



**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation
respecting its participation at the 35th ParlAmericas Meeting
of the Board of Directors and the 11th Plenary Assembly**

Canadian Section of ParlAmericas

**Santiago, Chile
September 24-27, 2014**

Report

PARLAMERICAS AND CANADA'S INVOLVEMENT

ParlAmericas is an independent network made up of national legislatures that are also members of the Organization of American States (OAS). ParlAmericas members are committed to promoting parliamentary participation in the inter-American system and developing inter-parliamentary dialogue on issues of importance to the hemisphere. ParlAmericas seeks to encourage the sharing of experiences and best practices amongst its members, and works to strengthen the role of legislatures in democratic development and promote harmonization of legislation and hemispheric integration as instruments of sustainable and harmonious development in the region.

ParlAmericas was constituted at the Inaugural Meeting hosted by the Parliament of Canada, in Ottawa, in 2001. The organization is made up of three main bodies, namely: the Plenary Assembly, the Board of Directors and the Technical Secretariat. The Plenary Assembly, which meets annually, provides a platform for parliamentarians from the Americas to discuss various themes of common interest to the hemisphere. Topics addressed during the Plenary Assembly are developed and planned by the board of directors, which establishes the agenda of the Plenary Assembly. In addition to these activities, members of the board are responsible for monitoring projects that have been assigned to them by the Assembly. Members may also participate on one of five standing committees; these have mandates which cover a number of topics considered of interest to the board. The board is headed by a Chair, who is elected every two years. Both the board and the Chair receive support from the Technical Secretariat.

Canada has been strongly involved in ParlAmericas since its inception. On 10 September 2011, Mr. Randy Hoback, member from Prince Albert, was elected President of ParlAmericas. He served as President of ParlAmericas until the election of a new President on September 27, 2014. Mr. Hoback has also served as the head of the Canadian Section of ParlAmericas since April 2010. He became the second Canadian president of ParlAmericas, following Senator Céline Hervieux-Payette, who held this position from 2001 to 2006. In addition, the ParlAmericas Technical Secretariat is incorporated in Canada and is based in Ottawa. Canada is also in charge of maintaining the ParlAmericas website. This site, upgraded and re-launched in the fall of 2011, plays a key role in the organization's activities, allowing parliamentarians and the general public to access up-to-date resources created by ParlAmericas on a wide range of issues held in common interest by countries of the hemisphere.

35th meeting of the Board of directors

A. Introduction

The ParlAmericas Board of Directors held its 35th meeting in Santiago, Chile, at the Ex-Congreso Nacional de Chile, on 24 and 27 September 2014. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Randy Hoback, Member of Parliament of Canada. Other participants were:

- Mr. Germán Alcides Blanco Avarez, member of the Chamber of Representatives of Colombia, Secretary Treasurer;
- Senator Michael L. MacDonald (Canada), representing North America;
- Mr. Ignacio Urrutia Bonilla, member of the Chamber of Deputies of the National Congress of Chile, representative of the Host Country of the 11th Plenary Assembly;
- Senator Marcela Guerra Castillo, member of the Mexican Congress, representing North America;
- Mr. Hugh Buchannan, member of Parliament of Jamaica, representing the Caribbean;
- Ms. Guadalupe Valdez San Pedro, member of the Chamber of Deputies of Dominican Republic, representing the Caribbean;
- Ms. Alicia Cmelli, member of the chamber of Deputies of Argentina, representing South America;
- Ligia Elena Fallas Rodríguez, member of the Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica, representing Central America.

The main objectives of this board of directors meeting were:

- To receive an update from board of directors members and Secretariat staff concerning recent ParlAmericas activities;
- To review and consider ParlAmerica's Financial Update;
- To receive an overview of ParlAmericas ParlAmericas Financing Strategy and new initiatives, and;
- To determine the location and date of the 36th board of directors meeting and the 12th Plenary Assembly.

