

## 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting

### Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum

Sponsored by: Ecuador, Chile and Malaysia

#### ASIA PACIFIC REGIONAL COOPERATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF DEMOCRACY, PARTICIPATION AND POLITICAL LEADERSHIP OF WOMEN

**Whereas** the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum first held in Singapore in August 1991, is a regional integration initiative that seeks to identify and discuss issues of regional concern and interest in order to promote them in a global context, by deepening and understanding of public policy issues and the experience of the countries of the region;

**Whereas** the objectives of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum include: examining the political, social and cultural developments resulting from economic growth and integration; encouraging and promoting regional cooperation at all levels on matters of common interest to the region;

**Reaffirming** the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted in December 1948, especially Article 7 which provides that "all men are equal before the law and, without any discrimination, are entitled to equal protection" and note that as women are human beings the usage of the term "men" includes women so that the same benefits and protection are afforded to women;

**Reaffirming** the Universal Declaration on Democracy 1997, which, in its Article 1 defines democracy as "*a universally recognized ideal and an objective based on common values shared by the peoples of the world community, regardless of their social cultural, political, and economic differences*";

**Reaffirming** the Inter-American Democratic Charter of 2001, which Article 7 provides "*Democracy is indispensable for the effective exercise of fundamental freedoms and human rights in their universality, indivisibility and interdependence, embodied in the respective constitutions of states and international human rights instruments*";

**Reaffirming** the commitments undertaken by member States that have signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women CEDAW, the Beijing Declaration and Platform adopted in 1995, the Resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations on the participation of women in politics in 2011 and the final document of the regional meeting of the Inter-parliamentary Assembly of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations on promoting women's leadership and political participation in Jakarta 2014;

**Reaffirming** the commitments made in ILO Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, where States undertake to promote actions geared at non-discrimination, recognition of the culture of indigenous peoples, consultation and participation;

**Recognizing** the Ministerial Declaration of Asia and the Pacific on progress towards gender equality and empowerment of women in Bangkok 2014 and the Resolution of the 17th Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF) on Gender Issues in the Parliamentarians adopted in Vientiane 2009;

**Recalling** the resolutions of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (WAIPA) on Women in Power and Decision Making in Kuala Lumpur 2007, Increasing Women's Representation in Politics in Hanoi 2010 and the Women's Leadership in Southeast Asia in Vientiane 2014;

**Recognizing** Parlantino's Political Declaration on the Women and Democracy Parliamentary Meeting adopted in Panama 2014, and the Declaration of ParlAmericas with commitments on the Open Parliament in the Americas adopted in Chile 2014;

**Aware** that the broad political diversity, the different types of regimes and ideological diversity in the Asia-Pacific region difficult progress and development of certain public policies and that the lack of transparency and probity are factors limiting democracy and thereby the prosperity of its inhabitants;

**Recognizing** that women play a key role for the sustainable development of nations and their political participation and leadership in public and private spaces should be encouraged at all levels of decision making and free from any form of violence;

**Recognizing** that Parliaments, Assemblies and Conventions are relevant areas to support the interests of women and their active involvement in the process of lawmaking is the key factor for achieving the Millennium Development Goals and the United Nations Development Agenda Post-2015, particularly the women's agenda;

## **RESOLVES TO:**

- 1. Promote** the development of civil, political, social and cultural rights with the aim to achieve equal rights for all members of society;
- 2. Strengthen** the structure and role of the democratic States with the objective of fortifying the participation and government processes of inclusion involving social groups that have been historically discriminated against and excluded;
- 3. Urge** the APPF Member States to promote the protection of human rights through social and economic rights in an environment of ethics and responsibility;
- 4. Reiterate** the commitment of the APPF Member States to promote the protection and defense of the democratic order through the adoption of legislation which assures democratic participation and the development of social integration processes;
- 5. Encourage** the use of best practices regarding transparency, accountability and probity in public policies;
- 6. Encourage** parliaments to adopt policies that ensure equal opportunities for participation of ethnic, cultural and gender groups respecting diversity;
- 7. Promote** the empowerment of women in politics and the promotion of female leadership in the Post-2015 Agenda with a specific approach to achieve complete and effective participation and equal opportunities for women in the political leadership and in decision making at all levels;
- 8. Encourage** APPF Member States to use Information and Communications Technologies to promote the importance of women's participation in politics.

Quito, January 14<sup>th</sup> 2015