



Asian Women Parliamentarian Caucus

Inclusivity & Diversity in Gender Equality in Parliaments in Asia

Colombo, Sri Lanka
9th - 11th Oct 2023



Background

Democratic development cannot take place without equal participation of women in all spheres of life, especially politics. As such in lieu of the need to promote female political leadership training and empowerment in Asia, the Regional Programme Dialogue Asia office of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung in Singapore is committed to pursuing programmes to narrow the political gender gap.

Regional networks help to build on existing strategic knowledge and solidarity systems, especially for countries that lack adequate or any representation of women in politics. Women caucuses also help to unite women across party lines, offer opportunities to mainstream gender issues through legislation and provide oversight of government action in the work of parliament. The women's caucus is also a platform to inform and encourage parliamentarians to use and benefit from the laws passed in their respective countries for stronger enforcement. In most instances, women's caucuses do not receive parliamentary support such as financial resources or the meeting venues to organise.

Objectives

With the support of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, a network of 40 Asian women parliamentarians have met annually since 2011 to promote, strengthen and develop female political leadership in the their respective countries through policy discussions and capacity building programmes. The AWPC, which was formally established in 2014 via a regional conference in Singapore, aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Promote more robust engagements in policy issues by encouraging regional discussions on policies impacting women's leadership in Asia
- Strengthen capacities of individual parliamentarians through networking, plenary sessions and skills upgrading workshops
- Identify leadership challenges faced by female parliamentarians in Asia and provide adequate support through leadership training and policy workshops

Policy Focus

The meetings in the form of dialogue programmes and/or study trips, have also strategically addressed thematic policy concerns such as:

- Migration and Human Trafficking
- Anti-Corruption
- Gender Mainstreaming in Policy Making
- The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Women's political participation in parliaments, and more.



Asian Women Parliamentarian Caucus Meeting
Inclusivity & Diversity in Gender Equality in Parliaments in Asia
8th- 12th October 2023
Sri Lanka

8th Oct Sunday	Arrival of Participants
19:00 pm	<p>Welcome Dinner for AWPC Members Only Venue: The Ruby Room, Hotel Hilton</p>
9th Oct Monday	Inaugural Session in the Parliament of Sri Lanka
09:00 am	Departure to the Parliament of Sri Lanka
10:00 am	<p>Inaugural Session in the Parliament of Sri Lanka</p> <p>Welcome Address Hon. Dr Sudarshini Fernandopulle, Member of Parliament – Chair of the Women Parliamentarians’ Caucus of Parliament, Sri Lanka</p> <p>Mr. Andreas Klein, Director, Regional Programme Political Dialogue Asia</p> <p>Special Address Ambassador Dr. Felix Neumann, Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany to Sri Lanka, Colombo</p> <p>Keynote Speech Hon. Mahinda Yapa Abeywardana, Speaker of Parliament, Sri Lanka</p> <p>Group Photo</p>

1:00 pm	Lunch in Parliament
14:30 pm	Departure from Parliament
15:00 pm	<p>Open Forum</p> <p>Discussion with Civil Society Actors and NGO Groups of Sri Lanka</p> <p>Election Commission of Sri Lanka Election Secretariat, P.O. Box 02, Sarana Mawatha, Rajagiriya.</p>
17:10 pm	Departure to Hotel
19:00 pm	<p>Networking Dinner</p> <p>Venue: The Ruby Room, Hotel Hilton</p>
20:00 pm	End of Day 1
10 th Oct Tuesday	<p>AWPC Panel Discussions</p> <p>Venue: The Blue Room, Hilton Hotel</p>
09:30 am	<p>AWPC Panel Discussions on Gender Equality Policy- Perspective from Sri Lanka</p> <p>Chair: Hon. Dr Sudarshini Fernandopulle, Member of Parliament – Chair of the Women Parliamentarians' Caucus of Parliament, Sri Lanka</p> <p>Mrs. Yamuna Perera, Secretary, Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment</p> <p>(Dr.) (Mrs.) Ramani Jayasundere, Consultant, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and Director Justice and Gender, from the Asia Foundation</p> <p>Mrs. Sharika Cooray, Assistant Representative (a.i.), National Programme & Policy Analyst, Women's Rights and Gender, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)</p> <p>Mrs. Kushani Rohanadeera, Secretary- General of Parliament and Secretary to the Women Parliamentarians' Caucus in Parliament</p>

11:00 am	Tea/Coffee Break
11:30 am	<p>AWPC Panel Discussion on Gender Equality Policy- Perspectives from Germany and Asia</p> <p>Hon. Romina Plonsker MdL, Member of Parliament Germany Hon. Ms. Shizuka Terata, Member of Parliament, Japan Hon. Pramila Kumari, State Minister of Education, Science and Technology, Nepal Hon. Elvina Sousa Carvalho, Secretary of State for Equality and Social Inclusion, Timor Leste Hon. Mas Ermieyati, Member of Parliament, Malaysia Hon. Sakuna Saranun, Member of Parliament Thailand</p>
12:30 pm	Perspectives from AWPC Members
13:00 pm	Lunch
14:30 pm	<p>AWPC Panel Discussion- Inclusivity & Diversity in Gender Equality in Parliaments in Asia- Perspectives from South Asia</p> <p>Hon. Tashi Chhozom, Member of Parliament, Bhutan Hon. Eva Abdulla, Deputy Speaker of Parliament, Maldives Hon. Nisha Dangi, Member of Parliament, Nepal</p> <p>Discussions</p>
15:30 pm	<p>AWPC Panel Discussion on - Inclusivity & Diversity in Gender Equality in Parliaments in Asia, Perspectives from South East Asia</p> <p>Hon. Dr. Razwana Begum Abdul Rahim, Nominated Member of Parliament, Singapore Hon. Ledia Hanifa, Member of Parliament, Indonesia Hon. Nguyen Thanh Cam, Member of Parliament, Vietnam Hon. Patsarin Ramwong, Member of Parliament Thailand Hon. YB Ng Shy Ching, Member of Parliament, Malaysia Hon. Baintan Adil Ampatuan, Member of Parliament, Philippines</p>

