



ParlAmericas Express

YEAR 1. ISSUE 1. JANUARY 2012



Message from the President	ParlAmericas Objectives and Structure
Multi-dimensional Approaches to Citizen Security (M. Rodríguez)	Annual Gathering of the Group of Women Parliamentarians
Gender Perspective on Citizen Security (T. Ulloa)	Strengthening Parliamentary Budget Oversight
There is a way out (K. Casas-Zamora)	9 Plenary Assembly
Vox populi	Resource Centre

2012 UPCOMING EVENTS

30-31 JANUARY: Strengthening Parliamentary Budget Oversight (Saint John's, Antigua and Barbuda)

24-25 FEBRUARY: Board of Directors meeting (Manzanillo, Mexico)

MAY: Board of Directors meeting (TBC, Chile)

9-10 MAY: Annual gathering of the Group of Women Parliamentarians (Valparaiso, Chile)

30-31 AUGUST & 1 SEPTEMBER: 9 Plenary Assembly (Panama City, Panama)

29 AUGUST & 1 SEPTEMBER: Board of Directors meeting (Panama City, Panama)



ParlAmericas

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

Established in 2001

President

Randy Hoback (Canada)

1st Vice-President

Victor Julio III (Panama)

2nd Vice-President and President of the Group of Women Parliamentarians

Linda Machuca Moscoso (Ecuador)

Secretary Treasurer

Germán Alcides Blanco Álvarez (Colombia)

Other Board of Directors members

Maria Jeannette Ruiz Delgado (Costa Rica)

Edmonde S. Beauzile (Haiti)

Armando Torres Aguirre (Cuba)

Alberto Grillón Conigliaro (Paraguay)

Ignacio Urrutia Bonilla (Chile)

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



“We have renewed our mission and vision, and we have begun to put our aspirations into action with a new three-year strategic plan.”

Dear Colleagues,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to **ParlAmericas Express**, our newsletter published three times per year, with articles of interest to parliamentarians, civil society, and academics. Some of you have been following us during the last decade and the name change from FIPA (Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas) to ParlAmericas is no surprise.

For those who might be wondering **“why rebranding now?”**, I would like to highlight that this change follows a decision taken at the 7th Plenary Assembly in 2010. The purpose of the name change is to make plain what and who we are: we are Parliamentarians for the Americas – ParlAmericas. ParlAmericas strives to foster open, constructive dialogue, as well as productive exchange of ideas and practices among all parliamentary institutions of the hemisphere and their members.

The pillars of our rebranding strategy are our new name, new logo, and new website – www.parlamericas.org – a great tool in the four official languages of ParlAmericas, with current news of the Americas, comprehensive news and

events archives of our organization, a document library, photo galleries, and much more.

We have also taken the opportunity of our tenth anniversary in 2011, to re-examine our work, and our goals. We have renewed our mission and vision, and we have begun to put our aspirations into action with a new three-year strategic plan.

Our network of parliamentarians in 35 countries across the Americas makes ParlAmericas a formidable voice for legislators who wish to be part of a larger dialogue, and who believe that by working together we can make positive contributions to the discourse of the hemisphere, and to the realities of our citizens. And in **ParlAmericas Express** we aim to give voice to you and your concerns as a parliamentarian.

Please join us in celebrating this new focus and our new image. Welcome to our Inter-American family!

Kind regards,

Randy Hoback
President of ParlAmericas
Member of Parliament, Canada

ABOUT PARLAMERICAS

OBJECTIVES

To contribute to the development of inter-parliamentary dialogue in dealing with issues on the hemispheric agenda

To increase the sharing of experiences, dialogue, and inter-parliamentary cooperation on issues of common interest to member states

To help strengthen the role of the legislative branch in democracy, and in the promotion and defense of democracy and human rights

To promote the harmonization and development of legislation among member states

To contribute to the process of integration as an instrument for sustainable and harmonious development in the hemisphere

STRUCTURE

Plenary Assembly: the highest decision-making body of the organization composed of the delegations accredited by ParlAmericas member legislatures.

Board of Directors: members are elected by the Plenary Assembly and represent the four sub-regions of the hemisphere.

Executive Committee: composed of the President, the 1st Vice President, the 2nd Vice President who is also the President of the Group of Women Parliamentarian, and the Secretary Treasurer.

Technical Secretariat: charged with implementing the programs and projects of the organization, and assisting the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee in the performance of their functions; located in Ottawa, Canada.

Group of Women Parliamentarians: a permanent working group of ParlAmericas, whose President is elected by the Plenary Assembly.

MULTI-DIMENSIONAL APPROACHES TO CITIZEN SECURITY

by Marco Antonio Rodríguez Corrales

“[In 2010] the Americas account for one fourth of these natural disasters, 76% of the fatalities, 6% of the total affected persons and approximately 46% of the total losses.”

ABOUT THE
AUTHOR:

**MARCO ANTONIO
RODRÍGUEZ
CORRALES**

Bolivian consultant. Designated by the President of Bolivia as National Director of the National Risk Reduction Service in 2002. Since 1998, a consultant with the National Civil Defence Service, the Ministry for National Defence, and the Ministry for Sustainable Development.

