



NETWORK OF WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE AMERICAS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Montego Bay, Jamaica, March 29, 2014

Draft minutes

The 27th Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas and the Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas were held on March 29 and 30, 2014 in Montego Bay, Jamaica.

Some 35 parliamentarians from Jamaica, Haiti, Mexico, Argentina, Costa Rica and Paraguay attended the Network's Executive Committee meeting, which was chaired by its President, Senator Diva Gastélum Bajo. Also in attendance were Alicia Verónica Gutiérrez, Deputy for the Province of Santa Fe, Argentina and Executive Committee Regional Representative for the Southern Cone, and Mireya Zamora, Deputy for Costa Rica and Executive Committee Regional Representative for Central America. Meeting host, the Honourable Sharon Ffolkes Abrahams, MP for Jamaica, also became an Executive Committee member as Regional Representative for the Caribbean.

In their opening remarks, senators Gómez and Gastélum both highlighted the importance of the work accomplished by the women of the Network and the need to continue proposing themes that positively impact the continent's women. Senator Gómez reiterated her commitment to supporting the Network's efforts and pursuing actions to further empower the women of the Americas.

Senator Diva Gastélum Bajo, President of the Network, then called the meeting to order and proceeded with approval of the minutes of the 11th Annual Meeting of the Executive Committee, held on October 13 and 14, 2013 in Brazil. The President presented her activity report for the period October 2013 to March 2014, and the new layout of the Network Newsletter. The report of the Network's Secretariat was also tabled and approved.

The President of the Network then presented the report on her participation in the Interparliamentary Seminar on the 20th Anniversary of the Beijing Declaration

and Platform for Action, held in Québec City, Canada, on January 21 and 22, 2014.

The meeting gave members the opportunity to approve the 2013–2015 Work Plan and to appoint three rapporteurs on the following study themes: 1) Follow-up on the Millennium Development Goals, the Development Agenda Beyond 2015 and the 20th Anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Senator Diva Gastélum Bajo), 2) the effects of climate change on women (MP Sharon Ffolkes Abraham) and 3) women's sexual and reproductive rights (Deputy Alicia Gutiérrez).

Two conferences followed. In the first, Dr. Leith Dunn, Head/Senior Lecturer at the Institute for Gender and Development Studies of the University of the West Indies, made a presentation on Violence against Women and the Monitoring Framework to Reduce Violence against Women, discussing Jamaica's experience and the many challenges Jamaican women face.

In the second conference, Mrs. Shauna Fuller Clarke, Co-founder and Director of the B.A.S.E. Foundation, presented the Program on Awareness and Support for Endometriosis. She shared her experience as someone who suffers from the disease, and discussed the Foundation's goals and many activities.

The meeting also allowed participants to prepare the 12th Annual Meeting and to present a book on the pioneers of women's suffrage in the Americas. The Honourable Gerardo Lozano Arredondo, Ambassador of Mexico to Jamaica, adjourned the meeting and pointed out how important it was for the parliamentarians to continue working for the well-being of the women of the Americas.

The work of the Network's Executive Committee was followed by the work of the COPA Executive Committee on March 30. Attending the opening ceremony were Senator Zulma Gómez, President of the Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas, Senator Diva H. Gastélum Bajo, President of the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas, the Honourable Sharon Ffolkes Abrahams, MP and host of the meeting, Arnoldo Brown, Minister of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Foreign Trade, and Michael Peart, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Jamaica.

The Most Honourable Portia Simpson-Miller, Prime Minister of Jamaica, concluded the weekend's work with a speech in which she reaffirmed the importance of Jamaica's involvement in the Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas. The Prime Minister highlighted the work done by the Network of Women Parliamentarians and the many challenges the women of the Americas still face. She pointed out the need to strengthen COPA's presence in the Americas and to continue implementing this type of continent-wide forum for dialogue.