17:00 pm	Tea/Coffee Break
17:15 pm	<p>AWPC Panel Discussion on - Inclusivity & Diversity in Gender Equality in Parliaments in Asia, Perspectives from East Asia</p> <p>Hon. Yu-Lan Sandy Yu, Member of Parliament, Taiwan Hon. Ms. Shizuka Terata, Member of Parliament, Japan</p> <p>Discussions</p>
18:00 pm	<p>Summary of Proceedings</p> <p>Megha Sarmah Programme Manager, 2030 Agenda, Political Dialogue Asia</p>
19:30 pm	<p>Dinner Hosted by Hon. Mahinda Yapa Abeywardana, Speaker of Parliament, Sri Lanka</p> <p>VENUE: Hon. Speaker of Parliament's Residence</p>
21:00 pm	End of Day 2
11th Oct Wednesday	Site Visit
08:30 am – 17:00 pm	Site Visit to Helmut Kohl Memorial Maternity Hospital
19:00 PM	<p>Dinner</p> <p>VENUE: TBA</p>
12th October 2023	Departure of Participants



Asian Women Parliamentarian Caucus

Inclusivity & Diversity in Gender Equality in Parliaments in Asia

Colombo, Sri Lanka | 9th - 11th Oct 2023

ELECTION COMMISSION AGENDA



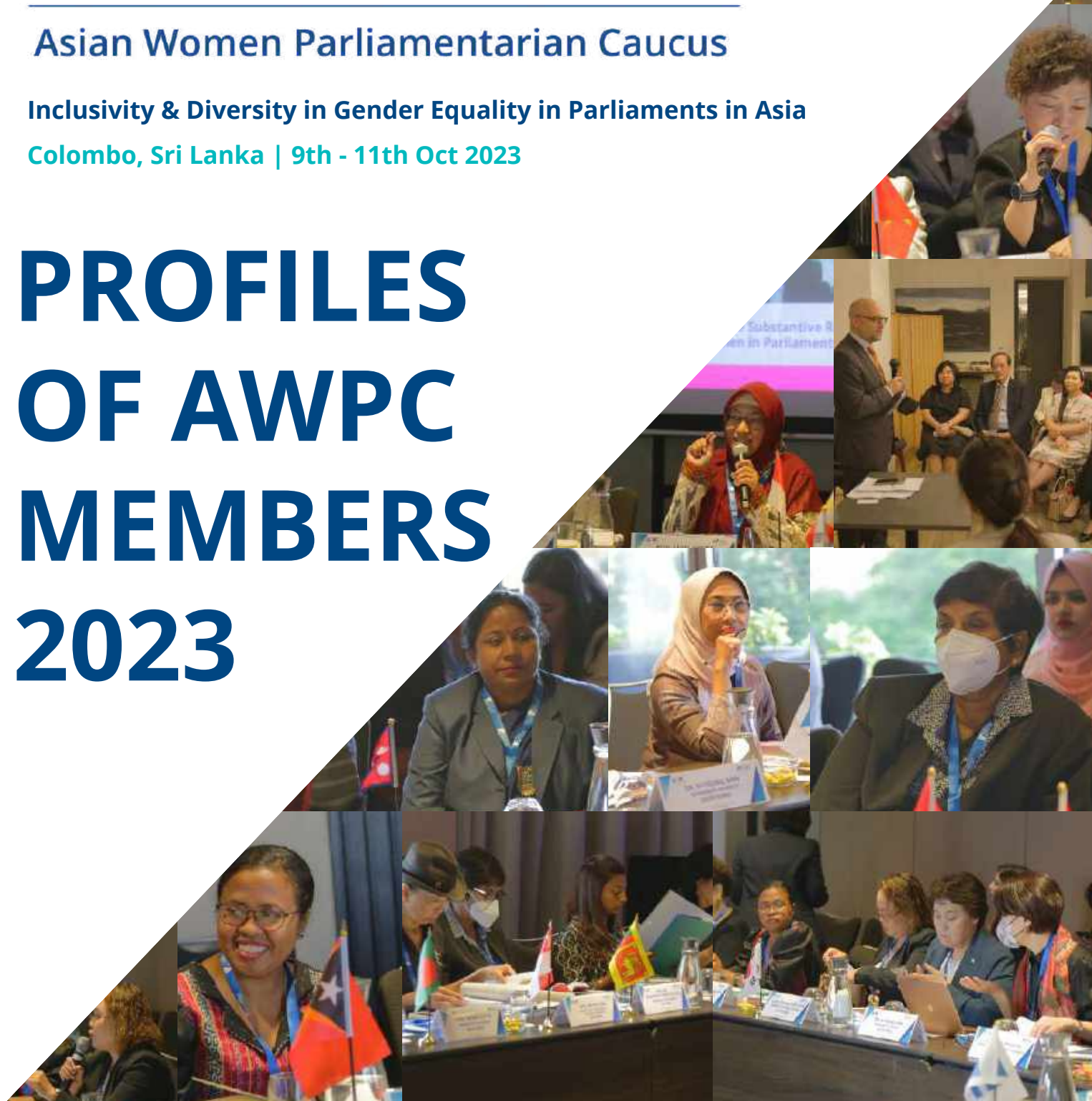


Asian Women Parliamentarian Caucus

Inclusivity & Diversity in Gender Equality in Parliaments in Asia

Colombo, Sri Lanka | 9th - 11th Oct 2023

PROFILES OF AWPC MEMBERS 2023





**HON. TASHI CHHOZOM
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
BHUTAN**

His Majesty The King granted Dhar to Supreme Court Justice Tashi Chhozom, appointing her as the Member of Parliament of the National Council of Bhutan, in accordance with Article 11.1 of the Constitution.

She served as a Supreme Court Justice since 2012. Hon.Tashi Chhozom was a Hubert Humphrey Fellow in the Washington College of Law and completed her Master's Degree, LL.M from the Queensland University of Technology, Australia. She also received the University's Special Excellence Award in 2013.



**HON. ROMINA PLONSKER
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
GERMANY**

Since 2017, Hon. Romina Plonsker has been a member of the North Rhine-Westphalia state parliament, where she has been CDU spokesperson for Europe and International Affairs since 2022. The whole time, CDU has been running government in Germany's biggest (by population) federate state. Since 2016, she has been a member of the state executive committee of the CDU North Rhine-Westphalia.

Romina Plonsker's efforts are not limited to state politics only, as she is also involved in local politics. In 2020, she was elected to the council of the Rhein-Erft district as well as deputy chairwoman of the CDU district council faction. Since 2021, she has been the very first district chairwoman of the CDU Rhein-Erft.