As a Project Manager, he promoted the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act No. 2140, the design of the Amendment Act No. 2335, and the associated regulations (Decree No. 26739).

In Bolivia and other countries within the region, he designed such disaster risk management methodologies and instruments as National, Sectorial, Departmental and Municipal Plans.



“In 2010, there was a global toll of 373 natural disasters, resulting in over 296,800 fatalities, 208 million affected persons and an estimated cost of USD 110 trillion.”

“Globally, 41% of disasters are hydrological (floods, wet mass movements); 36% are caused by meteorological events (storms); and 6% are geophysical (quakes, volcanoes). The latter caused the greatest repercussions in 2010.”

“Advances on gender issues have also been important: analyzing the impact of disasters helped recognize that in societies with higher gender inequality, consequences are direr, and recovery and reconstruction processes demand more time and resources.”

“National models based on the overexploitation of environmental resources have resulted in high levels of vulnerability and disaster.”

“Human security has two fundamental aspects: safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression; and protection against sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life.”

“Disaster risk analysis is the basis for defining a strategy that will become a public policy to be implemented through the development of planning systems and instruments, such as public investment, territorial organization, institutionalization of disaster risk related responsibilities, appropriate resource allocation, as well as the dissemination of information on threats and vulnerabilities.”

“Communities prefer to manage aid themselves, rather than have the church or international organizations do it for them. This is an unmistakable sign of mistrust.”

To read the whole article, and the author's recommendations and biography, click [here](#).

ANNUAL GATHERING OF THE GROUP OF WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS



In May, Chile will host the annual gathering of the Group of Women Parliamentarians, the main theme of which will be **"Citizen Security and Women."** The objective of the meeting is to discuss strategies for incorporating concrete mechanisms of protection for women into the national public safety policies of countries in the Americas.

The pictures in this section were taken during last year's annual gathering in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. To view the complete album, visit [the event's photo gallery](#).



GENDER PERSPECTIVE ON CITIZEN SECURITY

by Teresa Ulloa



"I consider it essential to attempt a brief explanation of what is meant by mainstreaming the gender perspective. In this case, it means to ponder how drafting or amending a piece of legislation will affect the life and daily living of men and women, focusing on those historical inequalities that still persist in our region. It means zooming in on every line and legislative piece, as we analyze women's reality and whether our action will contribute to bridge the inequality gap or to make it even deeper – and acting upon it. It means undertaking a reengineering project, in order to transform the intent and outcome of legislation, as well as to eradicate its patriarchal and sexist vision."

To read the whole article, and the author's recommendations and biography, click [here](#).

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: TERESA ULLOA

Regional Director of the Coalition Against Trafficking of Women and Girls in Latin America and the Caribbean ([CATWLAC](#)).

STRENGTHENING PARLIAMENTARY BUDGET OVERSIGHT



At the end of January, Antigua and Barbuda will host a workshop that aims to promote greater knowledge of the Caribbean Parliamentary budgetary oversight system, and facilitate discussions of key issues for Public Accounts Committees (PACs).

The workshop intends to share best practices from PACs of large and small legislatures in the Caribbean; strengthen the relationship between Auditors General and PACs; develop strategies to strengthen the independence of Auditors General; and enhance regional knowledge sharing on budgetary oversight.

For complete and up to date information visit:

www.parlAmericas.org.



COLLABORATIONS

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One of our goals is to foster dialogue, as well as the productive exchange of ideas and practices among all parliamentary institutions of the Hemisphere and their members. If you have Caribbean connections in Continental America or Continental connections in the Caribbean, and would be interested in supporting our networking initiatives, please contact us at communications@parlAmericas.org.

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If you would like to be added to our Directory of Experts and contribute to our events or newsletters, please contact us at communications@parlAmericas.org with a short bio including your fields of expertise and a contribution proposal.

“In Latin America, the proportion of people who place delinquency as one of the top national priorities has tripled in less than a decade.”

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

KEVIN CASAS-ZAMORA

He currently combines his position of Senior Fellow in Foreign Policy for the Latin America Initiative at Brookings, with his position of Advisor to the Second Report on Democracy in Latin America at the UNDP.

Most recently, he was Vice President of Costa Rica; Minister of National Planning and Economic Policy; second Vice President of Costa Rica; general coordinator and lead author of Dr. Oscar Arias' electoral platform (National Liberation Party of Costa Rica); general coordinator and lead author of the Costa Rica's National Human Development Report Programme; and consultant/advisor to the Money and Politics Project.



“Since 2002, in Honduras, the adoption of several anti-crime plans with repressive edges has not changed much: the 56 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants that the country had in 2002 became 78 in 2010, the worst figure in the world.”

“It is increasingly clear that the task of addressing the epidemic of violence in Latin America and the Caribbean requires a comprehensive and complex program that defies the oversimplification seen in prevailing political discourses.”

