



NETWORK OF WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE AMERICAS 7th ANNUAL MEETING

**Mexico City, Federal District, Mexico
September 10, 2008**

REPORT

Documents marked by an asterisk () are available on the Internet site of the Network at the following address: <http://www.feminamericas.org/>.*

1- Introduction

Some sixty participants from twelve countries of the Americas came together on the occasion of the 7th Annual Meeting of the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas held on September 10, 2008, in Mexico City, Federal District, Mexico.

Aparecida Gama, president of the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas and Member of the Legislative Assembly of the State of Rio de Janeiro, welcomed the participants and delivered the opening speech.

Carlos Jiménez Macías, president of COPA and Senator of the Chamber of Senators of the United Mexican States, then addressed the participants.

The participants were asked to briefly introduce themselves.

2- Approval of the agenda

The meeting agenda was adopted as presented.¹

The president briefly explained the procedure for the election of representatives to the Network's Executive Committee for the 2008-2009 term of office:

- The positions to be filled were: president, two representatives from each of the five regions of the Americas and four representatives for the regional parliaments and interparliamentary organizations.
- Those parliamentarians interested in filing their candidacy were invited to fill in the nomination paper and to submit it before the lunch break. The election was scheduled to be held at the end of the meeting, depending on the candidacies received.

¹ The item concerning regional initiatives relating to the status of women was subsequently withdrawn from the agenda, owing to lack of time.

3- The Network's 2006-2008 Activity Report

The Network president, Aparecida Gama, presented the Network's activity report*, which was in the form of a commemorative journal outlining the Network's main achievements during her two terms of office as president. The journal also contained articles written by the Executive Committee members and a tribute to the women who have held the office of president of COPA or of the Network.

Ms. Gama then presented the principal activities conducted during the 2006-2008 term: three Executive Committee meetings in La Plata (Buenos Aires), Argentina, in November 2006, in Los Angeles (California), United States, in June 2007, and in Cancun (Quintana Roo), Mexico, in March 2008; a seminar on human trafficking in Los Angeles, in June 2007; a women parliamentarians' forum in Zacatecas, Mexico, in September 2007; and the president's participation in several activities to represent and promote the Network.

4- Secretariat's report

Nicole Ménard, Member of the National Assembly of Québec, presented the Network Secretariat's report*. The main duties carried out by the Secretariat since the 6th Annual Meeting, held in May 2006, were the following:

- 1) the implementation of the programme for the Network's main work theme;
- 2) the development of tools linked to the Network's main work theme;
- 3) the preparation of and follow up on the annual meetings and Executive Committee meetings, in collaboration with the Network president;
- 4) support for the president in her activities representing and promoting the Network;
- 5) the management of the Network's Internet site.

5- Workshop on the main work theme: Human trafficking in the Americas

The workshop of the 7th Annual Meeting marked the closing of the proceedings on the theme of human trafficking, which the Network had been examining since 2006.

Owing to the absence of the designated rapporteur for the theme, Zulma Gómez, a member of the Chamber of Senators of the Republic of Paraguay, Aparecida Gama presented the introductory overview.

Nicole Ménard, Member of the National Assembly of Québec, gave an interactive presentation, using the Network's Internet site, of the new document databank, *TRAFICAS – Human Trafficking in the Americas**, developed by the Network Secretariat. A copy of the document databank was given to each participant.

Subsequently, the following parliamentarians and experts presented the work they had carried out on human trafficking*:

- Edda E. Acuña, Senator of the Chamber of Senators in the Province of Buenos Aires, Argentina, presented the situation in Argentina and in the Mercosur region, and outlined the content of the bill "Prevention, protection and support to human trafficking victims" introduced in her legislative assembly;

- Céméphise Gilles, Senator in the National Assembly of Haiti, provided an overview of the situation in Haiti and explained the measures taken by the State to try to eliminate this phenomenon, including the drafting of bills on human trafficking and responsible parenthood;
- Colette Lespinasse, representing the *Groupe d'appui aux rapatriés et aux réfugiés* (support group for repatriates and refugees) of Haiti, then presented the work carried out by this civil society group in the fight against human trafficking and illegal trafficking of migrants;
- Alliet Bautista Bravo, Deputy of the Chamber of Deputies of the United Mexican States, presented an overview of the situation in the Americas and proposed strategies to prevent human trafficking.

