



Organization of  
American States



## INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION OF WOMEN

CIM/DEC. 10 (XXXV-O/10)

### DECLARATION OF THE INTER-AMERICAN YEAR OF WOMEN “WOMEN AND POWER: FOR A WORLD OF EQUALITY”

(Adopted at the fifth plenary session, held on November 4, 2010)

THE THIRTY-FIFTH ASSEMBLY OF DELEGATES OF THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION OF WOMEN OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES, gathered in Mexico City from November 3rd to 5th 2010,

#### BEARING IN MIND:

That the rights, values and principles of liberty, equality and social justice are intrinsic to democracy;

The rights, values and principles contained in the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW);

That the Inter-American Democratic Charter establishes that “States shall promote the full and equal participation of women in the political structures of their countries as a fundamental element in the promotion and exercise of a democratic culture;” and

That during its thirty-seventh regular session, the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS) approved Resolution AG/RES.2322 (XXXVII-O/07), “Inter-American Year of Women,” with the aim of proclaiming 2010 as the year for its celebration, to promote broad mobilization in the Americas around the evaluation of achievements made and challenges encountered in the defense of women’s human rights and gender equality, and increase public awareness of gender issues. The theme chosen for the celebration was “*Women and Power: For a World of Equality*”;

#### NOTING WITH SATISFACTION:

That in 2010, the inter-American system also celebrates fifteen years since the entry into force of the Inter-American Convention to Prevent, Punish and Eradicate Violence against Women, “Convention of Belém do Pará,” (1995) and ten years since the adoption of the Inter-American Program on the Promotion of the Human Rights of Women and Gender Equity and Equality (IAP, 2000);

That at the international level it has been fifteen years since the adoption of the Declaration and Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995), and ten years since the adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security and the development objectives and commitments derived from the Millennium Declaration of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly (New York, 2000);

The adoption of resolution A/RES/65/1 “Keeping the Promise: United to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals” by the General Assembly of the UN;

The establishment of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) through resolution A/RES/64/289 of the UN General Assembly; and

The establishment, by the UN Human Rights Council, “for a period of three years, of a working group of five independent experts, of balanced geographical representation, on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice,” (A/HRC/RES/15/23),

**CONSIDERING:**

That significant advances have been made in national legislation, such as the recognition of women’s political rights at the constitutional level and the adoption of specific measures to promote the equal integration of women in the public sphere and in decision-making; and

That the Consensus of Quito (2007) and the Consensus of Brasilia (2010) agreed on the bases for strengthening women’s citizenship within a context of diversity and increasing their participation in decision-making processes and spheres of power;

**RECOGNIZING:**

That in spite of the advances reached, effective equality still has not been reached between women and men in terms of the exercise of political citizenship; and

That in the face of persistent discrimination against women in political institutions and processes in some countries in the hemisphere and the limited implementation of measures for political inclusion, legislative and institutional reforms are needed, as are public policies, including electoral policies, that guarantee the applicability of the full exercise of women’s political rights;

**REITERATING** that the equal participation of women in decision-making in the public and private sectors is indispensable to their inclusion in development processes; and

**CONSCIOUS** of the importance of having electoral systems that promote the representation of women in elected offices at all levels,

**DECLARES ITS COMMITMENT TO:**

1. Develop and foster, as appropriate, electoral legislation reforms and affirmative action measures needed to ensure the equal treatment of women and men in political representation.

2. Promote the creation of mechanisms that contribute to guaranteeing the effective application of quota laws and/or parity, with the objective of obtaining a real and equal representation of women in electoral processes, as well as to promote quota systems and parity in countries where they do not exist, as appropriate.

3. Promote a multi-cultural and diversity approach within laws, policies and strategies for promoting gender equality in political representation and in executive decision-making offices.

4. Promote measures to contribute to the leadership and political participation of indigenous and Afro-descendant women.

5. Promote the measures necessary to prevent, punish and eradicate political harassment of women.

6. Promote the generation of party and electoral statistical information on the profile of women's participation in elections.

7. Promote legislation and specific measures that ensure the elimination of the obstacles faced by women in the activities of political parties and in electoral campaigns for egalitarian access to public financing as well as to electoral publicity during peak audience hours.

8. Promote policies and measures of co-responsibility and conciliation of family and work life between women and men in order to increase the possibility for women to participate in the public sphere.

9. Promote the development of integral training programs in educational organizations and institutions in order to foment and enhance the capacities of women and their empowerment in the exercise of political leadership and negotiation.

10. Promote alliances with pertinent Inter-American entities and national and local electoral bodies to foster effective measures for the full exercise of women's political rights, including, among others, mechanisms for the obtaining of identity documents.

**REQUESTS THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND THE PERMANENT SECRETARIAT OF THE CIM TO:**

11. Promote, in collaboration with established mechanisms for the generation of statistical information, including the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) Gender Equality Observatory of Latin America and the Caribbean, hemispheric initiatives for evaluating and monitoring policies, measures and strategies implemented for the achievement of women's political representation in the region.

12. Strengthen their relations with civil society organizations in order to coordinate actions for the promotion of women's political leadership.

13. Advance the gender equality and women's rights agenda during the preparatory process for the Sixth Summit of the Americas, to be held in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, in 2012.