



**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation  
respecting its participation at the 21st Executive Committee  
Meeting of the Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas**

**Canadian Section of ParlAmericas**

**Panama City, Panama  
January 29-30, 2010**

# Report

## 1. Introduction

FIPA held its 21st Executive Committee meeting in Panama City, Panama on January 29-30, 2010, at the Taboga Hall of the Sheraton Hotel Panama. The meeting was hosted by Panamanian Deputy Víctor Juliao III, Representative of Central America to the Executive Committee, and chaired by FIPA President Luiz Carlos Haully, Member of the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies. Seven other members of the Executive Committee attended: James Bezan, MP (Canada, representative of North America), Stanford Callender, MP (Trinidad and Tobago, representative of the Caribbean), Deputy María Estela de la Cruz (Dominican Republic, representative of Central America), Senator Adriana González Carrillo (Mexico, representative of the host country of the 7th Plenary Meeting), Senator Alberto Grillón Conigliaro (Paraguay, representative of South America), Senator Céline Hervieux-Payette (Canada, past President of FIPA) and Linda Machuca, Member of the National Assembly of Ecuador (President of the Group of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas). Dominican Deputy Gladys Sofía Azcona, Parliamentary Centre representatives Amelita Armit and John Wood and representative of the Inter-American Parliamentary Group on Population and Development Norma García de Paredes participated as guests. (See Appendix A for a list of participants)

The main objectives of the meeting were to discuss the 2010 work plan – which included preparations for the 7th Plenary Meeting, a regional trade workshop, a meeting of the Group of Women Parliamentarians and initial activities of the new project financed by the Canadian International Development agency (CIDA) – and to address administrative matters. In response to the January 12 earthquake in Haiti, members also discussed and adopted a resolution of solidarity towards that country.

## 2. Opening of the Meeting

Deputy Víctor Juliao III extended welcoming remarks on behalf of José Luis Varela Rodríguez, President of the National Assembly. He then referred to the tragic events occurred in Haiti on January 12, and invited participants to observe a minute a silence in memory of the victims of the earthquake.

FIPA President Luiz Carlos Haully, as Chair of the Executive Committee, was then invited to take the floor. He thanked Mr. Juliao for facilitating the organization of the 21st Meeting of the FIPA Executive Committee. He recalled the Forum's mandate and presented a summary of themes addressed by FIPA since its creation. He then introduced participating Executive Committee members and guests and, in doing so, noted the difficulties faced in having an official United States representative appointed to the FIPA Executive Committee.

### **3. Adoption of the Agenda**

President Haully invited members to review the draft agenda of the 21st Executive Committee Meeting. He proposed the inclusion of a new item to discuss the situation in Haiti.

Delegates took the floor in turn to express their solidarity with Haiti and talk about their respective country's response to the disaster. The outstanding efforts made by the Dominican Republic in support of their neighbouring country were particularly praised.

Meeting host Víctor Juliao introduced a draft resolution through which the FIPA Executive Committee expresses solidarity with Haiti in light of the disaster caused by the earthquake. He explained that the aim of the resolution was to promote the idea of emergency preparedness and seek for an exchange of experiences in terms of emergency relief efforts.

The agenda was adopted with the proposed addition. The Chair asked members to submit their suggestions regarding the draft resolution in writing so that these could be included in a revised version to be considered the following day.

### **4. Approval of the Report of the 20th Executive Committee Meeting**

The meeting proceeded with the consideration of the report of the 20th FIPA Executive Committee meeting, which was approved without any change.

### **5. Report on Recent Activities**

Canadian representative James Bezan was invited to speak about the signature of a contribution agreement between CIDA, FIPA and the Parliamentary Centre of Canada for the implementation of the Project "Strengthening the Role of Parliaments in Democratic Governance and Sustainable Development in the Americas".

The floor was then given to Parliamentary Centre President Amelita Armit, who described this as a significant and timely agreement, which would enable the Parliamentary Centre to support FIPA in many areas, including the development of training programs and the elaboration of a strategy to achieve financial sustainability.

Ms. Armit followed her address with a presentation of a revised version of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) defining the relationship between FIPA and the Parliamentary Centre. She explained that the range of services to be provided to FIPA by the Parliamentary Centre would be expanded through this new MOU, to include not only Technical Secretariat services and administrative support but also expertise in parliamentary capacity-building and development.

