



#NotInMyParliament

Sexism, Harassment and Violence against Women Parliamentarians

Violence against women is one of the most widespread human rights violations, and the world of politics is also affected by this scourge. As in other sectors, violence against women in politics has been tolerated and normalised for too long. It can take many forms, including harassment, sexist remarks and attitudes or physical violence. A joint study of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)/ Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) released in 2018 revealed that more than 85% of women parliamentarians interviewed had experienced psychological violence, and among them more than 46% had received threats of death, rape or beatings during their parliamentary term and more than 67% been subject to sexist remarks. These Europe-wide figures confirm those obtained in the framework of the IPU global study conducted with women MPs from all regions of the world in 2016.

Violence against women in politics directly impacts the political participation of women, therefore further delaying progress in achieving gender equality. The UN 2030 Agenda made the elimination of violence against women in all sectors a priority target. The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) requires State Parties to criminalise all forms of violence against women. The French Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe has also made the fight against violence against women a priority

The awareness of violence against women in politics is gradually being incorporated into new or existing national laws and into regional and international normative frameworks which are specifically calling on governments, parliaments, political parties and political leaders to address the issue. In this respect, the Bolivian law on political violence against women (2012) influenced legislation in other countries as well as the Inter-American Model Law on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women in Political Life, published in 2017. The UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences submitted to the UN GA a report on violence against women in politics in 2018. In April 2019, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe adopted Resolution 2274 (2019) on *Promoting parliaments free of sexism and sexual harassment*. It has also launched the awareness-raising campaign *#NotInMyParliament* to mobilise parliaments to stamp out sexism and violence in their own settings. The Inter-Parliamentary Union adopted in 2016 a resolution on *The freedom of women to participate in political processes fully, safely and without interference* and is currently preparing Guidelines on eliminating sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliaments.

You are invited to join this side event on the occasion of the 41st session of the Human Rights Council, organised by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, UN Women, Permanent Missions of Canada and Costa Rica to the UN and the French Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to take stock of ongoing legal and policy initiatives to end violence against women in politics and to share experiences and lessons learned from their implementation. The event also aims to strengthen partnerships at global, regional and national levels, as well as to increase the impact of the work and efforts in this area.

Panellists:

- **Ms Liliane Maury Pasquier**, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
- **Mr Martin Chungong**, Secretary General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union
- **Ms Thorhildur Sunna Ævarsdóttir**, member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, rapporteur on Promoting parliaments free of sexism and sexual harassment
- **H.E. Ms Elayne Whyte Gómez**, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Costa Rica
- **Ms Julie Ballington**, Policy Advisor on Political Participation in the Leadership and Governance Section, UN Women
- **Ms Clarisse Gérardin**, Human Rights Advisor, Permanent Mission of France

Moderator: Ms Béatrice Fresko-Rolfo, General Rapporteur on violence against women, Political Coordinator of the Parliamentary Network Women Free from Violence, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

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Date: Wednesday 10 July 2019
Time: 3 to 4.30 p.m.
Languages: English and French
Venue: Room XXVII, Palais des Nations, Geneva
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