



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

15th Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament

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The 15th Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament (15SWSP) was held on 28 July 2025 in Geneva, Switzerland, on the theme *Leading for inclusive and lasting peace*. Thirty of the world's leading women legislators took part in the Summit, which was organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in partnership with the Federal Assembly of Switzerland. The full list of participants is available on the [IPU website](#).

The 15SWSP Preparatory Committee, established on the basis of nominations from all the IPU geopolitical groups, guided the substantive preparations for the 15SWSP. The Committee selected the theme and sub-themes of the Summit, identified the motions and drafted the concept notes for the panel debate sessions. The outcomes of the deliberations of the 15SWSP fed into the proceedings of the Sixth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament (6WCSP) thus making gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls a priority on the agenda of all parliaments.

Executive summary

On 28 July 2025, the world's top women legislators gathered in Geneva for the 15th Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament (15SWSP) hosted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the National Council of Switzerland under the theme *Leading for inclusive and lasting peace*. The Summit was held immediately prior to the Sixth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament (6WCSP). It resulted in a final declaration which contributed to the Conference's proceedings. A total of 26 women Speakers of Parliament, four women Deputy Speakers representing their women Speakers and three women presiding officers of parliamentary assemblies, among over 350 participants from 31 countries, were in attendance.

Women leaders discussed how the most pressing global challenges – from climate change and technological transformation to the erosion of democracy and human rights, alongside entrenched inequalities – are reshaping the prospects for peace. These challenges often have a disproportionate impact on women. While women are among the first to respond, they are often the last ones to be heard.

Amplifying women's voices and leadership is not only a matter of fairness, but of effectiveness. Peace agreements are more sustainable and lasting when women are involved. Yet, in 2023, only 9.6% of peace negotiators globally were women. When it comes to national parliaments, despite growing evidence of the correlation between women's leadership and bold action for peace and climate, in 2025, only 27.2% of members of parliament and 23.7% of Speakers were women.



Hosts of the 15th Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament. From left to right: Ms. T. Ackson (IPU President) standing next to Ms. M. Riniker, President of the National Council of Switzerland. © IPU/Pierre Albouy

As 2025 marks 30 years since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action for gender equality and women's empowerment, and 25 years of the Women, Peace and Security agenda, the Summit reaffirmed existing commitments, and highlighted the importance of placing gender parity in decision-making at the centre of multilateral and national efforts.

The Summit comprised two sessions. The first focused on the 25 years of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda. The women Speakers agreed that peace is not only the absence of war but the presence of fairness. Inclusive and lasting peace requires strong, coordinated and gender-sensitive action, which must be led by men and women on an equal footing. Sexual violence in conflict, which was described as a weapon of war, was intended to disrupt lives and societies. As such, there could be no inclusive peace without justice for survivors, who must be recognized as leaders and central actors in peacebuilding.

Speakers agreed on the need to redress women's underrepresentation in peacebuilding, adopting gender-responsive laws and budgets, and breaking harmful social norms in the security sector. Proposals for concrete responses included increased funding to women-led peace

organizations, and the development of WPS National Action Plans that mandate the collection of gender-disaggregated data and the allocation of dedicated budgets, set targets and provide for parliamentary oversight.

The second session addressed two other pressing global challenges: climate change and artificial intelligence (AI). The debate on climate change stressed that its impacts were not gender-neutral but exacerbate existing inequalities and vulnerabilities. Women often bear a disproportionate burden due to their concentration in subsistence agriculture, limited access to resources, and greater unpaid household and care responsibilities. Climate-related disasters were also linked to increased gender-based violence, forced marriage, school dropout of girls, and sexual and reproductive health risks linked to the disruption of related services and water scarcity.

Speakers called for gender-responsive climate policies, equal access to land and property, the allocation of dedicated resources to women beneficiaries, and the full inclusion of women in climate response and environmental decision-making. They also called for measures to protect women human rights defenders, who are on the frontlines of climate action and environmental protection.

During the debate on AI, the women Speakers overwhelmingly agreed that it was not too late to shape it as a tool for gender equality. They stressed the imperative of women's leadership in the development, governance and regulation of emerging technologies, so as to ensure these systems are inclusive, free from bias, and supportive of social cohesion and gender equality. Speakers agreed on the need for diverse AI development teams, strong legal frameworks, and accountability from technology companies. They called for measures to address online gender-based violence, ensure unbiased algorithms, and protect women's rights in digital spaces. This is particularly important in the face of rampant online violence against women in politics. Good practices discussed included the adoption of dedicated provisions to criminalize and prosecute acts of gender-based political violence and online violence, as in Mexico, as well as of legal frameworks to regulate AI, as in the European Union.

