



***Executive Committee Meeting  
Isla Margarita, Venezuela***

***February 21-23, 2003***

***[Proceedings \(PDF format\)](#)***

***Meeting of the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the  
Americas (Report in PDF format)***

***[Photos of the event \(PDF format\)](#)***

***PARLIAMENTARY CONFEDERATION OF THE  
AMERICAS***

***WORK SESSION ON MARGARITA ISLAND***

***Report***

With the presence of more than 40 delegates from countries throughout the Americas, who are members of the Executive Committee, the 8th Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas (COPA), was carried out on Margarita Island, State of Nueva Esparta, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, from Friday 21 to Sunday 23 of February, 2003.

The Executive Committee of COPA arrived on the Venezuelan Island on Friday, February 21. By that time, technicians, advisers and guests had already arrived in the country to put the finishing touches to the hemispheric meeting. Professionals from COPA's three secretariats located in Mexico, Quebec and Brazil, along with the team from the Andean Parliament, worked on the details for the

deliberations of the Executive Committee of this parliamentary political forum, as well as for the meeting of the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas which took place on Saturday, February 22.

Regarding the program of the 8th Meeting of the Executive Committee of COPA, on Friday, February 21, the convened parliamentarians gathered at the Margarita Hilton Hotel where, on the morning of Saturday, February 22, was held the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas during which the following people participated: the President of the Women's Bank, Ms. Nora Castañeda and the President of the Standing Committee for Women and Family of the National Assembly, Rep. Marelis Pérez. Simultaneously, the coordination meeting of the three secretariats of COPA took place. The first two work sessions of the Executive Committee of COPA were held during the afternoon the same day.

On Sunday, February 23, in the afternoon, the third and fourth work sessions took place. Afterwards the parliamentarians were taken to the Nueva Esparta State's Legislative Council, where the official ceremony was carried out for the transfer of COPA's Presidency for the February 2003 – February 2004 period, that will be chaired by Rep. Jhannett Madriz, current President of the Andean Parliament. As closing ceremony of the event, the Governor's Office of the State of Nueva Esparta and Corpotur offered a dinner with the presentation a musical groups from the region as well as a folkloric show from the State of Lara, where the 5th General Assembly of COPA will take place in the month of November this year.

Finally, the delegations returned to their countries on Monday. It is worth mentioning that that a delegation from the Republic of Ecuador visited on Monday, February 24, the State of Sucre, to accompany Governor Ramón Martínez in an official ceremony to honour the memory of Venezuelan national independence hero, Antonio José de Sucre

### ***DEBATED ISSUES***

Among the important issues debated by the parliamentarians from throughout the Continent, was the elaboration and approval of the annual agenda of the Parliamentary Organization that promotes

Inter-American cooperation. As well, COPA issued its political declarations on the current situation in Venezuela, as well as on international conflicts, particularly the Iraqi case. This agenda also underlines the creation of COPA's election observer mission as an institutional mechanism and the reflections concerning the organization's information instrument, COPA Magazine.



**WELCOME SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE  
COPA MEETING'S ORGANIZING COMMITTEE  
REP. JHANNETT MADRIZ SOTILLO**

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela is proud and pleased for being the venue of this Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Parliamentary Confederation of the America, a propitious moment to show once more the spirit of hospitality and brotherhood that characterizes the Venezuelan people, and very specially, the "Margariteño", the people from Margarita Island.

It is also for me a great honour, as incoming president, to share with the Executive Committee of COPA in this tourist resort of my country, Venezuela. I am sure we will be accompanied by ideological and environmental diversity, that will stimulate our intention to exchange experiences and establish ties of cooperation throughout the Continent.

Margarita Island is located at less than 50 km from Venezuela's continental territory, and it has been called the "Pearl of the Caribbean" thanks to its diversity, natural beauty and tropical climate.

A long time ago, Christopher Columbus, our conqueror, was the one who gave rise to the affectionate name that this territory is known by, thanks to the fact that in one of his enthusiastic speeches delivered before the Spanish Crown in 1498, he described the native Indians as "people adorned with pearls on the world's most beautiful land".

As I fully share the description given by our conqueror, I believe that Margarita Island is a place where the environment and the memories of our history have had the effect that in my mind emerges an infinity of ideas that Columbus as liberator had for our future, and which, today in events like these, can be taken into account once more and given continuity in the Americas.

We are surrounded by historical sites such as the Santa Rosa Castle, located on San Bernardo mountain, that offers a spectacular view of the capital city of Margarita, "La Asunción" and its surroundings. We also have the beautiful Virgen del Valle sanctuary, in the Espíritu Santo Valley, and La Restinga, where the longest beach on the Island is found.

I reiterate my joy being with you all in one of my country's most beautiful places, on the occasion of such an important event for our societies and for the future of the countries of the Americas.

