



**NETWORK OF WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE AMERICAS  
8TH ANNUAL MEETING  
SALTA, ARGENTINA  
SEPTEMBER 16, 2009**

**Resolution on the elimination of violence against women**

**RECOGNIZING** the authority of international legal instruments on the elimination of violence against women, particularly the *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women* adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 20, 1993 and the *Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Elimination of Violence Against Women* (Convention of Belém do Pará) adopted on June 9, 1994 by the member States of the Organization of American States;

**CONSIDERING** that the Convention of Belém do Pará defines violence against women as “any act or conduct, based on gender, which causes death or physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, whether in the public or the private sphere. Violence against women shall be understood to include physical, sexual and psychological violence: (a) that occurs within the family or domestic unit or within any other interpersonal relationship, whether or not the perpetrator shares or has shared the same residence with the woman, including, among others, rape, battery and sexual abuse; (b) that occurs in the community and is perpetrated by any person, including, among others, rape, sexual abuse, torture, trafficking in persons, forced prostitution, kidnapping and sexual harassment in the workplace, as well as in educational institutions, health facilities or any other place; and (c) that is perpetrated or condoned by the State or its agents regardless of where it occurs”;

**CONSIDERING** that the violation of the rights of women is a violation of fundamental human rights;

**NOTING** that the male partner is the aggressor in 95% of cases of conjugal violence worldwide;

**EMPHASIZING** that violence against women is a manifestation of the inequality that persists between women and men and involves, in most cases, men controlling women;

**RECOGNIZING** that violence is still all too often ignored in our society and that it represents a major obstacle to achieving real equality between women and men;

**RECOGNIZING** that the most effective legislation on violence against women ensures full victim safety, condemns and punishes all forms of violence, allows victims of violence to seek monetary remedies and guarantees their access to assistance programs run by physical and mental health specialists to help them regain control of their lives;

**RECOGNIZING** that parliamentarians play a key role in adopting the budgets needed to implement laws and create programs to protect victims and raise public awareness;

**SALUTING** the campaigns to eliminate violence against women organized by UNIFEM, the Secretary General of the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union that aim to raise awareness among as many social actors as possible, especially governments, parliaments, municipalities, society as a whole, educational institutions, communities, women and men, by encouraging them to participate in preventing violent behaviour and helping victims;

**CELEBRATING** the Inter-Parliamentary Union's initiative of highlighting the 10th anniversary of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women on November 25, 2009 by suggesting that parliaments pledge to hold events to support efforts to eliminate violence against women;

**WE, the legislators and representatives of the parliamentary assemblies belonging to the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas, gathered in Salta, Argentina on September 16, 2009 for the 8th Annual Meeting of the Network,**

**FIRMLY CONDEMN** any show of violence against women, in particular violence in the workplace, and most especially any violation of women's fundamental rights perpetrated in the course of armed conflicts;

**SALUTE** the States that have ratified the *Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Elimination of Violence Against Women* (Convention of Belém do Pará) and **URGE** those who have not yet done so to ratify or accede to it as quickly as possible;

**EXHORT** States to do all in their power to ensure that their laws conform to the *Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Elimination of Violence Against Women* (Convention of Belém do Pará);

**DEMAND** that existing laws on violence against women be enforced by all those involved, namely police forces, prosecutors and judges, and **ASK** that all be provided with appropriate training enabling them to better help victims;

**INCITE** our parliaments, if they have not done so already, to pass laws protecting victims of violence, **INSIST** that these laws be strengthened by national action plans aimed at preventing violence and providing victims with psychological, physical and financial assistance and **PLEDGE** to ensure that the necessary budgets are adopted in our parliaments to allow these action plans to be carried out with due consideration for gender issues;

**SUPPORT** UNIFEM's "Say NO to Violence Against Women" campaign and **COMMISSION** the President of the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas to take the steps required to have the Network recognized as an official UNIFEM partner organization;

**PLEDGE** to join forces with the Inter-Parliamentary Union's "Parliaments Take Action on Violence Against Women" campaign in commemorating the 10th anniversary of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women on November 25, 2009, by approaching parliamentary authorities to organize events highlighting the importance of eliminating violence against women;

**RECOMMEND** that the parliamentarians present at the 9th General Assembly of COPA in Argentina ensure that all the parliaments of the Americas follow up on this resolution, thus combining their efforts to eliminate gender-based violence.