The Summit concluded with a shared commitment by women Speakers to lead the transformation for inclusive and sustainable peace, namely by:

- 1) Rebuilding trust in democracy by ensuring that parliaments are inclusive and gender-sensitive institutions.** This requires tackling harmful stereotypes and outdated norms and putting an end to all forms of violence and harassment against women in politics. This also means engaging young people — especially young women — so that politics becomes a space where their leadership is welcome.
- 2) Placing gender equality at the very centre of peace and security.** Women must not only be present but empowered, supported and resourced to take decisions at every stage in diplomacy, conflict prevention, negotiations and post-conflict recovery. International humanitarian law must be upheld and the consequences of conflict must be addressed in a gender-responsive manner.
- 3) Confronting challenges such as climate change and technological advancements through a gender-responsive lens.** This includes ensuring women's leadership in climate negotiations, as well as in the development and governance of new technologies, and developing gender-responsive policies in these fields.
- 4) Making gender parity the new norm.** Women's representation in parliaments has doubled in the past thirty years, and the number of women Speakers has grown significantly, but parity is the objective and that objective is still far from reality. The implementation of gender quotas remains a crucial driver of gains in this area.
- 5) Leading by example by joining the IPU's *Achieving gender equality, action by action* campaign.** Speakers and MPs were encouraged to join the campaign and take the transformative actions it calls for.

As witnessed by their final Declaration, the women Speakers stand ready to act as models for inclusive leadership and inclusive multilateralism. They also stressed that gender inequality cannot be tackled by women alone and that men must play their part.

Opening session

Opening statements were delivered by Dr. Tulia Ackson, IPU President and Speaker of the National Assembly of the United Republic of Tanzania; Ms. Maja Riniker, President of the National Council of Switzerland and President of the Summit; and Ms. Tatiana Valovaya, Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG).¹

Dr. T. Ackson (IPU President and Speaker of the National Assembly of the United Republic of Tanzania) opened the session by underscoring the historic significance of the Summit, noting that while women held over 21% of presiding positions in parliaments worldwide, parity remained distant. Despite the persistent obstacles faced by women – entrenched stereotypes, double standards and violence – their leadership was vital for democracy and development. Amid a well-funded backlash against women’s rights that was seeking to roll back progress, solidarity was necessary to defend equality, including through the dedication of at least 15% of peace and security funding to the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda. In line with the IPU’s new plan of action for achieving gender parity in parliament and its campaign *Achieving gender equality, action by action*, participants were urged to transform commitments into practical change.



Dr. T. Ackson, IPU President and Speaker of the National Assembly of the United Republic of Tanzania. © IPU/ Pierre Albouy

¹ The full texts of the opening statements are available on the [event page](#) on the IPU website.

Ms. M. Riniker (President of the National Council of Switzerland and President of the Summit) warmly welcomed participants to Geneva and emphasized her country's long-standing commitment to peace and humanitarian law. Lasting peace could not be achieved if women remained excluded from decision-making. Inclusion was both a matter of fairness and a prerequisite for stability. Switzerland had made progress in increasing women's representation in parliament, but parity was still far from being achieved, especially among young leaders.



Ms. M. Riniker, President of the National Council of Switzerland. © IPU/Pierre Albouy

Widespread violence against women, especially in conflict settings and online, was an alarming trend, and there was a need to address toxic standards that held women back. Gender perspectives needed to be integrated into all areas of governance, from climate action to digital transformation, and participants were invited to turn shared concerns into concrete commitments. The Summit should serve to pave the way for the future.

Ms. T. Valovaya (Director-General of UNOG) placed the Summit in the context of key anniversaries: 30 years since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration, 25 years since the adoption of United Nations (UN) Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), and a decade since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Despite these frameworks, progress remained



Ms. T. Valovaya, Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva. © IPU/Pierre Albouy

slow, with women holding less than 30% of parliamentary seats worldwide. The 2024 “super election year” was one of missed opportunities. Quotas, zero-tolerance policies against violence in politics, and strong support for women candidates were essential, not optional. The UN had made progress towards parity in senior positions, including at UNOG, and the International Gender Champions initiative was a praiseworthy effort to mobilize leaders to break down barriers. Gender equality was indispensable for achieving the SDGs and sustaining peace, and women Speakers were role models for future generations.

The opening session thus set a strong tone for the Summit, combining a call for vigilance against regression with a reaffirmation of women's indispensable role in building inclusive and lasting peace.

Session 1:

The women, peace and security agenda 25 years on: Persisting challenges and the way forward

The first substantive session of the Summit was dedicated to taking stock of the implementation of the WPS agenda, marking 25 years since the adoption of UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). The session provided an opportunity to share experiences on enhancing women's leadership in peacebuilding, addressing the gendered effects of conflict on women and girls, and paving the way for inclusive and sustainable peace for the whole of society.

