



PARLIAMENT  
REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO



OFFICE OF THE PARLIAMENT OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

REPORT ON THE

GLOBAL SUMMIT OF

# WOMEN SPEAKERS

OF PARLIAMENT

ABU DHABI

12-13 DECEMBER 2016

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## Background

### Introduction

Women Speakers of Parliament from over 35 countries gathered on December 12-13, 2016 in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, at the Global Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament, organised by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the UAE Federal National Council. This Summit may undeniably boast of having obtained the largest gathering of women presiding officers as 35 of the 52 female presiding officers were in attendance.



The Summit was held under the overall theme of **“United for Shaping the Future”** and focused on the role that Women Speakers can play in uniting parliamentarians around national and political interests to deliver sustainable prosperity and security in a rapidly changing world for present and future generations.

The Summit brought together leaders from across parliaments, governments, international organisations, the private sector and civil society to participate in debates and address key questions on the evolving role of parliament, including how parliaments can work with the other branches of government, with the private sector and the wider

community. It also aimed to provide women in the highest decision making positions of parliament, a regular forum and opportunity to exchange ideas and experiences.<sup>1</sup>

## **Delegation**

The Trinidad and Tobago delegation comprised the following persons-

- Hon. Bridgid Mary Annisette-George, MP – Speaker of the House  
*(Leader of the Delegation)*
- Hon. Dr. Nyan Gadsby-Dolly, MP
- Sen. Khadijah Ameen
- Ms. Chantal A. La Roche

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ipu.org/splz-e/abudhabi16.htm>

## Day One – Sunday December 11, 2016

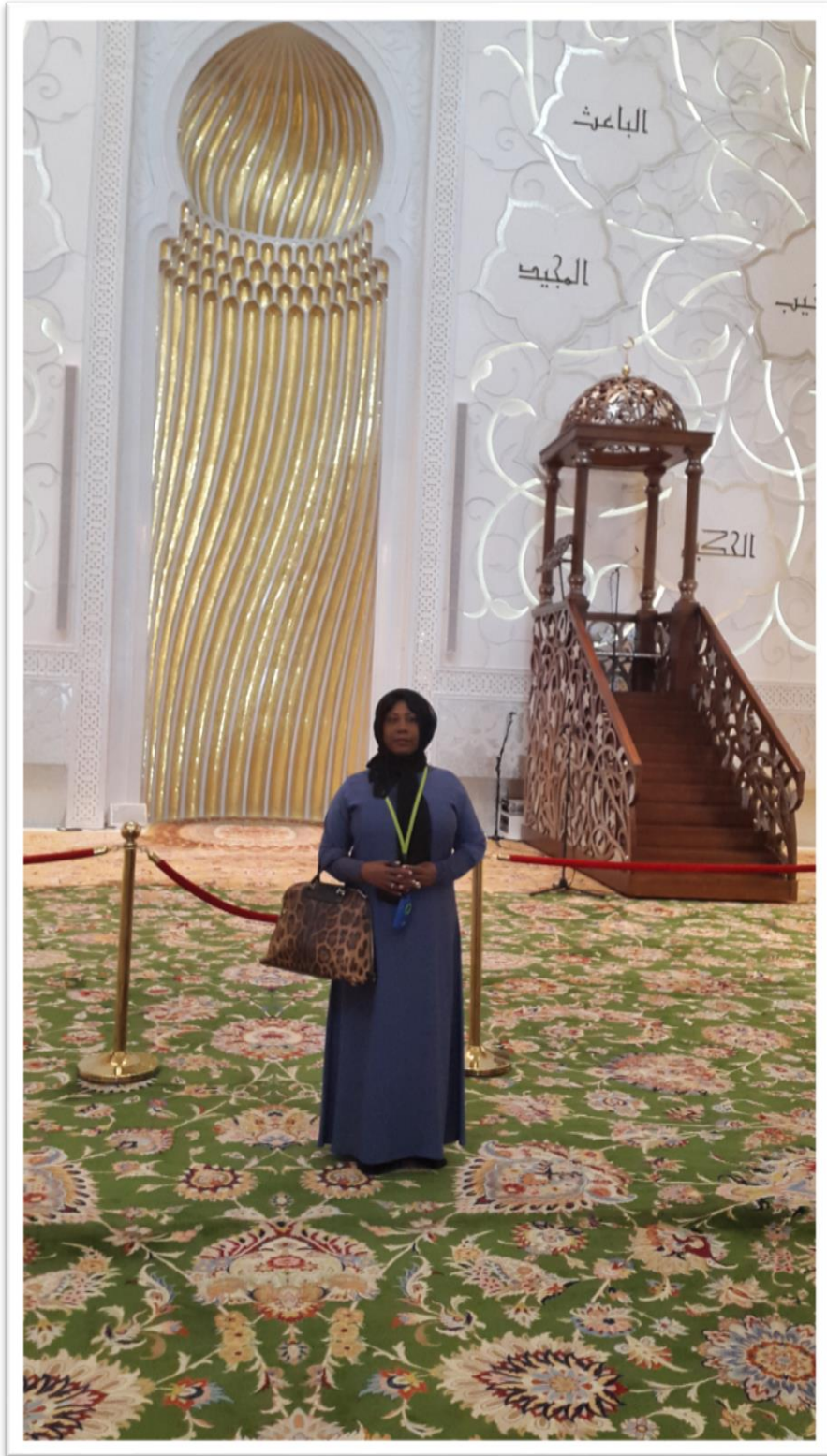
The delegation arrived in Abu Dhabi on Sunday December 11, 2016 and was greeted by officials of the Federal National Council of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and members of various media organisations of the UAE.



