

National Parliamentary Dialogue on Promoting Women's Political Participation and Leadership (WPPL)

Bandar Seri Begawan, 18 June 2025 — The ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA), in collaboration with the Legislative Council of Brunei Darussalam, co-hosted the **National Parliamentary Dialogue on Promoting Women's Political Participation and Leadership (WPPL)** in Bandar Seri Begawan. The event was supported by the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports of Brunei Darussalam and UN Women. The dialogue served as a platform to advance national and regional efforts to promote inclusive and gender-responsive governance.

The dialogue, held in conjunction of the Brunei Mid-Year Convention and Exhibition (MCYE) 2025, brought together over 90 participants including the Members of the Legislative Council, representatives from relevant ministries, women-focused civil society organisations and academic institutions. Emphasising a multi-stakeholder and cross-sectoral approach, the discussion aimed to raise awareness on the importance of creating a more inclusive environment for leadership and to explore practical pathways for implementing the WAIPA [Plan of Action](#) and [Implementation Framework](#) on WPPL (2024-2030) tailored to the national context of Brunei Darussalam.

“Unlike elected parliamentary systems, Brunei’s Legislative Council members are appointed personally by His Majesty the Sultan. Yet, this unique governance structure has not hindered our progress toward gender equality and equity. Our experience highlights that meaningful representation can take different forms, but the goal remains the same, empowering women to shape the future of ASEAN.” said Yang Berhormat Dayang Hajah Safiah binti Sheikh Haji Abd Salam, Member of the Legislative Council of Brunei Darussalam.

“It is for this reason that AIPA, through WAIPA continues to call for sustained and coordinated action, rooted in national efforts, strengthened through regional solidarity, and driven by collaboration across sectors. In shaping ASEAN’s future, women must not only be present, they must be empowered to lead.” said H.E. Siti Rozaimeriyanty Dato Haji Abdul Rahman, Secretary General of AIPA.

“Women’s participation improves governance, it leads to greater attention to a diverse range of social and development priorities; it increases trust in institutions; it ensures diverse voices, ideas and perspectives are considered; and it promotes more innovative, inclusive decisions. More importantly, it inspires the next generation of young women and girls to lead, with confidence and purpose; and young men and boys to value diverse leadership styles and perspectives” said Ms. Norul Huda Mohamed Rashid, Regional Policy Advisor on Governance, Peace and Security for Asia and the Pacific, UN Women.

“The Empowerment of women and girls, who constitute 47.2% of our population, is central to Brunei Vision 2035. Their development is essential for our nation's continued progress and prosperity, making it one of the priority social issues for the National Council on Social Issues or Majlis Kebangsaan Isu Sosial (MKIS). Through this whole-of-nation platform, the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, as Chair and Secretariat of MKIS, collaborates with public, private, and civil society stakeholders to champion policies that advance the rights and well-being of women and girls. Under the council, the Special Committee on Family, Women and Children is developing a dedicated National Plan of Action on Women to enhance women's rights and ensure they remain a driving force for national transformation.” said Yang Mulia Dayang Hajah Nor Ashikin binti Haji Johari, Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports of Brunei Darussalam.

This dialogue marks the first national-level initiative following the adoption of the WAIPA [Plan of Action](#) and [Implementation Framework](#) at the 45th AIPA General Assembly in Vientiane, Lao PDR. It represents a concrete step toward the operationalisation of the Framework by strengthening national engagement and encouraging collaboration across sectors. In particular, it supports Pillar 2.B of the Framework, which focuses on fostering multi-stakeholder coordination to promote women's political participation and leadership.