



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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Towards effective action against discrimination: Parliaments and human rights treaty bodies

Online roundtable debate for parliamentarians organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) with the support of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

Tuesday, 16 December 2025

14:00 – 16:00 CET (Geneva time)

BACKGROUND

This roundtable debate will allow parliamentarians to share good practices and real-life examples of how they can take effective action against discrimination in their daily work. It will showcase concrete parliamentary initiatives – laws, budget allocations and oversight mechanisms – that have successfully advanced equality and inclusion, while also drawing on the expertise of United Nations (UN) human rights treaty body members. The meeting will take place in the context of the IPU's *Achieving gender equality, action by action* campaign, which promotes legislative action against all forms of gender discrimination and calls on parliaments to include women in all their diversity.

The briefing is intended to be interactive and will be held online in English, with interpretation in French. Interpretation in Arabic, Russian or Spanish can be arranged upon request.

PROGRAMME

Tuesday, 16 December 2025

10:00

Welcoming remarks by Mr. Akmal Saidov, former member of the IPU Executive Committee

10:10 – 11:45

Introductory session on how parliaments can turn global commitments against discrimination into real change

This session will highlight how parliaments have advanced equality and inclusion by using UN human rights treaty body recommendations in their work. Participants will share practical experiences of passing new laws, strengthening oversight and shaping budgets to combat discrimination in areas such as education, health and minority rights. The focus will be on what has worked, what obstacles were encountered and how parliamentarians can partner more effectively with UN treaty bodies to achieve lasting results.

Moderator: Mr. Akmal Saidov, Member of the Legislative Chamber of the Parliament of Uzbekistan and Member of the UN Human Rights Committee

Panellists:

- Mr. Claude Cahn, Human Rights Officer, Indigenous Peoples and Minorities Section, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
- Ms. Mara Gabriili, Member of the Federal Senate of Brazil, Member of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

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- Ms. Christelle Vuanga, President of the Gender, Child and Family Committee of the National Assembly of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.
 - Ms. Syerleena Abdul Rashid, Member of the House of Representatives of Malaysia
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11:45 – 12:50

Interactive discussion on what works in parliaments to fight discrimination

In this session, parliamentarians will exchange their own experiences of taking action against discrimination. The discussion will centre on:

- Concrete steps taken in parliament: passing anti-discrimination laws, ensuring their implementation, allocating resources, conducting oversight and working with human rights institutions.
- The main challenges they faced, the strategies that helped overcome resistance, and opportunities to build stronger engagement with UN treaty bodies for greater impact.
- Lessons learned and tentative strategies for continued engagement in the area of non-discrimination in the future.

12:50

Closing remarks