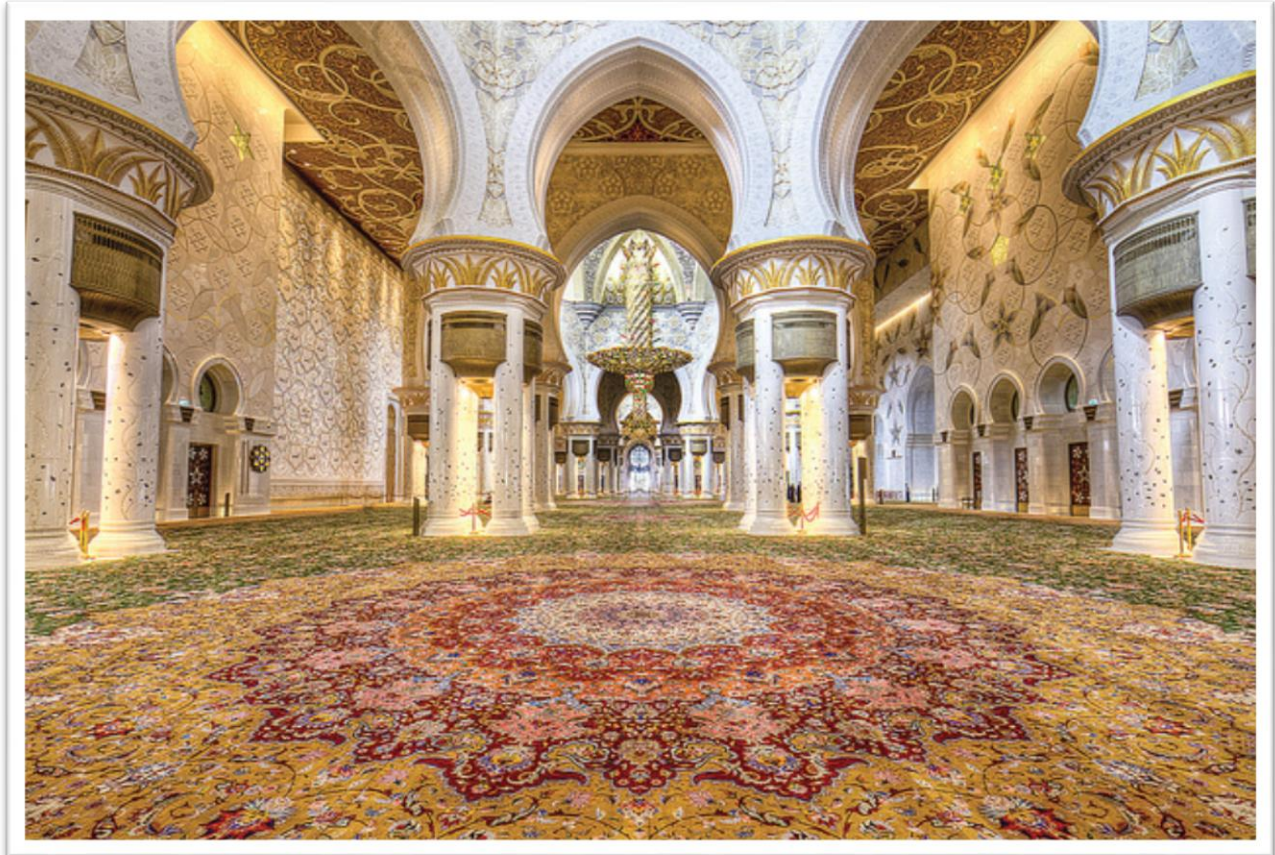
Organisers of the Summit arranged a cultural tour programme, which comprised visits to the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, Manarat Al Saadiyat and the Headquarters of the Federal National Council.

### **Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque**

The delegates were taken on a tour of the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, which is considered to be the key site for worship in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the third largest mosque in the World. The project was launched by the late president of the UAE, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, who wanted to establish a structure that would unite the cultural diversity of the Islamic world with the historical and modern values of architecture and art. His final resting place is located on the grounds beside the mosque, which was constructed from 1996 to 2007.



The Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque has many special and unique elements, including a carpet in the main prayer hall, which is considered to be the world's largest single piece of carpet.



### **Manarat Al Saadiyat**

The tour moved to Manarat Al Saadiyat, an art and cultural centre, intended to develop awareness and understanding of a wide range of culture and art of the UAE. Manarat Al Saadiyat is located in Saadiyat, which is the flagship development project of the Tourism Development and Investment Company (TDIC). It is a multi-faceted destination that features a wide range of luxury-based experiences, including hospitality, leisure and retail. Manarat Al Saadiyat showcases Saadiyat's projects and hosts art exhibitions organized by the Abu Dhabi Tourism and Culture Authority.

### **Federal National Council Headquarters**

The tour concluded with a visit to the Federal National Council (FNC) of the United Arab Emirates, which is the equivalent to the Trinidad and Tobago Parliament. The FNC is the representative body of the people of the UAE, and was established in 1972.

The FNC is comprised of 40 members representing the UAE's seven emirates, with half of its members elected by the electoral bodies and the other half appointed by the council. There are 8 seats each for the emirates of Abu Dhabi and Dubai, 6 seats each for the emirates of Sharjah and Ras Al Khaimah and 4 seats each for the emirates of Ajman, Umm Al Quwain and Fujairah.



The FNC Headquarters is a dedicated modern building with state of the art facilities in its chamber, but which also maintains traditional architectural features.



