

Canadian Group  
Inter-Parliamentary Union



Groupe canadien  
Union interparlementaire

**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation  
to the Parliamentary Meeting on the  
Occasion of the 53<sup>rd</sup> Session of the  
Commission on the Status of Women**

**The Role of Parliaments in Promoting Equal Sharing of  
Responsibilities between Women and Men**

**Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)**

**New York, New York, United States of America  
March 4, 2009**

# Report

## **Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation to the Parliamentary Meeting on the Occasion of the 53<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women**

### **The Role of Parliaments in Promoting Equal Sharing of Responsibilities between Women and Men**

#### **Organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women**

#### **1. Conference Theme**

The theme for the 2009 Conference on the occasion of the 53<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women was 'The Role of Parliaments in Promoting Equal Sharing of Responsibilities between Women and Men.'

#### **2. Agenda**

The Conference focused on the role of parliament and the contribution it can make in promoting a more balanced sharing of responsibilities between women and men. The Conference took place at the United Nations Headquarters in New York City on March 4, 2009.

Parliamentarians had the opportunity to exchange views and experiences with colleagues in other parliaments, and interact with representatives from regional and international organizations.

The Conference included the following themes:

- The intersection of paid and unpaid work
- Building a protective and supportive framework for workers with family responsibilities
- Changing mindsets and behaviours
- Men and Women in Politics: Balancing public and private life responsibilities

#### **3. The Canadian Delegation**

The Canadian delegation included the following parliamentarians:

- Ms. Patricia Davidson, the Head of the Delegation
- Ms. Nicole Demers
- Senator Mobina Jaffer
- Ms. Anita Neville

#### **4. Conference Proceedings<sup>1</sup>**

Senator Pia Cayetano (Philippines), President of the IPU Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians, and Ms. Carolyn Hannan, Director of the United Nations

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<sup>1</sup> A detailed conference report is available on the IPU Conference website: <http://www.ipu.org/splz-e/csw09/report.pdf>.

Division for the Advancement of Women, welcomed the conference participants. This was followed by a Keynote Address by Dr. Marilyn Waring, Professor of Public Policy, Institute of Public Policy, AUT University, New Zealand. Dr. Waring discussed unpaid work and the importance of the household sector to the overall economy. According to Dr. Waring, women's unpaid work remains invisible as long as the production of services for the household's own final consumption are excluded from being counted as productive and as part of the national economy.

She underlined the importance of measuring this form of work using textured time data.

### **The Intersection of Paid and Unpaid Work**

The first theme to be addressed at the Conference was the intersection of paid and unpaid work. Ms. Winnie Byanyima, Director of the Gender Team, Bureau for Development Policy, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), discussed the valuation and measurement of paid and unpaid care work. She noted that the UNDP looks at the situation of unpaid care work in a framework of three "R"s: recognizing, reducing, redistributing. The UNDP assists governments to recognize the contribution of women's unpaid care work to their economies, by quantifying it as an important part of the whole economy.

Both Ms. Demers and Ms. Neville made interventions on the topic of measuring unpaid work, including volunteer work. The presenters responded that Statistics Canada has implemented one of the best time use surveys on unpaid work.

### **Building a protective and supportive framework for workers with family responsibilities**

Ms. Naomi Cassirer, Senior Technical Officer, International Labour Organization (ILO) and Ms. Isabel Allende, Chair of the Committee on Family in the House of Deputies of Chile made presentations on the topic of protective and supportive frameworks for workers with family responsibilities. Ms. Cassirer described the protections afforded to workers under international labour conventions. Ms. Allende described the efforts being made by the Chilean Congress to create measures to protect working women and to recognize their contributions to Chilean society and the economy.

Ms. Davidson made an intervention requesting information on maternity/parental benefits for the self-employed that have been implemented in other countries. Ms. Cassirer responded that she will provide Ms. Davidson with this information once she has consulted with her colleagues at the ILO.

### **Changing mindsets and behaviours**

Participants heard from two presenters on the theme of changing mindsets and behaviours. Mr. Andrew Levack, Co-Director, MenEngage Alliance, considered aspects of promoting the role of men and boys in care giving, fatherhood and support for gender equality. Ms. Rose Mukantabana, Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies of Rwanda, shared with the participants her country's initiatives and challenges in changing attitudes.

## **Men and Women in Politics: Balancing public and private life responsibilities**

Three members of the Canadian delegations presented on the topic of balancing public and private life responsibilities. Ms. Davidson, Ms. Demers and Ms. Neville shared with the participants their personal experiences as female politicians in balancing public-private responsibilities.

Respectfully submitted,

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

## Travel Costs

<b>ASSOCIATION</b>	Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	Parliamentary Meeting on the Occasion of the 53 <sup>rd</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women The Role of Parliaments in Promoting Equal Sharing of Responsibilities between Women and Men
<b>DESTINATION</b>	New York, New York, United States of America
<b>DATES</b>	March 4, 2009
<b>DELEGATION</b>	
SENATE	Hon. Mobina Jaffer, Senator
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Ms. Patricia Davidson, M.P., Head of the Delegation Ms. Nicole Demers, M.P. Ms. Anita Neville, M.P.
STAFF	Ms. Clara Morgan, Analyst
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	<b>\$ 9,138.95</b>
<b>ACCOMMODATION</b>	<b>\$ 2,261.99</b>
<b>HOSPITALITY</b>	
<b>PER DIEMS</b>	<b>\$ 825.95</b>
<b>OFFICIAL GIFTS</b>	
<b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$12,226.89</b>