B. Opening of the Meeting

Mr. Hoback opened the session by welcoming the meeting's participants and thanking Mr. Ignacio Urrutia Bonilla's work as host. Mr. Hoback also welcomed and thanked the ParlAmericas Technical Secretariat staff.

Mr. Hoback then presented the Agenda of the meeting, which was approved. The board proceeded with the approval of the report of the 34th meeting of the board of directors in Mexico City, Mexico.

C. President's Report

Mr. Hoback provided board members with an update of activities for the period of June to September 2014. These included diplomatic meetings on June 12th and 16th with the new Ambassador of Guatemala and a lunch for a delegation visiting from Honduras.

On 26 to 28 June 2014, Mr. Hoback had discussions in Washington to promote ParlAmericas with stakeholders active in Parliamentary Strengthening programming in the Americas. Meetings included representatives from the OAS, Embassy of Canada and the Canadian Permanent Mission to the OAS, National Endowment for Democracy, International Republican Institute and the National Democratic Institute.

On 17 and 18 July 2014, Mr. Hoback attended the Inaugural Meeting of the Inter-American Presidents Legislatures in Lima, Peru. He used the opportunity to solidify planning for collaboration with NDI and LOWG for the Plenary Assembly, participated in the Open Parliament Working Group Session, conducted side-meetings with the World University Services of Canada and conducted side-meetings with the former Revenue Watch Institute (now the Natural Resource Governance Institute).

On 18 September 2014, Mr. Hoback, as the Chair of the Canadian Section of ParlAmericas, organized and hosted an evening reception to bring together the Heads of Missions of the 35 member countries of ParlAmericas and Canadian Parliamentarians.

D. Technical Secretariat Report

The Director General of ParlAmericas, Alisha Todd, provided the board with a report on the activities of the Technical Secretariat. These included, among other things:

- Work (thank you letters, correspondence and report) related to the Group of Women Parliamentarians in Mexico;
- Preparations for the 11th Plenary Assembly including engaging contribution of new partners, securing expert speakers and resources to contribute to the working group discussions, compile handouts and resource materials and develop facilitation strategy and also to upgrade ParlAmericas' database to ensure the invitation to the 2014 Plenary Session reached as many parliamentarians as possible;
- Increasing Stakeholder engagement and new project development by meeting with the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada, forming official partnerships with NGOs in Canada to bid on a project in Haiti, approaching private sector companies like Google, Bayer, Pfizer, Facebook and Twitter to engage as sponsors, traveling to Washington to meet with stakeholders and potential donors and collaborating with NDP and OAS in the development of the working group programs for the Plenary.
- Current Government of Canada Project;

- Website maintenance and content updates; and
- Financial and administrative management duties.

E. Financing Strategy and New Initiatives

- Canadian Mission for Accompanying the Legislative Elections in Haiti.

ParlAmericas, in consortium with two notable Canadian NGOs who specialize in volunteer sending projects and currently operate in Haiti, WUSC and CECI, propose a Canadian Mission for Accompanying the Legislative Elections in Haiti. This initiative will support a more transparent and inclusive democracy in Haiti. A Canadian election observation and monitoring mission will increase the likelihood that the legislative elections occur in reasonable accordance with legal framework and established calendar as currently scheduled for October 26 and December 15. This mission will also enhance domestic and international stakeholder understanding of Haiti's election process to thereby inform recommendations of future election policies, reforms, initiatives and programming.

- ParlAmericas Group of Young Parliamentarians

Under ParlAmericas' current funding renewal negotiation with the Government of Canada, there is an opportunity to incorporate program planning and a budget to launch a permanent working group for young parliamentarians – an aspiration that was included in the Regulations adopted by the Plenary Assembly in August 2013. The purpose of a Group of Young Parliamentarians could be two-fold: both to promote the political empowerment of youth and young parliamentarians, as well as advancing youth policy.

