



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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Third Regional Seminar for the Asia-Pacific Region Parliaments on Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals



Islamabad, Pakistan, 13 - 14 September 2022

Organized jointly by the Inter-Parliamentary Union
and the National Assembly of Pakistan

PROGRAMME

Monday, 12 September 2022

Arrival of delegates

Tuesday, 13 September 2022

09:00-10:00

Registration

10:00-10:45

Inaugural session

Moderator: Ms. Romina Khurshid Alam, MP, Convener of the National
Parliamentary Taskforce on SDGs, Pakistan

Welcoming remarks:

- Mr. Raja Pervaiz Ashraf, Speaker of the National Assembly, Pakistan
- Mr. Ahsan Iqbal, Minister of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Pakistan
- Mr. Duarte Pacheco, President, IPU
- Mr. Shehbaz Sharif, Prime Minister, Pakistan

Location: National Assembly Hall

Group photo

10:45-11:15

Setting the scene: SDG implementation in Asia-Pacific

This presentation will provide an overview of progress with the implementation of the SDG agenda in the region, highlighting the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and emerging challenges in the social, economic and environmental spheres.

Moderator: Ms. Romina Khurshid Alam, MP, Convener of the National
Parliamentary Taskforce on SDGs, Pakistan

- Mr. Ahsan Iqbal, Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Pakistan – Key Note
- Mr. Oliver Paddison, Chief of the Countries in Special Situations Section, Office of the Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)

Location: Committee Room No. 2, Parliament House

11:15-12:30

Session I: Envisioning inclusive development: Socio-economic challenges in Asia-Pacific

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, it was estimated that around 400 million people in the region were living in extreme poverty, below the lower international poverty line, and that 1.2 billion people were living below the higher international poverty

line, accounting for more than a quarter of the region's population. Due to the impact of the pandemic on the region's economies, with depressed international demand, job losses and bankruptcies, poverty has stopped declining for the first time in two decades. Marginalized and vulnerable segments of the population have suffered the effects of the crisis more acutely. This session will discuss how COVID-19 recovery can enhance economic resilience, adopt an inclusive approach, and ensure resources are not diverted from sustainable development.

Moderator: Ms. Aisha Ghaus Pasha, State Minister for Finance, Pakistan

- Mr. Miftah Ismail, Minister for Finance, Pakistan – Key Note
- Mr. Kyu Chang Ko, Head, United Nations Project Office on Governance, Republic of Korea
- Ms. Noriko Yoshida, Representative in Pakistan, UNHCR

The presentation will be followed by a debate with delegates.

Location: Committee Room No. 2, Parliament House

12:30 – 13:00

Regional launch of Global Parliamentary Report

Moderator: Ms. Aleksandra Blagojevic, Programme Manager for International Development, IPU

- Mr. Andres Lomp, Community Engagement Manager, Parliament of Victoria, Australia

Location: Committee Room No. 2, Parliament House

13:00-14:00

Lunch and prayer break

14:00-15:30

PARALLEL BREAKOUT SESSIONS: TACKLING INEQUALITIES

A) Ending hunger and malnutrition

Little progress has been made towards ending hunger and malnutrition in the region. A growing body of research demonstrates the negative consequences of food insecurity for the most vulnerable groups, especially women's and children's health and developmental outcomes, including cognitive development and school achievement, as well as overall health. The COVID-19 pandemic further risks pushing people into a state of food insecurity. The aim of the debate on this topic is to discuss ways to successfully address population needs through the promotion of adequate policies and laws across sectors, including health, agriculture, education and gender equality, and to implement the SDGs by maximizing the available domestic resources for nutrition.

Moderator: Ms. Mehnaz Akber Aziz, MP, Pakistan

- Ms. Shazia Marri, Minister for the Benazir Income Support Programme, Pakistan
- Ms. Silvia Kaufmann, Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement
- Mr. Kraisid Tontisirin, Member of the Bureau of the IPU Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, MP, Thailand
- Mr. Abdullah Fadil, Country Representative, UNICEF – TBC

Location: National Assembly Hall, Parliament House

B) Promoting quality education and decent work for youth

Over 500 million young people live on less than US\$2 a day. 43 per cent of the global youth labour force is either unemployed or trapped in working poverty. While youth offers many of the world's poorest countries a demographic dividend, young people are at the forefront of many of the world's emerging political movements calling for economic equality. Education provides young people with the capability to become economically active, contribute to democratic and peaceful societies

and improve individual wellbeing. Creating quality learning environments and youth employment could contribute not only to reducing disparities, but also have a multiplier effect for development. This session will focus on the importance of ensuring quality inclusive and equitable education opportunities for all – regardless of their gender, race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, religion, disability, wealth, political beliefs, or any other status – and of promulgating laws that favour full and productive employment and decent work for all.

Moderator: Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Youth Affairs, Pakistan

- Mr. Zahid Akram Durrani, Deputy Speaker, National Assembly of Pakistan
- Ms. Rabia Razzaque, Senior Programme Officer, ILO Pakistan Office
- Ms. Zeb Jaffar, MP, Pakistan

Location: Committee Room No. 5, Parliament House

C) Ensuring equitable access to health

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on health systems and national budgets, with countries facing challenges in ensuring equitable health outcomes and sustaining efforts towards universal health coverage. Inequitable distribution of COVID-19 vaccinations between and within countries is further limiting countries' ability to contain the virus and focus on making progress towards health targets. The session will present findings from the follow-up process on implementation of the IPU resolution *Achieving universal health coverage by 2030: The role of parliaments in ensuring the right to health*, and explore what actions parliaments are taking to improve access to health for vulnerable and marginalized groups.

