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14th Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament (14SWSP)



O'zbekiston Respublikasi
**OLIJ MAJLISI
SENATI**

Parliamentary leadership: Anticipating risks to better deliver sustainability and prosperity

Tashkent (Uzbekistan), 8 to 9 September 2022

BACKGROUND NOTE

The 14th Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament that will take place on 8 and 9 September 2022 will focus on priority action areas for parliamentary leaderships to better deliver on sustainability and prosperity while building on lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and related crises, and when anticipating future risks. In so doing, the 2022 Summit will follow up on the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament and its High-level Declaration *Parliamentary leadership for more effective multilateralism that delivers peace and sustainable development for the people and the planet*, as well as on the outcome document of the 13th Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament *Women at the centre: From confronting the pandemic to preserving achievements in a gender-responsive recovery*, both adopted in September 2021.

The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered a multifaceted crisis that has undermined progress in the achievement of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) and resulted in worldwide increases in poverty, inequalities and vulnerabilities. In 2022, the recovery of the global economy remains uncertain and unequal and is further challenged by wars and conflicts. Looking ahead, many countries will face huge budgetary deficits in the coming years and parliaments must be ready to address such challenges.

Parliamentary leaders gathered at the Fifth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament in 2021 called for global economic recovery that would nurture renewed efforts in addressing the root causes of conflicts and build more peaceful, just and inclusive societies.

For economic recovery to be effective and long lasting, it must reflect coherently all dimensions of sustainable development, including the environmental pillar. It will also have to assess its impact on specific groups, including women, youth and children, persons with disabilities and marginalized communities.

Another key component of economic recovery to be considered today is the advancement and greater future resilience of the digital economy. Advancing the digital economy means innovation in the use of digital technologies while addressing related risks, including the digital gap, mass surveillance, misinformation, manipulation and the dissemination of false news and disinformation, but also, discrimination, harassment, hate speech and violence. Women and girls are victims of the digital divide, and when they have access to digital technologies, their rights and freedoms are often severely hindered.

In all these priority action areas aimed at delivering better on sustainability and prosperity, strong and able governance institutions are needed. Parliaments – the cornerstone of democracy and development – in particular must be strong, inclusive, and gender-sensitive if they are to be efficient institutions, able to better deliver on sustainability and prosperity for all while building on lessons learned from crises and anticipating future risks.

To address these important policy issues, it is proposed to organize the proceedings of the 14th Summit in two main sessions and a special segment as follows:

Session one: Addressing risks of the post-pandemic global recovery

Today, there is an urgent need for a socially inclusive economy that is in line with combating poverty and reducing vulnerabilities while advancing climate action. Promoting sustainable economic recovery calls for taking into account all dimensions of sustainable development, including tackling socioeconomic and gender inequalities and climate change.

This session will offer a platform for women leaders of parliament to focus attention on economic recovery from the perspective of sustainable development rooted in justice, inclusion and environmental protection. Women Speakers will be invited in particular to:

- Identify means to develop a gender-responsive approach to decent work and to build a social and solidarity economy which advances social protection for groups in situations of vulnerability and recognizes the value of care and unpaid work.
- Pay special attention to addressing vulnerabilities resulting from gaps in sexual and reproductive health and rights faced by women and girls.
- Focus on means to advance a green economy grounded in environmental protection.

In their debates, women Speakers will be invited to consider the following key questions:

- *What are the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic in building more economic resilience?*
- *How to achieve a social and solidarity economy that reduces inequalities and vulnerabilities?*
- *What measures are needed to reduce girls' and women's vulnerabilities, including in the area of sexual and reproductive health and rights?*
- *How to ensure that economic recovery addresses climate change?*
- *What good practices of the economic recovery efforts carried out in their respective countries can women Speakers share, learn from and promote?*

Session two: Preventing tech-related risks and preserving human rights and gender equality in a tech world

“New technologies are changing our world in unparalleled speed and scale, with huge impacts on human lives and rights” (Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights).

New technologies have made the impossible become possible in so many areas of the lives of people, their work and their social interactions. It has made possible distance learning, instant information sharing and connected people from all around the world. It has helped research advance and innovations prosper.

But there is also another face to new technologies. The digital divide remains huge. Great risks keep emerging, including those related to online privacy, freedom of expression, and harassment and violence. Women and girls are at particular risk online and solutions need to be found and applied.

In their debates, women Speakers will be invited to consider the following key questions:

- *How has the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated progress towards technological innovation in the digital economy and the world of work?*
- *What initiatives that address the digital divide are being implemented nationally and internationally?*
- *How can parliaments better promote and protect the rights and freedoms of women and girls online?*

Special segment: Gender-sensitive parliaments for sustainability and prosperity

Held in conjunction with the tenth anniversary of the IPU's Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments adopted unanimously at the 127th IPU Assembly, the Summit will also offer an opportunity to take stock of parliamentary readiness and ability in being gender-responsive in anticipating risks and better delivering peace, sustainability and prosperity. The Plan of Action is a unique visionary and forward-looking framework to transform parliaments into institutions that incorporate the views of and respond to the needs and interests of both men and women in their composition, structures, operations, methods and work.

A gender-sensitive parliament is especially crucial in confronting crises as can be seen from the most recent gender-responsive measures taken by parliaments as they adapted to the COVID-19 pandemic. There is much to be learned from such innovative measures when crafting a path towards resilient parliamentary institutions able to anticipate risks and deliver peace, sustainability and prosperity tuned to the differentiated needs and interests of men and women.

Given the success of the "Doha-style debates" of the 13th Summit of Women Speakers in 2021, it is proposed to renew the experience at the 14th Summit in 2022 and organize one special segment of the Summit in a Doha-style debate on the following four main statements:

- 1. Only a gender-sensitive parliament can drive gender-responsive parliamentary diplomacy, development cooperation and peace efforts**
- 2. Without a gender-sensitive parliament, gender-responsive laws cannot be adopted**
- 3. A gender-sensitive parliament can prevent, punish and repair sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliament and in society**
- 4. Women Speakers have the power to make parliament more welcoming and more empowering for women**

Women Speakers will be invited to indicate in a sign-up sheet which session(s) they would like to contribute to in the form of a statement of four (4) minutes. They will be invited to indicate their preferred session and theme. **For the special segment only**, women Speakers will be invited to make a statement limited to three (3) minutes in agreement or in disagreement with one of the four statements to be debated.

Closed session: Adoption of the Tashkent Declaration

Before the closing of the Summit's proceedings, women Speakers will be invited to participate in a closed session to discuss their main conclusions and recommendations, as well as measures to be taken to translate existing commitments into action. Based on the outcome of the discussion, the women Speakers will adopt the Tashkent Declaration.

The Tashkent Declaration will build on declarations adopted at previous Summits of Women Speakers of Parliament.