

Canadian Group
Inter-Parliamentary Union



Groupe canadien
Union interparlementaire

**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
to the One-day parliamentary meeting on the occasion of the
51st session of the Commission on the Status of Women: *A
parliamentary perspective on discrimination and violence
against the girl child***

Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)

**New York
March 1, 2007**

Report

1. Background

One of the main areas of activity of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) is women in politics. The IPU also has a policy of contributing to major international forums by seeking to introduce a parliamentary dimension into the proceedings of intergovernmental organizations, such as the United Nations. As a result, when the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) met in March 2005 to appraise implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the IPU worked with the UN Division for the Advancement of Women (UNDAW) to organize a one-day parliamentary event to provide a parliamentary perspective to that appraisal. The success of that meeting has led the IPU to hold a one-day parliamentary event to coincide with subsequent annual meetings of the CSW. The meeting of 1 March 2007 was the third such event.

Over the last decade, the IPU has been working closely with the United Nations to enhance the parliamentary dimension of international cooperation. In addition to the political contribution that the IPU makes to the United Nations through its statements and resolutions, the two organizations work closely together to advance specific issues through many joint activities, publications and meetings. In addition to the United Nations proper, the IPU cooperates with a growing body of United Nations specialized agencies and programs to focus more effectively on a number of critical subject areas. These include democracy and human rights, women's issues, child protection, HIV/AIDS, trade and sustainable development.

2. A parliamentary perspective on discrimination and violence against the girl child

The Inter-Parliamentary Union and the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women organised a one-day parliamentary event entitled *A parliamentary perspective on discrimination and violence against the girl child*. The meeting took place in New York, at United Nations Headquarters, on 1 March 2007, on the occasion of the 51st session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW).

This one-day event provided a forum for debate between parliamentarians from all over the world, and aimed to contribute to the deliberations of the 51st CSW Session on the theme of discrimination and violence against the girl child. The day was divided into two sessions: one focused on combating discrimination and violence against the girl child, and the second on empowering the girl child.¹

3. The Canadian Delegation

The Canadian delegation, led by Senator Nancy Ruth, included the Honourable Anita Neville, Ms. Nicole Demers, and Ms. Judy Wasylcia-Leis.

In the general discussion on the subject of combating discrimination and violence against the girl child, Senator Nancy Ruth noted that children's issues have been

¹ For a summary of the proceedings see: <http://www.ipu.org/splz-e/csw07/summary.pdf>

examined by Committees in both the Senate and the House of Commons, although Canada does not have a permanent committee specifically dedicated to children. She cited the study of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women on trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation in Canada, and the work of the Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights on Canada's international obligations in regard to the rights and freedoms of children. She concluded by highlighting a critique that had been made by the Senate Committee on Human Rights: that parliament currently plays no role in ratification of international human rights instruments, thus international human rights treaties that are not directly incorporated into domestic legislation bypass the Parliamentary process. A presentation was given on the International.

Canadian participants were impressed with the presentation from the IKnowledge Network of Women in Politics (iKnow Politics), an innovative global forum designed to promote gender-sensitive governance and advance the role of women in political and public life, which had been officially launched only a few days before, at the United Nations. Participants identified a number of Canadian organizations which could be linked to that forum.

4. Outcome

At the close of the meeting, a brief message to the CSW was issued, with particular emphasis on how parliaments can and should contribute to eliminating discrimination and violence against the girl child.

The next joint meeting of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women will be held in March 2008.

Respectfully submitted,

The Honourable Donald H. Oliver, Q.C., Senator
President, Canadian IPU Group

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)
ACTIVITY	One-day parliamentary meeting on the occasion of the 51st session of the Commission on the Status of Women: <i>A parliamentary perspective on discrimination and violence against the girl child</i>
DESTINATION	New York, United States
DATES	March 1, 2007
DELEGATION	
SENATE	The Honourable Nancy Ruth, Q.C.
HOUSE OF COMMONS	The Honourable Anita Neville, P.C. Ms. Nicole Demers Ms. Judy Wasylcyia-Leis
STAFF	Ms. July Cool, Analyst
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 11,311.56
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 1,673.23
HOSPITALITY	\$ 0
PER DIEMS	\$ 732.46
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$ 0
MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES	\$ 0
TOTAL	\$ 13,717.25