

Canadian Group
Inter-Parliamentary Union



Groupe canadien
Union interparlementaire

**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
respecting its participation at the 132nd Inter-Parliamentary
Union Assembly and related meetings**

Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)

**Hanoi, Vietnam
March 28th – April 1st, 2015**

Overview

A delegation from the Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) attended the 132nd IPU Assembly and related meetings in Hanoi, Viet Nam from 28 March to 1 April 2015.¹ The Canadian delegation was comprised of:

- Honourable Salma Ataullahjan, Senator, President of the Canadian IPU Group and head of the delegation;
- Honourable Dennis Dawson, Senator;
- Blaine Calkins, M.P.;
- Libby Davies, M.P.;
- David McGuinty, M.P.; and
- Larry Miller, M.P.

Meetings of the IPU provide an important opportunity for Canadian parliamentary diplomacy. Multilateral work occurs through the meetings of various committees and other bodies that take place during an IPU assembly. Bilateral work occurs through the side meetings that arise during IPU assemblies.

Throughout the 132nd Assembly, members of the Canadian delegation engaged in exchanges with their counterparts and participated in various debates in an attempt to further the principles of representative democracy, the rule of law, human rights and gender equality. They also addressed matters pertinent to Canadian foreign policy, including the fight against terrorism, as well as maternal, newborn and child health.

The IPU: Background

Established in 1889, the IPU is the international organization of parliaments of sovereign states. It:

- fosters contacts, co-ordination, and the exchange of experiences among parliamentarians of all member parliaments;
- considers questions of international interest and concern, and expresses its views on relevant issues in order to bring about action by parliaments and parliamentarians;
- contributes to the defence and promotion of human rights, which are essential aspects of parliamentary democracy and development; and
- contributes to better knowledge of the working of representative institutions, and to the strengthening and development of their means of action. At present, the IPU's activities are pursued according to its *Strategy*

¹ Meetings related to the 132nd Inter-Parliamentary Union [IPU] Assembly were held from 25 March to 1 April 2015.

2012–2017: Better parliaments, stronger democracies.² highlights of the 132nd ipu assembly: canadian activities

The 132nd Assembly Agenda³

The IPU Assembly is the principal statutory body that expresses the views of the IPU on political issues.

The agenda for the 132nd Assembly included the following items:

- Election of the President and Vice-Presidents of the 132nd Assembly
- Consideration of requests for the inclusion of an emergency item in the Assembly agenda
- General debate on The Sustainable Development Goals: Turning words into action
- Resolution on Cyber warfare – A serious threat to peace and global security (Standing Committee on Peace and International Security)
- Resolution on Shaping a new system of water governance: Promoting parliamentary action on water (Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade)
- Resolution on International law as it relates to national sovereignty, non-intervention in the internal affairs of States and human rights (Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights)
- Reports of the Standing Committees
- Approval of the subject items for the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security and the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade for the 134th Assembly
- Debate of an emergency item on The role of parliaments in combating all terrorist acts perpetrated by organizations such as Daesh and Boko Haram against innocent civilians, in particular women and girls.⁴

Overall, delegations from 128 member parliaments participated in the activities of the 132nd Assembly. Of the 1,370 delegates in attendance, 678 were members of national parliaments; they included 45 presiding officers and 46 deputy presiding officers.

At the close of the 132nd Assembly, 166 national parliaments were members of the IPU and 10 regional parliamentary assemblies were associate members.

² IPU, *IPU Strategy 2012–2017: Better parliaments, stronger democracies*.

³ Detailed reports and information on the 132nd IPU Assembly and related Meetings are available on the IPU website. See: IPU, “132nd IPU Assembly and related Meetings,” Hanoi, 28 March–1 April 2015; IPU, “132nd IPU Assembly: Overview of Main Events and Decisions,” Hanoi, 28 March–1 April 2015; and IPU, *Results of the 132nd Assembly and related meetings*, 2015.

⁴ IPU, *Results of the 132nd Assembly and related meetings*, 2015, p. 28.

The General Debate

At the 132nd Assembly, a general debate was held on the topic of “The Sustainable Development Goals: Turning words into action.” During the debate, which was held over three days, “representatives of 101 Member Parliaments, and two Associate Member and seven Permanent Observers took the floor” to address the theme of the General Debate.⁵ **Senator Ataullahjan**, and **Larry Miller, M.P.** attended at least one of the sessions.

