



**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation  
Respecting its participation at the 31st ParlAmericas Meeting of  
the Board of Directors**

**Canadian Section of ParlAmericas**

**Paramaribo, Suriname  
May 13-15, 2013**

# Report

## Introduction

ParlAmericas held its 31<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Board of Directors in the city of Paramaribo, Suriname. Participants expressed gratitude to the host, Ms. Jennifer Simons, Speaker of the National Assembly of Suriname, for the hospitality shown to them in Paramaribo. Mr. Randy Hoback, M.P. led a delegation representing the Canadian Section of ParlAmericas, which also included the Hon. Michael L. MacDonald, accompanied by Mrs. Guyanne L. Desforges, Association Secretary to the Canadian Section. Mr. Hoback attended the meeting in his capacity as President of ParlAmericas, and Senator MacDonald attended as the Canadian representative on the Board of Directors. The main objectives of the meeting were to hear about progress on preparations for the 10<sup>th</sup> ParlAmericas Plenary Assembly to be held in Costa Rica, to receive various updates from Board members and Secretariat staff, to approve a long term funding strategy for the organization, and to finalize the drafting of the new regulations being prepared for ParlAmericas. Immediately following this meeting, the Group of Women Parliamentarians (GofWP) held their annual Gathering, to which all Board members were invited.

### **1. Meeting Opening (See Appendix A for a complete list of participants)**

Mr. Randy Hoback, President and Chair of the meeting, opened the session. He welcomed the meeting participants and thanked Ms. Jennifer Simons, for her warm welcome, her support and for hosting this ParlAmericas meeting. Ms. Simons, Speaker of the National Assembly of Suriname, is attending the Board Meeting as the Acting President of the Group of Women Parliamentarians, since Ms. Linda Machuca was unable to participate. Ms. Simons was therefore hosting the Group of Women Parliamentarians Gathering immediately following this two-day meeting.

Speaker Simons welcomed Board members to Suriname, and wished everyone a successful meeting and a good stay in her country. Mr. Hoback then introduced all those who were present, and gave the regrets of those who could not be in attendance.

#### **a) Adoption of the Agenda**

Mr. Hoback invited members to consider the draft meeting agenda. The Board of Directors members agreed with the proposal, and the agenda was adopted.

#### **b) Approval of the Report of the 30<sup>th</sup> Board of Directors Meeting**

The meeting proceeded with the consideration of the report of the 30<sup>th</sup> ParlAmericas Board of Directors meeting, held in Medellin, Colombia, on February 21-22, 2013.

## **2. President's Report**

Mr. Hoback referred to his written report as he updated Board of Directors members on his activities since the last meeting in February 2013. He mentioned the ongoing conversations he is having with members regarding participation in ParlAmericas.

### **3. Update on Recent Activities of Board of Directors Members**

Mr. Alberto Grillon (Paraguay) reported on his attendance at the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) General Assembly in Quito, Ecuador in March. He stated that there were over one thousand parliamentarians in attendance.

Ms. Ruiz informed the members of the *Arms Trade Treaty* recently adopted by the United Nations, noting that 154 countries were in favor of the Resolution to adopt the Treaty.

She proposed that ParlAmericas use its forum to support the Treaty, in line with the work of the organization to date on security issues. It was agreed that the proposal be translated and circulated to the Board and a recommendation would be presented at the Plenary Assembly in August.

### **4. Update from Group of Women Parliamentarians Gathering**

Ms. Simons reported that she spoke with many Caribbean countries at the IPU General Assembly in Quito to mobilize their participation for the upcoming Women's Gathering. She reported that at her last count, there were some 60 participants registered from 22 countries. Speaker Simons reminded members of the theme chosen: "*Women in Power: Recent Changes in the Political Arena*".

### **5. International Secretariat Report**

Ms. Gina Hill, Director General of ParlAmericas introduced Ms. Katie Hermon, who has joined ParlAmericas as the consultant to the Group of Women Parliamentarians (GofWP). Ms. Hill made reference to the activities report circulated to the Board members, and highlighted the preparation for the GofWP Gathering and the comprehensive financial and narrative reporting to CIDA.

