



### **A group of Latin American parliamentarians to assess the situation in Haiti**

A delegation of eight parliamentarians from various Latin American countries, including five from Brazil, will travel to Haiti on Wednesday, November 10, 2004, to assess the political and humanitarian situation there. The goal of the delegation from the Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas (COPA) is to report back to parliaments and multilateral organizations such as OAS and the UN on how to achieve complete political stabilization and set the socioeconomic situation back on track in Haiti.

According to COPA president Maria José Maninha (Labour Party member for the Federal District of Brazil), parliamentarians cannot sit idly by awaiting the occasional bits of news from Haiti, especially when the reports that do make it out paint an increasingly violent picture of the situation.

“We’re going there to speak in person to politicians in the governing party and in the opposition, and with representatives from NGOs and Haitian civil society. We want to get a clearer idea of what needs to be done to help the country redemocratize and organize free elections, as well as forge financial and humanitarian ties,” said Maninha.

#### **Delegation**

The COPA president will head up the delegation, which includes the following parliamentarians: Ms. Clair (Labour Party, State of Paraná), Fernando Gabeira (Independent, State of Rio de Janeiro), Orlando Fantazzini (Labour Party, State of São Paulo), Jhanneth Madriz Sotillo (Venezuela), Charlotte L’Écuyer (member of the Québec National Assembly, Canada), and Mexican MPs Juan José García Ochoa and Carlos Jiménez Macías.

Travel, security, and accommodation will be coordinated by the Brazilian military command in Haiti.

## **COPA**

This mission to Haiti, COPA's third diplomatic initiative in the second half of 2004, follows missions to observe Venezuela's revocatory referendum last August and the Uruguayan presidential elections on October 31.

Created in 1997, the Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas brings together the 35 congresses and parliamentary assemblies of the Americas, making it the only pan-American body to include both the United States and Cuba, as well as interparliamentary organizations and legislative assemblies from the federal states. Its main mission is to foster the participation of parliamentarians in matters related to integration among countries in the Americas.