



ParlAmericas ***Express***

YEAR 1. ISSUE 3. OCTOBER 2012



2013 UPCOMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY

- 30th Board of Directors meeting (Medellín, Colombia)
- Extractive Industries and Parliaments Workshop (TBC)

MAY

- Annual Gathering of the Group of Women Parliamentarians (Paramaribo, Suriname)

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ParlAmericas

**Formerly known as
FIPA (Inter-
Parliamentary Forum
of the Americas)**

Established in 2001

President

Randy Hoback (Canada)

1st Vice-President

Víctor Juliao III (Panama)

**2nd Vice-President and
President of the Group of
Women Parliamentarians**
Linda Machuca (Ecuador)

Secretary Treasurer

Germán Blanco (Colombia)

**Other Board of Directors
members**

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TBC (Canada)

Adriana González - TBC
(Mexico)

Armando Torres (Cuba)

Hugh Buchanan (Jamaica)

María Jeannette Ruiz


(Costa Rica)


Ignacio Urrutia (Chile)

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Message from the President



Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to **ParlAmericas Express**! We have had an eventful 2012 and I am delighted to share with you an overview of the year.

In January, ParlAmericas held a two-day regional Workshop on **Strengthening Parliamentary Oversight**, which was attended by Parliamentarians and Auditors General from 13 Caribbean countries and two territories in the region. We partnered with the Caribbean Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (CAROSAI), the Canadian Comprehensive Auditing Foundation (CCAF-FCVI Inc.), the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, and the World Bank to broaden participation and enrich the discussion and resulting recommendations for regional work.

In February, we signed a **Memorandum of Understanding** with the OAS regarding a framework to enhance cooperation and interaction in areas of common concern, in particular, democracy, legal systems, and the rule of law.

We were pleased to support the efforts of the Parlamento Andino in hosting an **inter-parliamentary dialogue prior to the Summit of the Americas** in Cartagena, Colombia, in April, with participation from eight countries and several regional parliamentary associations of the hemisphere. A final declaration of 11 points was submitted to the Heads of State gathering for the Summit of the Americas.

The **Group of Women Parliamentarians Annual Gathering** hosted by the Chamber of Deputies of Chile in Valparaíso in May, was well-attended. The report is available in Spanish, English and French at www.parlAmericas.org.

In August we held our **9th Plenary Assembly**, which gathered 46 parliamentarians from 14 countries of the Americas, as well as 12 observing parliamentarians from two countries and three territories, and representatives of five institutions. The Plenary Assembly report will be available by the end of December.

The **Board of Directors** has also met three times over the year. As indicated in our Strategic Plan, we have conducted a thorough revision and updating of the organization's Regulations. I am pleased to inform you that we are very close to finalizing a much more comprehensive governance tool, which will be available for the information of all ParlAmericas members and stakeholders shortly. Our next major focus will be securing the financial sustainability of ParlAmericas.

We have a busy year in front of us and I wish to greet known faces and make new acquaintances in the months to come. I will also be glad to personally reply to your inquiries about how to become involved with ParlAmericas at president@parlAmericas.org.

Best regards,

Randy Hoback
Member of Parliament of Canada
President of ParlAmericas

About ParlAmericas: Our Mission and Vision

ParlAmericas has strong roots in promoting parliamentary participation in the inter-American system and in contributing to hemispheric dialogue.

Our mission

We are committed to improving and enhancing national and hemispheric democratic processes by providing a leadership forum that channels a continuous conversation on key issues of common concern throughout the Americas.

Our vision

ParlAmericas will exercise significant influence in hemispheric dialogue on key common issues raised by parliamentary institutions and their members. It will also be an inspiring model for the sharing of enhanced practices to better serve the people of the Americas.

Citizen Security for Women, a Parliamentary Task

Overview

Security was first discussed at the 8th Plenary Assembly of ParlAmericas in Paraguay in 2011. It was in response to the interest expressed by parliamentarians, and upon the feedback from participants at the 2011 Gathering in Dominican Republic, that the Group of Women Parliamentarians decided to devote the 2012 Annual Gathering to Citizen Security for Women. The meeting, focused on the task and responsibility entrusted to Parliamentarians in the Americas, gathered 22 countries represented by 42 Parliamentarians.

The goal set for this year was to discuss strategies for including concrete mechanisms intended to protect women in national citizen security policies throughout the Americas. Further to this decision, three panels were established: Panel 1, **Gender-based Violence in Latin America and the Caribbean: A National Perspective**, led by Christine Brendel; Panel 2, **Femicide**, led by Pável Uranga; and Panel 3, **Adjusting National Budgets to Citizen Security Needs**, led by Lorena Vinuesa. The sessions concluded with a round table on **Political Participation of Women in Chile**, with the participation of Minister Carolina Schmidt, from the Chilean Agency for Women's Affairs (SERNAM); Cristina Bitar, on behalf of civil society; and Pamela Villalobos, from the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).



