

Canadian Group
Inter-Parliamentary Union



Groupe canadien
Union interparlementaire

**Report of the Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary
Union**

**Parliamentary Forum at the UN High-Level Political Forum on
Sustainable Development**

New York, New York, United States of America

July 12 to 13, 2022

Introduction

A delegation of the Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (UIPU) participated in the [2022 High-Level Political Forum \(HLPF\) on Sustainable Development](#) at the United Nations (UN) headquarters in New York City on 12–13 July 2022. The delegation was composed of the Honourable Rosa Galvez, Senator, and Ms. Iqra Khalid, M.P. They were accompanied by Mr. Olivier Leblanc-Laurendeau, advisor to the UIPU. The Canadian delegation participated in the Parliamentary Forum organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) on 13 July 2022, as well as in several side events and meetings¹.

A total of 80 parliamentarians from 27 countries participated in the IPU's Parliamentary Forum.

PARLIAMENTARY FORUM

The theme of the [Parliamentary Forum](#) was Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) no. 17 (Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development). Specifically, the three-hour meeting was divided in two panels:

- domestic revenue mobilization; and
- development assistance and public-private partnerships (PPPs).

The meeting was opened by the Honourable Paddy Torsney, Permanent Observer of the IPU at the UN. She is also a former member of the House of Commons of Canada.

A. Panel one: Domestic Revenue Mobilization

The first panel was moderated by the Right Honourable Jack McConnell, House of Lords, United Kingdom (U.K). Three panelists made introductory remarks:

- Jayati Ghosh, University of Massachusetts Amherst, member of the Independent Commission for the Reform of International Corporate Taxation.
- Toril-Iren Pedersen, Assistant Director, Department for Partnerships and Shared prosperity, Section for governance and transparency, Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad), Addis Tax Initiative representative; and
- Tove Maria Ryding, Policy and Advocacy Manager of Tax Justice, Eurodad.

The three panellists spoke about tax evasion, the need to modernize tax systems and to fairly tax multinationals. They also mentioned the role of parliaments, noting that tax reforms are both a financial and a governance issue.

During that panel, Ms. Khalid asked the panellists whether there were incremental measures for parliamentarians to advocate for at home to mobilize revenues for the SDGs. She also inquired about the taxation of multinational corporations and the role of PPPs.

¹ A report, as well as a video recording of the Parliamentary Forum, are available on the Inter-Parliamentary Union's [website](#).

For her part, Senator Galvez stated that the COVID-19 pandemic did not break the tax system; it merely revealed a broken system. She noted that there is a lot of experience globally, notably at ParlAmericas (the multilateral interparliamentary institution for the inter-American system), when it comes to tax reforms.

B. Panel two: Aid and Public-Private Partnerships

The second panel was moderated by Petra Bayr, M.P. (National Council, Austria). Three panellists made introductory remarks:

- Ulrika Modeer, Assistant Administrator, Director of the Bureau for External Relations and Advocacy, UN Development Programme.
- Amy La Trielle, Country Program Director for Conflict and Fragile Countries, GAVI Vaccine Alliance; and
- Rebecca Riddell, Co-director of the Human Rights and Privatization Project, Center for Human Rights and Global Justice, New York University School of Law.

The panellists spoke about how low-income countries remain reliant on foreign aid; yet the current volume of foreign aid remains well below the target of 0.7% of contributing countries' gross national income. It was also noted that there needs to be an evidence-based approach to development finance and that we must forego one-size-fits-all solutions. Finally, one panellist encouraged parliamentarians to ask whether PPPs represent a good use of public funds, arguing that they often end up being more expensive and leaving the state with a disproportionate risk (compared to the private partners).

Senator Galvez raised the issue of stranded assets (assets that have suffered from unanticipated devaluation), double materiality² and greenwashing. She asked the panellists about the changes required for the financial sector in order for financial actors to better align themselves with the SDGs.

Ms. Khalid highlighted [Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy](#) and the [Gender-Based Analysis Plus](#) conducted on federal policies and budgets. She explained that, in order to progress, our societies must achieve gender equality.

CANADIAN SIDE EVENTS

A. Official side event on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

On 12 July 2022, the Permanent Mission of Canada to the UN in New York co-organized a side event on sexual and reproductive health and rights with the Permanent Mission of the Argentine Republic and the UN Population Fund. The Honourable Karina Gould,

² The concept of "double materiality" is said to describe "how corporate information can be important both for its implications about a firm's financial value, and about a firm's impact on the world at large, particularly with regard to climate change and other environmental impacts. The idea of double materiality comes from a recognition that a company's impact on the world beyond finance can be material, and therefore worth disclosing, for reasons other than the effect on a firm's bottom line." See: Henry Engler, "Double materiality": New legal concept likely to play in debate over SEC's climate plan," Thomson Reuters, 12 April 2022.

Minister of Families, Children and Social Development of Canada, and the Honourable Elizabeth Gómez Alcorta, Minister of Women, Genders and Diversity of Argentina, addressed attendees via pre-recorded videos.