Before that, she served her apprenticeship as a bank clerk in 2010 and worked as a consultant in the branch management of a German private bank. From 2011 to 2013, she studied Business Administration (B. Sc.) at the University of Cologne/ Germany and completed a semester abroad at the University Carlos III in Madrid/Spain. From 2014 to 2017, she studied business administration (M. Sc.) at the University of Cologne.

Her political priorities are - in addition to European and international politics - the structural change in the region with the settlement of companies, the creation of new jobs and the expansion of the necessary infrastructure with attention. To this end, she is in regular exchange with the municipalities, employee representatives and companies with the aim of maintaining a prosperous region and creating a climate-neutral industrial country.

In European und international affairs, she is connected to a wide European und international network with exchanges e.g. to the US, Japan and through Europe with close attention to matters of the young generation.



HON. LEDIA HANIFA AMALIAH
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
INDONESIA

Hon. Ledia Hanifa Amaliah is a member of the The House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia (DPR RI) from the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) for the Bandung City and Cimahi City electoral districts who really cares about issues of Education, Family and People with Disabilities.

Ledia who currently serves as Secretary of the PKS Fraction of the DPR RI, has been a member of the DPR RI for 3 terms, starting from 2009-2014, 2014-2019 to 2029-2024.

Spending her elementary to high school years in Jakarta, Ledia completed her undergraduate education at the University of Indonesia majoring in Chemistry and continued her Masters in Applied Psychology with a specialization in Social Intervention at the Faculty of Psychology from the same university, the University of Indonesia.

Since she was young, Ledia has been active in organizations. Starting from Scouting, then being active in student associations, until then being involved in national and international level organizations such as being on the Expert Council of the Central Board of Women of the Islamic Community and Member of the Women's Caucus of the Asian Parliament until now.

In 1998 Ledia entered into political activities when she joined the Justice Party and was active as a party administrator until the party changed its name to the Prosperous Justice Party.

When she was Chair of the PKS Central Executive Board (DPP) for Women from 2005 to 2010, Ledia and her friends activated 4,500 Pos Wanita Keadilan (currently called Rumah Keluarga Indonesia) in 33 provinces as one of the flagship programs in community empowerment, especially for women, family and children.

During her time as a member of the DPR RI, Ledia has been active in Commission IX which is in charge of health and employment issues, Commission VIII which is in charge of religious, social, women's and children's issues, and most recently in Commission X which is in charge of issues of education, youth and sports, tourism and the creative economy as well as national library.

While working on Commission VIII DPR RI, Ledia was Chair of the Working Committee on the Halal Product Guarantee Bill, the Draft Law on Revision of Law No. 23 of 2002 concerning Child Protection, and the Bill on Disabilities and she oversaw these three bills until they were passed into Law No. 34 of 2014, Law No. 35 of 2014 and Law No. 8 of 2016.

In between her busy schedule as a wife, mother, member of parliament and party activist, Ledia poured out her life experiences and thoughts in the books *If We Want, We Can* (2011), *Arranging Halal Guarantees in Indonesia* (2016), *From Disability Development to Disability Development* (2011). 2016), and *Kartini Legislation- An Anthology of the Progress of PKS Women Legislative Members* (2017)



HON. SHIZUKA TERATA
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
JAPAN

Hon. Shizuka Terata is a member of the House of Councillors in Japan, first elected in 2019 from the Akita Prefectural district. She graduated from Waseda University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Human Sciences in 1998.

Since joining the House of Councillors, she has been actively serving on the Committee on the Environment and the Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries.

Terata's primary areas of focus include education, gender equality, and environmental issues. She is dedicated to improving social welfare and promoting foster care, as well as advocating for tuition-free education. Terata has also been actively working to eliminate gender discrimination in medical school admissions and pushing for legal reforms to reduce sexual crimes.

She is challenging Japanese society, where a significant gender wage gap exists, and one in every two single-mother households falls into relative poverty. Distressed by the news of cases involving the abandonment of newborn babies, she is also actively working to establish an anonymous childbirth system, despite facing strong opposition from conservatives who argue that it encourages baby abandonment. She believes that promoting SRHR (Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights) and the introduction of comprehensive sex education by UNESCO, as well as improving access to contraceptive methods that women can use autonomously to prevent unintended pregnancies, are key factors. However, with only 15% of female lawmakers, it is challenging to gain widespread understanding.

In Japan, women still spend 5.5 times more time on housework and childcare than men. With the belief that, for women to actively participate in politics and the economy, it is essential for men to spend more time on housework and childcare, she has been promoting paternity leave and advocating for male cabinet members to take paternity leave as well. In 2020, former Environment Minister Shinjiro Koizumi became the first male cabinet member to take a two-week paternity leave.

As a member of the Japanese Parliament, where gender equality ranks low (125th in the gender gap index), Terata places a strong emphasis on increasing women's participation in politics.



**HON. SANDREA NG
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
MALAYSIA**

Hon. Sandra Ng is a student activist turned state lawmaker from Malaysia, representing The People's Justice Party. She was first elected in the historic general election in 2018 that witnessed the first regime change in Malaysia since its independence.

She was re-elected in the recent 2022 Malaysian general election. With the formation of the unity government in Perak state, Sandra was appointed as the Perak State Executive Council member, holding the housing and local government portfolios.

Sandra is currently the exco member of her party's national women's wing, as well as the information chief of Perak state. She is also a member of the Asian Women Parliamentarian Caucus and an alumni of KASYP batch 4.



**HON. YB DATUK WIRA HAJJAH MAS
ERMIEYATI BINTI HAJI SAMSUDIN
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
MALAYSIA**

Hon. YB Datuk Wira Hajjah Mas Ermieyati binti Haji Samsudin or known as YB Emy amongst colleagues and people of Masjid Tanah, is a Malaysian Politician who has served as Chairperson of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) since April 2023 and the Member of Parliament (MP) for Masjid Tanah since May 2013. She became the first female MP in Melaka. She is also the second female PAC chairperson after Noraini Ahmad in Malaysian history.

She served as Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department in charge of Parliament and Law under former Prime Minister Ismail Sabri Yaakob from year 2021 until November 2022, Deputy Minister of Entrepreneur Development and Cooperatives from March 2020 to August 2021 and the Deputy Minister of Tourism and Culture from July 2015 to May 2018.

She is a member of the Malaysian United Indigenous Party (BERSATU), a component party of the Perikatan Nasional (PN) coalition and served as the 2nd Deputy Women Chief of BERSATU since August 2020 and the Women Youth Chief of the UMNO from October 2013 to June 2018.