- ParlAmericas Side Event at the Summit of the Americas

The upcoming 7th Summit of the Americas is scheduled to be held in March or April of 2015, hosted by Panama. Both the OAS and Parlamento Andino have initiated inquiries as to how ParlAmericas may wish to engage with the upcoming summit process; Parlamento Andino is keen to explore a possible partnership. There is currently no funding to conduct a side event in Panama; however the Government of Canada gave indication that they would be open to contribute, in part, to an initiative such as this. ParlAmericas would be well placed to take a lead on convening a side event to promote the importance of the legislative dialogue on the hemispheric issues.

- Expansion of In-Kind Contributions

Two major institutional costs for ParlAmericas include Labour and Translation. Prior to 2007, ParlAmericas had arrangements with Canada, Brazil and Chile for translation services. Presently, ParlAmericas utilizes in-kind personnel contributions such as interns and volunteers. Canada presently contributes to ParlAmericas through office spaces, IT Support, project based funding, annual membership fees, financing the participation of Canadian Parliamentarians for events and financing the participation of Canadians at the Board of Directors meetings. Other ParlAmericas members contribute via annual membership fees, hosting meetings and financing the participation of Parliamentarians for events and Board of Directors meetings. ParlAmericas would welcome contribution of staff through secondments to engage non-Canadian personnel on placements with ParlAmericas International Secretariat in Ottawa funded through the contributing country,

as well as an arrangement for translation services and recruitments of interns and volunteers through Embassies in Ottawa.

F. Items Related to the Conduct of the 11th Plenary Assembly

The final agenda for the 11th Plenary Assembly was reviewed and adopted. The Board members also discussed registered participants, the role of Board members and the ratification of resolution 34-3 which was adopted on 23 June 2014 and which states: "BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors will take to the Plenary Assembly the resolution that member legislatures must pay their membership fee to sit for election. Payment must be received the day before the election."

Further, a review of forthcoming board of directors' vacancies was conducted, along with the procedure for filling these vacancies.

G. Board of Directors Meeting on 27 September 2014

The board of directors met immediately following the official closing of the 11th Plenary Assembly to discuss the remaining items on its agenda. Mr. Hoback welcomed the newly elected President of ParlAmericas, Senator Marcela Guerra Castillo from Mexico as well as other new members of the Board. Discussions ensued on a number of items, including: the appointment of new board members, the appointment of the Secretary of the Corporation, the appointment of the Director General as an agent of the corporation authorized to sign contracts, fixing the remuneration for the Auditor, delegated authority to renegotiate the Memorandum of Understanding with the Parliamentary Center in Canada and a resolution on employee remuneration.

11th Plenary assembly of ParlAmericas

A. Introduction

The 11th Plenary Assembly of ParlAmericas was held in Santiago, Chile from 25 to 27 September 2014. During the Assembly, two working groups were offered, with each group discussing a separate theme. These themes were: Post-2015 legislative agenda in the Americas; and access to information and the digital sharing economy. A further working group organized by the Group of Women Parliamentarians was also offered on the topic of women's healthcare. The Plenary Assembly was attended by 58 parliamentarians from 23 countries, which represented each of ParlAmericas' sub-regions (North America, Central America, the Caribbean and South America). Canada was represented by four parliamentarians:

- Mr. Randy Hoback, member from Prince Albert and Head of the Delegation, President of ParlAmericas, Chair of the Canadian Section and member of the board of directors;
- Senator Michael MacDonald (Nova Scotia), Vice-Chair of the Canadian Section, member of the board of directors;
- Senator Pierrette Ringuette (New Brunswick) ; and

- Mr. Massimo Pacetti, member from Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel.

B. Official Inauguration and Welcome Reception

On 25 September 2014, delegates were transported from the hotel to the Santiago Seat of the National Congress for the Official Inauguration and Welcome Reception. Welcoming remarks were provided by speakers who included Aldo Cornejo González, President of the Chamber of Deputies of Chile; Ingacio Urrutia Bonilla, Member of the Board of Directors of ParlAmericas and Chilean Parliamentarian; Jennifer Simons, President of the Group of Women Parliamentarians and Randy Hoback, President of ParlAmericas.

