



PARLIAMENTARY FORUM
ON SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS



Parlamento Latinoamericano
Secretaría General

THE BUENOS AIRES DECLARATION

The Parliamentarians participating in the Inter-Parliamentary Conference “The Design of Public Security Policies”, assembled in Buenos Aires on the **14th and 15th of May, 2009** declare:

1. that citizen security is a fundamental human right, essentially linked with concepts of self-determination and individual and collective freedom, against the institutionalisation of fear. Poverty, exclusion and inequality are sources of violence. Injustice and impunity create frustration. If democratic institutions fail to fulfil their civil responsibilities there is an increased risk that social frustration will lead to undemocratic actions and the unilateral and illegitimate use of violence.
2. their concern that the issue of citizen insecurity in the region constitutes one of the most severe problems and a major challenge that affects the quality of life of the people and the legitimacy of democratic institutions in these countries.
3. their commitment to work for national legislative reforms in each country in the area of arms, which respect the principles and criteria set by the Latin American Parliament Model Legislation on Firearms, considering it a model to harmonize legislation in this area. Congratulates the Congress of Guatemala for its recent enactment of the legislation on arms as well as the Colombian Congress with regards to the citizen participation process to amend its legislation.
4. the need to continue working for an effective democratisation of the police and security agencies, to ensure proper control and performance on clear and transparent guidelines for action aimed at the effective resolution of security issues. Human rights are the absolute norm and no single representative of a security institution has the right, by their own judgement or by order, to act outside of this norm with impunity.
5. welcome the Convention against the use of Cluster Munitions signed in December 2008 in Oslo, as well as its implementation as a legally binding document banning the production, use, stockpiling and trade in cluster bombs, as an important humanitarian achievement, encouraging those nations who have not yet signed or ratified the Convention to do so.
6. to support and encourage the Arms Trade Treaty process, which will lead to a legally binding treaty, covering all conventional arms, including small and light weapons, setting procedural and material requisites, such as prohibition of aggression, compliance with embargoes and respect for international humanitarian law, in accordance with the principles arising from the Charter of the

United Nations, leading to stem the flow of arms to actors, countries and regions which are subject to diversion or misuse or aggravation of conflicts.

7. to recommend member countries of UNASUR to create a Council on Citizen Security in order to harmonize policies which can guarantee citizen security.