### **Welcome Reception & Dinner**

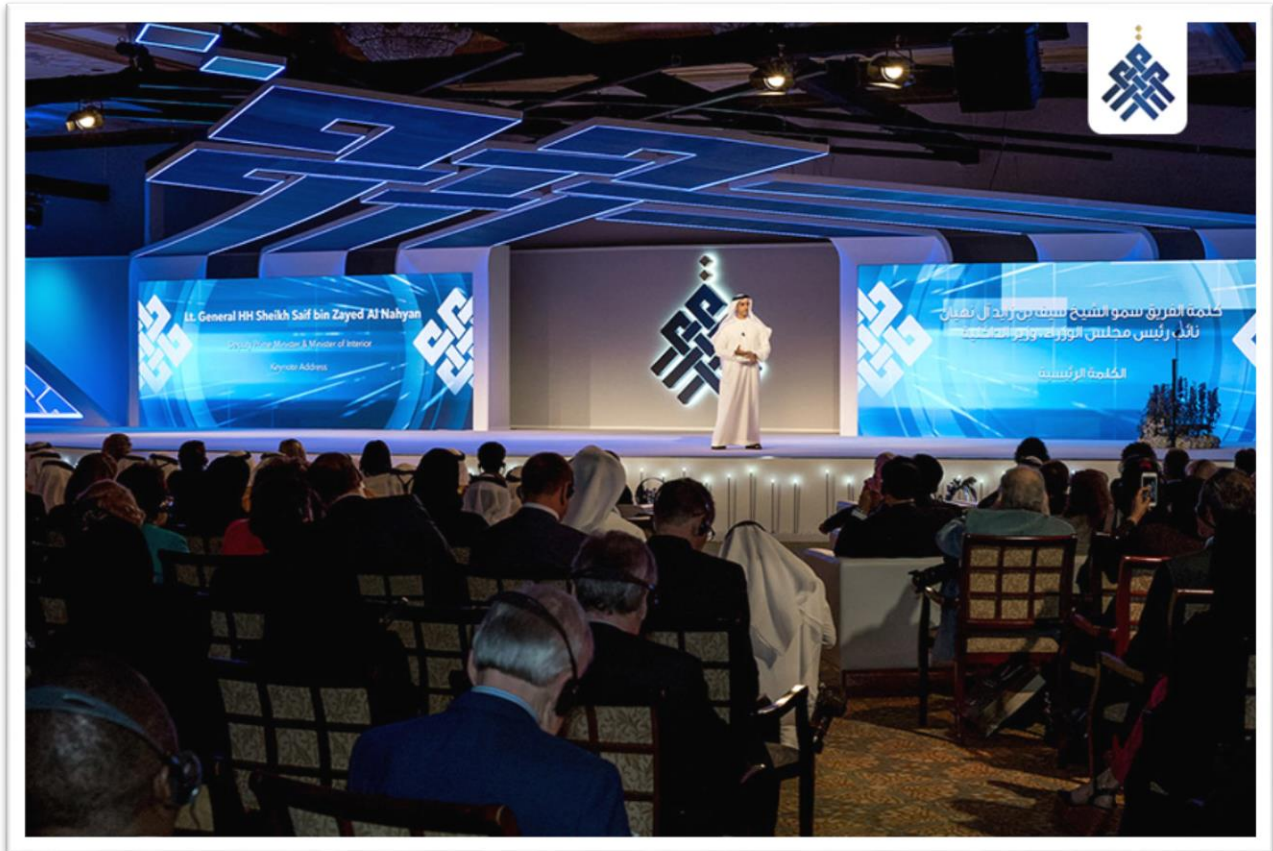
Following activities during the day, a welcome reception and dinner hosted for all participants of the Summit was held at the Emirates Palace Hotel under the patronage of H.H. Sheikha Fatima Bint Mubarak, Chairwoman of the General Women's Union (GWU), Supreme Chairwoman of the Family Development Foundation (FDF) and President of the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood.

In attendance were H.H. Sheikh Hamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Chief of the Abu Dhabi Crown Prince's Court, Dr. Amal Abdullah Al Qubaisi, Speaker of the Federal National Council (FNC) and Mr. Saber H. Chowdhury, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU).



## Day Two – Monday December 12, 2016

The Summit opened with addresses from H.H. Lt. General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior, as well as Her Excellency Dr. Amal Al Qubaisi, President of the Federal National Council (UAE). In her welcoming address, Dr. Al Qubaisi highlighted the role of women legislators and called for international dialogue to address future challenges.



## Session One: Reimagining the Future: The Megatrends Shaping Our World

The Summit commenced with a plenary session titled *“Reimagining the future: The Megatrends shaping our world.”* This session examined the geopolitical, socioeconomic, environmental and technological megatrends that are shaping our future and governance. These megatrends were considered in relation to the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Discussion was facilitated and led by Mr. John Defterios, CNN Money Emerging Markets Editor (USA) and included a variety of prominent speakers including: Her Excellency Valentina Matvienko, Chairperson of the Council of the Federation (Russian Federation), Her Excellency Dr. Amal Al Qubaisi, President of the Federal National Council (UAE), His Excellency Dr. Sultan Al Jaber, Minister of State and CEO of ADNOC Group (UAE), Dr Michio Kaku, Theoretical Physicist and Best Selling Author (UAE), Mr. Ray Hammoud, Author and Futurist (United Kingdom), and Mr. Jeff Martin, Founder & CEO of Tribal Planet (USA).



In his analysis of the upcoming global megatrends, Mr. Hammond said, *“Over the next 30 or 40 years, there are seven megatrends that will remain unchanged. The first of these is*

*asymmetric population explosion, which means that by 2050, the world population will potentially reach nine or 10 billion people”.*

The other trends identified include climate change, and subsequently an ongoing energy crisis, as well as globalisation, exponential technology development, revolutions in medical and life sciences and extreme global poverty.

