



British Group Inter-Parliamentary Union

British Group Inter-Parliamentary Union Newsletter December 2018

This BGIPU newsletter contains summaries and links to events which have occurred since September 2018 including on 27 November 2018 when the Executive Committee for 2018-19 was elected by the AGM with Rt Hon John Whittingdale MP as the new BGIPU Chair. We look forward into the new year and well into 2019-20, to continue to provide all our members with a diverse, relevant and beneficial programme in advancing UK interests in cooperation and partnership with IPU counterparts. We wish all members and friends of BGIPU a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year for 2019.

Rick Nimmo
Director, BGIPU

MPs call for bolder action to fight climate change

11 December 2018 - by *Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Geneva*



Nearly 200 parliamentarians and climate experts have called for urgent and bold action to implement the Paris Agreement before it's too late. At a parliamentary meeting on 9 December in Krakow, Poland, during the United Nations Climate Change Conference known as COP24, they set out their vision of the measures needed to limit global warming. The meeting was organized by the IPU and the Polish Sejm to discuss practical implementation of the 2015 Paris Agreement.

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IPU gives parliamentary dimension to the Global Compact on Migration

6 December 2018 - by *Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Geneva*



Preceding the Intergovernmental Conference on Migration taking place in Marrakech from 10 to 11 December 2018, MPs met at a parliamentary conference in Rabat, organized by the IPU and the Moroccan Parliament, from 6 to 7 December. The parliamentary conference follows the Declaration on Strengthening the Global Regime for Migrants and Refugees adopted by MPs during the IPU's 138th Assembly in March 2018. The IPU has been actively involved with the Compact, ensuring that it incorporates a parliamentary dimension.

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Parliamentarians push for bigger role at the WTO

6 December 2018 - by *Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Geneva*



Members of Parliament called for stronger ties between parliaments and the WTO at a time when the rules-based multilateral trading system is in deepening crisis. At the annual session of the Parliamentary Conference on the World Trade Organization (PCWTO), the IPU and the European Parliament called for WTO members to strengthen the parliamentary dimension of the WTO to ensure its democratic legitimacy.

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IPU acts on record number of human rights abuses against MPs

6 December 2018 - by *Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Geneva*



The IPU Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians has announced the highest number of human rights violations against MPs on its books since it was established 40 years ago. The Committee treated 564 cases of parliamentarians from 43 countries in 2018. This is almost double the figure from five years ago. Most of the cases concern opposition MPs from the Americas and Asia. The IPU Committee is the only international complaints mechanism with the mandate to defend the human rights of persecuted parliamentarians.

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IPU report shows new technologies help reconnect people with parliaments

29 November 2018 - by *Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Geneva*



A new IPU report shows that information and communication technology (ICT) is helping parliaments become better connected and more transparent, and that MPs are engaging more with people through social media and instant messaging. The report is being launched at the IPU's World e-Parliament Conference taking place from 3-5 December in Geneva, Switzerland. At the conference, the IPU will also launch the Centre for Innovation in Parliament, a new resource to support the use of digital tools in parliaments.

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AGM elects Rt Hon John Whittingdale MP as new BGIPU Chair

27 November 2018 - by *BGIPU*



Chaired by the Speaker of the HoC, the BGIPU AGM took place on 27 November 2018 to adopt the 2018 Annual Report. The AGM also saw the election of Rt Hon John Whittingdale MP as Chair for the BGIPU alongside a new Executive Committee for 2018/19. The contribution of the outgoing Chair, Nigel Evans MP, was warmly acknowledged by all BGIPU members along with recognition of the work of the BGIPU Secretariat.

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IPU/PACE Report shows Parliaments are failing women MPs

25 November 2018 - by *Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Geneva*



On International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, IPU President, Gabriela Cuevas and PACE President, Liliane Maury Pasquier, called on parliaments to build on the momentum of the #MeToo movement to denounce the violence happening in the corridors of legislative power. They said with more women MPs exposing the extent of the problem, the entire parliamentary community needs to step up and end gender-based violence now in our workplace and beyond.

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Parliaments working without borders on the global goals

15 November 2018 - by *Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Geneva*



The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a blueprint for ensuring a better and sustainable future for everyone. Parliaments play a crucial role in driving that agenda and ensuring progress towards the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals. Parliaments have been engaging with the SDGs more than with their predecessors, the Millennium Development Goals. They have also recognized that many SDGs require going beyond national borders and seeking regional cooperation.

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BGIPU visit to Chile reaffirms strong links with close ally in South America

4 November 2018 - by *Nigel Evans MP*



From 4th to 9th November 2018 Nigel Evans MP led a cross-party delegation to Chile, comprised of Julia Lopez MP (Conservative), Dr. Lisa Cameron MP (SNP, Chile APPG Chair) and Sharon Hodgson MP (Labour, Shadow Public Health Minister) from the House of Commons, and Baroness Hooper CMG (Conservative) and Lord Rennard MBE (Lib Dem) from the House of Lords. During the weeklong visit the delegation had a series of ministerial meetings and engagements with parliamentary counterparts to discuss a wide range of issues.

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IPU wraps up the P20 Parliamentary Forum & Speakers' Summit

31 October 2018 - by *Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Geneva*



In the run-up to the G20 Summit, Speakers of Parliament from the 20 leading economies of the world have committed to working together to address challenges such as the future of work, financing development, the fight against corruption, the empowerment of women and youth, education, and a renewed commitment to multilateralism. The IPU and the National Congress of Argentina brought together the 20 Speakers of Parliament or their representatives, and other legislators, from 31 October to 2 November, a few weeks before the G20 Summit.

