

**Statement by Carolyn Hannan, Director  
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**At the parliamentary event organized by the  
Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the**



legislative bodies, averaging between 25 and 30 percent of women legislators, and Rwanda currently has the highest proportion of women in parliament in the world. It will be important to ensure that these gains can be maintained and that the women in parliament are able to have a significant impact on policy-making processes and outcomes from a gender perspective.

The Inter-parliamentary Union already plays a critical role at national, regional and global levels by promoting women's increased participation in parliaments, collecting and disseminating much needed statistics on women's representation in parliaments, and very importantly by providing an excellent good practice example on accountability for gender equality in its own procedures.

At national level parliamentarians can and do play a critical role in promoting and monitoring implementation of the Platform for Action, as well as the gender-sensitive implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. Increasing women's representation in parliaments was identified as one of the indicators for achieving Millennium Development Goal Three: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women. Action by parliaments is critical to the removal of constraints to women's involvement in decision-making – such as illiteracy, poverty, stereotypical attitudes and practices, including unequal sharing of family responsibilities, and violence against women.

Parliaments can also make a significant contribution to ensuring full implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, including through reviewing the national reports to be submitted to the ~~Committee~~ Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and through

groups and networks at all levels. I am sure that the discussions today will be stimulating and fruitful in this respect.

I wish you a very successful meeting.