After graduating from the Law Degree in UKM in the year 2000, she started her career as an advocate and solicitor and later in 2004, with two partners, she opened their own legal firm, Messrs. Ermiey Nizam & Ho. Since school age and as early as 15, she has been active with the volunteering and activism throughout various platform and awarded as Tokoh Beliawanis Negeri Melaka for the year 2013.

She is now actively participating in projects and programmes related to social and economic development, sustainability and women and youth to connect with experts across the globe and exchange ideas for the betterment of the people.



**HON. EVA ABDULLA
DEPUTY SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT
MALDIVES**

Hon. Eva Abdulla is currently the Deputy Speaker of the People's Majlis of the Republic of Maldives and has been a representing member since the year 2009. This is her third term as a parliamentarian.

Eva has been an active advocate for democracy and human rights in the Maldives. She graduated from the University of Kent, UK, holding a BA in Politics and Government and a MA in Politics and International Relations from the University of Warwick, UK.

Eva was active in advocating for a multi-party political system, the formation of Maldivian Democratic Party, and in the national reform movement which ushered in the first democratic elections in 2008. She became the first woman to be elected to a governing council in a political party, and won her first Parliamentary seat in the first multi-party general elections of 2009. She is now serving her third term as a Parliamentarian.

Eva serves on the Parliamentary standing committee for oversight of the security forces, and sponsored the Maldives Anti-Torture Act in 2010 and the Whistleblower Protection Bill in 2019. She has also previously worked the WHO, the UNFPA and was Manager for the local newspaper 'Minivan Daily'.



**HON. PRAMILA YADAV
STATE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION,
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
NEPAL**

Hon. Pramila Yadav is State Minister for Education, Science and Technology of Nepal. She is also holding the position of Central Member and Politburo Member of the People's Socialist Party, Nepal

She has been elected as a Member of National Assembly (Upper House) since 2018. Her designated area of responsibility is Madhesh Province. She has more than 15 years experiences of politics. She is involved actively in the Madhesh Janadhikar Forum. She has been raising her voices in the Parliament and making laws for them for the Madheshis. She has gained a lot of popularity in the politics as well as education sector.

She has worked in the education sector for 25 years. She was Secondary English Teacher and the principal in Sunsari, Nepal. She has worked as a trainer of Child Friendly Education, Female Education, Adult Education, Distance Education, Secondary School Teacher Training and so on.

She has worked as a General Manager in National Trading Limited, Kathmandu, Nepal for two years (2011, 2012). She has been awarded by National Education Ministry, Teacher Forum, Female Forum, NGO/INGO on the occasion of Women's International Day and so on. In this way she is also very interested in the international politics and social work.



HON. NISHA DANGI
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
NEPAL

Hon. Nisha Dangi, a distinguished Member of Parliament, holds a unique position as the youngest member ever to grace the House of Representatives in the Federal Parliament of Nepal. As a testament to her leadership abilities, she serves as the Whip of the Rastriya Swatantra Party Nepal, where she plays a pivotal role in shaping party policies and directions. Her commitment to driving progress is further underscored by her membership in the Infrastructure Development Parliamentary Committee, where she actively contributes to the country's development agenda.

Nisha is a versatile individual, holding a Bachelor's degree in Social Work and a Master's degree in Journalism. Her academic background underscores her deep understanding of social issues and effective communication strategies. As an MP, Nisha Dangi has tirelessly championed the voice of the people, advocating for social justice, equality and the rights and well-being of marginalized communities together with the promotion of domestic production. Her unwavering dedication to these causes solidifies her position as a respected and influential leader in Nepali politics.



HON. BANTAN ADIL-AMPATUAN
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
PHILIPPINES

Hon. Engr. Baintan Adil-Ampatuan, MNSA has been a legislator for four (4) years and a development planner for more than 20 years.

She earned her degree in Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering (BSCE) from the Notre Dame University in 1991. She became a licensed Civil Engineer and a Career Service Professional right after obtaining her undergraduate degree in 1991. She also obtained her Master in Professional Studies – Development Management, major in Public Affairs Management from the USM Kabacan Extension School in 1994. In 2004, she obtained her third-level eligibility in Civil Service as a Career Service Executive Eligible (CSEE). In 2021, she finished her Senior Executive Master in National Security Administration (SE-MNSA) from the National Defense College of the Philippines (NDCP), where she received a silver award for meritorious thesis and a bronze award for academic excellence. As a result of graduating with SE-MNSA, she also became a commissioned reserve officer of the Philippine Army, with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

She has an in-depth understanding of autonomous government bureaucracy, having rose from the ranks from a Development Management Officer to the Executive Director of the Regional Planning and Development Office - Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (RPDO-ARMM). She has accumulated robust experience in planning, investment programming, budgeting, project implementation, alongside monitoring and the evaluation of policies, programs, and projects. She left a significant footprint in the defunct ARMM by leading the creation and development of various regional plans and notably, the ARMM Transition Report.

Today, she stands as one of the 80 presidential appointees of the second Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA) Parliament, from February 2019 to date.

As a Member of Parliament, she is one of the vice-chairpersons of the Committee on Finance and a member of seven (7) committees of the Parliament, specifically, the Committees on 1) Rules; 2) Ways and Means; 3) Agriculture; 4) Public Works; 5) Education; 6) Health; and 7) Women, Youth, Children, and other vulnerable sectors.

From August 2022 to July 2023, she principally/co-principally authored 47 bills and 96 proposed resolutions; co-authored 97 bills and 51 proposed resolutions. Of the 144 filed bills, 137 have undergone first reading, five (5) were referred to the appropriate committees, and other bills are yet to be calendared. Moreover, of the 147 proposed resolutions, 57 have been adopted by the Parliament, and 21 of them were principally authored by MP Ampatuan.

Additionally, she is one of the co-chairpersons of the Joint Task Force on Camps Transformation (JTFCT), on the side of the Government (GPH). The JTFCT is one of the peace mechanisms under the socio-economic cluster of the Inter-Cabinet Cluster Mechanism on Normalization (ICCMN).

She was also an awardee of the Civil Service Commission-ARMM 2014 Regional Outstanding Lady Executive (ROLE). She has also undergone several trainings locally and abroad, ranging from leadership programs in the United States of America (USA) and Japan, to exchange and learning visits to Timor-Leste and Scotland, and the 2021 International Training Program 3 (ITP3) on Disaster Risk Reduction and Management, sponsored by the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) of the Swedish Government.



