



British Group Inter-Parliamentary Union Newsletter May 2014

The BGIPU has maintained an active programme of activities in the Palace of Westminster and overseas since the start of 2014 with members participating in a diverse range of activities summarised below.

The 125th anniversary of the IPU, to be formally marked in Geneva on 30 June, coincides with the departure of IPU Secretary General, Mr Anders B. Johnsson. We acknowledge his leadership and thank him for his significant contribution to the achievements of the IPU in recent decades. Likewise, we warmly welcome the incoming Secretary-General, Mr Martin Chungong, who was elected at the 130th IPU Assembly in March and commences his term on 1 July 2014. This handover at the top of the IPU Secretariat, coinciding with a significant landmark in the organisation's history, provides an appropriate time to reflect on the organisation's long contribution to global peace, security and democracy for more than a century.

It is also timely, not least against the backdrop of current events, to remind ourselves of the IPU's core objective of encouraging inter-parliamentary dialogue for peace, democracy and the rule of law for all and do all we can to support and sustain the IPU's future efforts.

Rick Nimmo, Director, BGIPU

Looking Ahead: BGIPU Parliamentary Seminar on the Arms Trade Treaty

3 November 2014 - by *BGIPU*



In November 2014 the BGIPU will bring together parliamentarians from across the globe for a Seminar on the Arms Trade Treaty. The purpose of the BGIPU International Seminar on the Arms Trade Treaty will be to bring together parliamentarians from around the globe to build upon the existing momentum surrounding ratification of the Treaty, encourage debate on best practise for legislation and domestication of the ATT and discuss implementation models for parliamentarians moving forward in oversight and enforcement of the ATT at national and international level.

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World e-Parliament Conference; technology enhancing democracy

8 May 2014 - by *BGIPU*

More than 360 MPs and parliamentary staff from 90 national



parliaments, including the UK led by the Speaker of the House of Commons, attended the 2014 World e-parliament Conference in Seoul from 8-10 May exploring how to make information and communications technology (ICT) work better for democracy. The Conference, jointly organised by IPU and National Assembly of the Republic of Korea, built on progress made by parliaments in the use of ICT in recent years and looked at how to overcome current hurdles in parliamentary use of new technologies.

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HLM of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation

14 April 2014 - by *Lord Chidgey*



The High-level Meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation took place in Mexico City on 15-16 April 2014 with BGIPU represented by Lord Chidgey and Lord McConnell. Attended by 1500 development leaders from 130 countries, the Mexico City HLM brought together national government representatives, parliamentarians, civil society groups and other organisations to share knowledge about governance, transparency, improving domestic resource mobilisation and broader development co-operation questions.

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Timely visit to Poland opens up conversations on the EU, our bi-lateral relationship and Ukraine.

31 March 2014 - by *Rt Hon Alistair Burt MP*



The BGIPU Chair, Rt Hon Alistair Burt MP, led a delegation to Poland from 31 March to 4 April, the first by a formal Parliamentary delegation since 1996. Key issues during the visit were the bi-lateral relationship, in the future of the EU and our respective positions and developments affecting Ukraine and the broader implications for European security.

The delegation met with parliamentary counterparts, key government officials and included a visit to Krakow to learn more about inter-governmental relations between the central government and the regions.

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Uruguay Parliament keen for deeper relations with the UK

24 March 2014 - by *BGIPU*



The BGIPU hosted a inter-parliamentary visit from the General Assembly of Uruguay from 24-27 March 2014 led by Mrs Maria Elena Larnaga of the Chamber of Deputies. The delegation underscored that the Uruguay Parliament strongly supported efforts to deepen relations with the United Kingdom based on the long-standing and mutually beneficial ties existing between both countries and our shared values and common interests.

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UK active in pursuing strong outcomes for 130th IPU Assembly

16 March 2014 - by *BGIPU*



The 130th Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Assembly was convened in Geneva from 16 to 20 March 2014 with around 1,450 participants comprising some 726 parliamentarians from 141 parliaments, including over 50 Speakers and 223 women MPs. This was a landmark meeting of the world's parliaments in marking the IPU's 125th anniversary which also saw the election of new Secretary-General, Mr Martin Chungong, who will replace at the end of June 2014, Mr Anders B. Johnsson, who was widely praised for his 16 year leadership of the organisation.

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CSW 58 outcomes critical to post-2015 development agenda

10 March 2014 - by *Baroness Hodgson of Abinger CBE*



"We cannot achieve a world of dignity for all until we end gender inequality in all its forms" – stated the UN Secretary General at the Opening of CSW 58, which I was privileged to be sent to by the BGIPU this March. This year CSW was of particular significance as the theme was "Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls". Thus there was particular focus on gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment, both in terms of taking stock of the MDGs effectiveness and looking ahead to the post 2015 agenda.

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Trade agreements, economy and security are the focus of BGIPU Delegation to Armenia

16 February 2014 - by *John Whittingdale MP*



The Delegation to Armenia had the opportunity to meet with prominent figures in the Armenian government and parliament during the programme. Discussions were dominated by the Armenian decision to seek membership of the Eurasian Customs Union and what the ramifications of this might be for the relationship with the EU, the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh and the approaching centenary commemorations of the Armenian Genocide.

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31st Session of the IPU Steering Committee of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO

11 February 2014 - by *John Spellar MP*

The Steering Committee of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO met on 11 and 12 February 2014 on the premises of the European Parliament in Brussels. The session was co-chaired by Mr. V. Moreira, representing the European Parliament, and Mr. K. Örmfjäder (Sweden),



who had been recently appointed by the IPU President as coordinator of the IPU delegation to the Steering Committee and, in this capacity, co-Chair of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO. The UK Parliament was represented by John Spellar MP.

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BGIPU FORTHCOMING LOOK

- BGIPU Breakfast Panel Discussion | **“The GREAT Britain Campaign: Delivering Jobs and Growth for Britain”** with FCO Minister Hugo Swire MP | IPU Room | 13 May | 8:30 – 10:00
- BGIPU Inward Delegation | Inward visit of Parliamentarians from **Portugal** | 9 – 10 June
- BGIPU Inward Delegation | Inward Delegation of Women Parliamentarians from **Sudan** | 23 – 27 June
- BGIPU Discussion | **The UK National Action Plan on Women, Peace & Security** | IPU Room | 16:00 | 16 July
- BGIPU Outward Delegation to **Nepal** | 14 – 20 September
- BGIPU Outward Delegation to the **United Arab Emirates** | September 2014 | Dates TBC
- BGIPU Outward Delegation to **Norway** | September 2014 | Dates TBC
- 131st **IPU Assembly** | Geneva | 12 – 16 October
- BGIPU International Parliamentary **Seminar on the Arms Trade Treaty** | Attlee Suite, Palace of Westminster | 3 – 5 November

If you would like to register your interest in any of the above events or would like further information please contact the [Secretariat](#).