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News Release

60% of women MPs from Asia-Pacific report online gender-based violence

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A major new study by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), in partnership with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) and the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA), has exposed the pervasive nature of sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliaments across the Asia-Pacific region.

The report, *Sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliaments in the Asia-Pacific region*, is based on confidential interviews with 150 women parliamentarians and parliamentary staff from 33 countries.

The study highlights the alarming increase in online gender-based violence compared to the rates reported in previous IPU studies.

60% of women parliamentarians surveyed for the current study have been targeted by hate speech, disinformation, image-based abuse, or unwanted disclosure of personal data (doxing) online. This is the highest rate for this type of abuse compared to other IPU regional studies.

The study also reveals the following findings:

- **76%** of women parliamentarians and **63%** of parliamentary staff have experienced psychological violence.
- Sexual violence is also prevalent, with **25%** of women parliamentarians and **36%** of parliamentary staff reporting such incidents.
- Economic violence or damage to women's belongings has affected **24%** of women parliamentarians and **27%** of parliamentary staff, while physical violence was reported by **13%** and **5%** respectively.

Some women more at risk than others

According to the study, certain groups – women under 40, women from minority backgrounds and unmarried women – face disproportionately higher rates of violence.

Opposition women MPs also report higher rates of psychological and sexual violence.

Parliament is the primary site of harassment

More than half the incidents of sexual harassment against women MPs took place on parliamentary premises and were committed by male parliamentarians.

However, for the women MPs in the study, **85%** of cases of online attacks, **59%** of threats and **45%** of psychological harassment come from the public.

Positive steps forward

Several parliaments in the region have begun taking steps to prevent and respond to such actions, including introducing confidential reporting mechanisms and support services. This is the case, for example, in Australia, Fiji, India, Maldives, Philippines, Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

Regional comparison reveals similar rates of violence across the world

This new study follows previous IPU reports, starting in 2016 with a [global study](#), followed by a [2018 report on European parliaments](#) and a [2021 report on African parliaments](#).

Prevalence of violence among women MPs in the three regional surveys:

	Asia-Pacific (2025)	Africa (2021)	Europe (2018)
Psychological violence	76%	80%	85%
Sexual violence	25%	39%	25%
Physical violence	13%	23%	15%
Economic violence	24%	29%	14%

Quotes

Martin Chungong, IPU Secretary General said: *"Violence and sexism against women in politics is a direct assault on democracy itself. The courageous women who have come forward to denounce abuse deserve our unwavering support. Parliaments must be sanctuaries for healthy debate and law-making. We have the tools to support them. It is our responsibility to foster a political climate where women can thrive without the shadow of violence."*

Stephen Twigg, CPA Secretary-General said: *"Sexism, violence and harassment against women in politics have a negative impact on the lives of women Parliamentarians, parliamentary staff, their families and communities. Parliaments have a duty to show leadership and set an exemplary standard for society. We are determined to work together to empower Parliaments by providing relevant resources to ensure a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of gender-based violence."*

Siti Rozaimeriyanthy Dato Haji Abdul Rahman, AIPA Secretary General said: *"Violence against women in politics remains a significant barrier to their full and meaningful participation, affecting the inclusivity of governance. Addressing these challenges requires proactive measures from political institutions to foster a safe and supportive environment where women can engage without fear or constraint. Creating an enabling and secure space for women in politics is not just about fairness—it requires a shared commitment, not only within parliaments but also across political institutions, to build more inclusive and forward-looking governance that benefits society as a whole."*

About the IPU

The IPU is the global organization of national parliaments. It was founded in 1889 as the first multilateral political organization in the world, encouraging cooperation and dialogue between all nations. Today, the IPU comprises 181 national Member Parliaments and 15 regional parliamentary bodies. It promotes peace, democracy and sustainable development. It helps parliaments become stronger, younger, greener, more innovative and gender-balanced. It also defends the human rights of parliamentarians through a dedicated committee made up of MPs from around the world.

For more information about the IPU, contact Tpress@ipu.org

About the CPA

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) is an international community of 180 Parliaments at national, state, provincial and territorial level working together to deepen the Commonwealth's

commitment to the highest standards of democratic governance. The Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) network within the CPA represents over 6,000 Women Parliamentarians and campaigns to increase the number of women elected representatives in Legislatures and helps Parliaments to become gender-sensitive institutions.

For more information about the CPA and CWP please visit www.cpahq.org or email communications@cpahq.org.

About the AIPA

The ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) is the sole parliamentary organisation associated to the Association of the Southeast Asia Nations (ASEAN). AIPA currently consists of 10 Member Parliaments from ASEAN Member States and 25 Observer Parliaments from national and supranational parliament around the globe. Established in 1977, AIPA aims to promote inter-parliamentary cooperation among ASEAN Member States, other parliaments and parliamentary organisations and to facilitate the achievement of the goals of ASEAN.

For more information about AIPA, please visit www.aipasecretariat.org or email aipa@aipasecretariat.org.