Following the presentation, members were invited to consider this new MOU. The representative of Canada raised concerns about the fact that the MOU provides for a fix overhead percentage to be charged by the Parliamentary Centre to FIPA on top of direct labour costs and expressed his view that a breakdown of actual indirect expenses incurred by the Centre would be preferable. Ms. Armit indicated that the Centre would provide such a breakdown and that the overhead could be reconsidered in financial year 2010-2011 with this information in hand.

Upon a motion by the Canadian Representative the Memorandum of Understanding was approved by the Executive Committee.

The Parliamentary Centre was congratulated on efforts made to achieve an agreement with CIDA.

Finally, the President informed the Executive Committee that a new program officer in charge of communications and a program assistant had been hired at the FIPA Technical Secretariat in replacement of outgoing staff. Upon a proposal by past FIPA President Céline Hervieux-Payette a motion was moved to thank former FIPA staff Mateo Barney, Cora Capurro and Sabra Ripley for their contribution to FIPA and to welcome new staff.

## **6. 2010 FIPA Work Plan**

### **6.1 Preparations for the 7th Plenary Meeting**

Mexican Senator Adriana González Carrillo was given the floor to speak about preparations for the 7th Plenary Meeting. The Senator reiterated her Congress' satisfaction to be hosting the FIPA Plenary meeting on the bicentennial of its independence and centennial of the Mexican revolution and invited members to identify tentative dates for the event.

After discussion, delegates agreed to hold the 7th Plenary Meeting on November 17-21, 2010.

The Chair then invited delegates to share ideas regarding the event's agenda and, in particular, regarding themes to be addressed by working groups. After an exchange of ideas the following themes were agreed upon:

- Emergency preparedness, disaster relief and infrastructures;
- Regional security and transnational crime;
- The role of civil society in democracy strengthening.

Executive Committee members also agreed on the importance to pursue the work of FIPA in the areas of migrations and human rights and food security, possibly through capacity-building activities.

The representative of Ecuador asked that the agenda of the Plenary Meeting be kept open to a certain extent in order to take into account major issues which may arise in the course of the year. She proposed that an analysis be prepared and presented on each substantive topic in order to stress their strategic nature. Members of the Executive Committee concurred.

It was also proposed to open a space for a discussion with other parliamentary institutions, although members agreed that the meeting should focus on themes of interest to Parliaments of the Americas.

Finally, following-up on the decision made at the last meeting of Executive Committee, members agreed on the fee to be charged to observer delegations, fixed at US\$ 1,000/delegate up to a maximum of 5 delegates. In addition, members concurred that

there should be an annual regular fee for observers, equivalent to the lower fee paid by FIPA members.

## **6.2 2010 Regional Trade Workshop**

Upon the proposal of the host country, it was agreed to postpone the date of the trade workshop from March 11-13 to May 19-22, 2010.

## **6.3 FIPA Capacity-Building Program and Presentation of a Methodology to Assess the Needs and Interests of FIPA Member Parliaments**

Parliamentary Centre's senior adviser in parliamentary development John Wood was invited to present a methodology for the design of a capacity-building program to be developed in the framework of the new CIDA-financed project.

Mr. Wood presented key elements of the methodology, described in a document distributed to participants. He noted that the evaluation would be made through interviews – administered during visits to select Parliaments in each sub-region of the hemisphere – and questionnaires. He also expressed his interest in discussing with each member individually in order to obtain their input on such methodology.

The proposed methodology was approved by the Executive Committee, who noted the importance of having professional development opportunities for legislators and assured the Parliamentary Centre representative of their support. The Panamanian representative said that his National Assembly would provide support to the Parliamentary Centre in the coordination of interviews with parliamentarians and staff of his National Assembly. Paraguayan Executive Committee Alberto Grillón was appointed to be the official liaison between the Parliamentary Centre and the Executive Committee on the capacity-building program.

## **6.4 Group of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas**

Ecuadorian Representative Linda Machuca, President of the Group of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas, distributed a proposal for the next Women's Group meeting, which, reiterating the offer made by the President of the Ecuadorian Assembly, she proposed be held in her country.

She submitted tentative dates for the event (July 6-8, 2010) and invited Executive Committee members to express their preferences with regards to priority issues to be addressed at that meeting.

Proposed dates were approved. Participants noted that the situation of indigenous women and of women living in rural areas deserved particular attention as they are the ones who suffer the most difficult living conditions and are often not aware of their rights. The Dominican representative emphasized the importance of working at the local level, for example by having gender departments in local administrations.

Other proposals included harmonization between human rights international treaties and national legislation, the application of quota legislation and economic issues.

