



ParlAmericas Express



Gathering: Women in Power

The Group of Women Parliamentarians is a permanent working group of ParlAmericas. It includes both men and women parliamentarians from each of the sub-regions of the Americas – North, Central, South and Caribbean. Its meetings and activities strengthen the work of all parliamentarians by providing a space to share and exchange

Plenary Assembly: Economic Development

ParlAmericas members meet annually at the Plenary Assembly, hosted by a different member state each year. The meeting is attended by delegations of the national legislatures of ParlAmericas member states, from all sub-regions of the hemisphere.

Each participating delegation can be composed of up to 12 parliamentarians chosen by the

Workshop: Extractive Industries

ParlAmericas offers capacity building workshops on topics of current hemispheric importance. Our latest workshop, *Parliaments and Extractive Industries: How to Improve Oversight and Increase Collaboration*, took place in Bogotá, Colombia, 25-26 February.

Aimed at the national legislatures of Spanish-

experiences and knowledge from a gender perspective.

The objective for this year's Gathering, entitled ***Women in Power: Recent Changes in the Political Arena***, is to develop strategies for increasing the political participation and leadership of women in the Americas, and to provide legislators with tools for passing laws that reflect women's realities from throughout the region.

The discussions will focus on three key areas:

Women presidents of national legislatures

Through the experiences of women who preside a legislature, participants will analyze the situation of women in formal leadership positions (either from state power or from party structures). Participants will discuss what other factors have contributed to the struggle of groups committed to gender equality and how more progress can be made. Consideration will be given to how these changes can be measured, and what might be the result of such evaluations.

Leadership and political participation of women of African descent

In Latin America, significant progress has been made in increasing the participation of women in formal politics. However, the situation of Afro-descendant women has not improved to the same degree. Participants will analyze how the roles, styles and traditions of leadership among women of African descent are constructed. Discussion will include strategies to develop a

accredited national legislature, with the exception of the host parliament which has no limit. Delegations aim to include members of different political parties and groups in their legislatures, representatives of both chambers in case of bicameral legislatures, as well as both male and female delegates.

This year's Plenary Assembly signals an important milestone for our organization: the 10th Plenary Assembly, after twelve years of history.

The meeting will cover topics of importance currently being discussed in the hemisphere as well as issues identified by participants at the 9th Plenary Assembly (Panama 2012) as particularly interesting for ParlAmericas members.

The overarching theme of the 10th Plenary Assembly of ParlAmericas will be ***Economic Development***, and the two sub-topics will be ***natural resource development***, including environment and energy, and ***food security***.

The Chairs of the working groups will be Member of the Chamber of Representatives of Colombia, Germán Alcides Blanco Alvarez (natural resource development) and Member of Parliament of Jamaica Hugh Buchanan (food security).

The expected outcome from the discussions will be a set of recommendations developed during the working groups and agreed to by the Plenary, that participants will bring to their respective Parliaments. These

speaking countries of South America, it brought together parliamentarians from Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela.

The main objective of the workshop was to offer a forum for parliamentarians and subject experts to discuss the roles and actions of national legislatures with relation to extractive industries.

The topics covered by the panels were ***Parliamentary Roles: Legislation, Supervision and Representation, The Current State of the Right to Prior Consultation in South America, Types of Contracts, Tax Regime and Transparency, Managing Revenues from Extractive Activities, Improvements to the Current Development Model, and Alternative Development Models***.

It was highlighted that, in response to the tensions generated by extractivism in Latin America, three trends can currently be observed.

The first involves a decision not to extract resources, but to generate income through alternative activities such as ecotourism or the development of clean industries.

The second, the so-called neo-extractivism, proposes institutional frameworks to nationalize and use the income generated through the exploitation of non-renewable resources in social spending.

Finally, there is a post-extractivist proposal that, based

political vision that can place specific and strategic demands on the national and international agenda.

The effects of the participation of women in politics

The growing presence of women legislators in the Americas has produced a visible impact on the types of laws being enacted, and the will to include a gender-based approach in existing laws. Participants will analyze what concrete results the laws have produced with regard to trafficking, violence against women, and sexual harassment and what changes have occurred with the introduction of laws on quotas or equality of opportunity and pay. Discussion will include other impacts of female presence.

WHERE: Paramaribo, Suriname
WHEN: May 16-17, 2013

recommendations serve as suggestions of shared thinking by parliamentarians from throughout the hemisphere, on topics of mutual concern.

More information about the location and exact dates of the meeting will be available shortly at www.parlamerica.org.

** Last year's Plenary Assembly brought together 46 parliamentarians who participated as official delegates from 14 member countries of the Americas. Also in attendance as observers were 12 parliamentarians from two non-member countries and three territories, and representatives of five institutions. In addition, experts from eight countries of the Americas participated as speakers during working group sessions.*

WHERE: To be Confirmed
WHEN: August 2013

on the sustainable use of natural resources, seeks to redefine the centrality of extractive industries in the economy.

This overview framed the workshop's discussions that, through moderated debates as well as working groups, disseminated knowledge and best practices that exist at a regional level with regard to legislation and supervision of the extractive sector in South America, and the possibilities of parliamentary collaboration.

The exchanges from the working groups resulted in recommendations that were then presented, discussed and approved in a final plenary session. Upon completion, legislators left with tools to evaluate the situation of extractive industries in the context of their own countries.

WHERE: Bogota, Colombia
WHEN: February 2013

About ParlAmericas: the Group of Women Parliamentarians

As determined by ParlAmericas Regulations, the Group of Women Parliamentarians has as its general objectives:

- to strengthen the leadership of female politicians through ongoing regional exchange
- to promote the creation of conditions for equal opportunities, prioritizing the fight against poverty and the elimination of employment discrimination
- to strengthen democracies in the countries of the Americas in an effort to achieve respect for human rights, and conditions that promote equitable and sustainable social development
- to promote the creation of mechanisms encouraging women participation in politics
- to strengthen women's active participation at ParlAmericas working meetings, incorporating a gender perspective into each of the topics analyzed by the organization

Resource Center

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

*

Finding the 'New' Mexico in Querétaro

Joseph Parilla and Alan Berube of the *Brookings Institution* note that Mexico's rapid federal reforms, booming middle class, and strong current and projected economic growth are exemplified best by Querétaro.

What Is Driving Peru's Relationship with China?

A team of scholars from *Inter-American Dialogue* interview several area experts on the state of Peru-China commercial ties.

In Which Direction is Uruguay's Economy Headed?

In this *Inter-American Dialogue* interview, Graciana del Castillo, Claudio Loser and Christian Daude articulate some of Uruguay's contemporary economic challenges and opportunities.