I am grateful for your participation, and I hope your stay on our Island will be fully satisfactory.



## **INFORMATION ON COPA**

The Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas is an organization that brings together the congresses and parliamentary assemblies of the unitary, federal, federated and associated States, the regional parliaments and the interparliamentary organizations of the Americas.

An initiative of the parliamentarians of the Americas, COPA fosters dialogue on issues related to inter-American cooperation and hemispheric integration, in particular respecting the projects and mechanisms stemming from the Summits of the Heads of State and Government of the Americas. COPA contributes to the strengthening of parliamentary democracy and to the building of a community of the Americas founded on the respect for dignity and human rights, peace, democracy, solidarity between peoples, social justice and gender equity.

The COPA shall pursue the following objectives:

- I.- Promoting the interests and aspirations of the populations of the hemisphere regarding the issues and impacts of hemispheric economic integration before the executive bodies of the Americas;
- II.- Monitoring the progress of the initiatives and orientations agreed upon at the Summits of the Americas and to keep the congresses, parliamentary assemblies and governments of the Americas informed of related developments;
- III.- Developing and reinforcing the congresses' and parliamentary assemblies' means of action in the framework of hemispheric integration;
- IV.- Disseminating, to all members of the congresses and parliamentary assemblies of the Americas, the laws, regulations and means of action put in place to solve the problems with which the populations of the Americas are confronted, as well as comparative analyses of these public policies;
- V.- Fostering the creation of a synergetic relationship and permanent communication between the members of the different congresses, parliamentary assemblies, regional parliaments and interparliamentary organizations of the hemisphere;
- VI.- Promoting the implementation of public policies having an impact on the causes and effects of poverty in the countries of the Americas confronted with this problem.



**MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE PARLIAMENTARY  
CONFEDERATION OF THE AMERICAS (COPA)  
PORLAMAR, MARGARITA ISLAND, STATE OF NUEVA ESPARTA  
BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA**

**HOTEL: MARGARITA HILTON SUITES  
FEBRUARY 21 TO 24, 2003**

**PROGRAM**

**Friday, February 21, 2003**

**All day** Arrival of the members of the Executive Committee of COPA and of the Executive Committee of the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas, of the Technical Secretariats' staff and special guests.  
**Welcome:** Maiquetía Airport, Caracas and Porlamar Airport, Margarita Island.  
**Accommodation and work sessions:** Hotel Margarita Hilton Suites.

**Evening** Cocktail

**Saturday, February 22, 2003**

**9 a.m.- 1 p.m.** Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Network of Women Parliamentarians of the Americas

**11 a.m. - 2 p.m.** Meeting of the Technical Secretariats of COPA

**1 p.m.** ***LUNCHEON***

**3 p.m. - 7 p.m.** Meeting of the Executive Committee of COPA

**Opening and first work session**

Welcoming address by the President of COPA, Ms Laura Pavón Jaramillo and by the First Vice-President of COPA and President of the Andean Parliament, Ms Jhannett Madriz Sotillo.



**Sunday, February 23, 2003**

- 10 a.m.                      Second work session**
- 1 p.m.                        *LUNCHEON***
- 3 p.m.- 5 p.m.              Third work session**
- 5 p.m. - 5 :15 p.m.        *BREAK***
- 5:15 p.m. - 6 p.m.        Forth work session**
- 6 p.m.                        Ceremonious taking of oath of the new President of COPA and closing of the Meeting of the Executive Committee of COPA**

**Program:**

- Address by the President of the National Assembly of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the Honourable Francisco Ameliach, Representative.
- Taking of oath and transfer of powers to the new President of COPA, the Honourable Jhannet Madríz Sotillo.
- Address by Ms Jhannett Madríz Sotillo, Representative.
- Address by his Excellency, Mr José Vicente Rangel, Vice-President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.
- Conclusions of the Meeting of the Executive Committee.
- Press conference in order to present the adopted Declarations and recommendations.

**8 p.m.                        VENEZUELAN EVENING**

**Monday, February 24, 2003**

- All day                        DEPARTURE OF THE DELEGATIONS**
- (Optional)                    GUIDED TOUR OF MARGARITA ISLAND**

**Tuesday, February 25, 2003**

**All day                        DEPARTURE OF THE DELEGATIONS**

## MARGARITA ISLAND

### HOTEL/ VENUE

Hilton Margarita & Suites  
Calle Los Uveros, Urbanización Costa Azul,  
Margarita Island, Venezuela  
Telephone: (58-295) 262-4111  
Fax: (58-295) 262-1132  
Web Page: [www.margarita.hilton.com](http://www.margarita.hilton.com)  
E-mail: [res\\_margarita@hilton.com](mailto:res_margarita@hilton.com)

The meeting will take place at the Hilton Margarita & Suites, the principal international hotel on Margarita Island, located at a mere 40-minute air shuttle flight from Caracas, and 20 minutes from the "Santiago Mariño" Caribbean International Airport.

