

Recommendation on education

**Second General Assembly of the Parliamentary Conference of the Americas
Río Grande, Puerto Rico, July 19 to 23, 2000**

WHEREAS education is a motive force of economic growth and constitutes the very foundation of sustainable human development;

WHEREAS the promotion of literacy and universal access to education at all levels, without distinction as to race, sex or ethnic origin, constitute basic elements of social and cultural development, of economic growth and of representative democracy;

WHEREAS the advances in new information technologies offer unprecedented opportunities for progress, particularly in the fields of education, job training and information;

WHEREAS hemispheric integration results in a tremendous increase in relations among the populations of the different countries of the Americas, and requires greater openness toward different cultural realities, on the part of citizens;

WHEREAS we owe not only a financial debt but also a debt toward the education of children;

We, the women and men representatives of the parliamentary assemblies of the unitary, federal and federated States, regional Parliaments and interparliamentary organizations of the Americas:

REAFFIRM our will to support investment in the educational and continuing training systems that enhance the acquisition of general knowledge and of skills adapted to the new social, economic and technological realities, and to foster access to them for all the populations of the Americas, to help them in reaching their full potential and in achieving greater economic autonomy;

EXPRESS THE WISH that inter-American cooperation be reinforced in the area of education, that technical and occupational education be upgraded, and that the integration of the modern information and communications technologies in the different countries of the Americas be facilitated;

REAFFIRM our will to encourage exchange programs and to further develop the links between educational institutions, cultural institutions and individuals in the different States of the Americas, in order to promote cultural diversity and to contribute to improving mutual understanding between individuals and societies within the hemisphere;

COMMIT OURSELVES to intervene, within our respective assemblies, to improve universal access to quality education as an essential means to eliminate poverty and to foster sustainable human development for all citizens of the Americas, both female and male;

EXPRESS THE WISH, in accordance with the commitments made by the Heads of State and Government at the Santiago Summit, that greater resources be devoted to education and that the active participation of the different sectors of society be encouraged in the development and financing of education within the hemisphere, particularly through cooperation and innovation in the area of science and technology;

COMMIT OURSELVES to endeavour to have part of the service of the financial debt redirected toward education.