



Speech

Organization of American States



**LUIGI R. EINAUDI, ACTING SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE
ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES
ON THE OCCASION OF THE DAY OF THE WOMEN OF THE
AMERICAS
February 18, 2005 - Washington, D.C.**

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It is a pleasure for me to address this message to you today as we celebrate the Day of the Women of the Americas and the 77th anniversary of the establishment of the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM).

During my tenure as Assistant Secretary General, and now as Acting Secretary General, I have had the opportunity to work closely with the Commission and to take stock of its valuable contributions, which have brought great good to the women of the Americas. I would therefore like to seize this occasion to underscore the Commission's achievements during the past decade.

The CIM's efforts to prevent, punish, and eradicate gender-based violence are a source of pride for the Organization. These efforts have taken shape not only in the Convention of Belém do Pará, which is still the only such convention in the world, but also in the recently adopted Follow-up Mechanism for its implementation.

Likewise, at the initiative of the CIM, the issue of trafficking in women and children has been placed on the OAS agenda. I find it gratifying that, despite the short period of time devoted to this problem, significant progress has been made in encouraging governments to cooperate in combating it. Member states have become aware of its gravity and have started to adopt legislation and carry out public policies designed to address it.

The Follow-up Mechanism for the Convention, trafficking in persons, and such other topics as implementation of the Inter-American Program on the Promotion of Women's Human Rights and Gender Equity and Equality will be taken up in June this year at the thirty-fifth regular session of the OAS General Assembly. There is no doubt that the decisions adopted there will enable us to make further progress on these topics, which are so essential to the development of our societies.

I am confident that the CIM will continue to have a positive impact on the goal of full integration of the gender perspective into all topics of the Plan of Action to be adopted at the Fourth Summit of the Americas, which will be held in November this year in Mar del Plata, Argentina.

With thanks once again to the CIM for its work and record of achievement, I would like to invite all of you to collaborate with it and to support it as it continues to make progress toward the lofty purpose of helping to achieve the goals of equality, peace, prosperity, and development for all our peoples.

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Headquarters: 17th Street & Constitution Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006, USA
Tel. (202)458-3000 / Email: multimedia@oas.org

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