Ms. Machuca took note of these ideas and committed to extend the consultation to the Women's Group network. She also took note of the recommendation to have NGO representation at the meeting, while emphasizing, at the same time, the importance of having a well known keynote speaker in order to raise the profile of the event.

Before closing the discussion, President Haully indicated that the CIDA project budget included funds to contract a specialist to support the Group of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas. Members agreed that FIPA should proceed with the contracting.

### **6.5 Follow-Up to 6th Plenary Meeting Recommendations**

Participants were invited to look at a summary list of recommendations made at the 6th Plenary Meeting of FIPA and to consider means to follow-up on these recommendations. In the absence of comments, the Chair asked members to send their suggestions in writing to the FIPA Technical Secretariat.

### **6.6 Relations with Inter-American Institutions and Summit of the Americas' Process**

The Chair recalled the decision made the previous year to have a general cooperation agreement between FIPA and the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States (OAS), but indicated that such project had not materialized yet. He asked the FIPA Technical Secretariat to follow-up on this matter with the OAS General Secretariat

He suggested that the two organizations consider, in particular, the idea of holding a joint meeting of speakers and presidents of parliamentary chambers of the Americas – possibly as part of the process leading to the next Summit of the Americas in Colombia.

He then invited participants to review the list of inter-American activities available in their binders, in order for them to decide whether FIPA should seek participation in some of them.

Members expressed their interest in forming a parliamentary delegation to observe the 40th Regular Session of the OAS General Assembly in Lima, Peru, June 6-8, 2010.

The Canadian representative noted that the Inter-American Development Bank would hold its 2011 annual meeting in Calgary, Canada.

### **6.7 Relations with the Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas (COPA)**

The Chair reported on the lack of progress made in discussions between FIPA and COPA on the possible integration of the two organizations since the first meeting of the joint FIPA-COPA working group created in 2007.

After an exchange of views on relations between FIPA and COPA, members decided to maintain the status-quo for the moment while continuing to seek insight into how parliaments in the Americas view the future of the hemispheric parliamentary organizations.

## **6.8 Revision of the Communications' Strategy**

The Chair indicated that a review of FIPA's communication strategy – last updated in 2005 – would be undertaken by the FIPA Technical Secretariat, and invited members to share ideas in this regard with the FIPA communications officer.

A preliminary exchange of ideas took place, focussing primarily on the FIPA website. Members suggested to use the site the FIPA website, on the one hand as an information tool (for example by including a bank of legislation and best practices on different subject matters, updated links to member parliaments and blogs of parliamentarians) and on the other as a means to promote coordination among parliamentarians and exercise influence (for example by promoting good practices and inspiring experiences). It was also noted that the website should be attractive to target groups, such as the youth.

Other concrete proposals included:

- To revamp the Virtual Parliament and consider the use of social networks such as Facebook or others, for the exchange of information, especially for the Women's Group;
- To design new promotional material, such as a FIPA flag, pamphlets and posters;
- To promote staff exchanges between FIPA members parliaments as a means to share practices.

The communications officer took note of these ideas and indicated that she would contact individual members to pursue the review exercise.

## **7. Presentation by the Inter-American Parliamentary Group on Population and Development**

A special presentation was made by the Inter-American Parliamentary Group, represented by Program Coordinator Norma García de Paredes. Ms. García explained the mandate of the IAPG and its work on issues such as sexual and reproductive health in relation to the United Nations development agenda. She spoke about the Group's structure and its current projects, which include the development of comparative legislation on HIV-AIDS. She requested support from the Executive Committee to consolidate the Group's presence in countries where it doesn't have representation.

Following a question and answer period, Ms. García was thanked for her presentation.

## **8. Administrative and Financial Matters**

### **8.1 Special Meeting of the Board of Directors of the FIPA Corporation**

FIPA President Luiz Carlos Hauly invited the President of the FIPA Corporation, Canadian Senator Céline Hervieux-Payette, to take the floor to chair the Special Meeting of the FIPA Corporation Board of Directors. Among other items, directors approved the financial statement of the FIPA for the year ended on September 30, 2009.

## **8.2 Annual General Meeting of Executive Committee Members of the FIPA Corporation**

The President of the FIPA Corporation called the annual meeting of Executive Committee members of the FIPA Corporation, during which Executive Committee members received the auditors' report on the financial statement for the year ended on September 30, 2009 and elected the Board of Directors of the Corporation. Canadian Senator Céline Hervieux-Payette was re-elected as President of the FIPA Corporation. Auditors for the financial year ending on September 30, 2010 were appointed.