## **Session Two: United to Advance Peace and Security**

During this session, the issue of preserving the peace was discussed. It was suggested that it was becoming more difficult as conflicts become more diverse and complex and have an increasingly adverse impact on the security landscape. The discussion examined how parliaments could unite to fight terror and help end the root causes. Discussion was led by Frank Sesno, Director, George Washington University School of Media & Public Affairs. The panelists were Olga Zrihen, Second Vice-President of the Belgian Senate, Ināra Mūrniece, Speaker of the 12<sup>th</sup> Saeima of the Republic of Latvia, Margaret Mensah-Williams, Chairperson of the National Council of Namibia, Luz Filomena Salgado Rubianes, President of the Congress of the Republic of Peru, Maja Gojković, Speaker of the National Assembly of Serbia and Christine Muttonen, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.



### **Session Three: United to Secure Economic Prosperity for Future Generations**

Led by John Defterios, Emerging Markets Editor of CNN Money, this panel discussion included Gabriela Michetti, President of the Senate and Vice-President of Argentina, Veronica Nataniel Macamo Dlhovo, Speaker of the Mozambique Parliament, Rebecca Alitwala Kadaga, Speaker of the Ugandan National Parliament, Blanca Ruiz Alcala, President of the Latin American and Caribbean Parliament, and Dambisa Moyo, UK global economist and author.



The esteemed panel analysed the major challenges that impact economic prosperity at a time when the youth take the foreground as agents of change. According to the participants, these challenges include scarcity of resources, changing demographics and hyper-urbanisation in many regions of the world. The discussion analysed how parliaments can work together to develop innovative policies to tackle shared socio-economic challenges, including achieving equitable development.

Ms. Moyo identified six key factors that threaten the future: automation (which is causing unemployment), the alarming growth of population, income inequality, scarcity of natural resources, debts at governmental level, and decline of productivity, even across developed nations.

### **Session Four: United To Safeguard A Healthy Planet**

During a panel discussion entitled '*United to Safeguard a Healthy Planet*', participants reviewed various innovative policies drafted to protect the planet, and focused on the difference that parliaments can make in this matter, both individually and in mutual

collaboration. Dr. Al Zeyoudi, UAE Minister of Climate Change and Environment, led the panel discussion.

Other participants included Jiko Fatafehi Luveni, Speaker of the Parliament of Fiji, Lucie Milebou-Aubusson, President of the Senate of Gabon, Ntlhoi Alice Motsamai, Speaker of the National Assembly of Lesotho, Jennifer Geerlings-Simons, Speaker of the National Assembly of Surinam, Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan, Speaker of the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, and Pany Yathotou, President of the National Assembly of Lao People's Democratic Republic (Laos).

The session examined the parliamentary implications of the Paris Agreement and relevant sustainable development goals, as well as innovative approaches to protect the planet through effective parliamentary action.

### **Session Five: The Changing Dynamics of Political Communication**

Under the title, "*The changing dynamics of political communication*", this session examined the role of parliaments in maximising the use of communication technologies and social media for improving citizen participation while addressing emerging challenges.

Mohammed Al Otaiba, former Editor-in-Chief of The National, led the discussion and participants included Alincia Williams-Grant, President of the Antigua and Barbuda Senate, Ankie Broekers-Knol, President of the Netherlands Senate, Noura bint Mohammed Al Kaabi, Minister of State for Federal National Council Affairs, Dariga Nazarbayeva, Chair of the Committee on International Relations, Defence and Security of the Kazakhstan Senate, and Frank Sesno, Director of George Washington University School of Media and Public Affairs.

The panellists recognised the significant growth of social media over the past few years, and identified the ways governments and citizens interact with each other which needed to be redefined. During the engaging discussion, Mrs. Williams-Grant expressed the view that the absence of transparency and communication leads to public distrust.

She stated, "*There should be a transformative rule that makes governments more transparent and accountable. Communication technologies must be used to connect with the people and also enable the people to connect with the government.*"

She added, "*Social media allows people to communicate in more efficient real-time ways than ever before. Communication technologies are the fifth arm of the government, and parliamentarians should embrace evolving media platforms, and make budgetary allocations to facilitate the implementation of relevant changes.*"

**Day Three – Tuesday December 13, 2016**

### **Session One: Governing Tolerance**

The session entitled “*Governing Tolerance*” addressed the underlying questions of whether tolerance can be governed and if so, how parliaments can contribute to eradicating the root cause of intolerance that leads to violence, discrimination and terrorism. The session explored a variety of methods in fostering value-based behaviour and attitudes of acceptance within communities.

During the discussion, facilitated by Mohammad Baharoon, Director- General of the Dubai Public Policy Research Centre, panelists shared their insights on the role of governmental entities in eradicating attitudes of intolerance throughout society.

Speakers headlining the session included H.E. Sheikha Lubna Al Qasimi, Minister of State for Tolerance, UAE, Hon. Bridgid Annisette-George, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Trinidad and Tobago, Sharon Wilson, President of the Bahamas Senate, Halimah Yacob, Speaker of the Singapore Parliament, and The Right Honourable Lady Justice Anne Rafferty, Chairman of the UK Judicial College and Chancellor of Sheffield University.

During her presentation, Speaker Annisette-George highlighted the constitutional, legislative regulatory and quasi-judicial institutions in Trinidad and Tobago, designed to promote tolerance by balancing competing or conflicting interests.



Speaker Annisette-George also raised the following noteworthy point: *“We must in our political discourse and representation promote tolerance and refrain from engendering divisiveness- as simple factor which may easily escape in our Parliaments under the guise of Parliamentary privilege is the use of language invectives and innuendos. We as Speakers must be ever watchful and jealously safeguard our chambers from such rhetoric.”*



The full text of Speaker Annisette-George’s contribution is attached as Appendix I.