Keynote address by HRH the Grand Duchess Maria Teresa of Luxembourg, UN Global Champion for the Fight Against Sexual Violence in Conflict (video message)

HRH the Grand Duchess Maria Teresa of Luxembourg, a long-time champion of the fight against sexual violence in conflict, spoke of the devastating scale of this crime, recalling recent reports of mass rapes in conflict zones such as Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, Sudan and Ukraine. Sexual violence was not incidental but a deliberate weapon of war, intended to terrorize communities and destroy lives. Parliamentarians were urged to place survivors at the centre of policymaking – not merely as victims, but as leaders and experts. There could be no lasting peace without justice for survivors and their active participation in shaping solutions. Stand Speak Rise Up! had been founded six years ago for precisely this purpose: to denounce rape as a weapon of war, to prevent its use and to support survivors. Women's bodies must never be used as battlefields.²



Video message of HRH the Grand Duchess Maria Teresa of Luxembourg. © IPU/Pierre Albouy

Debate

In the ensuing debate, **Ms. K. Sudary** (Cambodia) emphasized the urgency of defending the Charter of the United Nations, international humanitarian law and multilateralism as foundations for peace. The WPS agenda remained a pathway to sustainable peace. Cambodia had deployed nearly 900 women peacekeepers since 2006 and was committed to increasing female participation in peace operations.

Ms. K. Kamissoko Camara (Côte d'Ivoire) expressed distress at the growing militarization of societies and at women's marginalization in peace talks. Following the adoption of successive WPS National Action Plans since 2008, women had been integrated into national and local dialogue structures in Côte d'Ivoire, often playing decisive roles in diffusing tensions and rebuilding trust. The latest action plan addressed emerging threats such as terrorism, climate change and forced displacement.

Ms. M.F. Lay (Timor-Leste) stressed that funding for women's organizations working on peace and security remained alarmingly low and that impunity for sexual violence was widespread. Parliamentarians must act decisively to increase women's direct participation, ensure adequate resourcing of women-led initiatives, and strengthen accountability mechanisms.



Ms. M. Fernanda Lay, Speaker of the National Parliament (Timor-Leste). © IPU/Pierre Albouy

² The full text of the address by HRH the Grand Duchess Maria Teresa of Luxembourg is available on the [event page](#) on the IPU website.

Ms. V. Murphy (Ireland) shared lessons from the peace process in her country, highlighting the transformative contribution of women in achieving and sustaining the Northern Ireland settlement. Ireland had recently adopted its fourth WPS National Action Plan, which integrated both domestic and international priorities, from combating gender-based violence to supporting women peacebuilders abroad.



Ms. V. Murphy, Chairwoman of the House of Representatives of Ireland. © IPU/Pierre Albouy

Ms. S. Gafarova (Azerbaijan) drew attention to her country's experience of displacement and humanitarian crisis. More than half of those displaced were women and girls, who had lost homes, livelihoods and security. Women played an active role in rebuilding communities and restoring livelihoods, contributing to both socioeconomic recovery and cultural revival. Women's participation was indispensable to preventing renewed violence and laying the foundation for sustainable development.



(From left to right), Mr. M. Chungong (IPU Secretary General) and Ms. M. Riniker (President of the Swiss National Council) greeting Ms. S. Gafarova (Chairwoman of the National Assembly of Azerbaijan) © IPU/Pierre Albouy

Ms. M. Pekarová Adamová (Czechia) indicated that her country's next WPS National Action Plan would aim to reflect the changing global context, integrating new areas such as cybersecurity and climate-related security risks from a gender perspective. Civil society, parliament and regional cooperation all had a key role to play in ensuring the implementation of the WPS agenda.



Ms. M. Pekarová Adamová, President of the Chamber of Deputies (Czechia). © IPU/Pierre Albouy

Ms. M.A. Talapa (Mozambique) highlighted the gendered impact of terrorism and climate-related disasters in her country. Women were often the first to suffer from forced displacement, food insecurity and gender-based violence during crises. Mozambique had integrated gender perspectives into its peacebuilding efforts and remained committed to promoting women's leadership in reconstruction and reconciliation processes.

Ms. B. Uwineza (Rwanda) underscored women's central role in peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction since the 1994 genocide in her country. Women held over 60% of parliamentary seats, enabling the integration of gender into national policies. But negative social norms and stereotypes continued to limit progress, particularly in addressing the gendered effects of climate change and ensuring the participation of young women in decision-making.