Mr. Cornejo González provided the delegates with an overview of the structure of the government of Chile, along with information concerning the format and agenda of the 11th Plenary Assembly. Mr. Hoback noted that this year's Plenary Assembly marked a milestone for the organization, provided comments on its continued evolution, and underlined the relevance and importance of the work of ParlAmericas as an open, equitable and ethical inter-parliamentary organization. Mr. Urrutia Bonilla commented that the large turnout at this year's assembly was indicative of the success ParlAmericas was achieving as an attractive forum for parliamentarians seeking to discuss issues of mutual importance in the hemisphere. Ms. Simons provided the delegates with wide-ranging comments on a number of topics including the importance of the Plenary Assembly's workshop topics (Open Parliament, Post-2015 Development Agenda: Legislative Perspectives, and the relationship and access to healthcare for women in particular).

C. Meeting with the Canadian Ambassador to Chile

On 24 September 2014, the Canadian delegation met with Ms. Patricia Fuller, Ambassador of Canada to Chile, along with members of the Embassy at Ambassador's residence in Chile.

The strong and productive bilateral relationship between Canada and Chile was discussed, including the Canada-Chile Strategic Partnership Framework and Memorandums of Understandings as well as other trade matters. Other issues of note which arose during the discussion included: President Bachelet's second term; economic Fundamentals and Outlook; Education and Youth Mobility; Defence Relations; themes related to ParlAmericas' Plenary meeting and general miscellaneous issues of note in Chile

D. First Session of the Plenary Assembly

The first session of the 11th Plenary Assembly began with the election of Mr. Ignacio Urrutia Bonilla as President for the Plenary Assembly. In his opening remarks, Mr. Urrutia Bonilla offered delegates a warm welcome and underlined the importance of the topics to be discussed by the working groups, noting that full and equal participation of all delegates would produce optimal recommendations.

The regulations for the conduct of the Plenary Assembly, along with the agenda, were reviewed and accepted.

Mr. Hoback, read the annual report of the President of ParlAmericas for 2013-2014. Highlights of this report included the introduction of the new Director General of ParlAmericas, Ms. Alisha Todd. Highlights also included a two-day regional workshop for parliamentarians on the topic of Strengthening Parliamentary Budget Oversight held in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. It was noted that the report and recommendations produced by this workshop was available on the ParlAmericas website. Mr. Hoback's report also noted collaboration with the OAS and new partners. The OAS and ParlAmericas have been exploring opportunities to collaborate on programming initiatives for parliamentarians. The report also contained information concerning the Group of Women Parliamentarians Gathering held in Mexico, along with the 34th Board of Directors Meetings. Mr. Hoback's report also discussed operations and finances, noting that project funding is currently provided for by the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD) and that new funding sources were being sought to maintain the organization's activities. In that respect, the importance of each member country paying its association dues was underscored. Finally, the report noted that at the 11th Plenary Assembly, there would be elections for a new President of the organization who will take Mr. Hoback's place as Chair of the Board of Directors. Mr. Hoback thanked everyone for the pleasure of serving as President of ParlAmericas for the last four years and looked forward to sitting on the Board of Directors as Immediate Past President.

Mr. Hoback presented the resolutions and recommendations proposed by the board of directors at the meeting held on 4 September 2014 to the Plenary Assembly. A resolution that member legislatures must pay their membership fee to sit for election and that payment must be received the day before the election was passed by the assembly. The nomination process for vacant positions on the board of directors was explained to the assembly by Alisha Todd. Lastly, the working groups for the 11th Plenary Assembly were established and the chairs of these groups were approved by the assembly.