## **8.3 Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors of the FIPA Corporation**

The FIPA Corporation President then called a meeting of the new Board of Directors of the Corporation. Officers of the Corporation were appointed. The remuneration of auditors for the year ending on September 30, 2010 was set. Director James Bezan, from Canada, was appointed to represent FIPA on the steering committee of the new CIDA-financed project. Finally, the FIPA budget for year October 1, 2009-September 30, 2010 was adopted with minor amendments.

## **8.4 Review of the Financial Strategy of FIPA**

The Chair passed the floor to the FIPA Executive Secretary, who explained the rationale behind the proposed review of FIPA's financial strategy. The Executive Secretary noted, in particular, that making FIPA self-sustainable was one of the objectives of the new CIDA-funded project and that this would require an examination of the membership fees system, the cost-efficiency of the current Technical Secretariat structure and the diversification of FIPA's funding. A document outlining the amount of funds collected from member parliaments annually since the introduction of the regular membership fees' system in 2004 was distributed to members for their information.

After an examination of the data provided, the Chair concluded that FIPA basically had to triple its current revenue from membership fees in order to achieve self-sustainability. He added, referring to the Brazilian experience, that the payment of contribution was often tied to the existence of FIPA chapters in member parliaments, hence the need to work on passing resolutions to create such structures in each member country. The Canadian delegates echoed this view, explaining the system put in place in the Parliament of Canada for the allocation of funds to parliamentary associations. The Dominican representative requested the support of the Executive Committee and Secretariat in reaching out to her country's Senate authorities in order to facilitate a possible increase of the Dominican contribution.

Members agreed to proceed with the review of the financial strategy. Parliamentary Centre President Amelita Armit reiterated the Parliamentary Centre's commitment, under the new project, to assist FIPA in the development of that strategy.



## **9. Other Business**

### **9.1 Date and Location of the 22nd FIPA Executive Committee Meeting**

The representative of Paraguay, Senator Alberto Grillón Conigliaro, offered to host the next FIPA Executive Committee Member in Asunción, Paraguay.

Members accepted the offer and, after discussion, decided to hold the meeting on June 4-5, before the OAS General Assembly (scheduled June 6-8 in Lima, Peru) in order to enable a delegation of Executive Committee members to attend the Assembly.

### **9.2 Resolution on Haiti**

Taking into account suggestions made at the beginning of the meeting, a final text of the draft resolution “In which the FIPA Executive Committee expresses its solidarity with Haiti in light of the disaster caused by the earthquake” was submitted to Executive Committee members on January 30. It was adopted unanimously.

(See Appendix B for Resolution FIPA/EC/2010/RES.1 “In which the FIPA Executive Committee expresses its solidarity with Haiti in light of the disaster caused by the earthquake)

## **10. Closing**

No other issue having been raised, the Chair declared the 21st FIPA Executive Committee Meeting closed.

Respectfully submitted,

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

# Appendix A

## List of Participants

### MEMBERS OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

#### FIPA President

Deputy Luiz Carlos Haully (BRAZIL)

#### North America

James Bezan, MP (CANADA)

#### Central America

Deputy María Estela de la Cruz (DOMINICAN REPUBLIC)

Deputy Víctor Juliao III (PANAMA – Host of the 21st executive Committee Meeting)

#### South America

Senator Alberto Grillón Conigliaro (PARAGUAY)

#### Caribbean

Stanford Callender, Member of Parliament (TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO)

#### Past President

Senator Céline Hervieux-Payette (CANADA)

#### President of the Group of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas

Linda Machuca Moscoso, Member of the National Assembly (ECUADOR)

### OTHER GUESTS

Amelita Armit (Parliamentary Centre of Canada)

Leif-Erik Aune (Parliament of Canada)

Deputy Gladys Sofía Azcona (DOMINICAN REPUBLIC)

Norma García de Paredes (Inter-American Parliamentary Group on Population and Development)

John Wood (Parliamentary Centre of Canada)

### FIPA TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT

Emmanuelle Pelletier (Executive Secretary)

Elena Sosa Lerín (Program Officer, Communications)

## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT**

Senator Nancy Patricia Gutiérrez (Representative of South America, COLOMBIA)

Dr. Rosemary Husbands-Mathurin, President of the House of Assembly (Representative of the Caribbean, SAINT LUCIA)

United States of Americas: Vacant

## **Appendix B**

### **Resolution “In which the FIPA Executive Committee expresses its solidarity with Haiti in light of the disaster caused by the earthquake”**