Ms. N. Mutti (Zambia) described the growing burden on women in her country as a result of climate-induced crises and insecurity. Women in rural areas often bore the heaviest costs of displacement and violence, while continuing to sustain communities. Security institutions remained male-dominated. Parliamentarians were urged to reinforce women's roles as peacebuilders through legislation, oversight and resource allocation.



Ms. N. Butete Kashumba Mutti, Speaker of the National Assembly of Zambia. © IPU/Pierre Albouy

Ms. T. Sveinbjarnardóttir (Iceland) stressed that women were the first to respond to crises but still the last to be heard. Women needed to be not only present in peace processes but also empowered actors of peace. Women leaders had a duty to not remain silent and to act to seek new paths.

Ms. V. Matvienko (Russian Federation) highlighted the importance of focusing on international cooperation, rather than sanctions, as a way to build peace. Respect for the development path of each nation was also a means to achieve peace. Women were key actors in this respect.



Ms. V. Matvienko, Speaker of the Council of the Federation (Russian Federation). © IPU/Pierre Albouy

Ms. S. Kuugongelwa-Amadhila (Namibia) recalled her country's leadership on the WPS agenda, including in ensuring the adoption of UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). The latest WPS National Action Plan of Namibia included a focus on cyberthreats. Parliament had a key role to play in implementing this agenda through gender-responsive budgeting, accountability, and the enactment of laws to protect women from gender-based violence, including in conflict and in cyberspace.

Ms. N. Kiselova (Bulgaria) called for an integrated approach to the implementation of the WPS agenda, including encouraging women and girls to pursue careers in male-dominated areas such as science, technology, engineering, mathematics, entrepreneurship, security and diplomacy. In Bulgaria, women held 50% of positions in diplomacy, including 40% of senior positions.



Ms. N. Kiselova, Speaker of the National Assembly (Bulgaria). © IPU/Pierre Albouy

Ms. L. Adderley (Bahamas) highlighted the need for the enactment of legislation to ensure women's involvement in peacebuilding, peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction. Justice was key to peace, which is why there was also a need to address gender inequalities such as the gender pay gap, as well as to reinforce protection against gender-based violence.



The Chair of the Summit discussing with Ms. L. Adderley, President of the Senate of the Bahamas © IPU/Pierre Albouy

Ms. M. Mokitimi (Lesotho) called for the protection of women human rights defenders and for efforts to redress the systemic exclusion of women from the decision-making table. Implementation of the WPS agenda required political will and the resourcing of women's peace initiatives. Events convened by the IPU were much-needed spaces for women MPs to unite and share best practices.

Ms. M.M. Chinomona (Zimbabwe) stressed that implementation of WPS National Action Plans remained fragmented owing to insufficient institutional support, persistent harmful gender norms, widespread sexual and gender-based violence, and a lack of funding. Oversight committees on peace and security, women's affairs, and gender and development, as well as women's caucuses, could play a key role in ensuring both the implementation of the WPS agenda and accountability for its implementation.



Ms. L. Dlamini, President of the Senate (Eswatini) © Swiss National Council

Ms. L. Dlamini (Eswatini) emphasized the responsibility of women parliamentary leaders to champion legislation that protected, empowered and elevated women, to hold institutions to account, and to place women at the heart of decision-making. This meant expanding the leadership pipeline for women in security and peacebuilding, investing in mental health and economic recovery for survivors, and crafting policies to empower women in all their diversity.

Ms. T. Narbaeva (Uzbekistan) outlined progress made in women's empowerment in her country, where, over the past eight years, the share of women MPs had increased from 16% to 38%. International cooperation, including dialogue among women leaders, was key to strengthening the implementation of the WPS agenda.



From left to right: Ms. T. Narbaeva, Chairwoman of the Senate of Uzbekistan and Ms. S. Gafarova, Speaker of the National Assembly of Azerbaijan. © The Swiss Parliament

Ms. A.T. Didiza (South Africa) highlighted the need to address security concerns and to provide the necessary funding to secure women's meaningful participation as mediators, negotiators and signatories of peace agreements. There was also a funding gap for implementation of the gender-related provisions of such agreements. The South Africa National Action Plan on WPS 2020–2025 had served as a pathway for women's engagement in peace efforts.

Ms. C. Cerqueira (Angola) stressed the importance of regional solidarity in building peace, calling for a focus on food security and on combating the unethical use of artificial intelligence (AI). Building a culture of peace and reconciliation also required awareness-raising efforts and collaboration with civil society. MPs had a key role to play in this regard.

Ms. C. López Castro (President of the IPU Bureau of Women Parliamentarians and member of the Senate of Mexico) congratulated women Speakers from around the world for having risen to power in such difficult times. Progress in women's participation and leadership had been uneven, with women making up just 27.2% of MPs and 23% of Speakers globally. There was a need to keep fighting for the new generations.