Moderator: Ms. Aleksandra Blagojevic, Programme Manager for International Development, IPU

- Mr. Abdul Qadir Patel, Minister of Health, Pakistan -TBC
- Mr. Palitha Mahipala, WHO Representative and Head of Mission Pakistan
- Ms. Aleksandra Blagojevic, Programme Manager for International Development, IPU
- Mr. Habibe Millat, Former President of the IPU Advisory Group on Health, MP, Bangladesh

Location: Committee Room No. 2, Parliament House

15:30-16:00

Plenary session – Conclusions of the parallel breakout sessions

Moderator: Ms. Romina Khurshid Alam, MP, Convener of the National Parliamentary Taskforce on SDGs

Location: Committee Room No. 2, Parliament House

Wednesday, 14 September 2022

09:45-10:00

Recap of day 1 proceedings - Ms. Romina Khurshid Alam, MP, Convener of the National Parliamentary Taskforce on SDGs

Location: Committee Room No. 2, Parliament House

10:00-11:30

Session II: Parliamentary mechanisms and practices to institutionalize the SDGs

Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, many parliaments established different mechanisms and practices to better deliver on the SDGs. Some of them created dedicated SDGs bodies, others updated the remit of existing standing committees

accordingly, others put in place specific procedures to mainstream the SDGs into their core functions (i.e. law-making, oversight, budget, representation). This session will present some of the existing parliamentary practices to support the implementation of the SDGs and will offer the opportunity to participants to share their experience, discuss challenges and lessons learnt to further scale up these efforts.

Moderator: Ms. Romina Khurshid Alam, MP, Convener of the National Parliamentary Taskforce on SDGs

- Ms. Aleksandra Blagojevic, Programme Manager for International Development, IPU
- Mr. Ali Al-Bayati, Chief Technical Advisor a.i., Strengthening Electoral and Legislative Processes Project (SELP) UNDP-Pakistan
- Ms. Romina Khurshid Alam, MP, Convener of the National Parliamentary Taskforce on SDGs, Pakistan

The presentation will be followed by a debate with delegates.

Location: Committee Room No. 2, Parliament House

11:30-11:45

Tea break

11:45-13:00

Session III: Women at the centre of the development agenda

This session will focus on understanding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women and identifying the challenges and root causes of discrimination that curtail women's rights. A case study of Pakistan's cross-party Women's Parliamentary Caucus will be presented. What started as a vision in the Parliament of Pakistan is now an international good practice, having been successfully replicated in over a dozen other parliaments as well as in provincial and regional legislatures. This session will explore SDG Goal 5 and the ways in which gender equality supports the achievement of all the other SDGs. Participants will be invited to reflect on how to integrate Goal 5 into their national legislation, and how to find effective approaches that promote the political, social and economic empowerment of all women.

Moderator: Ms. Syeda Nausheen Iftikhar, Parliamentary Secretary for Human Rights, MP, Pakistan

- Ms. Aisha Ghaus Pasha, State Minister for Finance, Pakistan
- Mr. Hassan Hakeem, Technical Advisor, Women Political Participation, UN Women Pakistan
- Ms. Shahida Rehmani, MP, Representative from Women Parliamentary Caucus, Pakistan
- Ms. Kishwer Zehra, MP, Pakistan

The presentation will be followed by a debate with delegates.

Location: Committee Room No. 2, Parliament House

13:00-14:00

Lunch

14:00 – 15:15

Session IV: Building resilience to preserve our common future

In our increasingly interconnected world, risks and impacts are transferred across nations and around the globe. Disasters are complex, interdependent events and their rising social and economic impacts require a fundamental shift in how disaster risks are managed to protect economic and development gains and achieve the SDGs. Climate change is increasing the frequency and complexity of natural hazard events. There is a link between habitat loss, environmental degradation and climate change on the one hand, and the emergence of novel zoonotic diseases that are transmitted between animals and humans, such as coronaviruses, on the other. This link calls for a sound environmental response to the pandemic. This session will explore approaches to build resilience by reducing disaster risks and promoting a sustainable recovery from COVID-19.

Moderator: Mr. Mushahid Hussain Syed, Senator, Pakistan

- Ms. Sherry Rehman, Federal Minister of Climate Change, Pakistan
- Ms. Georgina Lloyd, Regional Coordinator for Environmental Law and Governance, Asia and the Pacific (UNEP)
- Ms. Sarah Wade-Apicella, Head of Partnerships and Stakeholder Engagement Unit, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)
- Mr. Saber Chowdhury, Honorary IPU President, MP, Bangladesh
- Ms. Naz Baloch, Parliamentary Secretary for Climate Change, Pakistan

The presentation will be followed by a debate with delegates.

15:15 – 16:00

Closing plenary: Leaving no one behind – The way forward

Closing remarks: Mr. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Pakistan
-TBC

Vote of Thanks - Mr. Raja Pervaiz Ashraf, Speaker of the National Assembly, Pakistan

Adoption of the outcome document read by Ms. Romina Khurshid Alam, MP, Convener of the National Parliamentary Taskforce on SDGs, Pakistan

Location: National Assembly Hall, Parliament House