As President of the Canadian IPU Group and head of the delegation, **Senator Ataullahjan** delivered a speech during the General Debate. Her remarks focused on the Canadian priorities for the post-2015 sustainable development goals (SDGs) including the empowerment of women and girls and the elimination of child, early and forced marriage. She recalled the importance of setting realistic, measurable and focussed targets for the SDGs, including the elimination of maternal, newborn and child mortality within a generation. The Senator also spoke about the role of parliaments in providing effective oversight and input into a complex policy framework like the SDGs.

An outcome document of the Assembly’s General Debate was produced and on 1 April 2015, the Assembly adopted the Hanoi Declaration on the Sustainable Development Goals.⁶

The Emergency Item

The IPU Statutes provide that an IPU assembly may include one emergency item in its agenda.⁷ The IPU Rules further provide that: “Should several requests obtain the requisite majority, the one having received the largest number of positive votes shall be accepted.”⁸ The 132nd Assembly received eight requests for the inclusion of an emergency item on its agenda. Following a roll-call vote,⁹ the proposed emergency item entitled “The role of parliaments in combating all terrorist acts perpetrated by organizations such as Daesh and Boko Haram against innocent civilians, in particular women and girls” was added to the 132nd Assembly’s agenda. It had been put forward jointly by the delegations from Belgium and Australia. The Canadian delegation voted in favour of this item.

A debate on the emergency item was held on 30 March 2015; the topic was subsequently referred to a drafting committee, which was tasked with finalizing a resolution on the topic. **Blaine Calkins, M.P.** served as a member of this drafting committee.¹⁰ On 31 March 2015, the Assembly adopted the resulting resolution unanimously.¹¹

⁵ Ibid, p. 8.

⁶ IPU, *Results of the 132nd Assembly and related meetings*, 2014, p. 29.

⁷ IPU, *Statutes of the Inter-Parliamentary Union*, article 14(2).

⁸ IPU, “Rules of the Assembly,” adopted in 1976 and extensively revised in October 1983, April 2003 and October 2013, Rule 11.

⁹ Ibid., pp. 46–48. The number of votes to which each IPU member parliament is entitled is calculated according to the provisions of Article 15 of the IPU Statutes.

¹⁰ The drafting committee was composed of representatives from the delegations of Australia, Belgium, Burkina Faso, Canada (Blaine Calkins, M.P.), Chad, Iran, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, and Venezuela.

¹¹ The full text of the unanimous resolution is available.

IPU Standing Committees

Each IPU assembly is assisted in its work by standing committees. Each delegation is represented on standing committees by one member and one substitute member.¹² At the 129th Assembly in October 2013, the Governing Council adopted significant amendments to the rules of the standing committees: in addition to the topic of a draft resolution, a committee's work plan can now include other activities, such as hearings, reports and missions.

During the 132nd Assembly, the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security, and the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade each debated a draft resolution. The Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights resumed its work on a draft resolution it was unable to conclude within the allocated time during the 131st Assembly, and also considered other agenda topics.

Standing Committee on Peace and International Security

The Standing Committee on Peace and International Security addressed the topic: "Cyber warfare – A serious threat to peace and global security." The Committee met on 29–31 March 2015. The co-rapporteurs, Mr. N. Lazrek (Morocco) and Mr. J.C. Mahía (Uruguay), presented the draft resolution. Representatives from 36 delegations took part in the ensuing debate.

The Standing Committee then moved to finalize the draft resolution in a plenary session. It had over 150 amendments to consider,¹³ including several that had been submitted by the Canadian delegation, and by the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians.

During the plenary debate on the proposed amendments, **Blaine Calkins, M.P.** presented and explained each of Canada's proposed amendments, and participated in the debate on certain amendments that had been submitted by other delegations.

Mr. Calkins explained that a number of the Canadian delegation's proposed amendments aimed to complete the legal framework on cyber warfare presented in the draft resolution. In particular, he drew attention to the fact that Canadian amendments would ensure that the draft resolution did not open the door to violations of human rights, political rights and freedom of expression when calling for the restriction of citizen's use of information and communication technology tools.

Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade

The Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade addressed the topic: "Shaping a new system of water governance: Promoting parliamentary action on water." The Committee met on 29–31 March 2015.

The Standing Committee finalized the draft resolution prepared by the two co-Rapporteurs, Mr. I. Cassis (Switzerland) and Mr. J.J. Mwiimbu (Zambia) in a plenary

¹² IPU, *Statutes of the Inter-Parliamentary Union*, article 13; and, IPU, "Rules of the Standing Committees."

¹³ The full list of proposed amendments is available.

session. It had 70 amendments to consider,¹⁴ including several that had been submitted by the Canadian delegation, and nine that had been submitted by the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians.