Ms. H. Al-Sulaiti (member of the IPU Executive Committee and Deputy Speaker of the Shura Council of Qatar) called on parliamentarians to move from words to action, including by adopting mechanisms to address violence against women and by fostering partnerships across and among parliaments, as well as with UN organizations, in order to implement UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

Ms. K. Barley (European Parliament) highlighted the unique role of parliamentarians, as representatives of the people, in promoting peace and pluralism, and in exercising their lawmaking, budgetary and oversight functions to promote the WPS agenda. Parliamentary diplomacy was equally important to building peace and safeguarding democracy and human rights.

Ms. M. Bin Theneya (President of the Women Parliamentary Forum (WPF), Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean) outlined the importance of the WPF in advancing women's rights across the region. The United Arab Emirates had been playing a pioneering role in the region by strengthening women's empowerment – both politically and socially – and fostering interparliamentary cooperation, including on advancing the role of women in fighting terrorism.

Ms. M. Ibrahim (ECOWAS Parliament) called on women leaders to systematically integrate gender into security policies, to facilitate the role of women in mediation efforts at the regional level, and to support young women parliamentarians in order for them to carry that heritage on.

A number of common themes emerged across all interventions: the urgent need to address conflict-related sexual violence, the central role of women in reconciliation and peacebuilding, and the imperative of turning commitments into concrete legislative and policy actions. The session concluded with broad agreement that, while progress had been made over the past 25 years, the gap between the ambition of UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and the reality on the ground remained stark. Participants reaffirmed their determination to close this gap through parliamentary leadership, solidarity, and concrete action to ensure that peace processes and security frameworks were truly inclusive and sustainable. This included adopting WPS National Action Plans that integrated emerging threats, enacting WPS legislation, ensuring accountability, and securing funding. Women must be recognized not merely as victims of conflict but as agents of change with the authority to shape solutions.

Session 2: Emerging challenges to inclusive and lasting peace and the way forward

The afternoon session of the Summit was devoted to emerging challenges to inclusive and lasting peace, with a focus on climate change, AI, and technology-facilitated violence against women.

Keynote address by Ms. Sofia Calltorp, Director, Geneva Office, and Chief of Humanitarian Action, UN Women

Ms. S. Calltorp (Director, Geneva Office, and Chief of Humanitarian Action, UN Women) emphasized that UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) remained a promise to be fulfilled: resources were shifting from peace and equality to military spending, and 90% of women-led organizations in crisis contexts reported financial strain, with many at risk of closure. Women's organizations were not only responders but also peacebuilders, and their collapse would mean the loss of a vital line of defence against instability. Climate change was aggravating vulnerabilities, escalating competition for resources,

and fuelling displacement and violence, with women and girls disproportionately affected. Evidence pointed to rising femicide rates during heat waves and to the gender-blind nature of most climate action. Women's historical underrepresentation and stereotyping were also fuelling gender-based violence.

Turning to digital technologies, Ms. Calltorp stressed that AI carried both promise and peril: while it could support peacebuilding and access to justice, it also enabled disinformation, cyberattacks, autonomous weapons and gender-based violence. Research by UN Women showed that AI systems often reproduced gender and racial biases, intensifying online harassment, deepfake abuse and radicalization. Parliaments were urged to legislate proactively, ensure that the tech sector was held to account, and embed gender analysis in AI governance. Women parliamentarians must champion inclusive, gender-responsive approaches to both climate and digital transformation.

The session then proceeded with two interactive Doha-style debates.



Ms. K. Kamissoko Camara, President of the Senate of Côte d'Ivoire and Ms. K. Sudary, President of the National Assembly of Cambodia. © IPU/Pierre Albouy

Debate on motion 1: Climate change is gender-neutral; it has the same impact on women and men

Speakers agreed that climate change was not gender-neutral: it magnified existing inequalities, placed disproportionate burdens on women and girls, and required gender-sensitive adaptation and mitigation strategies.

Ms. K. Sudary (Cambodia) stressed that women faced heightened risks in times of climate-induced crisis and called for gender-responsive policies and women's leadership. **Ms. K. Kamissoko Camara** (Côte d'Ivoire) highlighted women's central role in agriculture and food security, noting how droughts and floods exacerbated their workload. Heating and energy systems needed to be adapted, and rural women's access to property enhanced, in order to ensure resilience. Health consequences, such as the interruption of sexual and reproductive health services owing to climate-related disasters, were also gendered and needed to be addressed.



