarians

Are "women's issues" solely the domain of women or have men also begun to champion these issues? To what extent are men parliamentarians challenging traditional perceptions of men's and women's societal and cultural roles? How successful have men been in sensitizing parliaments on gender issues?

Theme 6: Enriching parliament's capacities: The role of intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations

How can international organizations and nongovernmental organizations assist parliaments in effectively addressing the Beijing objectives?

General discussion

5.30– 6 p.m. *Closing session*
Speeches
Summary of proceedings