



Empowering rural women: What role for parliaments?

A parliamentary event organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and UN Women on the occasion of the 56th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women
29 February 2012, UN Headquarters, New York



INFORMATION NOTE

During the 56th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) - whose priority theme is *The empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges*, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the UN Women are organising a parliamentary event entitled **Empowering rural women: What role for parliaments?**

The meeting will take place on Wednesday **29 February 2011**, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
in the Conference Room 3 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 UN Women in order to provide a forum for debate between parliamentarians from all over the world, and to contribute to the deliberations of the 56th CSW.

The meeting will focus on strategies to empower rural women. The morning session will discuss political empowerment of rural women. It will look at ways of ensuring that rural women are fully part of the political process and that their voices are heard and taken into account by parliaments. It will also look at the question of rural women's representation in Parliament. The afternoon session will discuss strategic objectives for the empowerment of rural women, focusing on addressing discrimination in law (especially with regard to equal access to land, credit and inheritance) and access to health.

The meeting will aim to identify actions parliaments can take to overcome barriers and advance the status of rural women. It will therefore provide an opportunity to contribute to the debates at the CSW whose priority theme this year is *The empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges*.

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 the role of parliaments in empowering rural women.

Relevant documents

Background documents to be used throughout the meeting include:

- Written contributions of the panellists, when available;
- Documents of the 56th Session of the CSW.

Participants

The participants in the parliamentary event will include:

- Parliamentarians present in New York for the 56th 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 a.m.	Registration of delegates
10.00- 10.30 a.m.	Welcome remarks
10.30 -10.45 a.m.	General introduction - Rural women today: Progress and challenges ahead
10.45 a.m.- 1 p.m.	Political empowerment of rural women
1 p.m. - 3 p.m.	Lunch break
3 p.m. - 4. p.m.	Addressing discrimination in the law
4 p.m. – 5.30 p.m.	Ensuring access to health
5.30 - 6 pm	Closing remarks

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).

Informal side-events

- ❖ *Women in Politics: Latest trends* (1 March, 11.30 a.m. -12.45 p.m, Conference Room B), organized by the IPU.
- ❖ *How gender-sensitive are parliaments?* (Conference Room A, 3 to 4.15 p.m.), organized by the IPU.

N.B. Conference Rooms A and B do not have interpretation facilities and the meetings will be held in English only.