At the end of the debate, a resolution proposing a series of measures to combat human trafficking, whose implementation depends on various sectors of the State, was adopted by the participants.

6- Presentation of follow-up reports on previous work themes

The rapporteurs who had been appointed to follow up on previous discussion themes presented their reports.

- Flor María Ríos, Deputy of the National Assembly of Venezuela, presented the report on "The impact of the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA) on women"* as part of the follow-up on the theme "The impact of trade agreements on women".
- Selva Judit Forstmann, Senator in the Argentine National Congress, presented the follow-up report on the theme "The implementation of the *United Nations' Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol in the Americas"*.

7- Presentation and adoption of resolutions

Alliet Bautista Bravo, Deputy of the Chamber of Deputies of the United Mexican States, presented a statement in support of the people of Cuba, Haiti and Jamaica following the passage of hurricanes Faye, Gustav, Hannah and Ike. The statement was adopted by the participants.

8- Choice of the main work theme for 2008-2009, choice of work themes for follow-up at the next Annual Meeting and appointment of rapporteurs

On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Network, to be celebrated in 2009, Nicole Ménard, Member of the National Assembly of Québec, proposed that throughout 2008-2009, the Network focus on the theme "**Changes in Women's Participation in Politics 1999-2009: Situation and Outlook**" and she presented a draft work plan*. This proposal received the approval of all participants. Nicole Ménard was appointed rapporteur for the theme.

The participants also agreed that, at the 8th Annual Meeting, there would be a follow-up on the two most recent themes examined by the Network :

- Rosa Rosario Muñoz, Deputy of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Chubut, Argentina, was appointed rapporteur for the follow-up on the theme "Human Trafficking in the Americas";
- Emilia Patricia Alfaro de Franco, Deputy of the Chamber of Deputies of the Republic of Paraguay, was appointed rapporteur for the follow-up on the theme "The implementation of the *United Nations' Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol in the Americas".

9- Election of the 2008-2009 Executive Committee

The candidacies received allowed all positions to be filled without an election.

Pursuant to the Rules of Procedure for electing members of the Executive Committee of the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas, the composition of the Network's Executive Committee for 2008-2009 is the following:

President

Flor María Ríos, Deputy, National Assembly of Venezuela

Regional representatives:

Central America

Sandra Salgado, Deputy, Legislative Assembly of El Salvador

Maria Esperanza Valle, Deputy, Central American Parliament.

North America

Alliet Bautista Bravo, Deputy, Chamber of Deputies of the United Mexican States

Caribbean

Elsa Rojas Hernandez, Deputy, National Assembly of People's Power of Cuba

Céméphise Gilles, Senator, National Assembly of the Republic of Haiti

Southern Cone

Emilia Patricia Alfaro de Franco, Deputy, Chamber of Deputies of the Republic of Paraguay

María Cristina Perez, Deputy, Chamber of Deputies of the Province of Mendoza, Argentina

Andean Region

Carlina Rodríguez Rodríguez, Senator, Senate of the Republic of Colombia

Tomasa Yarhui, Senator, Senate of the Republic of Bolivia

Outgoing President

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

Interparliamentary organizations and regional parliaments

One representative from the U.S. National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) (to be determined)

Carmen Carreño, Deputy, Andean Parliament - Venezuela

Éster Nancy Hernández, Deputy, Chamber of Deputies of the Province of Santa Cruz, Argentina, and representative from the Parliament of Patagonia

One representative from the National Union of the Legislative Assemblies of the Federated States of Brazil (UNALE) (to be determined)

Founding Assembly of the Network and Host Institution of the Secretariat

Nicole Ménard, Member, National Assembly of Québec

Next Assembly to host the Network's Annual Meeting

The appointment of the two representatives from the next Assembly to host the Network's Annual Meeting has yet to be determined.

One position for a representative from the North American region remains vacant.

It is important to mention that the president of the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas, Flor María Ríos, holds ex officio one of the eleven vice-presidencies of COPA.

10- Election of the second representative on the COPA Executive Committee

Alliet Bautista Bravo, Deputy, Chamber of Deputies of the United Mexican States, was elected to represent the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas on the COPA Executive Committee.