Ms. S. Kuugongelwa-Amadhila, Speaker of the National Assembly (Namibia) © IPU/Pierre Albouy



Ms. M. A. Talapa, President of the Assembly of the Republic (Mozambique) © IPU/Pierre Albouy

Ms. S. Kuugongelwa-Amadhila (Namibia) stressed that gender-blind policies would leave women behind, while **Ms. M. Chinomona** (Zimbabwe) called for sustainable agricultural practices and the empowerment of women at the community level in order to enhance resilience. **Ms. H. Al-Sulaiti** (member of the IPU Executive Committee and Deputy Speaker of the Shura Council of Qatar) underscored the importance of protecting women human rights defenders who were active in protecting the environment.

Ms. M.A. Talapa (Mozambique) and **Ms. B. Uwineza** (Rwanda) described how prescribed gender roles, poverty, and unequal access to resources increased women's vulnerability to disasters. In this regard, **Ms. N. Mutti** (Zambia) and **Ms. C. Cerqueira** (Angola) underscored the links between food insecurity, displacement and women's marginalization, with climate-related disasters pushing girls out of school and increasing rates of child marriage. **Ms. L. Adderley** (Bahamas) and **Ms. A. Didiza** (South Africa) pointed to rising gender-based violence in the wake of floods and cyclones.



Ms. M. Chinomona, President of the Senate (Zimbabwe) © IPU/Pierre Albouy



Ms. A. Didiza, Speaker of the National Assembly (South Africa) © IPU/Pierre Albouy

Debate on motion 2: It is already too late to make AI gender-sensitive and to eliminate violence against women online

This debate revealed more diverse perspectives.

Supporting the motion, **Ms. A. Nenaševa** (Latvia) and **Ms. D. Gulmanova** (Turkmenistan) expressed concern that gender biases were already deeply embedded in digital systems and that online violence against women had reached alarming levels, warning that, without drastic intervention, AI would continue to entrench inequalities.



Ms. T. Sveinbjarnardóttir, Speaker of the Althingi (Iceland) delivering her remarks © IPU/Pierre Albouy

Other Speakers argued that decisive action could still reverse these trends, underscoring that while a gender-blind approach would only deepen inequalities, inclusive policies could transform these challenges into opportunities for more resilient, equitable and peaceful societies. **Ms. T. Sveinbjarnardóttir** (Iceland) recalled that AI systems were not static, and that what was trained could be retrained. Regulation and international cooperation had an important role to play in making AI gender-sensitive. **Ms. R. Gagné** (Canada) highlighted the lack of diversity in development teams in the AI industry: only one third of members of such teams were women, which was leading to the embedding of gender bias. More women should therefore be encouraged to work in this field, and the work environment in the industry should be made more gender-sensitive.



Ms. R. Gagné, Speaker of the Canadian Senate ringing the bell to celebrate the adoption of the Summit Declaration © IPU/Pierre Albouy

Ms. K. Kamissoko Camara (Côte d'Ivoire) stressed the role of parliaments in ensuring corporate accountability and accessible reporting mechanisms, in protecting online spaces, and in promoting equal access to digital technologies. **Ms. K. Barley** (European Parliament) recalled that the European Union had been the first legal space to regulate AI in a broad manner and called for companies to be held accountable for producing unbiased content. **Ms. C. López Castro** (Mexico) called for the adoption of specific legislation to combat technology-facilitated gender-based violence, such as the "Olimpia Law" in her country.



Ms. C. Cerqueira, Speaker of the National Assembly of Angola is ringing the bell to celebrate the adoption of the Summit Declaration © IPU/Pierre Albouy



(From left to right) Ms. T. Ackson (IPU President and Speaker of the National Assembly of Tanzania), Ms. M. Riniker (President of the Summit and President of the Swiss National Council) and Mr. M. Chungong (IPU Secretary General) © IPU/Pierre Albouy

Closing session

In her closing remarks, **Ms. M. Riniker** (President of the National Council of Switzerland and President of the Summit) thanked participants for their engagement and candour. The debates had shown both the diversity of contexts and the universality of challenges faced by women leaders. Peace would not be sustainable without women's full participation, and it was important to transform insights into concrete parliamentary action. Switzerland remained committed to supporting gender equality in both national policy and multilateral forums.

Dr. T. Ackson (IPU President and Speaker of the National Assembly of the United Republic of Tanzania) concluded the Summit by paying tribute to the moral authority and leadership of the women Speakers in attendance. Progress had been achieved over the past 25 years but regression remained a real and pressing danger. Participants were urged to return to their parliaments with renewed determination to legislate, allocate resources and hold governments accountable for implementing the WPS agenda; to speak with one voice against violence and discrimination; and to use their authority to ensure that emerging challenges such as climate change and AI were addressed through inclusive and gender-responsive governance.

