



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

**El Calafate (Santa Cruz), Argentina  
January 24, 2009**

**DECLARATION IN SUPPORT OF WOMEN VICTIMS OF WAR VIOLENCE,  
ESPECIALLY IN PALESTINE, IRAQ AND HAITI**

*We, members of the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas, an organ of the Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas, which brings together the congresses and parliamentary assemblies of the unitary, federal and federated states, the regional parliaments, and the interparliamentary organizations of the Americas, at the close of our meeting held in El Calafate in the province of Santa Cruz in Argentina on January 24, 2009, wherein we examined the subject of gender-based violence in areas of armed conflict, have, pursuant to the conclusions reached at the said meeting, adopted the following resolution:*

**WHEREAS** violence toward women constitutes a form of violation of fundamental rights that is contrary to the objectives of democracy, peace and development;

**WHEREAS** just about anywhere on the planet at this time there are areas of armed conflict motivated by territorial, economical, racial or religious claims;

**WHEREAS** civilians run 70 % more risk of being victims of current armed conflicts than combatants;

**WHEREAS**, in a proportion of 70 %, it is non-combatants, mainly women and children, who lost their lives in the latest conflicts;

**WHEREAS** the Rome Statute explicitly condemns attacks against civilian populations as being war crimes;

**WHEREAS** an increase in the practices of systematic rape, kidnapping, humiliation and sexual slavery has been observed as tactics of war and tools of submission;

**WHEREAS** rape victims faced several obstacles before justice was served;

**WHEREAS** displaced women and young girls living in refugee camps run the risk of being victims of rape, beatings, kidnappings and forced pregnancy;

**WHEREAS** the protection and support given to women survivors of acts of violence in conflict and post-conflict areas are pathetically insufficient;

**HEREBY desire to manifest our solidarity with women who suffer from and are victims of violence in areas of armed conflict;**

**DENOUNCE** all acts of violence committed against women during and after armed conflicts in all international and other war and post-war areas;

**CONDEMN** governments that are only too pleased or tolerate that their troops and security forces commit rapes and homicides, burn down homes and resort to any other form of high-handed violence against the civilian population;

**ASK** that measures be taken to reform the judicial system; ensure that legislation is in accordance with international standards and conventions; make medical, psychological and legal services available to victims of rape and sexual violence; and supply financial and technical aid to national and international humanitarian organizations that help women, young girls and adolescents who are victims of violence or of any other form of abuse;

**DEMAND** that Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, which was passed in the year 2000 by the Security Council and which calls for the egalitarian participation of women in decisions concerning peace and security, be observed by all countries;

**URGE** the competent authorities to be vigilant, to investigate war crimes, especially those committed against the civilian population, and to bring to trial those responsible for such crimes so that no act of violence remain unpunished;

**REAFFIRM** our steadfast determination to continue to fight against all forms of discrimination and violence against women in any part of the world, especially in countries that are theaters of armed conflict;

**EXHORT** competent authorities to carry out their responsibility of protecting their civilian population and to harmonize, ensure and improve existing legislation, rules and regulations so that women may lead their lives free from armed conflict and all other forms of discrimination and violence.