E. Keynote Address

Hernán Larraín, Senator of Chile made a presentation to the assembly concerning building together the culture of open Parliaments. He began by stating that Parliaments constitute today the best democratic expression of each of our countries. Representative democracy necessitates that the role of legislators and representatives is made possible by representatives elected to exercise power in the service of democratic values. Senator Larraín noted the work of the Joint Committee on Transparency of the Chilean Congress and then noted the later noted the impact of an open Parliament culture on the hemisphere and on multilateral relations. He then briefly discussed the Chilean Congress' open Parliament Action Plan. Senator Larraín concluded by saying that this is what the citizens hope from us: clear answers to social demands, carried out effectively in an open, transparent and direct way.

F. Working Group Sessions

On 25 and 26 September 2014, parliamentarians were invited to attend and contribute to one of two concurrent working groups, according to their areas of interest. The first group looked at open parliament. The second group focused on Post-2015 Development Agenda: Legislative Perspectives. In addition to these two groups, the Group of Women

Parliamentarians met twice to discuss women's healthcare. Key points of the discussions that took place in each group is presented below. The resolutions resulting from the working group sessions are also presented in Appendix A of this report.

Focus points for the working group on open parliament were:

- Seek greater integration of the new information and communication technologies;
- Use of open formats and free software in Parliaments, which will allow access to information and for it to be reused; and,
- The need for timely Web site updates with friendly formats to facilitate the communication with citizens.

The working group's discussions were facilitated by Ms. Cristiano Ferri Faria and by Ms. Maria Baron.

The working group on Post-2015 development agenda: Legislative Perspectives' objectives were to:

- Promote in parliaments further analysis and dialogue to enable the exchange of experiences to inter-American and domestic level aimed to strengthen parliamentary capacity in matters relating to compliance with the objectives of sustainable development, such as climate change and development agenda post 2015;
- Promote the respective political control of policies and programs for economic growth and investment by guiding them to healthier sustainable development.

Leading the discussion of this working group were two subject-matter specialists: Mr. Carlos J. de Miguel and Claudia de Windt.

The Working Group of the Group of Women Parliamentarians met twice in conjunction with the 11th Plenary Assembly, drawing a high level of participation on the part of delegates. The group "Women's Healthcare" was presided over by Dr. Jennifer Simons, Vice-President of the Group of Women Parliamentarians, and Speaker of the National Assembly of the Parliament of Suriname. Its points of focus were:

- Male responsibilities and participation;
- Empowerment and status of women;
- Reproductive rights and reproductive health;
- Primary health care and the health-care sector;
- Women's health and safe motherhood;
- Education, population and sustainable development;
- National policies and plan of action; and
- Subregional and regional activities.

Participants in this Working Group heard a presentation from Dr. Cristina Tirado (Brazil) and from Ms. Guadalupe Valdez, member of the Chamber of Deputies of the Dominican Republic.

G. Second Session of the Plenary Assembly

The second session of the 11th Plenary Assembly began with an announcement of the new countries selected, by acclamation, to fill positions on the board of directors. Positions on the board are allotted to each of the four ParlAmericas sub-regions, namely North America, Central America, the Caribbean and South America. The countries selected to fill positions on the board were:

- Ecuador, representing South America;
- Trinidad and Tobago, representing the Caribbean; and
- Nicaragua, representing Central America

Senator of Mexico Marcela Guerra was elected as the new President of ParlAmericas, and Representative Germán Blanco was elected as the new Vice-President. Two new members of the Executive Committee of the Group of Women Parliamentarians were also announced: Vice-President Claudia Nogueira, Member of the Chamber of Deputies of Chile and Secretary Magda Rodríguez Azcona Member of the Chamber of Deputies of the Dominican Republic.

The session continued with the presentation of the statements of commitments by the chairs of each working group (see Appendix A). These statements were fully received and adopted by the Assembly, with amendments.

Delegates from Panama also offered to be hosts of the 12th Plenary Assembly, scheduled for late September 2015.

Closing remarks were offered by Senator Marcella Guerra Castillo, in which she offered her thanks to the chairs of the working groups for their focused and efficient efforts; to the subject-matter experts; to the delegates; to the staff and Technical Secretariat; and to the translators.