### Special Room Rates:

Rooms	Rates in US\$ *
Single	70.00 US\$ + 4% tax
Double/King-size	80.00 US\$ + 4% tax

The rate includes: Breakfast Buffet  
Welcome Cocktail at Check In  
Private Check In/Check Out

NOTE: Expenses for tickets, accommodation and taxes will be paid by each Parliamentarian and attendee to the event.

### CLIMATE:

On Margarita Island the climate is warm, but cooled by the sea breeze. The annual average temperature is 27° C (85° F)

### LANGUAGE:

Spanish is the official language. In most tourist resorts and hotels English and French are spoken.

### CURRENCY:

The local currency is the bolivar (Bs.), whose updated exchange rate on February 6, 2003, ranges around 1,600 bolivars per American dollar. Major international credit cards are accepted in most commercial centers and hotels on Margarita Island.

### BANKING SERVICES:

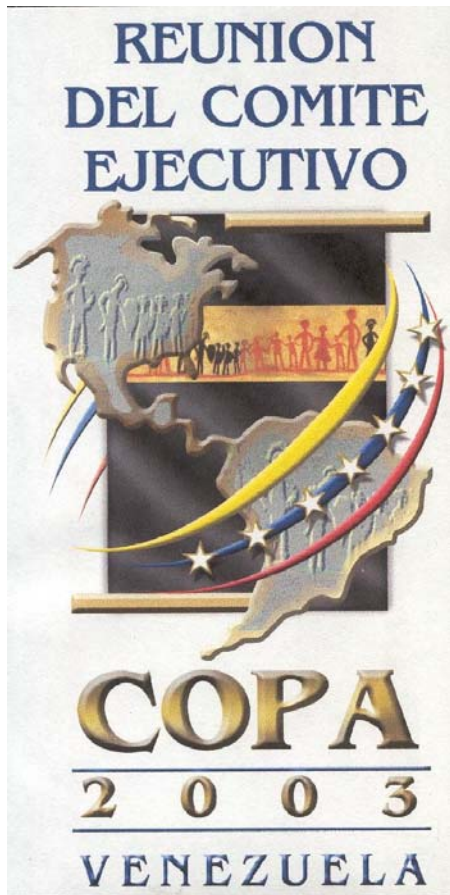
Agencies and branch offices of all the banks that operate in the country are found in the city of Porlamar, among which the most important are: Banco Provincial (BBVA); Banco de Venezuela (Grupo Santander); CorpBanca; Banco Mercantil; Banesco; Banco Industrial de Venezuela, among others.



Business hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on a continuous working day basis. There are also several foreign exchange offices such as Cussco; For You; Febres Parra and Triple. For currency exchange, the major hotels on Margarita Island also provide this service to their customers.

**AIRLINES:**

Aerolíneas Argentinas	(0295) 261.9884
Aeroméxico	(0212) 285.4422
American Airlines	(0212) 209.8111
Continental Airlines	(0212) 953.6433 / 5144
Lan Chile	(0212) 285.4433
Línea Aérea Copa	(0212) 953.6433 / 5144
Grupo Taca	(0241) 824.3130 / 2619
United Airlines	(0212) 278.4545
AVIANCA	(0212) 953.7254
AEROPOSTAL	0-800-2376252 / 0-800-284.6637
AVENSA/SERVIVENSA	263.7510 / 269.1315
ASERCA	269.1138 / 1149 / 1312
LASER	800-52.737 / 23732 / 73.737 --- 269.1216 / 1429
LAI	269.1352



Logo designed for the VIII Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Parliamentary Confederation of the Americas (COPA), which took place on Margarita Island, State of Nueva Esparta, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, from February 21 to 24, 2003.

Meeting of the Executive Committee of COPA, Margarita Island, State of Nueva Esparta.





Representative Guillermo Landázuri, President of the National Congress of Ecuador and President of the COPA Committee on the FTAA.



The solemn swearing in ceremony of COPA's new President, Representative Jhannett Madriz, for the year 2003, Place: Legislative Council of the State of Nueva Esparta.



Speech by the President of COPA, Representative Jhannett Madriz.



Showing gratitude towards the outgoing President of COPA, Mexican Representative, Laura Pavón.



Parliamentarians attending the Closing Ceremony.



The “Venezuelan Evening”, organized by the Government of the State of Nueva Esparta and the Tourism Corporation of Nueva Esparta



The First Lady of the State of Lara, Milagros de Reyes, presenting a sample of the crafts and folklore of her region, host of the V General Assembly of COPA.