During the plenary debate on the proposed amendments, **David McGuinty, M.P. and Larry Miller, M.P.** presented and explained each of Canada's proposed amendments, which complemented and were intended to build on the existing draft text. Both delegates also participated in the debate about certain amendments that had been submitted by other delegations. They explained that a number of the Canadian delegation's proposed amendments aimed to incorporate some key principles established by the international community to ensure that water governance models are based on effective participation from all water users.

Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights

The Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights held sessions on 30–31 March 2015 and 1 April 2015 in order to:¹⁵

- finalize and adopt the resolution on “International law as it relates to national sovereignty, non-intervention in the internal affairs of States and human rights;”
- debate on “the Convention on the Rights of the Child 25 years on: Are children’s lives better?;”
- debate on the implementation of the 2012 IPU resolution on “Access to health as a basic right: the role of parliaments in addressing key challenges to securing the health of women and children;” and
- debate on “Democracy in the digital era and the threat to privacy and individual freedoms,” which will be the topic of a draft resolution to be debated at the 133rd Assembly in October 2015.

Senator Ataullahjan attended the first session where the Standing Committee resumed its work on the resolution on “International law as it relates to national sovereignty, non-intervention in the internal affairs of States and human rights,” on the basis of the text as it had stood at the end of the 131st Assembly in October 2014. The Standing Committee approved the text with no further amendments.

Libby Davies, M.P. moderated the session to review progress on the implementation of the 2012 IPU resolution on “Access to health as a basic right: the role of parliaments in addressing key challenges to securing the health of women and children.”

Blaine Calkins, M.P., and **David McGuinty, M.P.** also attended the Committee's sessions on “Democracy in the digital era” and the “Convention on the Rights of the Child.”

¹⁴ The full list of proposed amendments is available.

¹⁵ For a summary of the Standing Committee's session, see: IPU, *Results of the 131st Assembly and related meetings*, 2015, p. 9.

Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs

A dedicated IPU Committee on United Nations Affairs was created in 2007 “in order to better respond to the growing partnership between the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the United Nations.”¹⁶ Following changes to the IPU Statutes and Rules that were adopted at the 129th Assembly in October 2013, the IPU Committee on United Nations Affairs became the fourth standing committee of the IPU.

The Standing Committee held sessions on 29 and 31 March 2015 in order to:¹⁷

- debate to mark the 70th anniversary of the United Nations;
- discuss the IPU field missions to examine interaction between UN country teams and national parliaments; and
- debate parliaments’ institutional capacities to mainstream the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into their work.

Senator Dawson, and **David McGuinty, M.P.** attended the Committee’s sessions. **Senator Dawson** moderated the session on IPU field missions which examined the interaction between UN country teams and national parliaments.

Bureau of the IPU Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs

Since the 130th Assembly in March 2014, **Senator Dawson** has been a member of the Bureau of the IPU Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs.¹⁸ The Bureau meets during each assembly, and is tasked with preparing and reviewing the implementation of the Standing Committee’s work plans and with considering proposals for subject items to be discussed at future assemblies.¹⁹ The Bureau met on 31 March 2015. The members of the Bureau were updated on recent developments at the UN. They also discussed possible topics for the Standing Committee sessions to be held at the 133rd Assembly in October 2015.

Participation by Canadian Delegates in Related Meetings and Activities

IPU Governing Institutions

Governing Council²⁰

The Governing Council is the plenary policy-making body of the IPU.²¹ Moreover, several committees fall under the Governing Council’s responsibility and report to it on their

¹⁶ IPU Cooperation with the United Nations, “IPU Committee on United Nations Affairs.”

¹⁷ For a summary of the Standing Committee’s session, see: IPU, *Results of the 132nd Assembly and related meetings*, 2015, p. 10.

¹⁸ The full list of Bureau members is available.

¹⁹ IPU, “Rules of the Standing Committee,” adopted in 1971 and extensively revised in October 1983, April 2003 and October 2013.

²⁰ This section reflects highlights of the 196th Session of the IPU Governing Council. For further details, see also: IPU, *Results of the 132nd Assembly and related meetings*, 2015, pp. 13–16, 18–21, 24–26 and 51–85.

²¹ The functions of the Governing Council are outlined in Article 21 of the IPU Statutes.

work.²² The Council is composed of three representatives from each IPU member parliament, provided that its representation includes both men and women parliamentarians.²³

Meetings of the 196th Session of the Governing Council were held on 29 March and 1 April 2015. **All Canadian delegates** attended at least one of these meetings.

