



**First Inter-Parliamentary Conference  
Public Security and Small Arms and Light Weapons  
Dialogue between Regions, Dialogue between Parliaments**

**PANAMA DECLARATION**

The Parliamentarians participating in the First Inter-Parliamentary Conference on Public Security and Small Arms and Light Weapons, assembled in Panama City on the 31<sup>st</sup> of October and 1<sup>st</sup> of November, declare:

1. That security is a fundamental human right, essentially linked with concepts of self-determination and individual and collective freedom, against the institutionalisation of fear. Inequality is a source 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. A fruitful and complimentary collaboration between the Latin American Parliament and the Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons in deepening the task of supporting parliamentarians from the region in the construction of democratic public policies for citizen security as well as in the evaluation of the impact of measures for small arms and light weapons control.
3. Their concern over the fact that issues related to citizen insecurity constitute one of the most severe problems in the region and an enormous challenge affecting the quality of life of the people and the legitimacy of democratic institutions in these countries.
4. Their concern over the expansion of the private security industry in the region, which, without an adequately regulated framework or effective controls, creates a problem with serious consequences, thus complicating the management of citizen security.
5. The need to implement measures which give Parliaments a central role in the creation of a space for reflection and consensus generation, thus extending their capacity for intervention and assuming a proactive attitude in relation to the search for solutions, especially when concerning the creation of parliamentary commissions on weapons and ammunitions control.
6. Their commitment to the formulation, implementation and pursuit of integral measures of security, taking into special account the situation of young people, women and children as well as the poorer and more vulnerable sectors of society as the main victims of violence and crime.



7. The promotion of the adoption of coordinated public policies for citizen security between the different levels of the State and with participation from all sectors of society, taking into consideration the essential responsibility of the specific agencies (police officers, judicial and penitentiary).
8. Their concern over the phenomenon of the mismanagement of public security which, when delegated to policing institutions, makes the management of such systems autonomous.
9. That penal populism, which aspires to solve problems with new, tougher laws that are restrictive of guarantees, when conditions are not even such that it is possible to apply previous legislation, constitutes a false answer to the problem.
10. That the paradigm of citizen security constitutes a democratic construction which displaces the doctrine of national security. While the latter emphasises security of the State, the new paradigm accentuates the security of the people and the participation and involvement of civil society in the construction and extension of the sphere of citizen security.
11. Their devotion to the dynamism of the concept of citizen security, characterized by the recognition of the tensions and conflicts that are generated in society which are involved in the search for a balance between opposing interests, thus assuming the existence of a plural society.
12. Their invitation to the Members of Congress to adhere to this doctrine in the fulfilment of their legislative and control functions.
13. The need to consider citizen security as a public policy of the State and not of conjunctures, with a special emphasis on human rights.
14. Their commitment to the strengthening of State institutions when responding to citizens' demands with regards to security.
15. The need to clearly differentiate the functions of civil police institutions in charge of public security from those of national defence, and to recognize the exceptional nature of recourse to the armed forces with regards to tasks involving domestic security.
16. The need to conduct an analysis of the modernization of police forces in view of the complexity that insecurity and crime represent.
17. Their commitment to the process of passing a Model Legislation on Firearms and Controlled Materials within the scope of the Latin American Parliament and with support from the Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons.



18. Their commitment to the national promotion and legislative adjustment of the Model Legislation of Firearms and Controlled Materials as a way of orientating the harmonization of laws on the matter in the countries of the region.
19. The need to combine all international efforts in the search for consensus on the formulation process and passing of a legally binding Arms Trade Treaty which regulates international transfers.
20. Their commitment to parliamentary support for the ratification and internalisation process of such a norm.
21. Their strong recommendation to arms- and ammunition-producing countries to adapt production to responsible standards.
22. Their appreciation for the contribution and support of the Arias Foundation, the National Assembly of Panama and the United Nations Development Program.

Authorities of the Latin American Parliament:

- Senator Jorge Pizarro Soto, President
- Senator Sonia Escudero, Secretary General
- MP Elías Castillo, Vice-President of the Latin American Parliament for the Republic of Panama
- Dr. Humberto Peláez, Executive Secretary

Authorities of the Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons

- Minister Daisy Tourné, Uruguay
- MP Juan Hernandez, President of the Forum
- Peter Weiderud, Secretary General

Parliamentarians present:

Sen. Marlon E.R.A. Jamaloodin, President of the Justice Commission of the Netherlands Antilles

Sen. Pedro Joachim Kroon, Netherlands Antilles

MP Paola Spatola, President of the Citizen Safety, Combat and Prevention of Narcotraffic, Terrorism and Organized Crime Commission of the Latin American Parliament and Vice-President of the Domestic Security and Drug Trafficking Commission of the Argentine Chamber of Deputies



MP Silvia La Ruffa (FPV), President of the Security Commission of the Legislature of Buenos Aires, Argentina

MP Iván Canelas Arrualde, Bolivia

MP Raúl Jungman, member of the Commission for Public Security and Combating Organized Crime of the Chamber of Deputies of the Federative Republic of Brazil

MP Elizabeth Fonseca Corrales, member of the Permanent Commission of Government and Administrative Affairs, Republic of Costa Rica

MP Benito Antonio Lara, member of the Commission for Public Security and Combating Drug Trafficking, El Salvador

MP Anibal García, Republic of Guatemala. (Abstained from voting due to not yet having taken up his post in parliament)

MP José Santos Figueroa, National Director of the Project of the Commission for the Modernization of Nicaragua

MP Agustín Escudé, President of the Commission for Human Rights, National Assembly of the Republic of Panama

MP Alemán, President of the Commission of Foreign Affairs in the National Assembly of Panama

MP Olivares Fridas, member of the Commission for Human Rights, National Assembly of the Republic of Panama

MP. Javier Megeria, member of the Commission for Human Rights, National Assembly of the Republic of Panama

MP Alcíades Vásquez, member of the Commission for Human Rights, National Assembly of the Republic of Panama

Cong. Yohny Lescano, President of the Construction Commission of Peru

MP Gustavo Daniel Bernini Seguessa, member of the Construction Commission, Codes and General Legislation of the Chamber of Representatives of the Republic of Uruguay

Other regions:

MP Christer Winbäck, member of the Parliamentary Group on Small Arms & Light Weapons, Sweden

MP Manuel de Araujo, Deputy Chairperson International Relations Commission, Mozambique