**HON. DR. RAZWANA BEGUM BT
ABDUL RAHIM
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
SINGAPORE**

Hon. Associate Professor Razwana Begum Bt Abdul Rahim (Razwana) was appointed as a Nominated Member of Parliament on 24 July 2023.

Razwana holds a PhD in business ethics and restorative justice from Monash University, Australia, as well as a Bachelor of Law (University of Woverhampton, UK), a Master of Law (University of London, UK), and a Master of Counselling (Monash University). She also holds a Graduate Diploma in Social Work (National University of Singapore), and International Diploma in Computer Studies, and a Diploma in Administrative Management. Razwana is currently an Associate Professor at the Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS) and is Head of the Public Safety and Security Programme within the School of Humanities and Behavioural Sciences, Singapore University of Social Sciences.

Her research interests include - public safety; causes of criminogenic behaviour; effective criminal justice systems; restorative justice; children and family protection; individuals in contact with the justice system; and leadership and ethical behaviour within the commercial and social services sector. Razwana is Vice President II of the Singapore Muslim Women's Association (PPIS), a member of the Bowen Secondary School Advisory Committee, and the Ministry of Family and Social Development (MSF) Fostering Committee and is also an Advisory Member to the Singapore Youth Court.

She also provides expert advice to Lutheran Community Care Services (LCCS), and the European Forum for Restorative Justice. Prior to joining SUSS, Razwana worked as a Social Worker at Pertapis Children's Home, then spent 18 years with the MSF where she worked directly with children and families in contact with the Criminal Justice and Child Protection systems. Razwana is regarded as a leading national and international expert, and is regularly approached to provide advice and training, cooperate on research projects, and present at seminars and conferences. Razwana is married with two children, and enjoys travelling, trekking, cooking, and watching movies.



HON. DR. SANDY (YU LAN) YU
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
TAIWAN

Hon. Dr. Sandy (Yu Lan) Yu, also known as Sandy Yeh, is a legislator at large representing Kuomintang (KMT), the largest opposition party of Taiwan, the Republic of China.

Sandy was a police officer after her graduation from Central Police University, and became a lecturer/professor after she completed her MA in Law Enforcement Administration from Western Illinois University in 1986, and Ph.D. in Public Policy Analysis from University of Illinois at Chicago, USA, in 1994.

In addition to her academic career in the Central Police University as a faculty, Dr. Sandy Yu have been very active in police reform, and committed herself to non-government organizations in advocating victim assistance and anti gender-based violence. She served as the board member and chair of board of Taipei Women Rescue Foundation which has been playing a vital role in pushing through the legislations of anti gender-based violence including: Domestic Violence Prevention Act, Sexual Assault Prevention Act, Sexual Harassment Prevention Act, and Human Trafficking Prevention Act.

Dr. Sandy Yu retired from Central Police University in 2014, worked as a human rights volunteer, and a free-lance commentary writer. She was nominated by KMT and was elected to be the legislator in 2020. During this tenure, she has been the member of Internal Administrations Committee, Judicial and Legal Affairs Committee, and Procedure Committee. She served as convening member to chair the Judicial and Legal Affairs in 2021, and is currently the convening member/chairperson of the Internal Administration Committee.



HON. PATSARIN RAMWONG
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
THAILAND

Hon. Patsarin Ramwong is a progressive Thai scholar, politician, and member of the House of Representatives. She is the leading advocator of women's and LGBTQIA+ rights in the House. As a legislator, she is working to protect and strengthen reproductive rights for all genders, children's rights, and minority rights in Thailand.



HON. SAKUNA SARANUN
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
THAILAND

Hon. Sakuna Saranun is a Thai Parliamentarian from Wanon Niwat, Sakhon Nakhon Province in Northeastern Thailand. She holds a B.Sc. in Agricultural Studies from Khon Kaen University and an M.Sc. in Biotechnology from King Mongkut's University of Technology.

In the 1990s, she worked at the Jacob Institute for Desert Research in Negev, Israel and later at Thailand's National Science and Technology Development Agency. Subsequently, Sakuna founded a garment business that transitioned into Kram Sakon, a firm committed to local textile production, co-development of cultural assets and revitalization of Sakon Nakhon's Indigo industry.

Sakuna firmly believes that self-reliance is essential for societal equality for both individuals and communities. As the current chair of the science and technology subcommittee, national assembly of Thailand, she promotes the integration of scientific research to bolster Thailand's grassroots economy, especially in agricultural sector.



HON. ELVINA SOUSA CARVALHO
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EQUALITY
TIMOR-LESTE

Hon. Elvina Sousa Carvalho is currently Serving as the secretary of state for equality in Timor-Leste. Born of 18 July 1986 and a Timorese. She is a graduate of International Relation from Universidade da Paz. An alumnae of Konrad Adenauer school for young politician.

First time elected to the parliament in 2017 and was re-elected in the early election held in may 2018. Serving in parliament from 2018 to 2023. During her time serving as member of parliament she was elected by fellow parliamentarians to hold various position such as secretary of the parliamentary standing committee on foreign affairs, security and defence, vice president of young parliamentarian group and two times elected as the parliamentarian women caucus.

As a young political leader in Partido Democratico. Elected in national congress of party woman's wing organization as president from 2016 till 2024.



Asian Women Parliamentarian Caucus

Inclusivity & Diversity in Gender Equality in Parliaments in Asia

Colombo, Sri Lanka | 9th - 11th Oct 2023

PROFILES OF SRI LANKA WOMEN CAUCUS MEMBERS 2023





**HON. KUSHANI
ROHANADHEERA,
SECRETARY GENERAL**

A lawyer by profession, Ms. Kushani Rohanadheera is the newly appointed Secretary General of Parliament of Sri Lanka. She served as the Chief of Staff and Deputy Secretary General of Parliament from December 2020 to May 2023. Prior to that she served as the Assistant Secretary General (Administrative Services) of Parliament since 2012. She joined the Parliamentary Service in 1999 as a Parliamentary Officer. She is a strong gender and social inclusion champion who served as the Secretary to the Women Parliamentarians' Caucus and worked towards making the Parliament of Sri Lanka gender sensitive and inclusive. She has graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Colombo. She later graduated with a Bachelor of Laws from the Open University of Sri Lanka. Ms. Rohanadeera is a qualified Attorney-at-Law.