## **Session Two: Youth Perspectives**

During this session, approximately 30 young people discussed their challenges, fears and aspirations for the future. Participants included Saeed Saleh Al Rumaithi, Member of the UAE Federal National Council (FNC) and President of the Board of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Forum of Young Parliamentarians, Alya Soliman Al-Jassim, Member of the FNC, Jacobo Pombo Garcia, President of the Global Youth Leadership Forum, and Jamie Woodruff, Ethical Hacker.

A number of students from Khalifa University, Paris-Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi, New York University Abu Dhabi, Higher Colleges of Technology and Zayed University also attended the session. Frank Sesno, Director of George Washington University School of Media and Public Affairs, led the discussion.



### Session Three: Closed Session Roundtable Discussion for Women Speakers of Parliament

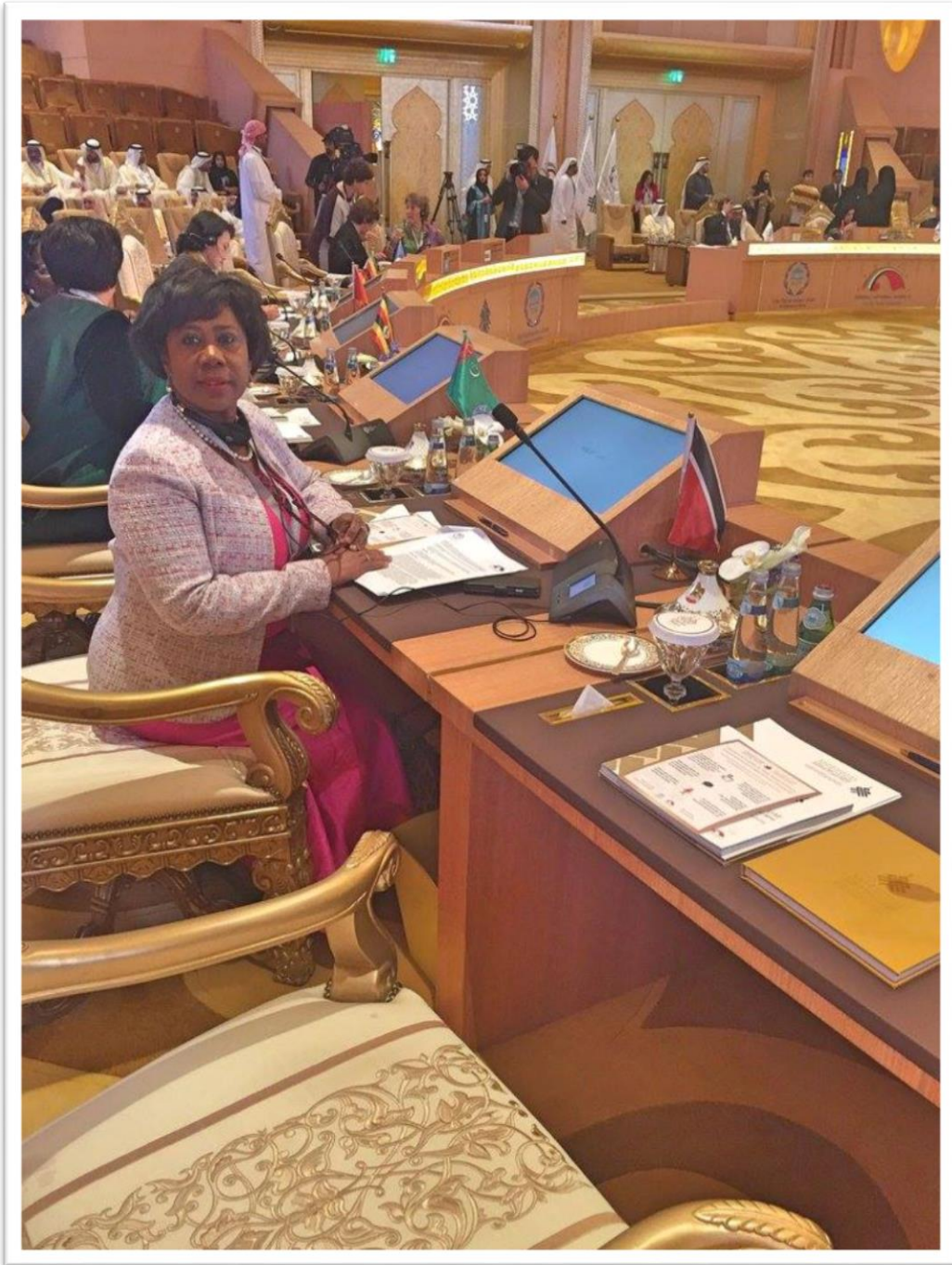


Chaired by Dr. Amal Al Qubaisi, Speaker of the UAE Federal National Council and President of the summit, the roundtable drew the attendance of Saber Chowdhury, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), Martin Chungong, Secretary-General of the IPU, and the women speakers in attendance at the Summit.

Dr. Al Qubaisi highlighted the unique purpose of the event, and the various topics identified for debate and deliberation. She commended the participant women speakers on their determination, and their will to translate these discussions into real decisions and tangible results. Dr. Al Qubaisi also expressed hope that the Abu Dhabi Declaration will mark a new beginning for parliaments around the world.



The roundtable sparked lively discussion, with several suggestions and comments from various Speakers. Some of the key takeaways included ensuring generality of the language used in the Abu Dhabi Declaration in order for it to be adaptable to specific national agendas around the world; greater focus on climate change, environmental sustainability and food safety; protection against drug trafficking; empowerment of the girl child; enhancement of peace and security; and introduction of gender-sensitive policies, such as a quota system, to encourage female participation in parliaments. The speakers also lauded the inclusion of concrete actions in the declaration, including the establishment of a Parliamentary Committee for the Future.



