



Inter-Parliamentary Union

For democracy. For everyone.

PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN AND OTHER GROUPS IN THE EGYPTIAN PARLIAMENT

PUTTING THE CONSTITUTION INTO EFFECT

Terms of Reference Mission to Egypt of an Advisory Delegation of the IPU

BACKGROUND

Women's participation in public and political life is essential in all societies, and even more so in situations of democratic transition towards democracy. These situations often require the development of a new legal framework to govern society. In many new democracies, such reform processes have been a window of opportunity to introduce or anchor provisions for women's participation in politics. Many experiences have demonstrated the positive impacts triggered by women's participation in democratic reconstruction and economic and social development.

In Egypt, a new Constitution was adopted in 2014, rebuilding the foundations of the Egyptian society after the revolution of 2011 and the regime of the Muslim Brotherhood in 2013. Women were crucial actors in all steps of the democratization process experienced by Egypt since 2011. They have massively participated in the 2014 referendum to validate the new Constitution.

The new Constitution of Egypt provides for non-discrimination against women and equality between men and women in civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. It also ensures the implementation of international instruments for the promotion of women's rights and equality. It enshrines the rights of all to health and education and guarantees Egyptian women the right to give citizenship to their children.

The new Constitution also recognizes the importance of women's participation in public affairs. It establishes a 25% quota for women in local councils and stipulates that the State shall take the necessary measures to ensure "appropriate representation" of women in Parliament. However, the Constitution does not specify what measures should be taken to ensure the representation of women in Parliament, stating that these measures should be specified in the law.

The next parliamentary elections are scheduled to take place in Egypt during 2014.

The IPU offers to provide advice and expertise on how to implement the constitutional provisions relating to the representation of women in Parliament. It will also include information sharing regarding the representation of youth, minorities, people with disabilities and other groups of the society.

ACTIVITY

In support to the Egyptian authorities, the IPU will form an advisory delegation made of experts in women's participation in parliament. It will also include expertise on the participation of under-represented groups such as the youth, minorities, people with disabilities and other groups of the society. The advisory delegation will carry out a mission to Egypt.

OBJECTIVES

The advisory delegation will inform and discuss with Egyptian authorities various strategies and measures to support women's representation as well as the participation by other under-represented groups such as the youth, minorities, people with disabilities and others. It will also provide comparative expertise based on best practices developed in other countries. It will share proposals and recommendations on how to implement the Egyptian constitutional provisions on women's participation in parliament. In all its work, the delegation will tailor its advice to Egyptian national realities and possibilities.

TIME

The mission of the IPU delegation will take place over five days, in April 2014.

EXPECTED RESULTS

At the end of the mission of the IPU delegation, the Egyptian authorities and key stakeholders have:

- a roadmap for women's participation in parliament, adapted to the current Egyptian context and identifying objectives, actions and measures as well as key actors;
- a better understanding of various systems and measures that led to a better representation of women and other under-represented groups in other countries;
- a consultation process established with the National Council of Women and the main non-governmental organizations working for the promotion of women in politics.

Furthermore, Egyptian policymakers, including representatives of political parties will be aware of the importance of ensuring a balanced representation of men and women in politics and of the means to enhance the participation of under-represented groups in parliament.

ACTIVITIES OF THE DELEGATION

The IPU delegation will have meetings and working sessions with ministers, officials involved in the drafting of the electoral law, representatives of political parties, the National Council for Women , the main non- governmental organizations working for the promotion of women in politics and the media.

In particular, the IPU delegation will carry out the following activities:

- (1) First series of consultation meetings with key stakeholders to :
 - identify challenges that women face to be elected to parliament;
 - identify expectations vis-à -vis the electoral law;
 - explore options of actions and measures to enhance the representation of women and other under-represented groups;
 - identify key actors;
 - advocate for ensuring the closest possible balanced participation of men and women in the future parliament and more generally in politics.
- (2) Round-table discussion with a group of key stakeholders on best practices, strategies and measures that led to a better representation of women and other groups such as minorities, the youth and people with disabilities in other countries.
- (3) Drafting of proposals and recommendations by the IPU delegation.
- (4) Second series of consultation meetings with key stakeholders to discuss proposals and recommendations.
- (5) Submission by the IPU delegation of a roadmap for women's participation in parliament, including objectives, strategies, measures and main actors. The IPU delegation will also submit recommendations as how to enhance the participation of other under-represented groups such as minorities, the youth, people with disabilities and other groups.

PREPARATION OF THE MISSION

The IPU is responsible for the preparation of the mission and for identifying members of the delegation.

The delegation will be composed of specialized experts and members of parliament who worked for women's participation in parliament. It will also include expertise on the representation of minorities, the youth and other groups.

The IPU will oversee the conduct of the mission and its results and outcomes.

The preparation of the mission will be coordinated with the Minister of the Council of Deputies and Social Reconciliation.

The competent authorities of the Egyptian Parliament secretariat will facilitate the organization of the mission and support in scheduling and organizing the different meetings.

FOLLOW-UP

The Egyptian authorities will inform IPU of decisions taken with regards to implementation of the roadmap for women's participation in parliament and the participation of other under-represented groups.

Possible follow-up actions will be determined in cooperation between IPU and the Egyptian authorities.