Respectfully submitted,

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

APPENDIX A

WORKING GROUP STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

a) Working Group 1 – Open Parliament in the Americas

During the 11th Plenary Assembly of ParlAmericas, we – national parliamentarians representing 23 legislatures from across the Americas – have convened in Santiago, Chile, alongside representatives of civil society and international organizations, in order to set out a course of legislative action for improving transparency and access to information for the citizens of our countries.

As a point of departure, our discussions started with the Agreements reached at the Working Table on “Transparency and Accountability in Parliamentary Role: Are there any Open Parliaments?” held at the Inter-American Meeting of Presidents of the Legislative Branch in Lima, Republic of Peru, on July 18, 2014.

Recalling this commitment to the above-mentioned Agreement adopted by the participating presidents of the legislative branch in the Americas,

We reaffirm that:

- Transparency is a central aspect of democracy and a cross cutting issue essential to political, social, and economic development.
- Open data allows for enhanced monitoring of the legislative branch, its functioning, and makes for richer, more interactive dialogue between parliamentarians and social actors.
- The pursuit of open parliaments is a shared goal for the Americas and Caribbean, despite differing sociocultural environments and gaps in connectivity that may present particular national challenges when designing effective and efficient mechanisms that enhance transparency and openness.
- In working towards the objective of bringing our parliaments closer to the communities and citizens they represent, we recognize the importance of understanding the contexts of specific communities and the most appropriate channels for communication with them (e.g. internet, television, radio, and print media).
- Many challenges still need to be overcome, particularly in terms of the technical infrastructure, financial resources, processes, and cultures necessary to support and improve open parliament initiatives.

We recognize the following as potential actions to fulfill the points of Agreement:

- Provide practical training for legislators in information and communications technologies (ICTs) and social media for the purpose of improving direct dialogue with citizens, within an intercultural framework.

- Support the drafting of laws on transparency and establish specialized oversight mechanisms in countries where these do not yet exist.
- Examine the experience of the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies as a model for sharing parliamentary information in a more user-friendly manner, avoiding the presentation of information in overly institutional, legalistic, or bureaucratic terms.
- Invest in education and training that fosters a culture of parliamentary transparency and that deepens the public's understanding of the functioning of public institutions.
- Make use of free or open source software, collaborate with civil society organizations specializing in transparency, and build public/private partnerships in order to make progress in parliamentary openness.

We commit to:

Report, in writing or in person, on the advances and/or challenges of transparency and access to information at the 12th Plenary Assembly of ParlAmericas to be held in 2015, with active contributions from delegations of our parliaments.

b) Working Group 2 – The Post-2015 Development Agenda in the Americas

During the 11th Plenary Assembly of ParlAmericas, we – national parliamentarians representing 23 legislatures from across the Americas – have convened in Santiago, Chile, alongside representatives of civil society and international organizations, in order to set out a course of legislative action that advances sustainable development objectives at a time when our national governments are finalizing the United Nations' post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda.

As a point of departure, our discussions started with the Agreements reached at the Working Table on “The Parliament as a Main Actor in the Effective Dialogue for Sustainable Economic Development, Climate Change, and Social Inclusion” of the Inter-American Meeting of Presidents of the Legislative Branch held in Lima, Republic of Peru, on July 18, 2014.

Recalling this commitment to the above-mentioned Agreement adopted by the participating presidents of the legislative branch in the Americas,

We reaffirm that:

- It is imperative to increase political will to prioritize the post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda across the Americas and Caribbean.
- Establishing sustainable development processes must be participatory, inclusive, and democratic in nature, respecting the dignity of human beings, and must be carried out in consideration of social, political, and economic conditions, as well as cultural conditions.

- Increased awareness about climate change, poverty, and inequality starts at home and presents an important opportunity for legislators to introduce initiatives that address these challenges.
- Regional cooperation and exchanging best practices through legislator-led workshops is necessary for implementing structural changes that improve current models of development.
- Building dialogue and participation with civil society – as well as building agreement among all branches of government in a way that improves the efficient administration of public resources – contribute to our citizen's wellbeing and ensure the quality of life of future generations.