## **Session Four: Transformative Innovations: Opportunities and Ethical Dilemmas**

This session examined how parliaments can address the ethical questions emerging from technological breakthroughs such as engineering new life forms and the emergence of humanoid robotics to the possibility of finding new life and resources in space.

Discussion was led by Dr. Rafic Makki, Senior VP and Executive Fellow, Globalfoundries, and included Homaid Al Shimmari, CEO of Aerospace & Engineering Services - Mubadala, Dr. Charles Elachi, Former Director of NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Andrew Hessel, Distinguished researcher - Autodesk Jeffrey O. Kephart, Distinguished Research Scientist, Symbiotic Cognitive Systems, IBM and Dr Habiba AlSafar, Director, Khalifa University Center for Biotechnology.

## **Session Five: United Towards a More Inclusive Society**

This session focused on how parliaments, through legislation, government oversight and working closely with international organizations, can bring about gender equality and put an end to violence against women. There was a presentation on the results of the IPU study on harassment, intimidation and violence against women in parliament.

Discussions were led by H.E. Martin Chungong, Secretary General of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and presenters included H.E. Eileen Alix Boyd Knights, Speaker of the House of Assembly of the Commonwealth of Dominica, H.E. Onsari Gharti, Speaker of Legislature-Parliament of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal, H.E. Jeanne d'Arc Gakuba, Vice-President of the Senate of Rwanda, H.E. Edith Mendoza Fernandez, President Andean Parliament, H.E. Anna Diamantopoulou, President of the Greek think tank "TO DIKTIO" and Dr. Dubravka Simonovic, United Nations Special Rapporteur on violence against women.

## **Session Six: Transforming Parliaments for a Better Future**

This session examined the role of parliament in implementing UN Agenda 2030 and the need for parliaments to transform in order to address present and future challenges. The discussion leader for this session was Ms. Mary Hanafin, Councillor on Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council and included contributions from H.E. Saber Chowdhury, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, H.E. Ohood Al Roumi, Minister of State for Happiness of the UAE, H.E. Gabriela Rivadeneira, President of the National Assembly of the Republic of Ecuador, H.E. Maria Lohela, Speaker of the Eduskunta Parliament of Finland, H.E. Leonne Thodore-John, Speaker of the House of Assembly of St Lucia and H.E. Ester D.S. Dlamini, Deputy Speaker of the House of Assembly of the Kingdom of Swaziland.

## Session Seven (Closing Session): Abu Dhabi Declaration

The Global Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament concluded with the issuing of the Abu Dhabi Declaration with a commitment to contribute to the realisation of the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement, the results of the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Marrakech and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. The text of the declaration is attached at Appendix II.



### Sources:

<http://www.saadiyat.ae/en/your-saadiyat>

<http://www.wam.ae/en/home.html>

<https://www.gsws.ae/>

## **Appendix I: Governing Tolerance in Trinidad and Tobago by Speaker of the House Hon. Bridgid Annisette-George, MP**

In making my contribution to this session's topic I have decided to look at the Trinidad and Tobago experience.

In my own view there is no issue with whether tolerance can be governed, but there is an imperative that tolerance must be governed.

In highly diverse societies like Trinidad and Tobago- with differences along political ethnic religious ideological and economic lines- there is a great potential for intolerance with the result threats to social harmony and cohesion.

On the face of it, Trinidad and Tobago may be considered a tolerant society. In fact several years in an official visit to the twin island Republic Archbishop Desmond Tutu described us as "a rainbow people" referring to both our diversity and our harmony.

Our Founding Father the late Dr. Eric Eustace Williams it would appear in recognition of the potential for intolerance ensured

1. In both our Independence Constitution 1962 and our Republican Constitution 1976 that there were enshrined rights granted to every citizen for example.
2. In our watchwords *Discipline Production and Tolerance* our citizens are reminded expressly of the importance of tolerance.
3. In our national anthem is contained the phrase:  
*"here every creed and race find an equal place"*

Our experience has also placed us in a position to appreciate differences in each other, to participate in each other's religious festivals such as Divali, Eid, Emancipation Day, Spiritual Shouter Baptist Day and Christmas. Our national days of observance also facilitate a level of intercultural discourse and understanding and promote religious harmony which helps create peaceful and tolerant societies.

We have as a country also resorted to legislation to promote tolerance and have passed laws such as:

- o *Status of Children Act*: to remove discrimination in the rights of persons born out of wedlock.

- *The Equal Opportunity Act*: an act to prohibit certain kinds of discrimination such as in the employment of persons and in the provision of services, prohibits any act that is reasonably likely to humiliate insult intimidate or offend, to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different status,
- *The Domestic Violence Act*: to provide protection to victims of domestic violence which included physical sexual emotional psychological or financial violence committed by a person against a spouse child or any person of the household or a dependent.
- *The Freedom of Information Act*: to give members of the public a general right of access to official documents of public authorities.
- *The Industrial Relations Act*: regulates the balance of power between employers and employees.
- *Abolition of the Criminal Offence of Malicious and Defamatory Libel Act- Libel and Defamation (Amendment) Act*: which abolished Libel and Defamation as criminal offences in support of the constitutional right of freedom of expression, freedom of the press and freedom of political expression.
- *The Environmental Management Act*: to ensure that development is in harmony with the environment.
- *Cybercrime Act*: which outlaws the use of a computer system to coerce intimidate or harass another person with intent to cause emotional distress, cyberbullying, using a computer system to disseminate any information statement or image which damages the reputation of another or subject the other to public ridicule contempt hatred or embarrassment.