“The best experiences of reducing levels of crime show that the challenge is to combine "zero tolerance" for crime with "zero tolerance" for social exclusion.”

“Institutions like the police, the judiciary and the penitentiary not only do not help to solve the serious insecurity problems that exist, but in many cases they worsen them.”

“Latin America and the Caribbean have the worst rates of criminal violence in the world. More than 1.4 million Latin American and Caribbean people died in the last decade as a result of crime, much of it organized. Starting two decades ago, all available figures have shown that the rate of intentional homicide in the region has been above 20 per 100,000 inhabitants; almost three times the figure for the world as a whole. According to the latest global estimate from 2004, only sub-Saharan Africa showed figures comparable to those of Latin America and the Caribbean.”

“Each year, approximately 200 million Latin American and Caribbean people – a third of the total population of the region – are victims of a criminal act, perpetrated directly against them or against a member of their family.”

“Criminal violence is the matter where all the shortcomings of our development converge. Citizen Insecurity is not a security problem, it is a development problem.”

An article based on this speech to be published soon by the author. For more information, read ParlAmericas' 8 Plenary Assembly report [here](#).

9 PLENARY ASSEMBLY



At the kind invitation of the National Assembly of Panama, the 9th Plenary Assembly of ParlAmericas will be held on August 30-31 and September 1, 2012 in Panama City. This year's meeting will build on the topics discussed at the 2011 meeting.

The pictures in this section were taken during last year's annual Plenary Assembly in Asuncion, Paraguay. To view the complete album, visit [the event's photo gallery](#).



VOX POPULI

At the last Plenary Assembly, we asked parliamentarians **which topics they considered to be of particular national or regional interest to inform the next ParlAmericas Plenary in Panama**. These are some of their thoughts. If you want to share your views regarding this or any other issue, contact us at communications@parlAmericas.org.

"Access to public health, education and food for all social sectors in our region, unfulfilled basic needs as a whole, that compromise our future and present."

Armando Torres (Cuba)

"Ethical behaviour and corruption in the political arena."

Margarita Escobar (El Salvador)

"The development of statistics and indicators on citizen security to compare progress and setbacks."

Daniel Sandoval (Chile)

"The fight against drug trafficking and narco-terrorism, crime and organized gangs in our countries."

Victor Juliao (Panama)

At ParlAmericas we aim to promote dialogue through access to information. In this section we offer links to recent reports and studies on topics of hemispheric interest – in this issue: citizen security. Let us know what you would like to see here.



World Bank

[World Development Report 2012: Gender Equality and Development](#)

The lives of women around the world have improved dramatically, at a pace and scope difficult to imagine even 25 years ago. Gender gaps in primary schooling have closed in many countries; while in a third of all countries girls now outnumber boys in secondary school. Women are using their education to participate more in the labour force: they now make up for 40 percent of the global labour force.

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IFRC. International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

[Disasters in the Americas. The case for legal preparedness](#)

Disasters are an all-too-common feature of life in the Americas. Recent catastrophic events, such as Hurricane Mitch in Central America in 1998, the earthquakes in Peru in 2007 and in Haiti and Chile in 2010, have wreaked a colossal toll on the lives, communities and development prospects of the stricken countries. The Haiti earthquake alone claimed a staggering 220,000+ lives and displaced over 1.5 million people.

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WOLA. The Washington Office on Latin America

[Tackling Urban Violence in Latin America: Reversing Exclusion through Smart Policing and Social Investment](#)

The report discusses the relative effectiveness of strategies to reduce violence in four different Latin American cities: Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, Medellín in Colombia, Ciudad Juárez in Mexico, and Santa Tecla in El Salvador. The four cities are attempting to improve citizen security by combining smart policing strategies and social investment in marginalized communities most affected by crime.

ParlAmericas thanks its partners, especially those who have most recently contributed to our efforts to foster open, constructive dialogue, as well as the productive exchange of ideas and practices among all parliamentary institutions of the Hemisphere and their members.



Agence canadienne de
développement international

Canadian International
Development Agency



The Parliamentary Centre
Le Centre parlementaire



GLOBAL ORGANIZATION OF PARLIAMENTARIANS AGAINST CORRUPTION
ORGANISATION MONDIALE DES PARLEMENTAIRES CONTRE LA CORRUPTION
ORGANIZACIÓN MUNDIAL DE PARLAMENTARIOS CONTRA LA CORRUPCIÓN



Organization of
American States



WORLD TRADE
ORGANIZATION



ASAMBLEA NACIONAL
REPUBLICA DEL ECUADOR



FUNPADEM
FUNDACIÓN PARA LA PAZ Y LA DEMOCRACIA

Upcoming Elections in the Americas

El Salvador - Legislative

March 11, 2012

Dominican Republic - Presidential

May 16, 2012

The Bahamas - Parliamentary

May 2012

Mexico - Presidential

July 1, 2012

Mexico - Legislative

July 1, 2012

**Information provided by the [International Foundation for Electoral Systems \(IFES\)](#), an international non-profit dedicated to strengthening electoral democracy.*