The Summit closed with a strong collective message: that women Speakers of Parliament were not only symbolic leaders but also active agents of change, uniquely positioned to advance gender equality and inclusive peace. By standing together and translating commitments into action, women Speakers would reaffirm their determination to build a more just, secure and sustainable world.

Final Declaration

Leading for inclusive and lasting peace

Monday, 28 July 2025

Final Declaration

The 15th Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament (15SWSP), convened by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in close cooperation with the Swiss Parliament, took place in Geneva, Switzerland, on Monday, 28 July 2025. 29 women Speakers of Parliament and 3 presiding officers of parliamentary assemblies and organizations, among about 330 participants from 37 countries, were in attendance.

As an outcome of their deliberations, the women Speakers of Parliament adopted the following final declaration:

- (1) *We, women Speakers of Parliament*, gathered at the 15th Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament at a critical juncture and in a year of many milestones for the women and girls of the world, marking the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the 10-year milestone of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the 25 years of existence of the Women, Peace and Security agenda, aiming to inspire the next chapter in the pursuit of gender equality and women's empowerment and leadership,
- (2) Deeply concerned by the growing sense of despair and disillusionment over the state of global affairs, and the alarming disregard for democratic values and principles, universal human rights and international humanitarian law, the erosion of trust in institutions, and the spread of polarization, conflict and hostility that undermine civic cohesion and inclusive peaceful governance,
- (3) Concerned that persistent negative norms and stereotypes related to masculinity and femininity, and the roles of men and women, continue to shape the conduct of politics and international relations, often reinforcing exclusion and adversarial approaches that undermine inclusive and sustainable peace,
- (4) Alarmed by the toll of armed conflict on civilian populations and underscoring that armed conflicts disproportionately affect women and girls; that gender-based violence, including its use as a weapon of war, is one of the gravest threats to security, exacerbating existing inequalities, and obstructing paths to justice and sustainable peace,
- (5) Expressing our solidarity with all women and girls in areas of conflicts and wars,
- (6) Recognizing the importance of respecting civilizational and religious pluralism in shaping models of women's empowerment and leadership, including those models based on religious references and national traditions,
- (7) Convinced that the voices and leadership of women are integral to accelerating progress on the Sustainable Development Goals, yet continue to be excluded from decision-making roles in processes critical to mitigating risks, responding to crises and building resilience,
- (8) Affirming that gender equality¹, inclusivity and women's leadership are critical to sustainable peace and security, as recognized in the Women, Peace and Security agenda, with clear evidence showing that inclusive, multidimensional, multilateral and participatory processes, led by women and showing due respect for international law, contribute to conflict prevention, resolution, and post-conflict recovery, and result in more durable and effective peace agreements,

¹ In IPU's Plan of action for gender-sensitive parliaments, adopted unanimously by the 127th IPU Assembly (Quebec City, October 2012), the IPU defines gender equality as follows: "Gender equality means that women and men enjoy full and equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities".

- (9) Concerned that the underrepresentation of women in peace mediation and negotiation remains a significant barrier to achieving lasting peace and inclusive governance,
- (10) Gravely concerned by the significant underrepresentation of women in diplomatic roles, as highlighted by UN General Assembly resolution 76/269, reaffirming the critical importance of advancing women's leadership in foreign affairs, multilateral institutions and diplomacy to strengthen inclusive global governance, and acknowledging the importance of the International Day of Women in Diplomacy in order to promote the full and equal participation of women at all levels of diplomacy,
- (11) Emphasizing that science and diplomacy are linked in addressing transboundary challenges, and that the role of women diplomats and scientists is pivotal and in need of empowerment in shaping both scientific and political solutions,
- (12) Certain that today's most urgent global challenges, including climate change, technological transformation, the erosion of human rights and entrenched gender inequality, are reshaping the prospects for peace, and require strong, coordinated and gender-sensitive leadership and action in partnership between men and women,
- (13) Worried that women are persistently underrepresented in climate decision-making and recognizing that climate change intensifies precarity and drives instability, particularly in fragile contexts, with impact on women and girls,
- (14) Recognizing that emerging technologies are transforming societies and governance, bringing both opportunities and serious risks, and concerned by the lack of gender-inclusive political dialogue on the governance of artificial intelligence,
- (15) Stressing the imperative of women's leadership in the development, governance and regulation of emerging technologies, to ensure these systems are inclusive, free from bias and supportive of social cohesion and gender equality,
- (16) Welcoming progress in women's representation in national parliaments, which has more than doubled over the past 30 years, growing from 11.3% in 1995 to 27.2% in 2025, noting that the implementation of gender quotas, or other initiatives and supports that increase women's participation in politics, remains a crucial driver of these gains, welcoming progress in women's leadership of parliaments from 10.5% 30 years ago to 23.7% today, and calling for continued commitment and accelerated action in partnership between men and women towards parity in participation and leadership,
- (17) Affirming that gender parity is fundamental to the legitimacy, resilience and effectiveness of democratic institutions across all areas of life, and convinced that achieving gender parity in parliaments and decision-making spaces is more urgent than ever to effectively address global challenges and to build inclusive and sustainable peace,
- (18) Reaffirming our unequivocal commitment to achieving gender parity, as enshrined in the plan of action for gender parity in parliament adopted at the IPU Global Conference of Women Parliamentarians in March 2025 in Mexico, which was a decisive call to make parity a universal political standard, in line with the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women's General Recommendation No. 40 on the equal and inclusive representation of women in decision-making systems,