We have established *regulatory and quasi-judicial institutions* by acts of Parliament to promote tolerance that is to say by balancing competing/conflicting interests;

- The Equal Opportunities Commission and The Equal Opportunities Tribunal
- The Environmental Commission and the Environmental Court
- The Industrial Court
- A dedicated Domestic Violence Court

OTHER MECHANISMS TO RESOLVE CONFLICT RESULTING FROM INTOLERANCE

- *The Mediation Act* which provides for mediation services and which has established a Mediation Board to provide certification of mediators for the incorporation of voluntary collaborative and self-determined conflict resolution.
- Parliament in its exercise of its oversight function has a Joint Select Committee- *The Committee on Human Rights, Equality and Diversity* comprising members of both the Upper and Lower Chambers. This Committee in the First Session of the 11<sup>th</sup> Parliament which was prorogued on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2016 investigated and has reported on the challenges faced by persons with Disabilities with specific focus on access to services and employment treatment of persons with Disabilities and has made recommendations to the Parliament for the improvements.

Our imperative to govern tolerance cannot be exclusive to strict sense of the passing of legislation and the establishment of Commissions and Tribunals. The megatrends of today's world require a definition of govern in a wider context which includes providing education and access to information, which means for us as legislators that we must ensure that our budgets are designed to finance education and providing access to information for the promotion of tolerance.

Helen Keller opined, "The highest result of education is tolerance"

We must in our political discourse and representation promote tolerance and refrain from engendering divisiveness- as simple factor which may easily escape in our Parliaments under the guise of Parliamentary privilege is the use of language invectives and innuendos. We as Speakers must be ever watchful and jealously safeguard our chambers from such rhetoric.

In the discussions over the past two days we have referred repeatedly to the recent presidential campaign in the United States of America. There are so many lessons to be learnt from that but as pertains to this discussion we witnessed where the call as innocent as it may have appeared on the surface was an insidious reference to intolerance "*Make America Great Again*"

In our oversight function we must also govern tolerance by ensuring that systemic occurrences of intolerance be identified, examined and investigated leading to recommendations for the elimination.

I thank you



## **Appendix II- Abu Dhabi Declaration**

"We, women Speakers of Parliament from more than 30 countries, met on 12 and 13 December 2016 in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, for the Global Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament, organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the UAE Federal National Council for the purpose of shaping the future of parliaments for a better world.

*(i)* Affirming the 38 provisions of the Declaration of the Fourth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament entitled Placing democracy at the service of peace and sustainable development: Building the world the people want; and reiterating the principles and recommended actions of the summary report of the Tenth Meeting of Women Speakers of Parliament entitled Innovating for Gender Equality: Making development, peace and democracy a reality for women and men,

*(ii)* Cognizant of the challenges our world is facing today, and of the geopolitical, socio-economic, environmental and technological megatrends, which are accelerating the pace of change, and which are likely to affect quality of life for generations to come,

*(iii)* Committed to contributing to the realization of the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement, the results of the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Marrakech and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction,

*(iv)* Also committed to contributing to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, as well as to addressing all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls,

*(v)* Emphasizing that today's megatrends are intertwined and interdependent, and that tackling them requires a holistic approach, which encompasses geopolitical, socioeconomic, environmental, demographic and technological responses,

*(vi)* Stressing our willingness and duty to work together to address the challenges we face, as well as our conviction that parliamentarians must form a united front and work

towards a better future with the other branches of power, the private sector, civil society and the community at large,

*(vii)* Asserting that solutions to the challenges that our world faces cannot be realized without democratic governance, respect for human rights and the achievement of gender equality at all levels throughout the world; and recalling that the attainment of gender equality is not only a question of human rights but also a matter of efficiency that would harness all the potential and talent required for innovation and transformation,

*(viii)* Recognizing that young people should be included as active participants in the decisions we make,

*(ix)* Convinced of the need to take account of the interests and aspirations of future generations in our parliamentary work, and committed to working for change through collective action,

We stand:

(1) "United for Shaping the Future" by committing to work together and forge partnerships across government, the private sector and society at large in order to address the challenges that our world faces;

We agree that: (2) Peace and security. Our parliaments are crucial in the promotion and maintenance of peace and security. As representative institutions, through their legislative and oversight functions, they can take effective measures to prevent violence and conflict as well as to promote conflict resolution through peaceful means, including dialogue and reconciliation, with full respect for international law. Inter-parliamentary dialogue and cooperation can advance peace across nations. Winning the war on terrorism will require parliaments to come together and work with governments, civil society - including youth -, religious groups and leaders. Promoting peace and security is underpinned by democratic governance and institutions, the protection and promotion of human rights and the values of tolerance, inclusiveness, diversity, equality and dialogue.

(3) Inclusive society. Regardless of gender, age, race, class, geography or religion, inclusive societies should empower their members. Marginalization can lead to violent extremism and even terrorism. While the world has made progress, much work remains to be done on every front, especially in the critical area of gender equality. To achieve a more inclusive society, parliaments must be more proactive in addressing discrimination and eliminating violence against women and girls. They should ensure that every woman, child and adolescent across the world survives, thrives and reaches their full potential. They should promote girls' education. Parliaments must also advance tolerance, economic equity, equal access to education and employment, women's

economic empowerment, and equal participation in the political process, including decision-making institutions.

(4) Economic prosperity and well-being. Megatrends across many sectors affect economic prosperity and well-being. Such trends include transformative innovation in science and technology, changing geopolitical landscapes, resource scarcity, insecurity, hyper-urbanization and aging populations. Major challenges for the global economy continue to include: high and persistent unemployment rates, especially among young people; high indebtedness in developed and developing countries; slow growth; and rising inequality. As such, parliaments need to develop holistic frameworks and action plans that tackle these challenges, address inequalities, take advantage of the opportunities created by the megatrends mentioned above and promote equitable and sustainable economic growth across and within nations.