Ms. Hill provided updates on the following matters: firstly, observer status at the IPU had been granted by the Governing Council and ParlAmericas was given a formal seat at the table at the General Assembly that took place in Quito, Ecuador in March 2013. Secondly the World Bank has indicated an interest in supporting the work of organizations interested in building parliamentary capacity in budget oversight for the Caribbean, if it is channelled through CAROSAI – the Caribbean Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions. With the support of a consultant, a proposal will be submitted to the World Bank. Thirdly, ongoing conversations with the OAS regarding programming to put into effect the memorandum of understanding signed in 2012. In particular, ParlAmericas agreed to participate in a project of capacity-building for parliamentarians in Central America, Mexico and Belize which brings together parliamentarians from a core region of our membership. The project consists of national workshops in each of nine countries, and two regional seminars. Presently, the possibility of holding one regional seminar in conjunction with the Plenary Assembly scheduled for August in Costa Rica is being explored.

Ms. Viviane Rossini, Program Manager, was then invited to give a brief overview of the major activities undertaken since the last meeting of February 2013 and focusing on the workshop held in Bogota, Colombia, on Parliaments and Extractive Industries, which brought together 17 parliamentarians and six experts from eight countries in Spanish-speaking South America. It was mentioned that a report is already available on the Web site.

Ms. Rossini then provided the Board of Directors with a financial presentation reporting the actual figures for the first half of the fiscal year and invited questions. Regarding membership

dues, she mentioned that dues notices are sent out stating that the deadline for payment is May 31<sup>st</sup>; however, many member parliaments often pay later in the year due to their internal financial cycles.

## **6. Financing Strategy**

Mr. Randy Hoback reminded members that one of the key priorities of the Strategic Plan is to seek out and secure sustainable core funding for the organization. Following the meeting in Medellin, Mr. Michel Rathier, consultant to ParlAmericas, had developed a Funding Strategy document for the Board's approval. The President reviewed the document, had circulated it and he was in agreement that it was the best way forward. Mr. Rathier was then invited to facilitate the discussion which covered a number of issues including the following:

- Support for the proposal that ParlAmericas seek International Organization Status as an organization headquartered in Canada;
- Support for the proposal that the priority be placed on securing funds to contract a dedicated Business Development Director;
- The need to have varied sources of funding including from the private sector and foundations;
- The recognition that we must have comprehensive Guidelines in place that address concerns such as conflict of interest.

The Board of Directors approved, unanimously, the Funding Strategy document.

## **7. 10<sup>th</sup> Plenary Assembly Preparations**

Ms. Hill informed the Board of Directors that Costa Rica was not in a position to host the Plenary Assembly. Ms. Ruiz explained to members that they could however coordinate support on items that don't require an outlay of financial resources, such as securing a hotel discount or seeking space with the Assembly. Ms Hill explained that given that the Plenary Assembly would have to be coordinated and entirely paid by the Secretariat, Costa Rica nevertheless seemed like the most appropriate place to hold the annual meeting. Issues taken into account included the central position of the country to travel; a relatively high level of security and that it offers a high level of professionalism in the service industry.

It was agreed that the 10<sup>th</sup> Plenary Assembly would take place in San Jose, Costa Rica, from August 22-24, 2013 with the Board of Directors meeting taking place on August 21, and working lunch following the Plenary on August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

The Board then turned to the draft agenda for the Plenary Assembly with two Working Group topics as discussed at the Board Meeting in Medellin. Other topic suggestions were made including arms trade treaty; cyber-crime; human trafficking; environmental disasters; the lack of economic growth and standardizing technology. Recognizing that the Secretariat had begun identifying expert speakers for the topics discussed in Medellin, it was agreed to retain the existing topics, namely:

- 1) Economic Development - Natural Resource Development (including environment and energy): German Blanco (Colombia)
- 2) Food Security: Hugh Buchanan (Jamaica)

The Board members were invited to review the document outlining which Board seats would be up for election, at their convenience.

