

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

Quebec City, April 16 and 17, 2001

**DECLARATION ON THE IMPACTS OF THE FTAA AND HEMISPHERIC INTEGRATION ON
THE LIVES OF WOMEN**

Whereas the liberalization of trade brought about by the implementation of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) threatens to reduce the power of states to legislate in areas that are crucial to the well-being of their populations, including that of women;

Whereas processes of free trade in goods and services are accompanied by policies of budgetary restraint, the impacts of which are felt mainly in social programs, and thus in the household sphere;

Whereas women are active in different sectors of economic activity that generate growth in exports;

Whereas the implementation of integration processes has already profoundly affected the lives of women in both their domestic and economic roles;

Whereas these phenomena have contributed to further increasing the gaps and inequalities existing between men and women;

Whereas in the name of the principles of equality recognized by our societies, it is imperative that the fundamental rights and labour-related rights of women be respected;

Whereas a rectification of gender-based inequalities in the workplace would bring about positive effects on the functioning of markets and on economic growth;

We, the representatives of the parliamentary assemblies of the unitary, federal, federated and associated states, regional parliaments and interparliamentary organizations of the Americas:

Take notice of the problems raised by civil society through the conclusions of the Peoples' Summit, and particularly of the Forum on "*Women and Globalization*" of the Peoples' Summit;

Affirm the need for the trade liberalization policies and the process of the Summits of the Americas to reflect the needs and concerns of women;

Agree to take action directed toward the negotiators of our respective countries in order to ensure that structures and processes are implemented that ensure the participation of women in the FTAA negotiations;

Agree to continue our efforts in order that the national labour standards concerning women are maintained and continue to be improved, and to take measures to ensure that national standards shall serve as a basis for international agreements;

Agree to promote the political involvement of women in order to stimulate better representation of women in circles of power;

Urge the Heads of State and Government of the Americas, in accordance with their previous commitments, to maintain and improve social protection policies, as a measure of equity and support for women;

Urge the Heads of State and Government of the Americas to protect intellectual property rights and to recognize culture as an instrument of economic development that should be protected and promoted;

Urge the Heads of State and Government of the Americas to recognize the value of domestic work by women and to include it in the official economic statistics;

Urge the Heads of State and Government of the Americas to integrate in the FTAA negotiations the Beijing platform and the international conventions on labour-related and human rights.

Agree to continue our work within our respective parliaments and the Parliamentary Conference of the Americas (COPA) to keep ourselves informed of the issues related to the creation of the FTAA, particularly concerning women, to establish a dialogue with voters on these issues and to ensure that strategies are adopted in order that the executive authorities may grant the parliamentarians of the Americas a voice in the negotiations on this agreement.

Agree that transparency is a basic requirement for the success of the FTAA negotiations, and that the governments have a duty to inform their respective populations on the economic, political, social and cultural issues of the FTAA, particularly with regard to women.