The Governing Council had a number of items on its agenda, including the following:²⁴

- questions relating to IPU membership;
- report of the IPU President;
- annual report by the Secretary General on the activities of the IPU for 2014;
- financial results for 2014;
- implementation of the IPU's *Strategy 2012–2017*;
- IPU cooperation with the UN system;
- reports on recent IPU specialized meetings;
- action by the IPU to strengthen democracy and parliamentary institutions
- activities of committees and other bodies;²⁵
- Preparations for the Fourth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament
- the 133rd Assembly;
- future inter-parliamentary meetings; and
- elections to the Executive Committee.

Libby Davies, M.P., in her capacity as the Chair of the Advisory Group on HIV/AIDS and Maternal, Newborn and Child Health, reported to the Governing Council on the meeting of this group.

²² These committees include: the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians; the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians; the Committee on Middle East Questions; the Group of Facilitators for Cyprus; the Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law; the Gender Partnership Group of the Executive Committee; the Advisory Group on HIV/AIDS and Maternal, Newborn and Child Health; and, the Forum of Young Parliamentarians of the IPU.

²³ IPU, "Rules of the Governing Council," adopted in 1971 and extensively revised in October 1983 and April 2003.

²⁴ IPU, "Convocation: 196th Session of the Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Hanoi (Viet Nam) 29 March and 1 April 2015," CL/196/C.1, 15 January 2015.

²⁵ Further information is contained on pages 13–16 of the following document: IPU, *Results of the 132nd Assembly and related meetings*.

The Meeting and Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians

The Meeting of Women Parliamentarians

In accordance with the IPU Statutes, a Meeting of Women Parliamentarians is held during the assemblies; it reports on its work to the Governing Council. In general, the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians aims to:

- encourage contact among women parliamentarians;
- foster democracy by promoting partnership between men and women in all fields;
- promote the participation of women parliamentarians in the work of the IPU and the equitable representation of women at all institutional levels within the IPU; and
- pre-study certain issues on the agendas of IPU assemblies and/or the Governing Council.²⁶

The 21st Meeting of Women Parliamentarians took place on 28 March 2015. More than 90 women parliamentarians from 67 countries attended, including **Senator Ataullahjan**. Agenda items included the following:

- a briefing on the work and recommendations of the Gender Partnership Group
- a presentation on the 2015 edition of the *Women in Politics* Map;
- consideration, from a gender perspective, of the items “Cyber warfare – A serious threat to peace and global security” and “Shaping a new system of water governance: Promoting parliamentary action on water” on the agenda of the 132nd Assembly;
- a panel session on “Beijing+20” to review implementation of the Beijing commitments and to define new objectives; and
- a call for action by parliamentarians to use their power to create a better world for women and girls – *My Power for Women’s Power*.²⁷

For the consideration of the items “Cyber warfare – A serious threat to peace and global security” and “Shaping a new system of water governance: Promoting parliamentary action on water” participants were divided into two working groups, one on each item. **Senator Ataullahjan** chaired the first group on cyber warfare. The groups’ work led to the proposal of amendments to the draft resolutions that would be finalized by the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security, and the Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Finance and Trade.

²⁶ IPU, *Rules of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians*.

²⁷ See IPU, *Results of the 132nd Assembly and related meetings*, 2015, p. 56

The Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians

The Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians assists the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians by:

- preparing the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians and facilitating its normal working in conformity with the Statutes and Rules of the IPU;
- ensuring the continuity of work and the coordination of the initiatives of women parliamentarians; and
- ensuring coordination between the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians and the other bodies of the IPU.²⁸

It is composed of 12 elected members representing the geopolitical groups and women members of the Executive Committee, who are *ex officio* members. **Senator Atullahjan** was elected substitute member of the Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians for the Twelve Plus Group in October 2014. She participated in the Committee's 35th Session, which took place on 28 and 31 March 2015.

Meetings of the Advisory Group on HIV/AIDS and Maternal, Newborn and Child Health

The IPU Advisory Group on HIV/AIDS and Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (MNCH) provides a global parliamentary focal point for legislative work in the field of HIV/AIDS and maternal, newborn and child health.

The Advisory Group is composed of 12 members of national parliaments, appointed by the IPU President in consultation with current Advisory Group members and IPU Member Parliaments on the basis of attested expertise in the field of HIV/AIDS and maternal and child health. Four international organizations active in the areas of HIV/AIDS or MNCH participate in the Advisory Group as technical advisors: UNAIDS, The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis, the World Health Organization (WHO), and the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health.

The meeting of the Advisory Group was held on 28 March. As the Chairperson of the Advisory Group, **Libby Davies, M.P.** participated in this meeting. Agenda items considered included a hearing with senior representatives of UNAIDS and WHO to learn about the post-2015 trends for HIV/AIDS and MNCH respectively. Members also discussed the role of the Advisory Group in light of the new international development goals and the IPU's own agenda. A detailed report on the work and decisions of this Advisory Group is available online.²⁹

Meetings of the Geopolitical Groups

Article 27 of the IPU Statutes permits IPU members to form geopolitical groups; there are six such groups formally recognized by the IPU. The groups play an important role in the

²⁸ IPU, *Rules of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians*.

