

INTERNATIONAL PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE ON GENDER AND POLITICS
COMMUNIQUÉ

1. We, the **49 delegates from 44 Parliaments** across the world, came together under the auspices of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, 6-8 November 2012 at the Houses of Parliament in London to discuss **Gender Representation in Politics, Parliament and Public Life**. Our purposes have been to: **focus** on best practice, research and innovation to advance gender equality in decision-making; **consider** the role of different stakeholders in encouraging the participation of women in the political process; **explore** ways of advancing the social, economic and political position of women through policy and legislation; **support** women's empowerment at grassroots level through education and economic independence.
2. We **applaud** the achievements of leading women role models in *all* sectors of society.
3. We **endorse** the work of **UN Women** in supporting women and advising governments on the rights of women across sectors, and in raising the profile of gender equality.
4. We **affirm** the imperative of gender equality for progress on social and economic emancipation and development in societies across the world. We **support** the efforts of governments in striving towards Millennium Development Goal 3 **to promote gender equality and empower women**. We **remain concerned** about: all barriers to education for girls, particularly those from the poorest backgrounds, the continuing practices of forced marriage, sexual violence and abuse towards and the trafficking of women and young girls, the cruel practice of female genital mutilation and rape used as a weapon of war and we will **seek** the elimination of them all.
5. We **look forward** to the progression of the post-2015 development framework and **support** the aspiration for gender equality to be mainstreamed in the successor agenda to the MDGs.
6. We **highlight** the benefits to women *and* men of achieving gender equality in representation. In recognising that some progress has been made on parliamentary representation, we **regret** that

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CONFERENCE TEAM
Westminster Hall London SW1A 0AA
T: +44 (0)20 7219 5373 F: +44 (0)20 7233 1202 E: genderconference2012@parliament.uk
W: www.parliament.uk/genderconference2012 Twitter: [#genderconference2012](https://twitter.com/genderconference2012)





Parliaments¹; and **strongly encourage** Members to bring this Plan of Action to the attention of their governments and parliaments.

13. We **welcome and support** the newly established **Gender Parliamentary Reference Group** on the Agora Portal which will enable: a continuing dialogue on gender issues; the sharing of experience and best practice, case-studies and resources; providing a parliamentary voice on the inter-governmental process, particularly by contributing to the Commission for the Status in Women (CSW) 57 which will take place in March 2013 – the priority theme of which is *Elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls*.

14. In support of the CSW 2013 priority theme we **shall engage** with stakeholders to initiate / revise our respective legislation on violence against women and girls. We **expect** such legislation to identify and fill gaps in national legal frameworks dealing with all forms of violence against women, using current data and best practice as an evidence-based approach to legislative and policy change. Furthermore we **will seek** to hold our governments to account on their responsibilities, policies and action plans to tackle and eliminate violence against women and to **encourage** the allocation of adequate budgets for those initiatives.

Westminster

8 November 2012

¹ <http://www.ipu.org/conf-e/127/res-plan.htm>



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