**HON. (DR.) SUDARSHANI
FERNANDOPULLE,
CHAIR OF THE WPC**

Hon.(Dr.) Sudarshani Fernandopulle is a Specialist Medical Officer of Community Medicine by profession. She is the current Chairperson of the Women Parliamentarians' Caucus (WPC). She has held cabinet portfolios as the State Minister of COVID19 control Primary Healthcare and Epidemics and the Deputy Minister of Higher Education. She is an exemplary female leader and a champion in the parliament in multiple fields, especially in the area of gender equality and social inclusion. As an active member of parliament she has held many leadership positions in different parliamentary committees and Caucuses. She is also a member of the Committee on High Posts, Committee on Public Accounts, Ministerial Consultative Committee on Health and Select Committee on Gender Equality in the 9th Parliament, and the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Women and Gender, Women Parliamentarians' Caucus, Parliamentary Caucus for Children, and Ministerial Consultative Committee on Health, Nutrition & Indigenous Medicine in the 8th Parliament are a few such examples. Among many other achievements, her contributions towards positive social impact through politics were recognized at the Women in Management Conference and Awards Ceremony held in Dubai, U.A.E. under the Women in Politics category in 2022.



**HON. (DR.) SEETHA
ARAMBEPOLA, DEPUTY CO-
CHAIR OF WPC AND STATE
MINISTER OF SKILLS
DEVELOPMENT, VOCATIONAL
EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND
INVENTIONS**

Dr. Arambepola is one of the two Deputy Co-Chairpersons of the Women Parliamentarians Caucus in the 9th Parliament of Sri Lanka. An ENT surgeon by profession, she has served as a medical doctor both locally and internationally since 2013. Serving as the Governor of the Western Province from December 2019 to March 2020, she resigned from office to enter Parliament through the National List of SLPP. Currently she serves as the State Minister of Health. Until May 2022, she was the State Minister of Skills Development, Vocational Education, Research and Innovation. In her role as the State Minister, she has held collaborative partnerships with local and international stakeholders in order to improve the skills and education sector in the country. She is also a member of the Select Committee of Parliament to look into and report to Parliament, its recommendations to ensure gender equity and equality with special emphasis on looking into gender based discriminations and violations of women's rights in Sri Lanka (Select Committee on Women and Gender), and the House Committee. She has also served in the Ministerial Consultative Committee on Education.



**HON. ROHINI KUMARI
WIJERATNE, DEPUTY CO-CHAIR OF
THE WPC**

An educator by profession, Hon. Wijeratne won a seat in the 8th parliament in the 2015 elections representing UNP then in the 9th parliament representing SJB. She serves as one of the two Deputy Chairpersons of WPC in the 9th parliament and was an active member of WPC in the 8th parliament. She was the chairperson of the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Education and Human Resources Development (SOC in Education) in the 8th Parliament. Other committees she is involved in currently are the Select Committee on Women and Gender, Ministerial Consultative Committee on Wildlife & Forest Resources Conservation and the Committee on Public Petitions. She has held membership in numerous committees In the 8th Parliament including the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Women and Gender Sectoral Oversight Committee on Education and Human Resources Development, Sub-Committee on Higher Education, Parliamentary Caucus for Children, Ministerial Consultative Committee on Wildlife & Forest Conservation, etc. She is a strong advocate for gender equality and social inclusion in parliament. She has championed the ratification of ILO C 190 on Prevention of Violence and Harassment in the Workplace which process is now in progress.



**HON. PAVITHRADEVI
WANNIARACHCHI, MINISTER OF
WILDLIFE AND FOREST
RESOURCES CONSERVATION**

Hon. (Mrs.) Pavithradevi Wanniarachchi is an Attorney-at-Law and a Member of Parliament in Sri Lanka, currently serving as the Minister of Wildlife and Forest Resources Conservation. She has an impressive record of serving in various ministerial portfolios, including Women & Child Affairs, Social Security, Health & Indigenous Medicine, Power & Energy, Technology & Research, Cultural Affairs & National Heritage, Youth Affairs, Samurdhi & Poverty Alleviation, and Plan & Implementation. She was a member of several parliamentary committees, including the Women Parliamentarians Caucus, Select Committee of Parliament to ensure gender equity and equality, Committee on Parliamentary Business, and several others. She has been a member of the Parliament for Ratnapura District since 1994 and previously served in the Sabaragamuwa Provincial Council from 1993 to 1994.



**HON. GEETHA SAMANMALE
KUMARASINGHE, STATE
MINISTER OF WOMEN & CHILD
AFFAIRS**

A Sri Lankan film actress by profession, Hon. Kumarasinghe is the current State Minister of Women and Child Affairs. Hon. Kumarasinghe has been involved in several parliamentary caucuses, including the Women Parliamentarians Caucus in Parliament and the Parliamentary Caucus for Children. She has also served on the Select Committee of Parliament to ensure gender equity and equality and to address gender-based discrimination and violations of women's rights in Sri Lanka. Additionally, Hon. Kumarasinghe has been a member of the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Women and Gender and the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Youth, Sports, Arts, and Heritage.



**HON. THALATHA
ATHUKORALA, MEMBER OF THE
WPC AND CHAIRPERSON OF THE
SECTORAL OVERSIGHT
COMMITTEE ON GENDER AND
WOMEN**

Hon. Thalatha Athukorala is an Attorney-at-Law by profession. She has served in different ministry portfolios as the Minister for Foreign Employment Promotion and Welfare and the Minister for Prison Reforms. Most importantly, she became the Minister of Justice in the country in 2017 as the first Sri Lankan female parliamentarian to hold that position. She is the current Chairperson of the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Children, Women and Gender. Additionally, she is also involved with the Committee on High Posts, Ministerial Consultative Committee on Justice, Prison Affairs and Constitutional Reforms and Committee on Ethics and Privileges. She has served many committees in the former Parliaments including Select Committee of Parliament to look into and report on the possibility of enabling Sri Lankans employed overseas to exercise their franchise in future elections and matters incidental thereto, Liaison Committee (Eighth Parliament of the D.S.R. of Sri Lanka), Select Committee of Parliament to study and report to Parliament its recommendations to ensure Communal and Religious Harmony in Sri Lanka, Committee of Selection, etc.



