



Inter-Parliamentary Union  
For democracy. For everyone.

**206th session  
of the Governing Council  
(Extraordinary virtual session) 1–4 November 2020**

Governing Council  
Item 5

CL/206/5-P.4  
4 September 2020

**Election of the President of  
the Inter-Parliamentary Union**

**(Article 19 of the Statutes and Rules 6, 7 and 8 of  
the Rules of the Governing Council)**

Candidature

of

**Ms. Salma Ataullahjan (Canada)**

On 4 September 2020, the Secretary General received a communication from Ms. Salma Ataullahjan, Senator of Canada, submitting her candidature for the office of President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, which is to be filled at the 206th session of the Governing Council.

The text of this communication, as well as the presentation letter and the curriculum vitae of Ms. S. Ataullahjan, are to be found in Annexes I, II and III.

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**COMMUNICATION ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL BY  
MS. SALMA ATAULLAHJAN, SENATOR OF CANADA**

Ottawa, 4 September 2020

Dear Mr. Secretary General,

I am writing to submit my candidacy for the Presidency of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in November 2020. Since my involvement with the IPU began in 2011, my commitment and respect for this organization has grown. I have witnessed the work the IPU does where gender issues, children issues, and the rights of parliamentarians are concerned. I have also seen the work the IPU does to encourage peaceful dialogue in areas of conflict. It would be my honour to serve as President in the largest and oldest organization of national parliaments.

I have a strong history of involvement through the Canadian Group of the IPU. As a rapporteur for the IPU Standing Committee of Democracy and Human Rights, I took the lead in drafting a report on the role of parliaments in assisting women and children's access to health services. The report was unanimously adopted in a landmark resolution on Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (MNCH) at the 126<sup>th</sup> Assembly. I was the only Parliamentarian to speak at the World Health Assembly in Geneva on this topic in May 2011.

I have also held positions through the IPU as Goodwill Ambassador for Maternal and Newborn Child Health, as a member of the executive of the Bureau for Women Parliamentarians, and on the ExCom where I headed its Sub-Committee on Finance. I presently serve as Chair of the IPU Committee on Middle East Questions (MEQ). As Chair of the Committee on MEQ, I have seen first-hand the importance of mediation, dialogue, and fostering relations between countries based on mutual respect.

My commitment and strong belief in the importance of the work the IPU does encouraged me to fight for the survival of the Canadian Group of IPU when Canada considered withdrawal. Were it not for my efforts Canada would not presently be a member of the IPU. The fact that Canada maintains a strong presence in the IPU today is something of which I am very proud.

My experience in the Senate of Canada, and proven track record with the IPU, make me an ideal candidate for President of the IPU. I would be honoured to serve as the IPU President and bring to life my vision for the IPU, enclosed herein.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed)          The Hon. Salma ATAULLAHJAN (Ms.)  
                                Senator, Canada

## PRESENTATION LETTER OF MS. SALMA ATAULLAHJAN, SENATOR OF CANADA

Dear Colleagues,

It is with great pleasure that I announce my candidacy for the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). I believe strongly in the values and ideals of the IPU and I am deeply honoured by this opportunity. My priorities for my tenure as President of the IPU would include parliamentary diplomacy, human rights and gender inequity, education access, and climate action.

**Parliamentary Diplomacy:** I believe strongly that what the IPU does best is encourage dialogue between countries. As President of the IPU I would work to facilitate collaboration while encouraging equity and diversity among parliamentarians. I also hope to support the IPU's continued work to strengthen the role of parliaments globally. In particular, by creating training opportunities for parliamentarians, including underrepresented groups such as racialized individuals, women, and young parliamentarians.

**Human Rights and Gender Inequity:** We must continue our work to protect human rights globally, especially amongst vulnerable groups. I believe strongly that it is time to end the practice of child marriages. Young girls married before the age of 18 are more likely to experience violence from their partner and suffer from health problems, and psychological issues. I also look forward to continuing the IPU's work to reduce maternal mortality globally. This is a portfolio that I am strongly committed to as I have a history of working with the IPU in this sphere.

**Access to Education:** Ensuring access to education for children and adolescents, especially those who are disenfranchised, is essential. This requires not only providing physical access to affordable schools, but also addressing the factors such as poverty that force so many children to drop out of school.

**Climate Action:** One of the most pressing dilemmas that we are currently facing globally is increased climate shocks such as flooding and drought. These climate shocks have already led to food insecurity, and famines. Decreasing access to fresh water is also a growing concern with many countries already grappling with water shortages. I believe concerted effort to address these concerns is crucial, and I hope to continue the dialogue on climate action and the promotion of sustainable growth.

In our current global climate as countries grapple with COVID-19 and its impacts on economies, infrastructure, and health, there is a unique opportunity to build back better than before. We are still learning what the long-term impacts of COVID-19 will be on the world we know. However what COVID-19 has taught us is that we are one global community and what happens in one country has implications for communities across the world. It is in this spirit of global community, I offer my candidacy for President of the IPU.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed)

The Hon. Salma ATAULLAHJAN (Ms.)  
Senator, Canada

## CURRICULUM VITAE



### HON. SENATOR SALMA ATAULLAHJAN

Senate of Canada  
East Block - Room 246  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A4  
Phone: 613-947-5906  
Email: salma.ataullahjan@sen.parl.gc.ca

### BACKGROUND

Born into a family with a long-standing history of political activism, Salma Atallahjan has spent many years actively involved both socially and politically in her community. She moved to Canada from Pakistan in 1980 and currently lives in Toronto with her husband and two children.