²⁹ See IPU, *Results of the 132nd Assembly and related meetings*, 2015, p. 20

functioning and activities of the IPU. Each group determines its own working methods, and informs the IPU Secretariat of its composition, officers and rules of procedure.

Canada belongs to two geopolitical groups:³⁰

- the 47-member Twelve Plus Group, which includes nations from Europe, as well as Australia, New Zealand and Israel; and
- the 31-member Asia-Pacific Group.

While Canada participates in the activities of both groups, it submits candidatures for vacant positions within the IPU through the Twelve Plus Group.

Asia-Pacific Group

A meeting of the Asia-Pacific Group was held on 28 March 2015. **Larry Miller, M.P.** attended the meeting.

Agenda items included the following:

- presentation by the IPU President on the possible creation of a group secretariat;
- briefing by IPU Executive Committee members;
- report from the ASEAN+3 Group;
- review of vacancies to be filled during the 132nd Assembly; and
- discussion of emergency item to be added to the Assembly's agenda.

Twelve Plus Group

Meetings of the Twelve Plus Group were held on 27, 29, 30 March and 1 April 2015. **Senator Ataulhjan, Senator Dawson, Blaine Calkins, M.P., and David McGuinty, M.P.** participated in these meetings.

Agenda items included the following:

- report on the Group's Steering Committee meeting, held in Brussels 2 March 2015;
- report from the Group's representatives on the work of the IPU Executive Committee;
- elections to fill vacancies;
- debate of the emergency item;
- meetings of the IPU standing committees;
- draft statement on the situation in Ukraine; and
- preparation for a parliamentary meeting within the framework of the next UN Climate Change Conference in Paris in December 2015.

³⁰ IPU, "Geopolitical groups."

At the first meeting, members of the Group reiterated their support to their representatives on the IPU Executive Committee to seek an additional reduction in members assessed contributions. At the last meeting, on 1 April 2015, the Twelve Plus Group adopted a declaration on the situation in Ukraine.³¹

Side Events

On 31 March 2015, **Libby Davies, M.P.** participated in the side event “Improving the Health of Women, Children and Adolescents: Consultation on the updated Global Strategy.” As the Chair of the IPU Advisory Group on HIV/AIDS and Maternal, Newborn and Child Health, she delivered the opening remarks, where she emphasized the value of parliamentarians’ input in policy making on health.³²

On 1 April 2015, **David McGuinty, M.P.** moderated the side event “Open Consultation on the theme of the next Global Parliamentary Report.” The Global Parliamentary Report analyses current challenges and makes recommendations to strengthen parliament. The first Global Parliamentary Report investigated the changing nature of parliamentary representation. It was published by the IPU and UNDP in 2012. Approximately 20 parliamentarians engaged in an informal discussion and exchange of views on the potential themes for the next report.³³

Bilateral Meetings

Members of the Canadian delegation held bilateral meetings with other delegations, including the following:

- Iraq,
- Thailand, and
- Oman

These exchanges provide an important opportunity for the Canadian IPU Group to engage in parliamentary diplomacy, to increase its understanding of other countries and regions, to discuss key bilateral issues and matters pertinent to the international agenda, and to work towards shared multilateral goals, including in the context of the work of the IPU.

Respectfully submitted,

Hon. Salma Ataullahjan, Senator
Chair, Canadian Group of the
Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)

³¹ Group of the Twelve Plus in the IPU, Declaration on Ukraine, 1 April 2015.

³² IPU, *Results of the 132nd Assembly and related meetings*, 2015, p. 23.

³³ IPU, *Results of the 132nd Assembly and related meetings*, 2015, p. 24.

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)
ACTIVITY	132 nd Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and Other Related Meetings
DESTINATION	Hanoi, Vietnam
DATES	March 28 th to April 1 st , 2015
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Hon. Salma Ataullahjan, Senator Hon. Dennis Dawson, Senator
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Blaine Calkins, M.P. Libby Davies, M.P. David McGuinty, M.P. Larry Miller, M.P.
STAFF	Line Gravel, Association Secretary Frédéric Forge, Analyst
TRANSPORTATION	\$56,829.30
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 7,450.05
HOSPITALITY	\$ 306.85
PER DIEMS	\$ 7,049.78
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$ 396.97
MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES	\$ 0
TOTAL	\$72,032.95