**HON. (DR.) HARINI
AMARASURIYA**

Hon. Dr. Amarasuriya became a parliamentarian through the national list of the National People's Power (NPP) in the 9th Parliament. A senior university lecturer at the Department of Social Studies at the Open University of Sri Lanka, Hon. Amarasuriya holds a PhD in Social Anthropology from the University of Edinburgh. She is a strong feminist advocate and her research areas include gender equality, youth, education, labor & employment, and child protection. Prior to her educational career, she has served as a child protection and a psychosocial practitioner. Joining the Federation of University Teachers' Association, Dr. Harini began her activist role in 2011 as she joined the fight for improving the quality of free education. She also serves as a board member of several local NGOs working for the rights of vulnerable groups in Sri Lanka. She was the lead researcher for the National Human Development Report 2014 of Sri Lanka and also was an active member of the drafting committee for the National Youth Policy in Sri Lanka launched in 2014.

She has been a strong advocate for gender equality and social inclusion in the 9th parliament. The parliamentary committees Dr. Amarasuriya is involved are the Select Committee on Women and Gender, the Ministerial Consultative Committee on Education, the Committee on Public Accounts, in addition to her involvement in WPC.



**HON. KOKILA
GUNAWARDENE**

Previously serving in the Airlines Industry, Hon. Gunawardena has been a political activist for over 15 years. Before she was elected to Parliament in 2020, she was a member of the Western Provincial Council. She also serves as an Executive Committee member of the SLPP Women's League and is also the SLPP Organizer of Mirigama in Gampaha District. In addition to her involvement in the Women Parliamentarians' Caucus, she also serves in the Select Committee on Women and Gender, Ministerial Consultative Committee on Urban Development & Housing, and Committee on Ethics and Privileges. Further, she has served in the Committee on Ethics and Privileges and the Ministerial Consultative Committee on Urban Development & Housing.



HON. MANJULA DISSANAYAKA

Hon. Manjula Dissanayake is a Member of Parliament and former teaching instructor (ISA) by profession. She has been actively involved in politics since 2009, serving as a member of the North Western Provincial Council. In 2018, she was re-elected to the council. Hon. Dissanayake has also played an important role in various committees in Parliament, including the Women Parliamentarians Caucus, the Select Committee on Gender Equity and Equality, the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Education, and the Parliamentary Caucus for Children.



HON. MUDITHA PRASHANTHI

Hon. Muditha Prishanthi is a teacher by profession and member of Parliament. She served as a member of several committees in Parliament, including the Women Parliamentarians Caucus, Select Committee of Parliament to ensure gender equity and equality, Sectoral Oversight Committee on Education, Select Committee of Parliament to address child malnutrition, House Committee, Committee on Public Accounts, Ministerial Consultative Committee on Environment, and Sectoral Oversight Committee on Children, Women, and Gender. In addition, Hon. Muditha Prishanthi has also served in various committees in the Ninth Parliament of Sri Lanka, including the House Committee, Ministerial Consultative Committee on Energy, Committee on Banking and Financial Services, and Ministerial Consultative Committee on Environment.



HON. RAJIKA WICKRAMASINGHE

Hon. Rajika Wickramasinghe is a qualified nurse and practices as a medical professional before entering Parliament. She is an active member of several important committees in Parliament, including the Women Parliamentarians Caucus, the Select Committee of Parliament to ensure gender equity and equality, and the Parliamentary Caucus for Children. She also serves on the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Reconciliation and National Unity, the Select Committee of Parliament to look into child malnutrition issues in Sri Lanka, the Committee on Public Enterprises, the Committee on Public Petitions, and the Ministerial Consultative Committee on Woman, Child Affairs, and Social Empowerment. Having served in the Committee on Public Petitions, Ministerial Consultative Committee on Water Supply, and Sectoral Oversight Committee on Children, Women, and Gender in the Ninth Parliament of the Democratic Socialist Republic (DSR) of Sri Lanka, Hon. Wickramasinghe brings a wealth of experience to her role as a Member of Parliament.



HON. DIANA GAMAGE

Hon. Gamage became a parliamentarian in 2020 through the National List of SJB. A lawyer and an actress, she has also contested in the provincial council elections and the local government elections before. She has a Masters in Business Administration and a LLB from the United Kingdom. She was seen as a controversial political figure as she switched her political affiliation to SLPP in 2021, while holding the position of Deputy Secretary of SJB.

She is a member of WPC, the Select Committee on Women and Gender and the Ministerial Consultative Committee on Transport. In the 9th parliament she has also served in the House Committee and the Ministerial Consultative Committee on Tourism. She has actively advocated for women's rights during parliamentary debates.



**MS. INDIRA DISSANAYAKE,
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
(ADMINISTRATION)**

Mrs. Indira Dissanayake has 32 years of experience in Parliamentary service. She has been serving in the capacity of Assistant Director Administration since 2013. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science from the University of Peradeniya in the stream of Statistics and joined the Parliamentary service at the age of 25 years in 1991 as a Parliamentary Officer. She has undergone many local and foreign training throughout her service period. She is the current Head of the Committee Office under which several Standing Committees, Select Committees and Caucuses are functioning.



**MS. NIMMIE HATHIYALDENIYA,
MANAGER MEDIA OF
PARLIAMENT OF SRI LANKA**

Nimmie Hathiyaldeniya holds the position of Manager Media of the Parliament of Sri Lanka. She has gained MA in Mass Communication at the University of Kelaniya, Post Graduate Diploma in Education in the University of Colombo, and BA (Special) Mass Media Studies at University of Colombo and Diploma in HD Technology for TV Broadcasting at Shanxi Mass Communication University, China. Before joining the Parliament of Sri Lanka, she worked as the Head of the Division and Lecturer in Television Studies, at University College, University of Vocational Technology. She is a notable Screenplay Writer, Assistant Director, and Production Manager in Film and Television medium with experience of 22 years and contributes as a Researcher and Analyst in Communication and Media studies. She was involved in many initiatives of the open parliament concept as the first Manager of Media, since the establishment of the Department of Communication in Parliament. She actively involves in promoting and making public awareness about the importance of the decisions taken by of Women Parliamentarians' Caucus and Select Committee of Parliament to look into and report to Parliament its recommendations to ensure gender equity and equality with special emphasis on looking into gender-based discriminations and violations of women's rights in Sri Lanka for the enhancement of the standards of the women in the country.



