



## **5th ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NETWORK OF WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE AMERICAS**

**Foz do Iguaçu, Brazil  
May 7, 2005**

### **REPORT**

Thirty-five women parliamentarians from thirteen countries met for the 5th Annual Meeting of the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas on May 7, 2005, in Foz do Iguaçu, Brazil.

The host of the annual meeting of the Network and the Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas (COPA) General Assembly, Ms. Maria Jose Maninha, president of COPA and representative of the Federal Congress of Brazil, briefly welcomed the attendees.

President of the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas and member of the El Salvador Legislative Assembly, Ms. Ileana Rogel presented the Network's activity report for 2003–2005. Since its last annual meeting, the Network has conducted a variety of activities:

1. Followup on the recommendations adopted at the 4th Annual Meeting of the Network in Caracas, Venezuela
2. Meeting of the Network Executive Committee on March 24, 2004, in Brasilia, Brazil, that helped make progress on a number of points with regard to implementing the action plan and adopting Network rules and procedures
3. Meeting of the Network Executive Committee on September 24, 2004, in San Juan, Puerto Rico, to prepare and choose a theme for the Network's Annual Meeting
4. Attendance in February/March 2005 of the Network president at the 49th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women
5. Attendance in April 2005 at a meeting of the Mexican Congress Committee on the Status of Women
6. Charing of COPA's Committee on Health and Social Protection

7. Development of a communications plan, production of promotional materials, and design of a special Network website ([www.feminamericas.org](http://www.feminamericas.org)) that addresses a number of issues exclusive to the Network
8. Production and release of two document bases, one dealing with the impact of the FTAA on women and the other with the impact of migration on women in the context of hemispheric integration
9. Meeting with Ms. Jeanne Kohl-Welles, president of the Women's Legislative Network of the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL). After this meeting, the organization's magazine, which is distributed to over 3,000 women parliamentarians in the United States, published an article on the Network.

Fatima Houda-Pepin, a member of the Québec National Assembly, then read the report by the Network Secretariat. As host organization, the Québec Assembly covered all operating costs of the Secretariat, which is responsible for organizing the annual meetings of the Network and the Executive Committee. It also handles the president's correspondence, prepares and transmits the organization's official documents, updates promotional materials, and keeps the document bases up-to-date.

The representatives elected to the Executive Committee presented their respective reports on the implementation of various initiatives under the Network action plan, on regional activities, and on legislative progress in their respective regions on issues of concern to women. Attendees then each presented the situation of women in their respective countries.

Ms. Fatima Houda-Pepin of the Québec National Assembly, Network reporter on the theme of "The impact of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) on women," presented the followup report on this extremely important issue.

Later, Ms. Cecilia González Soto, the Mexican ambassador to Brazil, led a workshop on the social and economic impact of migration on women in the Western Hemisphere. Ms. González then shared her experience with migration, and suggested ways that women parliamentarians can draw on their legislative roles to help.

This workshop culminated in the adoption of a recommendation setting out the main actions to take on the impact of migration on women in the context of hemispheric integration.

MNA Fatima Houda-Pepin then presented the "MIGRATIONS: women and migrations in the Americas" document base, which may be consulted on the Network website (<http://www.feminamericas.org/EN/document/index.html>). This document base, developed by the Network Secretariat, identifies the main studies and analyses that look at the impact of migration on women in the context of integration of the Americas.

Next, Brazilian parliamentarians and Network Executive Committee members Iara Bernardi and Sonia Fontes shared Brazil's experience in taking action to prevent violence against women.

It was further decided that the next Annual Meeting of the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas, which will coincide with the 25th anniversary of the coming into force of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and its optional protocol, will be dedicated to analyzing these international instruments.

The following is the list of representatives who were selected to make up the 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

Jeanne Kohl-Welles, Senator for the State of Washington, United States of America

**Central America**

Irma Segunda Amaya, Member of the El Salvador Legislative Assembly

**Antilles**

Graciela Fermin Nuesi, Member of the Dominican Republic Chamber of Deputies

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

**Andean Region**

Marelis Perez Marcano, Member of the Venezuelan National Assembly

Miryam Garces Davila, Member of the National Congress of Ecuador

**South Cone**

Edda Acuña, Senator of the Chamber of Senators of the Province of Buenos Aires, Argentina

Iara Bernardi, Member of the Federal Congress of Brazil

**Past president**

Ileana Rogel, Member of the El Salvador Legislative Assembly

**Interparliamentary Organizations and Regional Parliaments**

Adela Muñoz de Liendo, Member of the Andean Parliament

Maria Esperanza Valle, Member of the Central American Parliament

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

Kathy Hawken, Representative of the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL)

### **Founding Assembly of the Network and Secretariat Headquarters**

Fatima Houda-Pepin, Member of the Québec National Assembly

### **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 the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas, Ms. Aparecida Gama, is ex officio one of the eleven COPA vice presidents.

### **Meeting of the Network of Women Parliamentarians' New Executive Committee**

**May 7, 2005—5 p.m.**

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

Unanimous adoption of the proposal by MNA Fatima Houda-Pepin that the Network's rules of procedure stipulate that it participate in a greater number of activities, mainly in conjunction with civil society organizations

Election of Ms. Jeanne Kohl-Welles, senator for the State of Washington, as representative of the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas on the COPA Executive Committee

Appointment of Ms. Lucero Saldaña, senator of the Congress of the United States of Mexico, as rapporteur for the workshop next year that will examine the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and its optional protocol

Appointment of Ms. Ileana Rogel, past president and member of the El Salvador Legislative Assembly, as rapporteur for the workshop on the theme of Gender Budgeting Oversight

Appointment of members of the Network Finance Committee: Sonia Fontes, member of the Legislative Assembly of the State of Bahía; Fatima Houda-Pepin, member of the Québec National Assembly; and Lucero Saldaña, senator of the United States of Mexico Congress

Unanimous decision at the preparatory meeting of the Executive Committee held the day before the Network Annual Meeting on May 6, from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m., to assign the Network Secretariat the mission of conducting an objective analysis of the Network's work and operating rules in order to draw up an action plan to improve the quality and efficiency of Network operations