Inter-American
Development Bank

Politics Matter

a dialogue of
WOMEN POLITICAL LEADERS

Inter-American
Dialogue

International Center
for Research on Women

Women's Leadership
Conference of the Americas

Contents

Preface

THE INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK (IDB) AND the Women's Leadership Conference of the Americas (WLCA)—a joint initiative of the Inter-American Dialogue and the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW)—are pleased to present this report on the discussions regarding women's leadership that occurred at the meeting, "Politics Matter: A Dialogue of Women Political Leaders," held on November 13, 2000 at IDB headquarters in Washington, DC. We are particularly grateful to the fifty top women politicians from throughout the hemisphere whose thoughtful participation made this forum a success.

The meeting was an important opportunity to gather arguably some of the most powerful women in the Americas for well-prepared roundtable discussions on how to expand and strengthen the role of women leaders in hemispheric affairs—and to what end. They concluded that women are woefully underrepresented in positions of influence and power, and that this is a tragedy for the quality of political leadership in the hemisphere. The group was united in its commitment to prioritize the promotion of women into political leadership, and to advocate for the legal and institutional reforms needed to achieve gender equity across the board. They felt that this meeting was a useful step in that direction. Moreover, the group urged us to build on the conference, and work to formalize a network of women politicians who could meet on a regular basis to exchange ideas, experiences, and offer support and advice to one another.

We want to recognize several important contributions leading up to and following the conference. Ana Milena Gaviria merits special thanks for conceiving the idea of "Politics Matter." We are also indebted to her for coordinating the meeting on behalf of the WLCA, and spearheading its efforts to launch an interactive website—which will ensure that the personal connections and best practices shared at the meeting do not end there. Finally, we are grateful to Mrs. Gaviria and Secretary General César Gaviria of the Organization of American States for hosting in their home a reception for the Washington policy community in honor of conference participants.

The initiative benefited greatly from the contributions of Mala Htun, research consultant for the WLCA, who served as rapporteur for the meeting and prepared two informative and thought-provoking background papers. We also want to recognize Ajay Bhardwaj of the Gallup Organization, who directed the opinion survey on popular attitudes toward women in power in Latin America. We appreciate the quality research and analysis evident in the Gallup report, which provided an unexpectedly apt underpinning for the conference proceedings.

This meeting would not have been possible without the sustained support of PROLEAD (Program for the Support of Women's Leadership and Representation) at the Inter-American Development Bank. The members of the PROLEAD team—chief of Women in Development Unit Gabriela Vega, program coordinator Ana María Brasileiro, program officer Vivian Roza, and program assistant Cristen Dávalos—played an integral part in both the preparation and execution of the conference.

Finally, special thanks are due to the staff of the Women's Leadership Conference of the Americas—WLCA director Joan Caivano and Dialogue program assistant Kelly Alderson—for their contribution to the design and implementation of the conference, and their ongoing efforts to ensure that the momentum begun last November will continue to bear fruit.

Mayra Buvinic
Chief , Social Development Division
Inter-American
Development Bank

Peter Hakim
President
Inter-American Dialogue

Geeta Rao Gupta
President
International Center for
Research on Women

Foreword

MORE WOMEN HAVE MORE POWER TODAY THAN EVER before. We have begun to emerge on the political front as strong leaders, often perceived as the honest alternative to men in power. As made clear by the Gallup poll contained in this volume, attitudes toward women in political power have changed. Three-fourths of the urban populations of Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and El Salvador believe it is possible that a woman may become president in the next 20 years. But as Mala Htun's paper on trends and challenges makes clear, the highest circles of power still remain largely male-dominated. Women are often held back by anachronistic political party systems and chauvinistic leaders. These barriers have restricted women from reaching executive power where the crucial decisions are made. Nonetheless, our numbers and influence are growing, a fact that inspired this meeting of top women politicians from throughout the Americas, "Politics Matter: A Dialogue of Women Political Leaders." Together we reviewed the pressing economic and social issues that affect our societies and how we might address them. We also considered how the results of the Gallup poll would affect our own electoral and political strategies.

This roundtable of Western Hemisphere women leaders brought together an ideologically diverse group of female politicians from the United States, Canada, and twenty-one countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. Participants included mayors of the two largest cities in the hemisphere, ministers, congresswomen, senators, party presidents, a deputy prime minister, and several former officeholders. Although the group disagreed on some points, all participants shared a commitment to policy innovations that would ensure women an equal place in the halls of political power. We reaffirmed our belief that advancing more women into leadership positions would expand the rights and opportunities of all women. We agreed that women's issues are central elements in political campaigns and that they should be emphasized in political platforms. The Gallup poll gave us heart by providing evidence that the general public—at least among those surveyed—regards women as more honest and better able than men to deal with crucial social problems like poverty, corruption, education, and environmental protection. Women are even deemed superior at managing the economy and conducting foreign relations.