Asian Women Parliamentarian Caucus

Inclusivity & Diversity in Gender Equality in Parliaments in Asia

Colombo, Sri Lanka | 9th - 11th Oct 2023

GENDER & ELECTION WORKING GROUP



Gender and Election Working Group

The rising economic instability, political infighting, questionable reforms recently brought in to the constitution and electoral laws has led to political uncertainty in Sri Lanka. The upcoming elections including provincial council elections provides the critical need to safeguard inclusive, transparent and accountable electoral processes given the fragile political context. CEPPS/IFES works to increase the role of civil society, particularly women, youth and other underrepresented groups and supports the Election Commission of Sri Lanka to strengthen its organizational capacity to expand its voter outreach and inclusivity of Sri Lanka's electoral process. CEPPS/IFES' strong partnerships with local civil society organizations and government institutions advance gender and inclusion; accessible voter and civic education; credible elections; and democracy.

The Gender and Election Working Group (GEWG) comprised participation from the Election Commission of Sri Lanka ECSL, National Committee on Women (NCW), Ministry of Provincial Councils and Local Government and Sri Lanka Institute for Local Governance, women's rights activists/groups and civil society partners and was co-convened by CEPPS/IFES. The diversity and the cross - institutional representation of the group made it an ideal body to advance national-level legislation and it was able to gain traction with key local bodies and committees including the Women Parliamentarianism's Caucus. Given the current political crisis and context in Sri Lanka and the national discussions that are around political and electoral reforms and its impact on gender, CEPPS/IFES aims to restructure the GEWG to be an effective and proactive body even during times of unprecedented crisis.

Among other things, GEWG worked with CEPPS/IRI's Women's Campaign Academy (WCA) to draft recommendations for inclusive electoral reforms, which were submitted to the Parliamentary Select Committee (PSC) for Electoral Reforms. The recommendations were also shared with the Women Parliamentarians' Caucus (WPC), in coordination with CEPPS/NDI. WPC reviewed the joint submission and used it as a reference to develop and submit their own separate proposal to the PSC, aligning priorities and recommendations with the GEWG proposal.

In the Year 2023, IFES intends to commence GEWG work with restructuring of the group to continue to be an effective and proactive body even during times of unprecedented crisis. This restructure will focus on engaging an increased number of young activists, as well as women from ethnic and religious minority groups, women with disabilities, and women from across sectors in order to ensure priorities are inclusive of a diversity of stakeholder needs. Anticipated priorities for the GEWG include:

- Leading a strategic membership drive to expand membership to the target groups outlined above. Designing and launching mixed-media civic education campaigns promoting the importance of women's participation in the political and democratic space and improving perceptions of women as effective decision-makers across various sectors. Rural and low-literacy women will be target beneficiaries, including those from the plantation sector, export processing zones, small and medium-sized enterprises, and fishery communities.
- Launching voter awareness campaigns to promote women's participation in politics ahead of the local and provincial government elections, or possible referendum or parliamentary elections.
- Work with the NCW to develop a new partnership agreement to conduct leadership trainings for women development officers and jointly lead targeted civic education efforts.
- Ahead of anticipated local and provincial government elections in late 2022 or early 2023, support development of messaging and lead advocacy campaigns on challenges and roadblocks experienced by women in the electoral cycle, including related to campaign finance, violence and harassment, among other challenges.
- Constructing civic and voter education messages in coordination with working group members, targeting women community leaders, that emphasize digital literacy and principles for countering disinformation and hate speech as a critical area of civic engagement during times of political turmoil and lack of transparency from political leaders.



Asian Women Parliamentarian Caucus

Inclusivity & Diversity in Gender Equality in Parliaments in Asia

Colombo, Sri Lanka | 9th - 11th Oct 2023

KONRAD ADENAUER STIFTUNG ORGANISING TEAM





ANDREAS KLEIN
DIRECTOR,
REGIONAL PROGRAMME,
POLITICAL DIALOGUE ASIA,
KONRAD ADENAUER STIFTUNG
SINGAPORE

Andreas Michael Klein has more than 20 years of working experience for the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) since February 2000 as director of the newly established country office in Skopje/Macedonia (2000-04), as desk officer at the Department for International Cooperation in Berlin/Germany (2004-06) as well as director of the KAS' offices in Dusseldorf/Germany (2006/07), Riga/Latvia (2007-12), Hamburg/Germany (2012-16) and Santiago de Chile (2016-22). Since April 2022, Andreas is the Director of KAS' Regional Programme Political Dialogue Asia. He has studied Political Science, Modern History and Spanish at the University of Bonn/Germany (1993-1999), of which he holds a MA degree in Political Science, and Intercultural Communication at the University of Jyväskylä/Finland.



MEGHA SARMAH
PROGRAMME MANAGER
AGENDA 2030
POLITICAL DIALOGUE ASIA
KONRAD ADENAUER STIFTUNG
SINGAPORE

Ms. Megha Sarmah is Programme Manager of the 2030 Agenda at the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Regional Programme Political Dialogue Asia, Singapore. She is responsible for the Konrad Adenauer Sharing Political and Civil Engagement Spaces(KASpaces)and the Asian Women Parliamentarian Caucus. She is also managing the Consortium of South Asian Think Tanks, a partner project of the foundation. After graduating with an honors degree in Political Science from Calcutta University, India, Megha attained her Masters in International Relations from the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Singapore. Megha has also completed a course on UNESCO-Approved Advanced Course on International Understanding for Human Unity under The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Kolkata, India.



KISMET ABU BAKAR
REGIONAL ADMIN EXECUTIVE &
PRODUCER
POLITICAL DIALOGUE ASIA
KONRAD ADENAUER STIFTUNG
SINGAPORE

Kismet Abu Bakar has been with KAS PDA since January 2016. She started her journey in KAS as a Secretary and has now since move on to the role of Regional Admin Executive and Producer. She assists PDA in the back end administration of the logistics of events and also the producer of PDA's social media design and content. Her administrative experiences have been cultivated through experiences in various MNCs, advertising agencies and also a Singapore statutory board. She is also currently a part time student in the area of social services as she wishes to understand further on how society's could be helped through the understanding of human behavior.



RUBIAH MOHAMED
ADMIN ASSISTANT
POLITICAL DIALOGUE ASIA,
KONRAD ADENAUER STIFTUNG
SINGAPORE

Rubiah Mohamed has been working with the Regional Programme Political Dialogue with Asia and the Pacific at the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Singapore office since 2014. She supports the team in Singapore with organisation and preparation of events, especially in logistical matters with flight bookings and visa arrangements. Rubiah also supports the ongoing daily activities and administrative affairs of the KAS office.