We commit to advance the following concrete actions within our countries to fulfill the points of Agreement:

- Increase efforts to educate citizens about development issues and challenges and guarantee their access to relevant, timely information in order to empower citizens to become solution-driven leaders.
- Strengthen the capacity of the legislative branch to respond to new sustainable development challenges and direct financial resources that support projects addressing these challenges.
- Integrate to the debate the need for a legal framework that allows implementing awareness and integrative public outreach policies – supported by adequate financial resources – that have shared benefits for our countries while respecting the diversity of the countries of our hemisphere.
- Explore possibilities to harmonize legislation, recognizing that climate change has no borders.
- Reinforce parliamentary engagement and collaboration with multilateral organizations at the sub-regional and local levels in order to improve the effectiveness of public policies.

We commit to:

Report, in writing or in person, on the advances and/or challenges of sustainable development at the 12th Plenary Assembly of ParlAmericas to be held in 2015 with active contributions from delegations of our parliaments.

**c) Working Group (Group of Women Parliamentarians Gathering)
Declaration of Commitment on Women's Healthcare in the Americas**

Considering that:

Through Resolution 65/234 the United Nations General Assembly decided to extend the deadline for the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) beyond 2014,

The Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development, adopted at the First Meeting of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, is the regional agenda on this issue, and that its implementation not only supplements the Programme of Action of the ICPD, but it is also of essential to advancing women's health and rights,

Despite progress in furthering the objectives and goals set out in the Programme of Action of the ICPD, major challenges exist for its full implementation, many of which are related to inequalities still persistent in the region,

Gender-based violence is a persistent problem in the region, and one which has serious implications for the exercise of human rights, individual and community health, and the development of men and women suffering from such violence,

The challenges to achieve universal access to sexual and reproductive health are still serious, especially in regards to teenage pregnancy, maternal mortality, unsafe abortion, and the unmet need for contraceptives, including emergency contraceptive pills,

Average statistics generally conceal the realities faced by specific groups where these issues are even more serious, such as adolescents and youth and other vulnerable populations.

Investments in sexual and reproductive health education and prevention generate a large economic and social return,

Sexual and reproductive rights are an integral part of human rights, and their exercise is essential for health and development,

We are concerned about the criminalization of women who opt to terminate their pregnancy, and about the number of women who are imprisoned in our region on that account,

We commit to:

- Contribute to the establishment of policies for comprehensive education on gender and sexuality, at both public and private schools, and at all levels of schooling.
- Promote a sustainable development agenda that includes women's health and gender equality.
- Pass legislation on violence including and criminalizing obstetric violence, sexual violence, and political violence.
- Facilitate access to support and protection networks for women with at-risk pregnancies through multidisciplinary teams, physicians, psychologists, and social workers, in order to provide these women with the tools they require for their motherhood.
- Recognize that those comprising the legislative power must be aware of their impact on women's health.
- Open dialogue to analyze the legal frameworks on sexual and reproductive health and rights.

- Allocate budgetary resources to increase access to public services and to strengthen prevention-based sexual and reproductive health for youth and adolescents.

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian Section of ParlAmericas
ACTIVITY	35th Meeting of the ParlAmericas Board of Directors and 11th Plenary Assembly
DESTINATION	Santiago, Chile
DATES	September 24-27, 2014
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Hon. Michael L. MacDonald, Senator Hon. Pierrette Ringuette, Senator Hon. Massimo Pacetti, Senator
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. Randy Hoback, M.P.
STAFF	Mr. Alexandre Roger, Association Secretary Mrs. Guyanne Desforges, Association Secretary
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 35,390.10
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 4,801.83
HOSPITALITY	\$ 443.80
PER DIEMS	\$ 2,859.56
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$ 65.00
MISCELLANEOUS/ REGISTRATION FEES	\$ 108.57
TOTAL	\$ 43,668.86