"According to UN Women, by mid-2011 the presence of women in Parliament had reached 30% or more in only 28 countries throughout the world, and only 19 women directed the destinies of their countries as elected heads of state or government."

Linda Machuca

*Member of the National Assembly - Ecuador
President of the Group of Women Parliamentarians*

Gabriela Mistral (1889-1957) was the pen name of Lucila Godoy Alcayaga, a prominent Chilean diplomat, feminist and poet. It is in tribute to her legacy and importance that her portrait, especially commissioned from Ecuadorian artist Pilar Bustos, appears on the front cover of the report of the Annual Gathering of the Group of Women Parliamentarians (2012).



Plenary Assembly 9

Overview



Asamblea plenaria
Plenary Assembly
Assemblée plénière
Assembleia Plenária

9

The 9th Plenary Assembly of ParlAmericas was held between 30 August and 1 September 2012 in Panama City, Panama, and covered four main topics: ***Weak Rule of Law, a threat to Citizen Security, The Impact of the Global Economic Crisis on the Americas, Climate Change and the Environment, and Financial Crisis and its Effects on Women in the Region.***



Official photo of the 9th Plenary Assembly of ParlAmericas | © Simón Martínez

Download the event recommendations [here](#)

Read full biographies of the experts [here](#)



Key-note speaker: Major Pricilla Azevedo

Military police officer, currently working as General Coordinator of Strategic Programs for the “Police Pacification Units” (UPPs), Rio de Janeiro State Secretariat of Public Security’s “favela” (slum) pacification program. In 2012, she was awarded the International Women of Courage Award by the U.S. State Department.

Working Groups - Objectives

Weak Rule of Law, a Threat to Citizen Security

- Analyze how administrative justice and security are related
- Study current programs (public benefits, individual licensing and permitting, regulatory programs with individual impact)
- Study the application of the rule of law to administrative justice
- Analyze the adaptation of local microstructures in the democratic rule of law
- Study social microstructures and new leadership systems
- Study social microstructures that weaken the rule of law

Experts

Marco Castillo

Has worked in the fields of Popular Education, Educational Curriculum and Social Research since early in his career. Conducts research and activities in the fields of construction of urban peace, mediation, and transformation and resolution of community disputes.

Howard N. Fenton

Professor of Law and founding Director of the Democratic Governance and Rule of Law LL.M. Program at Ohio Northern University. Active consultant on administrative law reform for USAID. Has served on seven dispute settlement panels under the North American Free Trade Agreement.

The Impact of the Global Economic Crisis on the Americas

- Analyze the political and social consequences of the global economic crisis
- Study to what extent and how the global crisis has affected political dynamics and democratic governance in the Americas
- Study current fiscal and social policy responses to the crisis
- Analyze the China effect in mitigating the impact of the global economic crisis in the Americas

Laura Gómez-Mera

Former consultant for the World Bank and UNDP/Asia-Pacific. Her research includes regional trade agreements, trade conflict policy and international relations in developing countries, with a special emphasis on foreign economic policy decisions in Latin America.

Ottón Solís Fallas

Ex-Minister for Economic Policy and Planning, ex-Deputy at the Costa Rican Parliament. He co-founded *Partido Acción Ciudadana*, which became the second political force in Costa Rica. He ran for the Presidency on three occasions, and was the second most voted candidate in two elections.

Climate Change and the Environment

- Analyze extractive industries policy issues such as fiscal regimes and health, safety, environment (HSE) oversight
- Analyze the impacts of extractive industries on the environment and climate change (the “clean energy”, “green jobs” debates)
- Study current best practices in capacity building (how to improve poorly equipped government institutions and bodies)

Michelle Michot Foss

Over 30 years’ experience in oil, gas, LNG, and energy prospects and scenarios. Advisor to the USA and to several international power companies. Senior Fellow (USAEE-US Association for Energy Economics) (2006). Selected as one of the Key Women in Energy-Americas (2003).

Margarita Astrálaga

Regional Director in the Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNEP). Over 25 years of experience in the environment and sustainable development sector. Former Director of the IUCN Mediterranean Cooperation Centre (International Union for Conservation of Nature).

Financial Crisis and its Effects on Women in the Region

- Reflect upon the economic crisis and its impact on women
- Identify the unique characteristics of women as vulnerable subjects in an economic crisis
- Define the social and historical context giving rise to the economic crisis, as well as its financial components
- Identify potential Government policies to protect women and support them in an economic downturn

Mayra Buvinic

Led the World Bank’s Gender Action Plan, positioning gender equality as “profitable economy”, including the promotion of gender as a priority in loans to poor countries. Founding member and president of the International Center for Research on Women.