## **Organizational Governance**

The Chair introduced the session to review the final version of the regulations, reminding members that Mr. Michel Rathier is still working with ParlAmericas as a consultant (and is recognized as a non-voting associate) on key items related to the Strategic Plan adopted by the Plenary Assembly in 2011, including the drafting of new regulations for the organization.

There was some debate with the suggestion to change to the composition of the Board of Directors before securing funding for the organization. It was agreed that a committee be struck to examine the question of membership, considering demographics and population, and develop a proposal for the Board members. It was resolved that Michel Rathier in consultation with Ignacio Urrutia (South America), Michael L. MacDonald (North America), Maria Jeannette Ruiz (Central America) and Hugh Buchanan (Caribbean), report back to the Board members with suggested revisions at the August meeting in Costa Rica.

In reviewing the remaining sections of the Regulations, minor changes were made and the Board of Directors approved and recognized the completion of the Regulations.

## **Future Meetings and Close of Meeting**

Mr. Hoback advised that the 32<sup>nd</sup> Board of Directors meeting will take place in San José, Costa Rica immediately prior to the Plenary Assembly on August 21, and at a working lunch following the Plenary on August 24. Board members are invited to stay on for the 10<sup>th</sup> Plenary Assembly to take place on August 22 to 24, 2013.

The Chair then thanked Speaker Simons and her team for her warm and hospitable welcome to the members of the Board. He thanked the interpreters for their excellent work, as well as the International Secretariat staff for their on-going support and everyone for their participation.

There being no further discussion, Mr. Hoback adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Randy Hoback, M.P.  
Chair,  
Canadian Section of ParlAmericas

# APPENDIX

## List of Participants

### Members of the Board of Directors

#### President

- Randy Hoback, M.P. (CANADA)

#### North America

- Senator Michael L. MacDonald (CANADA)
- Deputy Adriana González Carrillo (MEXICO)

#### Central America

- Maria Jeannette Ruiz Delgado, Member of the Legislative Assembly (COSTA RICA)

#### South America

- Deputy Ignacio Urrutia Bonilla (CHILE)
- Senator Alberto Grillón Conigliaro (PARAGUAY)

### Representative of the Group of Women Parliamentarians

- Dr. Jennifer Simons, Speaker of the National Assembly (SURINAME)

### ParlAmericas Technical Secretariat

- Gina Hill (Director General)
- Viviane Rossini (Program Manager)
- Marcelo Virkel, (Project Coordinator)
- Katie Hermon, (Consultant to the Group of Women)

### Other Guests and Participants

- Michel Rathier (ParlAmericas Associate)
- Guyanne L. Desforges (Parliament of Canada)
- Saima Cabenda (Head of Secretariat, Suriname)
- Ruth de Windt, (Deputy Secretary General, Suriname)

### Board of Directors Members Absent

- Deputy Victor Juliao III , First Vice President (PANAMA)
- Linda Machuca Moscoso, Second Vice President, President of the Group of Women Parliamentarians and Member of the National Assembly (ECUADOR)
- Representative Germán Alcides Blanco Álvarez (COLOMBIA)
- Hugh Buchanan, Member of Parliament (JAMAICA)

## Travel Costs

<b>ASSOCIATION</b>	Canadian Section of ParlAmericas
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Board of Directors
<b>DESTINATION</b>	Paramaribo, Suriname
<b>DATES</b>	May 13-15, 2013
<b>DELEGATION</b>	
SENATE	Hon. Michael L. MacDonald
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. Randy Hoback, M.P.
STAFF	Mrs. Guyanne L. Desforges, Association Secretary
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	<b>\$ 11,998.01</b>
<b>ACCOMMODATION</b>	<b>\$ 1,729.33</b>
<b>HOSPITALITY</b>	<b>\$ 32.30</b>
<b>PER DIEMS</b>	<b>\$ 698.29</b>
<b>OFFICIAL GIFTS</b>	<b>\$ 55.50</b>
<b>MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 14,513.43</b>