The following speakers participated in the event:

- Diene Keita, Deputy Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund;
- Nancy Northup, President and CEO of the Center for Reproductive Rights (United States);
- Bwire Chirangi, Medical Director, Shirati Hospital, Tanzania; and
- Myriam Dagher, Research Assistant, American University of Beirut.

Participants discussed the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on reproductive rights and the importance of SDG 5 (gender equality). It was noted that there have been successes in recent years. For instance, the rate of maternal death has been declining. However, it was also acknowledged that these gains are currently under threat in many regions of the world and that many women are still unable to make their own decisions when it comes to their reproductive rights and health.

In a pre-recorded video message, Minister Gould reiterated that Canada unequivocally supports the right to choose and that, when abortion becomes illegal, abortions do not stop; they simply become less accessible and less safe.

B. Reception at the Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations

That same day, the Permanent Mission of Canada held a reception with members of the Canadian delegation to the HLPF. The Honourable Bob Rae, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Canada to the UN in New York, opened the reception. Held in-person and virtually, the event began with [Canada's HLPF national statement](#). Brian Bowman, Mayor of Winnipeg; Skye Lacroix, Indigenous activist; Donna Johnson, Deputy Minister of Education for the Government of Saskatchewan; and Sarah Mazhero, member of the Prime Minister's Youth Council, who had all contributed to the national statement, addressed the participants.

Ambassador Rae and Meghan Watkinson, Director of International Assistance Policy Coordination at Global Affairs Canada, then took questions from the attendees. A reception followed for those attending in-person.

C. Briefing at the Global Network of Woman Peacebuilders

On 13 July 2022, the Canadian delegation attended an informal briefing with the CEO of the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders³, Maria Victoria "Mavic" Cabrera Balleza. The Honourable Marilou McPhedran, Senator, Petra Bayr (Austria) and Candies Kotchapaw, Founder and Executive Director of the Black Diplomat Academy (Canada), were also in attendance.

³ The Global Network of Women Peacebuilders is a New York-based charity that receives funding from the Government of Canada as part of the [Peace and Stabilization Operations Program](#).

Ms. Cabrera Balleza explained her organization's role in promoting and advocating for women's rights, gender equality and sustainable peace worldwide. She stressed the interconnectedness between gender equality and peacebuilding. She also mentioned the landmark resolutions on gender equality adopted by the UN Security Council over the years and the importance of National Action Plan on Gender Equality at the national level.

BILATERAL MEETINGS

The Canadian delegation took advantage of the HLPF to meet with delegations from the U.K., Brazil and Indonesia, which were also present in New York. The Canadian delegation also met virtually with a delegate from Mexico following the HLPF.

A. Bilateral meeting with the U.K. delegation

On 13 July 2022, the Canadian delegation met with Lord McConnell and the Right Honourable Shaista Ahmad Sheehan from the House of Lords of the U.K. The discussion mostly focused on climate change, severe weather events (such as the severe floods in Canada in 2021 and the 2022 heat wave in the U.K.), sustainable development and biodiversity. They agreed on the importance for parliamentarians to be briefed on these topics. They also discussed the implications of climate change for national security and the need for parliamentarians to overcome partisan divisions on this file.

The four parliamentarians also talked about human trafficking, immigration and labour shortages.

B. Bilateral meeting with the Brazilian delegation

On 13 July 2022, Senator Galvez met with Senator Eliane Nogueira from Brazil. The pair discussed the work of ParlAmericas, notably on climate change, gender equality and open parliament. They also talked about the Canada–Brazil Friendship Group, environmental pollution and climate change, and of the political uncertainty in Brazil (the Brazilian general elections had not yet been held at the time).

C. Bilateral meeting with the Indonesian delegation

On 13 July 2022, Ms. Khalid met with Achmad Hafisz Tohir, Mardani Ali Sera and Putu Supadma Rudana, members of the People's Representative Council of the Republic of Indonesia. They were later joined by Senator Galvez. The discussion focused on Islamophobia, the importance of international cooperation and interparliamentary diplomacy, climate change and sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The Indonesian delegates highlighted that their country was currently presiding over the Group of 20 and that the next summit would be held in Bali in the fall.

D. Bilateral meeting with the Mexican delegation

On 21 July 2022, Ms. Khalid met with Cynthia López Castro, member of the Mexican Chamber of Deputies, via videoconference. The two discussed education, poverty, road

safety and online hate. They also talked about the role of young parliamentarians in addressing global challenges.

Respectfully submitted,
The Hon. David McGuinty, P.C., M.P.
President, Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union
ACTIVITY	Parliamentary Forum at the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
DESTINATION	New York, New York, United States of America
DATES	July 12-13, 2022
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Hon. Rosa Galvez, Senator
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Ms. Iqra Khalid, M.P.
STAFF	Mr. Olivier Leblanc-Laurendeau, Analyst
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 3,262.18
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 972.01
HOSPITALITY	\$ 0.00
PER DIEMS	\$ 733.38
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$ 0.00
REVENUES	\$ (321.60)
MISCELLANEOUS	\$ 0.00
TOTAL	\$ 4,645.97