



Inter-Parliamentary Union  
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# 149th IPU Assembly

Geneva  
13–17 October 2024



## Parity debate

*Pushing back on the pushback: Men and women MPs preserving and advancing gender equality*

Wednesday, 16 October 2024, 11:30–13:00  
Plenary A (level 0), CICG

The parity debate aims to promote dialogue between women and men at the IPU and encourage them to discuss issues of common interest together. In line with the principle of a parity debate, the composition of the debating panel will be gender balanced. The order of speakers invited to take the floor will also follow a gender-balanced sequence. Having an equal number of men and women speak in the debate will allow the different and complementary views and experiences of both genders to emerge. Delegations are therefore invited to be represented in this debate by male and female participants.

### Concept note

2025 will be a year of milestones for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, as it marks the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Despite some progress, no country has yet achieved gender equality, and women and girls continue to face discrimination in all spheres of life. Therefore, preparations are underway to use the 2025 milestones to reinvigorate global and national commitments to advance the gender equality agenda everywhere and at all levels.

Meanwhile, as 2024 unfolds, it's already proving to be a pivotal year for gender equality. Notably, 2024 is a super election year. By the time it is over, about 70 elections will have taken place, including in the world's most populous countries; roughly half the world's population will have gone to the polls; and thousands of parliamentary seats will have been up for grabs. Are the new parliaments more equal than before? What has been done at the national level to support more equal participation of men and women in parliament? Was the discourse during elections supportive of or unfavourable to gender equality?

2024 has also seen worrying reversals of existing measures to protect and promote gender equality and women's rights in various regions. In Afghanistan, unacceptable systematic violations of Afghan women's and girls' fundamental rights by the Taliban have continued and expanded. Unrest, conflict and war have further worsened conditions for women's rights. The rollback on reproductive rights is intensifying in several countries, including the United States of America, where the right to abortion is being reversed or restricted. Further setbacks include proposed reforms to laws protecting women and girls from gender-based violence.

However, there is a transformative force that is resisting pushbacks, advancing gender equality, protecting and promoting the rights and empowerment of women and girls, and fighting for just, inclusive, peaceful and sustainable societies for all. This force is made up of millions of women and girls around the world, and their movements and their allies, including men and boys. In the Gambia, a pushback on a pushback succeeded when a controversial bill to repeal the law banning female genital mutilation (FGM) was rejected by the Gambian Parliament.

The parity debate will provide a platform for both men and women MPs to:

- Understand pushbacks, their reasons, their supporting forces, their funding and their damage
- Share updates on elections held so far in 2024, including how the discourse on gender equality was framed during the electoral campaign
- Learn from good practices and craft strategies to push back on the pushbacks

Join and share your views, experiences and recommendations to push back on the pushback!

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