

Mexico City, 27 June 2014

Closing of the 6th Annual Gathering of the Group of Women Parliamentarians

The 6th Annual Gathering of the Group of Women Parliamentarians, *Moving from Formal to Substantive Equality* concluded Wednesday evening after a day of strategic planning sessions. The Gathering was attended by 58 parliamentarians from 25 countries across the hemisphere.

At the closing of the two-day event, Mexican Senator Marcela Guerra, member of the Board of Directors of ParlAmericas and host of the gathering, stated that legislators have the key to transform reality by creating laws for our countries.

Legislators present at the event stressed that despite the advances in guaranteeing gender parity, significant obstacles remain to achieving real equality. During the strategic planning sessions led by Keila González, director of the National Democratic Institute (NDI) in Mexico, participants identified the following priority issues for the committed work of the Group of Women Parliamentarians over the next 12 months: the prevention of violence against women, employment and economic empowerment of women, and women's political leadership.

Jennifer Simons, Speaker of the National Assembly of Suriname and President of the Group of Women Parliamentarians, expressed her great satisfaction at the close of the event. She reiterated the importance of the Group's work in moving from words to action.

She further explained that to create transformative change, young boys need to be educated. "We need them to be aware and support this cause, that our boys in school have different ideas about how to be men in society and how to relate to women."

The second day of the gathering built upon the productive discussions held the previous day, led by guest speakers Dr. Teresa Incháustegui and Dr. Ramona Biholar, as well as panellists with a diverse range of achievements in the promotion of gender equality in their parliaments: Imani Duncan-Price (Jamaica), Margarita Escobar (El Salvador), Suzanne Fortin-Duplessis (Canada), Constanza Moreiera (Uruguay), Alvina Reynolds (St. Lucia), Verónica Mendoza (Peru), Marie Jossie Etienne (Haiti), and Dulce María Sauri Riancho (Mexico).

Additionally, after news emerged about another mass kidnapping of girls, adolescents, and women in Nigeria, the parliamentarians in attendance condemned the acts committed, urging Nigeria's authorities to protect the female population and the international community to support all efforts to prosecute the perpetrators, in order to denounce and eradicate all forms of gender violence.

###

ParlAmericas is an independent network of the national legislatures of the 35 states of North, Central and South America, and the Caribbean. The Group of Women Parliamentarians – a permanent working group of ParlAmericas – seeks to include a gender perspective on the legislative agenda of parliaments, mainstreaming hemispheric annual issues of interest. The Group convenes an annual gathering aimed at strengthening the political capacities of parliamentarians committed to the rights of women.

Visit our website www.parlamericas.org, or contact: communications@parlamericas.org.

Follow us on Twitter:
@ParlAmericas #GoWP2014Mx

Like us on Facebook:
facebook.com/ParlAmericas