

Annual Gathering of the Group of Women Parliamentarians
“Women in Power: Recent Changes in the Political Arena”
Paramaribo, Suriname – May 16-17, 2013
Recommendations

Session 1: Women Presidents of National Legislatures

We recommend:

1. Encouraging ParlAmericas member States to support legislation that sets effective quotas for electing or appointing women to parliaments, and that establishes effective, transparent and gradual processes toward parity, ensuring women obtain competitive spaces on election lists. States should take measures to have a critical mass of women in parliaments so that they are in a position to impact the decision-making processes of their countries. States should not rely on quotas alone, which are necessary but insufficient to achieve the stated goal, but should do so to facilitate gender parity in parliamentary representation.
2. Encouraging female politicians to take assertive action to increase and maintain the representation of women in parliaments, in order to support one another within political parties. Further, that action be taken to ensure that women who are elected or appointed receive on-going support from their parties, and from other parliamentarians, and have access to training programs.
3. Holding a summit to consider the new challenges and current realities facing women and develop strategies to address these realities through a focused hemispheric agenda.

Session 2: Leadership and Political Participation of Women of African Descent

We recommend:

1. Ensuring the institutionalization of gender equality public policies, which includes proportionally women of African Descent, and where such institutionalization exists, it be adequately strengthened through laws, norms, and decrees in order to generate the necessary social, cultural, and economic changes. Sufficient budgetary resources must be allocated to the institutionalization process in order to bring forward the changes.
2. Seeking more open and transparent gender equality processes, and defining strategies to achieve the stated objectives, while demanding governmental accountability in order to combat the perpetuation of the patriarchal system.
3. Asserting that the contribution of this political vision guarantee that all women be the subjects of rights, particularly women of African Descent, who are to the target of multiple forms of discrimination.

4. Creating formal mechanisms of support to promote cooperation and collaboration between civil society organizations and elected representatives.

Session 3: The Effects of Women's Participation in Politics

We recommend:

1. Encouraging political parties to give women incentive to join their parties in order to promote women's political empowerment. Striving to attain 50% representation of women in parliament in order to move forward an important new agenda.
2. Engaging the cooperation of all women and men, including leaders, as strategic allies in order to achieve the cultural and social transformations, where women, who comprise more than 50% of the population of the Americas, see their rights taken into consideration by public policy and government programs. In order to advance, it is crucial that women occupy decision-making positions within parties and that a stable majority be created with men.
3. Educating and training men and women from all regions of ParlAmericas, and providing orientation in parliamentary processes, building capacity and training those who are not aware of the various dimensions of their position.

Further, influencing the educational systems of our countries so that they are based on a form of education free of sexist and patriarchal stereotypes which prevent the recognition of men and women as equals.

4. Fostering that our parliaments dedicate national resources to the economic empowerment of women, promoting credit programs for women who wish to undertake business actions, and allocating financial resources within the Budget to programs that support women's participation in the productive processes of their countries.