We commit to:

- Engage within and beyond our parliaments to raise awareness of the importance of multilateralism and inclusive interparliamentary dialogue as a fundamental trust-building mechanism for effective international cooperation and sustainable peace.
- Call for full respect of international humanitarian and human rights law, working through our parliaments to promote peaceful, negotiated settlements in place of a growing reliance on violence and war, and addressing their gender-related consequences, and reaffirm the urgency of gender-sensitive diplomacy and inclusive peace processes as the only sustainable path to lasting peace.

- Support women's leadership in diplomacy and foreign affairs by strengthening gender-balanced representation across all levels of diplomatic service and supporting inclusive foreign policy institutions that reflect and drive systemic change in global governance.
- Encourage all institutions, governments and organizations engaged in mediation and negotiation to adopt gender-inclusive policies and ensure the meaningful participation of women at all stages of these processes; and to further urge the allocation of adequate resources, training and support to empower women mediators and negotiators, particularly at the grassroots and community levels.
- Promote greater awareness in our parliaments of sustainable and inclusive peace as a multidimensional process by placing gender equality at its core.
- Lead a paradigm shift in politics by transforming our parliaments into gender-sensitive institutions while confronting harmful gender norms through inclusive procedures, sustained capacity-building and structural reforms.
- Step up efforts to rebuild trust in democratic institutions by fostering inclusive leadership and addressing the root causes of disengagement, particularly among younger generations, to bridge the widening generational divide.
- Reiterate our commitment to making parity the norm within and beyond our parliaments, while actively supporting global advocacy to encourage and enable all parliaments to adopt gender-sensitive practices and structures.
- Strengthen the response of our parliaments to address all forms of violence against women and gender-based violence within and beyond parliaments, by adopting and upholding zero-tolerance laws and policies, reinforcing accountability and treating this issue as a fundamental challenge to democracy.
- Take urgent action to ensure women's full participation in climate change responses and recognize that gender-responsive strategies are essential to building resilience, enabling adaptation and driving a just, equitable transition.
- Strengthen institutional knowledge and parliamentary capacities to oversee emerging technologies, ensuring their governance is inclusive, gender-sensitive and free from bias, with women equally represented with men in the design, development and oversight of these systems.
- Promote science diplomacy by championing gender-balanced representation of women diplomats and scientists in multilateral scientific forums, and foster clear pathways for girls and young women to enter and thrive in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) — building on successful models such as the Women in Science (WINS) programme and encouraging their deployment worldwide.
- Leverage the milestone anniversaries in 2025 of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Women, Peace and Security agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals, and the 40th anniversary of the IPU Forum of Women Parliamentarians to accelerate implementation and renew commitments to gender equality and inclusive peacebuilding.
- Join the IPU Achieving gender equality, action by action campaign, promote the campaign in our parliaments, and implement the 10 most transformative and urgent actions that it calls on us to take.

We will ensure that this outcome document informs the proceedings of the Sixth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, with a view to prioritizing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls on the agenda of all parliaments.

NB. It is recognized that due to their constitutional positions or other factors, certain Speakers cannot directly associate themselves with substantive political statements, and therefore should not be seen as indicating specific support for all sections. Nonetheless, on behalf of their chambers, they recognize the importance of the issues raised and the intentions of their colleagues in proposing particular ways forward.

Annex

The following documents are available on the [event page](#) on the IPU website:

Opening statements

Dr. Tulia Ackson
IPU President and Speaker of the National Assembly of the United Republic of Tanzania

Ms. Maja Riniker
President of the National Council of Switzerland and President of the Summit

Ms. Tatiana Valovaya
Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva

HRH the Grand Duchess Maria Teresa of Luxembourg
UN Global Champion for the Fight Against Sexual Violence in Conflict

Final programme

List of Participants

The recorded livestream of the Summit is also available on the [IPU's official YouTube channel](#) (in English)



28 July 2025 **Geneva, Switzerland**

Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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Assemblea federale
Federal Assembly

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