



**British Islands and Mediterranean Region (BIMR)
Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Inaugural
Conference**

Draft Programme

Saturday 15 March to Sunday 16 March 2014

Saturday 15 March

1.00pm Meeting of the BIMR CWP Steering Committee
Venue to be arranged

5.15pm All Delegates arrive at the Scottish Parliament

Programme to be advised

Sunday 16 March

9.00am Opening Session
Holyrood Room

Keynote addresses

9.30am Session 1: BIMR women parliamentarians: strengths and weaknesses

The aims of this session will be to stimulate open and constructive discussion to enable delegates to learn about the challenges facing political aspirants and serving politicians within their jurisdictions.

11.30am Session 2: The Commonwealth Charter – What can BIMR CWP do to promote gender equality and equity in the work of the CPA BIMR region and across the Association?

The aim of this session will be to have a discussion focussed on action that women parliamentarians could take to ensure equality for all at CPA events.

2.00pm Session 3: Pre-selection and post-election challenges and opportunities

- a. *Does experience bear out the perception that the lower representation of women candidates is the result of discrimination towards women in political parties?*
- b. *How realistic and/or effective are 50/50 campaigns and selection processes which guarantee selection as candidates for women?*
- c. *Do political parties field women candidates from constituencies where their chance of winning the election is negligible?*
- d. *Do women in BIMR suffer from under-reporting of their election campaigns?*
- e. *How can the region support legislatures within the region where women members hold less than 20% of the seats?*

3.45pm Session 4: The media representation of women in politics

The aims of this session will be to explore the local challenges and opportunities for women parliamentarians and their relationship with the media with a view to better enabling women politicians to find innovative ways to use the media and social network sites to raise the profile of gender issues.

5.00pm Closing Session