



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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140th IPU Assembly

Doha (Qatar), 6 – 10 April 2019



Forum of Women Parliamentarians
Item 6

FEM/29/6-Inf.1
22 March 2019

Panel Discussion *Equality at work*

Saturday, 6 April 2019, 2.30 – 4.30 p.m.

Room Al Rayyan, Sheraton Convention Center, Doha, Qatar

The global labour force is made up of only half of the women in the world and about 76 per cent of the men in the world. The gap widens based on ethnicity as well as for migrant women and mothers. Women are overrepresented in the informal economy, and in low-paid, low-skilled or unregulated jobs. They often face gender-based discrimination, violence and harassment in the workplace. Women also bear the burden of most unpaid care and domestic work and tend to earn less than men for work of the same value. Last but not least, women are the main victims of the unacceptable scourge of modern slavery.

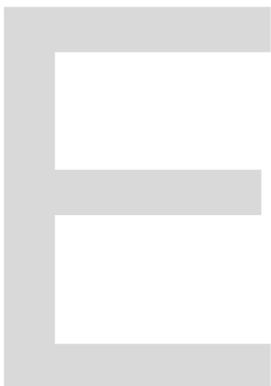
In addition, women's equal participation in the global labour force would add US\$ 12 trillion to the global economy. Gender equality at work would also have a multiplier effect for development, human rights and gender equality in general as women who are economically empowered are more likely to invest in nutrition, education and health, with great benefits for their children, families, communities and society as a whole.

The topic will also be high on the international agenda in the coming months with the negotiation of a new International Labour Organization (ILO) instrument to address violence and harassment in the world of work. In this context, *Ending Gender-Based Violence in the World of Work* was chosen as the theme of the *16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence* Campaign in 2018-2019.

The panel discussion will focus on sharing good practices, strategies, policies, legislation and measures to achieve gender equality, dignity, security and health at work as well as on the value of sharing responsibility for unpaid care and domestic work. It will address sexual harassment and violence in the workplace, the need to ensure equitable social protection for all and the elimination of exploitation in all its forms.

Participants will be invited to answer the following questions in particular:

- How can parliaments best protect the rights of all women workers, including their right to health, integrity, dignity, decent work and personal security?
- What best practices exist in ensuring the world of work is free from sexism, harassment and violence against women?
- What legal frameworks can best advance gender equality at work in areas such as pay equity and adequate social protection, including maternity leave benefits and safeguards?
- What measures can parliaments take to level the playing field between women and men as regards unpaid care and household work done mostly by women?
- What are the specific challenges faced by women domestic workers? How can parliaments best address these challenges?



#IPU140

Useful resources:

- *Ending violence and harassment in the world of work*, Report presented at the International Labour, Conference, 108th session, Geneva, February 2019:
https://www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/108/reports/reports-to-the-conference/WCMS_673728/lang--en/index.htm.
- *A quantum leap for gender equality: For a better future of work for all* [Executive Summary], International Labour Organization, March 2019:
https://www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS_674595/lang--en/index.htm.