(5) Climate change and resource scarcity. Our parliaments can and should promote the ratification of the Paris Agreement and take all necessary action to implement it. They should implement the IPU Parliamentary Action Plan on Climate Change. Parliaments must enact practical and appropriate legislation and establish regulatory frameworks to progressively reduce their nations' carbon footprints, while continuing to grow their economies and to create opportunities for all, including the most marginalized. Through their legislative and oversight work, parliaments must promote the innovation needed to provide clean energy on a massive scale. They must contribute to protecting and ensuring the rational use of water resources. Parliaments must also consider legislation that will protect natural habitats, biodiversity and the overall ecosystem. Internationally, parliaments need to ensure funding that will preserve and rehabilitate the carbon sinks of the world.

(6) Citizen participation. Parliaments now have tremendous opportunities to dramatically increase citizen participation through mobile communication platforms and social media; but they also need to enact appropriate legislation and work with governments and the judiciary to limit the abuse of mobile communications for criminal purposes or by terrorist organizations for political gain.

(7) Advancing tolerance. Intolerance leads to violence, discrimination and terrorism. Parliaments can and should contribute to promoting tolerance through: legislation, policy-making and parliamentary debates; and by working with governments, the judiciary, civil society and religious leaders. Parliaments should lead by example, by acting with propriety as representative and inclusive institutions in their composition, processes and procedures.

(8) Innovations in science and technology. Our quality of life could improve significantly as a result of scientific and technological innovation. However, this could come at a significant cost, unless parliaments begin to find ways of addressing the ethical and moral

implications of technological advances, including: human rights such as privacy; global issues such as security; economic issues such as the digital divide leading to a larger knowledge divide; and employment such as humanoid robots replacing humans.

We commit to: (9) Placing the well-being of our people, peace, prosperity, and the integrity of both our planet and humanity at the core of our parliamentary strategic objectives, and making them central to our development efforts;

(10) Through parliamentary action, making a contribution that responds to the needs of all people, including those on the economic and social margins, and improves the health and socio-economic well-being of all, particularly women and girls.

(11) Using the opportunities offered by the digital era to open up parliaments, engaging citizens in parliamentary processes and increasing international cooperation so as to narrow the digital divide between developed and developing countries.

(12) Proposing to the IPU to consider an international parliamentary declaration on tolerance aiming at promoting and upholding human values and the principle of tolerance to advance peace and security and combat terrorism and violent extremism;

(13) Working with all stakeholders, executive bodies, private sector and civil society representatives, especially young people, in order to implement the Sustainable Development Goals, which is our agenda for the future;

(14) Sharing knowledge and experiences so as to promote democratic standards, tolerance and mutual respect, and to prepare for the future; Action imperatives:

(15) Focusing on the future. (a) Encourage the IPU to consider establishing a structure on the future which would assess future changes and global trends as well as their impact on people's lives, and which would mobilize efforts of parliaments and stakeholders in responding to these challenges; (b) Consider establishing in every parliament an appropriately resourced structure for horizon-scanning, such as a committee on the future and/or administrative unit on the future, which would inform parliament's legislative and oversight work regarding the implications of megatrends that affect our world, and which would act as a means to ensuring a better quality of life for future generations.

(16) Strategic planning. (a) Develop new or modify existing strategic plans to better meet the challenges of the future, in light of the megatrends and challenges that we face today and are likely to face in the future. Strategic planning efforts should include measures to ensure that parliaments are fit for purpose and able to contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals; (b) Encourage parliaments to review existing strategic plans to reflect the conclusions of our Summit; (c) Encourage the IPU to consider developing a global Code of ethics for parliaments in order to address the ethical implications of technological advances.

(17) Promoting youth empowerment. (a) Develop regulations, mechanisms and processes within every parliament to increase youth representation and facilitate youth contribution to legislation and policymaking; (b) Promote youth economic empowerment through legislation, policies and action plans that create opportunities for education and employment; (c) Promote youth cultural empowerment through relevant policies and strategies including education; (d) Contribute to bridging the technology gap among young people.

(18) Advancing gender equality and women's empowerment. (a) Increase and accelerate women's participation in every aspect of legislative and oversight work with a view to attaining gender equality in politics and in parliaments by 2030, including by using electoral gender quotas where applicable; (b) Review the functioning of our parliaments to ensure that they are gender-sensitive institutions and that they provide family friendly facilities; (c) Take action to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls; (d) Address pay gaps, inequality of access to economic opportunities and harassment in the work place; (e) Ensure that women and girls have access to health and education in all instances, including in times of war and conflict; and (f) Work in partnership with women and men to those ends.

(19) Following-up to the Abu Dhabi Declaration. Urge the IPU to follow-up on the proposals and commitments included in the Abu Dhabi Declaration and accommodate them in its work programme in such a manner as to promote continued and strategic partnerships with government authorities, scientists, academia, youth and representatives from the private sector and civil society.

(20) Institutionalizing our united efforts. (a) Within 3 months of this Declaration submit proposals for establishing a coordination mechanism within the IPU for discussion at the IPU Executive Committee meeting and at the Forum of Women Parliamentarians during the 136th IPU Assembly (Dhaka, Bangladesh, April 2017), in order to set timelines for the action imperatives listed above; (b) Mobilize financial resources to implement this Declaration; (c) Use IPU Assemblies to further the goals and actions of this Declaration.

We are profoundly grateful to the IPU, and the Federal National Council of the United Arab Emirates as the gracious host of this Summit, for bringing together leaders from across parliaments, governments, international organizations, the private sector and civil society in order to participate in our debates.

United we stand in shaping the future, for a better world.