



Inter-Parliamentary Union

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Speaking notes

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General Debate on the theme:
*Strengthening the global regime for
migrants and refugees: the need for
evidence-based policy solutions*
138th IPU Assembly and related
meetings
Geneva, 25 March 2018

Madam President,
Mr. Secretary General,
Madam President of the Forum of Young MPs of the IPU,
Distinguished guests,
Dear colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today, 3.3 per cent of the world's population lives outside their country of birth. Women migrate as much as men. But women migrants are at a greater risk of exploitation and abuse, including trafficking. The global migration regime has until now offered insufficient protection for women migrants and refugees.

Change is urgent. The magnitude of global displacement today demands more than unilateral responses. And our action must acknowledge the unique needs and contribution of women.

The world needs safe, orderly and regular migration. To that end, we must form a political will that will focus on improving our common standards of protection and cooperation.

At the national level, we, as IPU Members, need to lay the groundwork for vigorous parliamentary action. We need to ensure our laws and our migration policies systematically integrate a gender dimension. Our debates, our budgeting, our programmes, all our efforts need to identify the multiple forms of discrimination and protect efficiently migrant women and girls.

Let us not forget that the protection of migrant, refugee or stateless women is an obligation, not an option. And that our duty to protect all women implies an obligation to achieve results. So in this work, we need to be guided by international and regional treaties that bind us, especially the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women - CEDAW.

Regional and cross-regional efforts are urgently needed to provide effective protection for refugee and migrant women. Together, we must share best practices on integration policies, establish holistic pre-departure and post-arrival programmes, and develop targets to accelerate the inclusion of migrants.

Last but not least, women migrants and refugees can no longer be seen primarily as victims. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development commands that we empower all women.

More than ever, migrant and refugee women's access to decision-making is crucial, be it in their homes, communities or, in cases of forced displacement, in the organization and management of refugee camps.

For that to happen, as parliamentarians, we have the power to create an enabling environment:

- By ensuring migrant and refugee women are aware of their rights and are able to claim them.
- By creating forums for them to voice their own concerns and needs.
- By ensuring that women of all origins, including immigrant women, are represented in our political institutions.

Dear colleagues,

Our citizens need access to objective, clear information on the benefits and challenges migration creates rather than to misleading narratives. They need to be able to address migration challenges while embracing the contribution that migrants bring to society. Women migrants and refugees are key vectors towards making our societies inclusive. Indeed, inclusiveness is the only path to peaceful and resilient democracies.