



British Group Inter-Parliamentary Union Newsletter April 2018

This BGIPU newsletter contains summaries and links to events which have occurred since the start of 2018 following the election of its Executive Committee for 2018 in December 2017. BGIPU has worked steadily to provide members with a diverse, timely and productive programme in advancing UK interests with our IPU member counterparts through both bilateral activities and participation in a range of multilateral events held under IPU auspices. In a special event of historic note on 17 April 2018, BGIPU celebrated the 20th work anniversary of our Deputy Director, Dominique Rees MBE. In reaching this milestone she became the longest-serving BGIPU official in our proud 130 year history, surpassing the 19 years served by our founder, Sir William Randal Cremer MP.

Call for zero tolerance towards sexism, racism & violence in parliament

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



Female parliamentarians worldwide call for immediate reforms to stop sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliaments. This includes urging all parliaments to set concrete targets and deadlines to achieve equal representation of women and men. Taking part in the 12th Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament on 25-26 April, women MPs urged the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) to lead global reform actions to end all forms of harassment in parliament.

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MPs condemn hate crimes against migrants and refugees

24 March 2018 - by *Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Geneva*



Nearly 750 MPs worldwide condemned the discrimination and abuse of refugees and migrants at the conclusion of the 138th Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Assembly in Geneva. The Assembly Declaration emphasized the critical role of parliaments in transforming the aspirations of the two Global Compacts – one on migrants and the other on refugees - into national laws.

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IPU condemns threats to parliamentary democracy

24 March 2018 - by *Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Geneva*



The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) expressed serious concerns about the scale and type of alleged human rights violations of parliamentarians in Cambodia, the Maldives, Turkey and Venezuela with the effect of jeopardizing parliamentary democracy in these countries. Meeting at the IPU 138th Assembly, the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians took positions on cases of violations against 237 MPs in 8 countries.

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IPU addresses empowering rural women and girls at the CSW

12 March 2018 - by *Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Geneva*



Empowering rural women and girls was the priority theme for the 62nd session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), which took place in New York from 12 to 23 March 2018. The IPU, in cooperation with UN Women, held a parliamentary meeting at the CSW on 13 March 2018, entitled “Parliaments deliver for rural women and girls”. MPs discussed ways to remove systemic barriers that rural women and girls face in realizing their rights and overcome the discrimination against them in law and practice.

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IPU President celebrates IWD and calls for action to advance gender equality

8 March 2018 - by *Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Geneva*



Marking International Women's Day 2018, the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), Senator Gabriela Cuevas Barron said the IPU proudly joins the worldwide efforts to achieve gender equality. As IPU President, she called upon male and female parliamentarians and men and women of all ages to join the fight for a better society marked by justice, equality and parity. In its work the IPU focuses on promoting gender equality and increasing the number of women parliamentarians worldwide.

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IPU finds no change in overall average of women in parliaments

2 March 2018 - by *Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Geneva*



The year 2017 saw some positive developments in women's participation in elections, according to the Women in Parliament in 2017: The year in review, released by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) ahead of International Women's Day. However, in global terms, the number of women in national parliaments has only increased by 0.1 percentage point from 2016, from 23.3% to 23.4%. A record number of women contested elections held in 2017, and more seats were won by women than in previous years: 27.1% compared with 22.3% in 2016.

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MPs from Estonia welcome exchanges with UK counterparts

26 February 2018 - by *BGIPU*



BGIPU hosted a parliamentary delegation from Estonia, led by the Chair of the Estonian IPU delegation, Ms Helmen Kuett. With many delegation members having strong interest in social affairs, much of the visit focused on health policy, pension reform and disability issues, but other topics such as security cooperation, e-government and the current Brexit negotiations were also discussed. There was mutual appreciation of the excellent state of bilateral relations between both countries.

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IPU President and SG meet UNSG to discuss future cooperation

22 February 2018 - by *Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Geneva*



On 22 February 2018, IPU President Gabriela Cuevas Barron and Secretary General Martin Chungong met with UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to review the status of UN-IPU cooperation. The meeting took place in New York in the context of the 2018 Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations on migration designed to bring a parliamentary perspective to the UN negotiations, and set the stage for active parliamentary engagement in the implementation of the Global Compacts for migration and refugee protection.

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UK members highlight evidence & data for fair migration

21 February 2018 - by *Kate Green MP*



Four British parliamentarians, Tim Loughton MP, Rt Hon Alistair Carmichael MP, Kate Green MP and Lord Dubs, travelled to the United Nations to participate in the UN Parliamentary Hearing, entitled 'Towards a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration' held 22-23 February 2018 and attended by representatives of some 50 parliaments. Significant focus was on the need for fair treatment of migrants with UK members highlighting the importance of evidence-based policies.

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UK delegation visits Iraq at pivotal time for its future

12 February 2018 - by *Rt Hon Ann Clwyd MP*



A UK parliamentary delegation which visited Iraq 13-16 February 2018 saw the country poised at a crossroads in which the upcoming elections will be crucial. The policy approaches and political stability of any government resulting from these elections will be a key determinant in whether a largely positive trajectory on the back of the victory over Daesh will continue. Political stability, addressing corruption and economic/social progress are pre-conditions for the full delivery of the \$30 billion pledged recently to rebuild the country.

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IPU Committee denounces wide scale repression of opposition MPs

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



The Inter-Parliamentary Union's (IPU) Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians condemns the exclusion and repression of opposition MPs in the lead-up to critical elections in Cambodia and Venezuela, and the pattern of intimidation against opposition parties worldwide. The IPU Committee, during a recent meeting, adopted decisions on 18 cases of violations against 252 MPs in 14 countries. A majority of these cases concerned opposition MPs.

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Timely visit from Norway exploring relations post-Brexit

29 January 2018 - by *BGIPU*



UK members hosted a delegation from Norway led by Mr Ulf Leirstein, Head of the Norwegian's IPU Delegation from 29-31 January 2018. Against the background of the ongoing parliament and public debate in the UK about relations with the EU after Brexit, UK MPs and Peers took the opportunity to discuss at length Norway's experiences dealing with its EU neighbours under EEA and EFTA provisions. The visit also explored key aspects of the long-standing bilateral relationship, particularly economic and security links between both countries.

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FORTHCOMING BGIPU ACTIVITIES

Delegation from Liberia | 8 to 11 May 2018

Delegation from Lithuania | 14 to 17 May 2018

Delegation from Iceland | 15 and 16 May 2018

John Smith Fellows Day in Parliament | 5 June 2018