Senator Atallahjan was appointed to the Senate of Canada in 2010, as a representative for the province of Ontario. As the first Canadian Senator of Pakistani origin, she stands for ethnic diversity, and the rights of women, youth and the world's most vulnerable.

### BILLS

- Tabled Bill S-204 criminalizing human organ trafficking
- Tabled Bill S-235 seeking the prohibition of investment in cluster munitions
- Critic on Bill S-211 on modern day slavery
- Critic on Bill S-217 for the establishment of an Office of the Commissioner for Children and Youth
- Critic on Bill C-376 for the establishment of Sikh Heritage Month

### SENATE COMMITTEES

- |   |                |
|---|----------------|
| Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights   | 2010 – Present |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>As member of Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights proposed nationally recognized study "<a href="#">Cyberbullying Hurts: Respect for Rights in the Digital Age</a>" (2012) and study "<a href="#">Training in Afghanistan: Include Women</a>"(2010)</li><li>championed studies on topics such as the working conditions of garment workers in developing countries and the resettlement of Syrian refugees in Canada</li></ul> |                |
| Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs & International Trade  | 2012 - Present |
| Senate Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans   | 2013 - 2015    |
| Senate Standing Committee on Aboriginal Peoples   | 2013 - 2015    |
| Senate Standing Committee on National Finance   | 2013 - 2015    |
| Standing Joint Committee on Library of Parliament   | 2011 - 2013    |
| Senate Standing Committee on Aboriginal Peoples   | 2011 - 2013    |
| Senate Standing Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce  | 2010 - 2011    |
| Senate Standing Committee on Agriculture and Forestry   | 2010 - 2011    |

### PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATIONS

- |  |                |
|--|----------------|
| Canada-Africa Parliamentary Association      | 2017 - Present |
| Canadian NATO Parliamentary Association      | 2017 - Present |
| Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) | 2011 - Present |
| Senate Artwork Advisory Council              | 2011 - Present |
| Canadian Group of the IPU                    | 2011 - Present |

## **INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION (IPU)**

Member since 2011

Canadian Group of the IPU – Former President, current executive member

Committee on Middle East Questions - President since 2017

Rapporteur for Standing Committee on Human Rights and Democracy

Bureau of Women Parliamentarians

ExCom member – Headed the Sub-Committee on Finance

Chaired IPU breakout sessions

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Hosted Parliamentary event with the Global Poverty Project's End of Polio Campaign "*A Strong Partnership for Polio Eradication in Pakistan: Celebrating Canada's Leadership Towards the End of Polio*" resulting in Government announcement of a \$20 million grant

Visited and reported to the Senate on the flood damaged regions of Nowshera and Charsadda followed by a Government of Canada food relief donation of \$27.8 million in addition to the \$19 million previously announced and personally donated 2.5 lakh rupees during visit to camps

Conducted Capacity Building with female parliamentarians in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh, January 2020

Visited campsites of internally displaced persons of Swat Valley, Pakistan

Accompanied then Minister of State for Multiculturalism Tim Uppal in meeting with Polio vaccinators, doctors, and UNICEF staff in Lahore

## **AWARDS & ACHIEVEMENTS**

Sitara-e-Pakistan (Star of Pakistan)	2020
Recognition of Canada's commitment to the survival of the Rohingya Nation	2018
Women's Federation for World Peace award for Ambassador for Peace	2018
Canada Pakistan Business Council Award	2018
Promoting diplomacy between Indonesia and Canada	2018
Appreciation for outstanding contribution to the work and mission of the IPU	2014
Saving Woman and Child Award	2014
Reh'ma Community Services Empowered Women award	2014
IPU's Goodwill Ambassador for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health	2013
National Hero Foundation Wonder Women Award (Pakistan)	2012
Canadian Association of Pakistani Origin (CAPO) Pride of Jinnah Award	2012
Society of Pakistani Canadian Professionals and Academics Award	2011
Pakistani League of America Quaid-e-Azam Award	2010
Home Life/Aces Realty Community Service Award	2010
Greater Nakodar Area Award	2008

## **COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS**

### **The Citizens Foundation Canada**

#### **Member**

International group that has built and funded over 730 schools for underprivileged children in Pakistan

### **South Asian Regional Council of Canada**

#### **Member**

Promotion of dialogue between South Asian communities in Canada

### **Canada Pashtoon Cultural Association**

#### **Director**

An inclusive community organization

**Society of Pakistani Canadian Professionals and Academics**

**Executive Member**

Involvement in community fundraising, most notably for a room named after M.A. Jinnah at the Credit Valley Hospital in Ontario

**David Lewis Public School Advisory Council**

**Founding Member and Chair**

Ontario elementary school

**EDUCATION**

**Centennial College, Toronto, ON, Canada**

Real Estate License

1988

**Control Data Institute, Toronto, ON, Canada**

Diploma in Computer Operations

1982

**PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP GROUPS**

Canada-Afghanistan Friendship Group  
Canada-Africa Friendship Group  
Canada-CARICOM Friendship Group  
Canada-Egypt Friendship Group  
Canada-India Friendship Group  
Canada-Iraq Friendship Group  
Canada-Kazakhstan Friendship Group  
Canada-Korea Friendship Group  
Canada-Mongolia Friendship Group  
Canada-Morocco Friendship Group  
Canada-Pakistan Friendship Group  
Canada-Qatar Friendship Group  
Canada-Sri Lanka Friendship Group  
Canada-Turkey Friendship Group  
Canada-UAE Friendship Group  
Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group  
Canada-Uzbekistan Friendship Group

**INTERESTS**

Watercolour painting  
Nature photography  
Bird watching  
Travelling