Building stronger relations between UK and Angola

28 October 2018 - by *BGIPU*



A parliamentary delegation from Angola visited the UK for a five-day visit from 29 October to 2 November 2018. This inter-parliamentary visit was a success in consolidating the strong relationship enjoyed between the UK and Angola and followed a UK Delegation visit to Luanda in 2015. An extensive programme allowed for exchanges with UK counterparts on economic progress in Angola, Brexit developments, bilateral issues, energy including wind farming and parliamentary practices.

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139th IPU Assembly demands action on climate change

18 October 2018 - by *Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Geneva*



With catastrophic climate change threatening to hit many parts of the world in just over a decade, 149 national parliaments have adopted an emergency resolution calling for decisive action. Concluding the 139th Assembly of the IPU, the emergency item resolution, called "Climate change – Let us not cross the line", follows the report published last week by the UN IPCC. The 139th IPU Assembly brought together over 1500 delegates including 56 Speakers of Parliament, 52 Deputy Speakers, and over 750 MPs.

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IPU Committee on rights of MPs gives voice to MPs silenced at home

18 October 2018 - by *Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Geneva*



At the 139th Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Assembly, the global parliamentary community expressed serious concerns about MP human rights violations worldwide including cases in Cambodia, Venezuela, Turkey, and Uganda. However, there was also good news from Malaysia and the Maldives. At this sitting, the committee took position on human rights violations of 295 MPs in 13 countries.

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BGIPU Vice-Chair speaks on IPU adoption of Declaration on UDHR

16 October 2018 - by *BGIPU*



On 16 October 2018, during the 139th IPU Assembly in Geneva, there was a Special Session convened to mark the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). This included the Launch of Handbook for Parliamentarians on Freedom of Expression for Parliaments and their members: Importance and scope of protection. Prior to the Assembly adopting a Declaration to mark the 70th anniversary of the UDHR, there was a video address by BGIPU Vice-Chair Ann Clwyd MP.

Sexual abuse & violence rife in Europe's Parliaments

16 October 2018 - by *Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Geneva*



A new study by the IPU and PACE shows that acts of sexism, abuse and violence against women are widespread in parliaments across Europe. The findings reveal that 85 per cent of women MPs have suffered from psychological violence in parliament; women MPs under 40 are more likely to be harassed; female parliamentary staff endure more sexual violence than female MPs; and that the majority of parliaments don't have mechanisms to enable women to speak out.

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Deepening UK-Vietnam inter-parliamentary relations

30 September 2018 - by *Wayne David MP*



Our visit to Vietnam comprised a cross-party group of four MPs and two Peers which travelled the length of the country from Hanoi in the north, to Danang onwards to Ho Chi Minh City in the south. As Vietnam's economy continues to grow and creates increased prosperity, it will be incumbent upon the country's many international partners like the UK to do their utmost to help Vietnam along a path of social and political change. This visit has hopefully ensured the friendship between our Parliaments has been truly deepened to assist that process.

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UK delegation receive a unique insight into Cuban politics and society

16 September 2018 - by *Mark Menzies MP*



From 16 to 21 September 2018, a UK parliamentary delegation visited Cuba with the aim of further strengthening bilateral relations, including new opportunities for trade and cooperation, and to see how recent national developments were changing the country and its people. In Havana and visiting rural areas, the delegation gained a good understanding of the effect of the long-standing US embargo on everyday people's lives and how this unnecessarily limits progress in Cuba and is detrimental to the everyday lives of Cuban people.

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IPU launches new platform with data on parliaments

15 September 2018 - by *Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Geneva*



To celebrate International Day of Democracy on Saturday 15 September, the IPU is launching New Parline, a new version of its online open data platform on national parliaments. The IPU has been collecting data on parliaments since its inception in 1889, including information on women's participation in politics since 1945. Through New Parline, the IPU has pooled all of its data into one hub, allowing the user to see trends over time, as well as compare progress or

regression between different regions of the world.

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IDD 2018: What if parliamentary oversight did not exist?

15 September 2018 - by *Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Geneva*



On 15 September, the IPU celebrates the 21st anniversary of its Universal Declaration on Democracy and the 11th anniversary of the International Day of Democracy. The date is an opportunity to reaffirm our shared commitment to protect and promote democracy.

Democracy Day is also a time to review the state of democracy around the world. This year we are focusing on the importance of parliamentary oversight - a core function of parliaments and a vital part of the checks and balances in any healthy democracy.

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International Parliamentary Seminar on the Western Balkans

10 September 2018 - by *BGIPU*



Following the UK Government's hosting of the Western Balkans Summit, BGIPU convened an International Parliamentary Seminar on the Western Balkans from 10-12 September 2018 at UK Parliament. By bringing together parliamentarians from across the Western Balkans Region to discuss the outcomes of the Western Balkans Summit, BGIPU sought to ensure that regional issues and priorities are not just being discussed at the Executive level but that the Berlin Process is also better understood and scrutinised at the Parliamentary-level.

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FORTHCOMING BGIPU ACTIVITIES

Parliamentary Delegation to Gabon | 18-22 February 2019

Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations | UN New York | 21-22 February 2019

Inward Delegation from Norway | 25 February-1 March 2019

Inward Delegation from Macedonia | 4-8 March 2019

63rd Session of the Commission of the Status of Women | UN New York | 11-15 March 2019

140th IPU Assembly | Doha | 6-10 April 2019