Meet the experts



Major Pricilla Azevedo



Mayra Buvinic



Howard N. Fenton



Marco Castillo



Ottón Solís Fallas



Laura Gómez-Mera



Margarita Astrálaga



Michelle Michot Foss

What's new



Election of the Executive Committee of the Group of Women Parliamentarians

Elections were held for new positions for the Executive Committee of the Group of Women Parliamentarians during the Meeting of the Group of Women Parliamentarians, held concurrently with the 9th Plenary Assembly of ParlAmericas.

Jennifer Simons, Speaker of the National Assembly of Suriname, and Mónica Zalaquett, Member of the Chamber of Deputies of Chile, were unanimously elected Vice-President and Secretary, respectively.

Photo: Jennifer Simons (Suriname), Linda Machuca (Ecuador), Mónica Zalaquett (Chile)

30th Board of Directors meeting

The 30th meeting of the Board of Directors of ParlAmericas will take place in Medellín, Colombia, in February 2013.

Following the elections held during the 9th Plenary Assembly of ParlAmericas, the updated composition of the Board of Directors is as follows: Randy Hoback (Canada), Víctor Juliao (Panama), Linda Machuca (Ecuador), Germán Blanco (Colombia), Michael L. MacDonald - TBC (Canada), Adriana Gonzalez - TBC (México - TBC), Armando Torres (Cuba), Hugh Buchanan (Jamaica), María Jeannette Ruiz (Costa Rica), Ignacio Urrutia (Chile), Alberto Grillón (Paraguay).

Photo: new member of the Board, Hugh Buchanan (Jamaica)

Capacity Building Workshop

ParlAmericas has held two workshops on budget oversight. The first focused on Central American countries (Costa Rica, 2011), and the second on Caribbean countries (Antigua and Barbuda, 2012).

ParlAmericas' next capacity building workshop, to be held in February 2013, will focus on Spanish speaking South America.

The workshop will cover issues related to extractive industries and Parliaments, focusing on strengthening parliamentary and civil society oversight of revenues generated by extractive industries, and an overview of different global standards for the industry.



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Annual Gathering of the Group of Women Parliamentarians

The Annual Gathering of the Group of Women Parliamentarians (2013) will be held in Paramaribo, Suriname, a country of 500,000 people with a rich cultural and ethnic diversity and yet a common history and shared future. Suriname is inhabited by original indigenous people of the Americas, as well as descendents of Africans brought during the slave trade, Creoles, maroons or descendents of Asia coming from Indonesia, India and China.

The nation's natural resources provide the largest component of the country's economy, and Suriname is considered one of the greenest countries in the world: 90% of its territory is covered by tropical rainforest and the deforestation rate is low.



Resource Center

**** Please, note that ParlAmericas does not necessarily endorse the views espoused in articles profiled ****

Millennium Development Goals Report 2012

This **United Nations** report presents the yearly assessment of global progress towards the MDGs, highlighting several milestones. It is based on a master set of data compiled by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on MDG indicators led by the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat. [Read](#)

Latin America: A Region in Transition

Mary Dempsey of **Inter-American Dialogue** summarizes remarks by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and former Dominican Republic President Leonel Fernández at the annual CAF Development Bank of Latin America conference. [Read](#)

Venezuela's Economic Recovery: Is It Sustainable? (Spanish)

Contrary to pessimistic forecasts, this **Center for Economic and Policy Research** paper finds that Venezuela's current economic growth is sustainable and could continue at the current pace or higher for many years. [Read](#)

Transnational Organized Crime in Central America and the Caribbean: A Threat Assessment

This **United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime** (UNODC) study examines the impact of major trafficking flows of cocaine; women and children coerced into the sex trade; migrants smuggled for labour; and firearms. [Read](#)

Beyond Boundaries in the Andean Region

This **Stimson Center** report hones in on the security and development threats plaguing Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru, and proposes a "whole of society" approach that seeks to better leverage existing resources, identify new streams of assistance, and bridge the divide between security and development. [Read](#)

Brazil: Restoring Economic Growth through Economic Freedom

A special report from the **Heritage Foundation** concludes that Latin America's largest economy needs more economic freedom and that the government should eliminate barriers to entrepreneurial activity. [Read](#)

Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime in The Americas: Major Trends in the Twenty-First Century

Bruce Bagley of the **Woodrow Wilson Center** examines adaptations and trends in the illicit drug economy over the last several decades. He explores the increasing globalization of drug trafficking and consumption as well as the unintended consequences of the U.S.-led 'war on drugs.' [Read](#)

Upcoming elections in the Americas (where dates available)

United States	Presidential	6 November 2012
United States	Legislative	6 November 2012
Barbados	Parliamentary	January 2013
Cuba	Parliamentary	January 2013
Ecuador	Presidential First Round	17 February 2013
Ecuador	Legislative	17 February 2013
Ecuador	Presidential Second Round	7 April 2013
Paraguay	Presidential	21 April 2013
Paraguay	Parliamentary	21 April 2013
Honduras	Presidential	November 2013
Honduras	Legislative	November 2013
Chile	Presidential	December 2013
Chile	Legislative	December 2013

Partners

