



Inter-Parliamentary Union

**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
respecting its participation at the Annual
Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations**

Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

New York, New York, United States of America

February 21 and 22, 2019

Report

1. Overview

On February 21 and 22, 2019, a delegation from the Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) travelled to New York to attend the IPU's annual parliamentary hearing at the headquarters of the United Nations (UN). The delegation was composed of the Honourable Senator Marilou McPhedran and the Honourable Senator Victor Oh. The hearing provides an important opportunity for parliamentarians to engage in dialogue, share experiences and perspectives with one another, and to hear from UN officials.

2. Background

The IPU is the international organization of parliaments of sovereign states. It was established in 1889, is “the focal point for world-wide parliamentary dialogue,” and “works for peace and co-operation among peoples and for the firm establishment of representative democracy.”¹ The IPU supports the efforts of and works in close co-operation with the United Nations, whose objectives it shares.²

3. Programme of the Parliamentary Hearing

The main theme of the 2019 hearing was *Emerging challenges to multilateralism: A parliamentary response*. Over the course of seven panel sessions, parliamentarians considered the following key themes:

- Multilateralism, emerging challenges and the role of parliamentarians;
- Increasing women's political participation;
- Revitalizing the United Nations; and
- The multilateral system in today's communications environment.

Common to these discussions were questions about how to address the declining faith in multilateralism, how to make the multilateral system more effective and more representative, how parliamentarians can make the UN more relevant to people around the world, and how parliamentarians can be given a greater voice within the UN.

A detailed summary report of the 2019 Annual Parliamentary Hearing is available on the IPU website.

4. Event Summary and Canadian Participation

More than 200 parliamentarians from some 60 countries participated in the hearing. Panelists included parliamentarians, UN officials, Ambassadors, academics, and representatives of civil society. All panels were moderated by Mr. Richard Wolffe, a journalist.

¹ Inter-Parliamentary Union, [Statutes of the Inter-Parliamentary Union](#), art. 1.

² *Ibid.*, art. 3.

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres delivered a keynote address, which discussed trust in multilateral institutions and reform initiatives within the UN, as well as the UN's goals for 2019. Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the 73rd UN General Assembly, as well as Ms. Gabriela Cuevas Barron, IPU President, provided opening and closing remarks.

Senator McPhedran and Senator Oh participated in panel discussions. Emphasizing the importance of ensuring the implementation of action plans, Senator McPhedran raised the question of what national and international mechanisms parliamentarians could support to advance gender equality. Senator McPhedran also asked how marking the upcoming 20th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action, a political document in which representatives of 189 governments agreed to advance women's rights, could be used to advance gender equality in the context of the UN's 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. Senator McPhedran also raised the question of how to further engage youth in the work of the United Nations.

Respectfully submitted,

The Hon. David McGuinty, P.C., M.P.

President

Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)
ACTIVITY	Annual Parliamentary Hearing at the United Nations
DESTINATION	New York, New York, United States of America
DATES	February 21 and 22, 2019
DELEGATION	
SENATE	The Hon. Marilou McPhedran, Senator The Hon. Victor Oh, Senator
HOUSE OF COMMONS	N/A
STAFF	N/A
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 2,789.60
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 1,570.53
HOSPITALITY	\$ 0.00
PER DIEMS	\$ 677.49
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$ 0.00
MISCELLANEOUS	\$ 0.00
TOTAL	\$ 5,037.62