



PRESS RELEASE – For immediate release

Interparliamentary Seminar on the 20th Anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action: President Diva Gastélum makes a vibrant appeal to parliamentarians

Québec City, Canada, January 22, 2014—On January 21 and 22, 2014, the President of the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas, Diva Gastélum Bajo, participated in the Interparliamentary Seminar on the 20th Anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which marked a turning point in the history of women's struggle for gender equality in 1995.

The Seminar brought together some 70 participants, including women parliamentarians from the Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie (APF), the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) and the Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas (COPA).

At the invitation of Jacques Chagnon, President of the National Assembly of Québec, Ms. Gastélum was accompanied by Rachel Marques, Deputy of the State of Ceará, Brazil, and Marie Bouillé, Member of the National Assembly of Québec.

The Seminar launched a process of reflection by women parliamentarians on their assessment of the implementation of the Platform for Action 20 years after its adoption and aimed to mobilize participants for the 59th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in March 2015.

In her opening speech, Ms. Gastélum called for the effective implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. She also highlighted the importance of mobilizing women parliamentary networks and encouraging discussion to continue the push for legislation that advances gender rights. In the same vein, during the Seminar, she presented the *General Law on the Access of Women to a Life Free From Violence*, which she co-sponsored in Mexico.

Seminar participants discussed three themes covering the essential elements of the Platform for Action: violence against women, economic empowerment and access to political and economic decision-making.

At the end of the Seminar, the women parliamentarians adopted a Declaration renewing their commitment to continuing efforts, within their respective parliaments, to further the accelerated, full and effective implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

The participants invited the networks of women parliamentarians to mobilize their members to actively participate in the review of progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and

Platform for Action, which will be concluded at the 59th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in March 2015 and called for the mobilization of all parliamentarians in anticipation of national and regional progress reviews.

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