



NETWORK OF WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE AMERICAS 6th ANNUAL MEETING

**Quito, Ecuador
May 30, 2006**

REPORT

Documents marked with an asterisk () may be consulted on the Network website at <http://www.feminamericas.org/>.*

Introduction

Some twenty participants from eight countries met for the 6th Annual Meeting of the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas on May 30, 2006, in Quito, Ecuador.

Ms. Aparecida Gama, president of the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas president and member of the Legislative Assembly of the State of Rio de Janeiro, welcomed the participants and proceeded with her opening address. She then invited the participants to briefly introduce themselves.

Mr. Guillermo Landázuri Carillo, COPA president and member of the National Congress of Ecuador, addressed the meeting participants.

Ms. Gama notified the participants of the end of the parliamentary mandate of Ms. Ileana Rogel, outgoing Network president. As well, she read a letter from Mr. Michel Bissonnet, president of the National Assembly of Québec, designating Ms. Fatima Houda-Pepin as a representative of the Network's founding assembly and 2006–2007 Executive Committee Secretariat host assembly.

Ms. Gama gave an update on the Network Executive Committee's prior request to hold a conference during the present General Assembly on an issue tied to the status of women as per the COPA General Assembly theme, "Trade Agreements and Economic Development," to provide an opportunity to discuss these issues with male parliamentarians. This conference will be included in the proceedings of the Committee on Economy, Trade, Labor, and Trading Blocs on Thursday, June 1, 2006, and will be presented by Ms. Magdalena León, coordinator of the Latin American Network of Women for Economic Transformation. She will discuss gender equality in the context of economic development.

The meeting agenda was adopted as presented.

1- 2005–2006 Report on Network Activities

The Network president read the 2005–2006 Network activity report*. She covered the main accomplishments, i.e., Network Executive Committee meetings held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on October 5, 2005, and Puebla, Mexico, on March 1, 2006; visit of the Network president to the National Assembly of Québec on September 15 and 16, 2005; organization of the International Forum of Women Parliamentarians in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on October 6 and 7, 2005; Network support for the 13th Latin American Congress on Sexology and Sexual Education in Salvador, State of Bahia, Brazil, from April 19 to 22, 2006; as well as numerous activities in which the Network president took part in Brazil and in COPA's Southern Cone activities.

2- Secretariat's 2005–2006 Report

Ms. France Hamel, MNA, National Assembly of Québec, presented the Network Secretariat's 2005–2006 report* in the absence of Ms. Fatima Houada-Pepin. The Secretariat's main accomplishments include the following: followup on the Network's 5th Annual Meeting, held in Foz do Iguaçu, Brazil, on May 7, 2005; organization of the Network president's visit to the National Assembly of Québec on September 15 and 16, 2005; organization and followup of Network Executive Committee meetings in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on October 5, 2005, and Puebla, Mexico, on March 1, 2006; preparation of the Network's 6th Annual Meeting; support for the organization of activities in which the Network is a partner; development of the annual theme "Implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol in the Americas" with the creation of a document bank; and promotion of the Network website.

3- Report on Women's Status Initiatives

Speaking in turn, meeting participants presented news on improvements in the status of women in their respective regions over the past year. This information on initiatives proposed and implemented by parliamentary assemblies of the Americas enabled participants to learn from the experiences and results.

4- Study Session on the Main Theme: Implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol in the Americas

Meeting participants considered "Implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol in the Americas." Ms. Lilia Rodríguez, assistant representative of the United Nations Population Fund, led a workshop on CEDAW and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), as well as the significance of the Convention for countries in the Americas.

Ms. Lucero Saldaña, senator of the Congress of the United States of Mexico and rapporteur for this theme, followed up with her report on implementation of the CEDAW in the Americas*, based on questionnaires filled out by Network Executive Committee members. Several participants mentioned the lack of data from their countries despite the fact that they had tried to submit their completed questionnaires. Ms. Saldaña collected the questionnaires in question and promised to add this information to the report.

Subsequently, Ms. France Hamel, member of the National Assembly of Québec, tabled and briefly presented the CEDAW document bank* developed by the Network Secretariat.

The debate concluded with discussion and adoption of a resolution promoting the implementation of CEDAW and respect for its principles in the Americas*.

5- Followup on Previous Network Themes

The rapporteurs responsible for followup on previous working themes presented their reports. In the absence of Ms. Fatima Houda-Pepin, Ms. France Hamel, member of the National Assembly of Québec, presented an update on *The Impact of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) on Women**. In the absence of Ms. Ileana Rogel, Ms. Irma Amaya, member of the El Salvador Legislative Assembly, reported on *Gender Budgets*. Ms. Lucero Saldaña presented an update on *The Effect of Migration on Women in the Context of Hemispheric Integration*. Following the presentations, participants were invited to comment.

6- Resolution Presentation and Adoption

A resolution condemning human trafficking*, which was examined during the Network Executive Committee meeting held in Puebla, Mexico, on March 1, was presented and adopted by the participants.

