



For Immediate Release

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News Release

GOPAC Calls for Greater Gender Equality in Politics to Help Reduce Corruption

Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption

Global Secretariat:

904 - 255 Albert St
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6A9
Canada

Tel: +1.613.366-3164 x 304
Fax: +1.613.421-7061
info@gopacnetwork.org

Website:

<http://gopacnetwork.org/>

Twitter:

[@GOPAC_Eng](https://twitter.com/GOPAC_Eng)

Facebook:

[fb.com/gopacnetwork](https://facebook.com/gopacnetwork)

GOPAC is a worldwide alliance of parliamentarians working together to combat corruption, strengthen good government, and uphold the rule of law.

Ottawa, Canada – The Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC) is urging countries to increase female participation in politics as a means of reducing political corruption. The appeal comes as part of GOPAC's latest position paper, *Gender Equality in Parliaments and Political Corruption*, published on International Women's Day.

GOPAC is also encouraging legislators to work with partners such as the United Nations, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, NGOs, and academic institutions to conduct further research into the effect of gender balance in politics and efforts to fight corruption.

"The status of women has come a long way since the first International Women's Day in the early 1900's, but our participation in the political sphere is still far too low in most countries across the world," said Dr Donya Aziz, Vice-Chair of GOPAC's Women in Parliament Network (WPN). "Our paper demonstrates that the strongest fight against corruption is one that includes and embraces the female perspective as a critical part of strengthening parliamentary oversight and parliamentary democracy."

GOPAC's research is based on a ten-year analysis of trends in the proportion of women elected to national parliaments correlated to trends in the levels of national corruption. GOPAC's findings overturned long-held assumptions about the different susceptibilities of male and female politicians to engage in corrupt activities. Specifically, GOPAC found:

- An increase in the number of women in parliament will tend to reduce corruption if the country in question has reasonably robust systems to uphold democracy and to enforce anti-corruption laws. However, in the absence of such systems, the gender blend of parliament is unlikely to have any impact on the levels of national corruption.
- To reduce corruption, countries should recruit greater female participation in politics in tandem with taking steps to increase institutional political transparency, to strengthen parliamentary oversight, and to enforce strong penalties for corruption.

The position paper was created through GOPAC's Women in Parliament Network. A copy of the full position paper is available for download on the GOPAC website:

gopacnetwork.org/Docs/PositionPapers/PP_WPN_EN_WEB.pdf

GOPAC is a worldwide alliance of parliamentarians working together to combat corruption, strengthen good government, and uphold the rule of law. Based in Ottawa, Canada, GOPAC has 50 national chapters on 5 continents. GOPAC supports its members' efforts through original research, global anti-corruption capacity building, and international peer support. Visit GOPAC on the web at gopacnetwork.org, on Twitter at twitter.com/GOPAC_Eng, and on Facebook at facebook.com/gopacnetwork

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Contact:

Emilie Lemieux

GOPAC Global Secretariat

+1.613.366-3164 x 305, emilie.lemieux@gopacnetwork.org