*Document translated from Spanish*

#### **FIPA/EC/2010/RES.1 of 30 January 2010**

Resolution in which the FIPA Executive Committee expresses its solidarity with Haiti in light of the disaster caused by the earthquake

#### **WHEREAS:**

On January 12, our sister Republic of Haiti was severely affected by a devastating earthquake that has caused over one hundred thousand deaths and affected the lives of another million people;

This powerful earthquake measuring 7.0 on the Richter scale caused severe damage to the main government buildings, churches, hospitals, schools and homes, destroying the central part of the capital, Port-au-Prince, and other cities;

Haitian families are living in a time of tragedy and misfortune due to the damage caused by the uncontrollable power of this earthquake, and urgently require international assistance in the form of food, medicine and water;

The Executive Committee of the Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas cannot remain indifferent to the tragedy being faced by our brothers and sisters in Haiti;

With a view to promoting democracy, the Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas (FIPA) and the Parliamentary Centre of Canada offered a training course in April 2009 to female candidates in the legislative and municipal elections in Haiti,

#### **RESOLVES:**

- 1) To express our firm humanitarian solidarity in this time of sadness and pain being experienced by the people of Haiti, a time in which the material damages have been considerable and in which deaths have exceeded 100,000, one million have been left homeless and severe damage has been caused to infrastructure.
- 2) To appeal to the international community to render assistance in this humanitarian emergency by promoting immigration regulations for Haitians living abroad, creating educational scholarships for Haitian citizens and actively participating in rebuilding the country and strengthening democracy.
- 3) To reflect on the breadth of the human tragedy our Haitian brothers and sisters are facing with respect to the risks and the state of vulnerability to

which our planet Earth is exposed, and to conduct scientific research to assess risks and minimize them as much as possible.

- 4) To strengthen mechanisms for regional cooperation and national technical and institutional capacity for the reduction, prevention, preparedness, response, rehabilitation, resilience, risk reduction, impact mitigation and assessment of disasters and emergencies such as pandemics.
- 5) To optimize systems for monitoring, surveillance, early warning and communication; encourage information exchange and research under the framework of the Inter-American Network for Disaster Mitigation, as appropriate, both in countries that are not in the path of hurricanes and volcanoes and in high-risk countries; and ensure that early warning systems are in place, promoting the preparedness programs, training and funding necessary for this purpose.
- 6) To encourage the strengthening of measures for internal planning and zoning and building codes, and to promote education and training to enhance public awareness of preparedness for natural disasters and national plans for prevention, mitigation and recovery after a disaster.
- 7) To offer active support by parliamentarians from the Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas to their Haitian parliamentary colleagues, while ensuring the inclusion of Haitian women, both parliamentarians and civil society women's groups.
- 8) To send copies of this resolution to the National Assembly of Haiti as an expression of our sympathy and deepest regret.

FOR COMMUNICATION AND EXECUTION.

*Adopted in Panama City on 30 January 2010.*

Dep. Luiz Carlos Hauly, Brazil  
President, FIPA

Dep. Victor Juliao III, Panama  
Host of the 21st FIPA  
Executive Committee Meeting

Mr. James Bezan, M.P.  
Canada

Mr. Stanford Callender, M.P.  
Trinidad & Tobago

Dep. Maria Estela de la Cruz  
Dominican Republic

Sen. Alberto Grillón  
Paraguay

Sen. Céline Hervieux-Payette  
Canada

Sen. Adriana González  
Mexico

Assemblywoman Linda  
Machuca  
Ecuador

## Travel Costs

<b>ASSOCIATION</b>	Canadian Section of ParlAmericas
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	21st Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Inter-Parliamentary Forum of the Americas
<b>DESTINATION</b>	Panama City, Panama
<b>DATES</b>	January 29-30, 2010
<b>DELEGATION</b>	
SENATE	The Honourable Céline Hervieux- Payette, Senator
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Mr. James Bezan, M.P.
STAFF	Mr. Leif-Erik Aune Association Secretary
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	<b>\$ 9,881.67</b>
<b>ACCOMMODATION</b>	<b>\$ 1,590.41</b>
<b>HOSPITALITY</b>	<b>\$ 102.50</b>
<b>PER DIEMS</b>	<b>\$ 580.19</b>
<b>OFFICIAL GIFTS</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>
<b>MISCELLANEOUS / REGISTRATION FEES</b>	<b>\$ 203.11</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 12,357.88</b>