Ms. Aparecida Gama then presented the *Bahia Declaration** from the 13th Latin American Congress on Sexology and Sexual Education held in Salvador, State of Bahia, Brazil, from April 19 to 22, 2006. The participants adopted a recommendation* taking note of the *Bahia Declaration* recommendations and pledging to take the appropriate steps to implement said recommendations.

7- Tribute to Former Network Presidents

To highlight the work accomplished by the first two Network presidents in forming and strengthening the Network, Ms. Gama awarded a commemorative plaque to Ms. Lyse Leduc, member of the National Assembly of Québec and Network president from 1999 to 2002, and Ms. Ileana Rogel, member of the El Salvador Legislative Assembly and Network president from 2002 to 2005. In their absence, the plaques were presented to their respective colleagues.

8- Election of the 2006–2007 Executive Committee

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure Concerning the Election of the Executive Committee of the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas, the following members were elected to the 2006–2007 Network Executive Committee:

President

Aparecida Gama, Member of the Legislative Assembly of the State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Regional Representatives:

North America

Lucero Saldaña, Senator of the Congress of the United States of Mexico

Kathy Hawken, Representative of the North Dakota House of Representatives, United States

Central America

Irma Segunda Amaya, Member of the El Salvador Legislative Assembly

Maria Esperanza Valle, Member of the Central American Parliament

Antilles

Elsa Rojas Hernandez, Member of the Cuba National Assembly of Popular Power

Cemephise Gilles, Senator of the National Assembly of Haiti

Andean Region

Flor Maria Ríos, Member of the National Assembly, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

Myriam Garcés Dávila, Member of the National Congress of Ecuador

South Cone

Olga Ferreira de López, Member of the Chamber of Deputies, Republic of Paraguay

Selva Judit Fortsmann, Member of the Chamber of Deputies, Santa Cruz, Argentina

Inter-Parliamentary Organizations and Regional Parliaments

Juana Maria Vallejo Klaere, Member of the Andean Parliament

Edda E. Acuña, Senator of the Chamber of Senators, Buenos Aires, Argentina and Representative of the Mercosur Parliamentary Union

Sonia Fontes, Member of the Legislative Assembly of the State of Bahia, Brazil and Representative of the National Union of State Legislatures of Brazil (UNALE)

Zulma Ramona Gómez Cáceres, Member of the Chamber of Deputies, Republic of Paraguay and Representative of the Latin American Parliament

Founding Assembly of the Network and Secretariat Headquarters

Fatima Houda-Pepin, Member of the National Assembly of Québec

Host Assembly for the Network's Next Annual Meeting

Designation of two representatives from the next assembly to host the Network's next annual meeting has not yet been confirmed.

Note that the president of Network of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas, Ms. Aparecida Gama, is ex officio one of 11 COPA vice presidents.

9- Choice of 2006–2007 Theme

Following discussions on proposed themes for 2006–2007, Annual Meeting participants decided to devote next year to studying human trafficking in order to continue the work started during an initial series of conferences in Puebla, Mexico, in March 2006. It was also agreed that special attention be paid to the issue of trafficking victims' health and sexual education.

10- Questions

Ms. Aparecida Gama distributed a letter from Ms. Liza Largoza-Maza, member of the Gabriela Women's Party in the Chamber of Deputies of the Philippines, and urged Annual Meeting participants to consider her call for support and solidarity toward this women's political party in the Philippines.

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
NETWORK OF WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE AMERICAS**

**Quito, Ecuador
May 30, 2006—4:30 p.m.**

DRAFT REPORT

At the meeting of the new Executive Committee, which was held immediately after the Network Annual Meeting, the following decisions were made:

- Election of Ms. Edda E. Acuña, senator of the province of Buenos Aires, Argentina, as representative of the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas on the Executive Committee of COPA¹.
- Designation of Ms. Zulma Gómez, member of the Chamber of Deputies of the Republic of Paraguay, as rapporteur on the main theme, “Human Trafficking.”
- Designation of Ms. Selva Judit Fortsmann, member of the Chamber of Deputies of the province of Santa Cruz, Argentina, as rapporteur for followup on the “Implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol in the Americas.”
- Designation of Ms. Irma Amaya, member of the El Salvador Legislative Assembly, as rapporteur for followup on “The Impact of Migration on Women in the Context of Hemispheric Integration.”
- Designation of Ms. Fatima Houda-Pepin, member of the National Assembly of Québec, as rapporteur for followup on “The Impact of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) on Women.”
- Inclusion of the theme “Impact of the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (BAA) on Women” and designation of Ms. Flor Ríos, member of the National Assembly of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela as rapporteur for followup on the theme.
- In the absence of Ms. Elsa Rojas, member of the National Assembly of People’s Power of Cuba and president of the COPA Committee on Health and Social Protection, it was decided that Ms. Flor Ríos shall act as Committee president pro tempore, and Ms. Alba Allende de López, member of the Chamber of Deputies of the Province of Entre Ríos, Argentina, shall act as vice president.

¹ Following the election of Ms. Edda E. Acuña as first vice president of COPA, Ms. Lucero Saldaña was designated as Network of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas representative to the COPA Executive Committee during the plenary session of the COPA General Assembly held on June 2, 2006, in Quito, Ecuador.