Despite this progress, the women political leaders who gathered in Washington for the one-day conference made clear the need for ongoing dialogue among women in power across countries. The group urged the Women's Leadership Conference of the Americas (WLCA) to create a Website to ensure that the sharing of best practices and useful contacts would not stop with our meeting. With the generous support of the Organization of American States and the Inter-American Development Bank, the construction of that site is now underway. Watch for www.womenleaders.org and www.mujereslideres.org over the next several months.

With this publication, we are delighted to present the results of "Politics Matter." We are convinced that women leaders are crucial to ensuring equitable representation, generating socially responsible growth, and promoting women's rights. We urge every nation in Latin America and the Caribbean to give women's leadership promotion top priority, and to implement the legal and institutional reforms necessary to achieve gender equity in all sectors.

Lourdes Flores Nano
Co-Chair, WLCA

Ana Milena Gaviria
Coordinator, WLCA

Participants

Sponsored by:
Inter-American Development Bank

In collaboration with:
Inter-American Dialogue
International Center for Research on Women (ICRW)
Women's Leadership Conference of the Americas (WLCA)

November 13, 2000
Inter-American Development Bank
Washington, DC

Manuela Alvarado
Former Congresswoman
Guatemala

Harriet Babbitt
Deputy Administrator
U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)
United States

Ingrid Betancourt
Senator
Senate of Colombia
Colombia

Jamileth Bonilla
Minister
Ministry of Social Action
Nicaragua

Erika Brockmann
Senator
Senate of Bolivia
Bolivia

Ana María Campero
Ombudsman
Bolivia

Elisa María Carrió
Congresswoman
Congress of Argentina
Argentina

Arabella Castro
Former Minister of Education
Guatemala

Piedad Córdoba Ruiz
Senator
Senate of Colombia
Colombia

Yeda Crusius
Congresswoman
Congress of Brazil
Brazil

Benedita da Silva
Vice Governor
State of Rio de Janeiro
Brazil

Elsa De Mena
Director
Internal Revenue Service
Ecuador

Maria Echaveste
Assistant to the President, Deputy Chief of Staff
The White House
United States

Cecilia Felgueras
Vice Mayor
The City of Buenos Aires
Argentina

Aura Celeste Fernández
Former Cabinet Member
Dominican Republic

Sarah Flood-Beaubrun
Minister
Ministry of Health and Women's Affairs
St. Lucia

Lourdes Flores Nano
Former Congresswoman
Peru

Susana González de Vega
Congresswoman
Congress of Ecuador
Ecuador

Rebeca Grynspan
Former Vice President
Costa Rica

Katherine Harris
Secretary of State
State of Florida
United States

Yadira Henríquez
Minister
Ministry of Women's Affairs
Dominican Republic

Maxine Henry-Wilson
Minister of Information
Jamaica

Balbina Herrera
Congresswoman
Congress of Panama
Panama

Guadalupe Jerezano Mejía
Former Vice President
Honduras

Alejandra Krauss
Minister
Ministry of Planning and Cooperation
Chile

María Laura Leguizamón
Councilwoman
City of Buenos Aires
Argentina

Cecilia López
Former Minister of Agriculture
Colombia

Otilia Lux de Coti
Minister
Ministry of Culture
Guatemala

Gladys Marín
President
Communist Party
Chile

Barbara J. McDougall
President
Canadian Institute of International Affairs
Canada

María Emma Mejía
Former Foreign Minister
Colombia

Beatríz Merino Lucero
Former Congresswoman
Peru

Billie Miller
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs
Barbados

Viviane Morales Hoyos
Senator
Senate of Colombia
Colombia

Cristina Muñoz
Minister
Ministry of Women's Affairs
Paraguay

Beatríz Nofal
Congresswoman
Congress of Argentina
Argentina

Nina Pacari Vega
Congresswoman
Congress of Ecuador
Ecuador

Beatríz Paredes Rangel
Congresswoman
Congress of Mexico
Mexico

Dulce María Pereira
Executive Secretary
Union of Portuguese Speaking Countries
Brazil

Mercedes Pulido Briceño
Former Minister of Women's Affairs
Venezuela

Mirtha Quevedo
Former Congresswoman
Bolivia

Rosario Robles
Mayor of Federal District
Mexico City
Mexico

Ileana Rogel
Congresswoman
Congress of El Salvador
El Salvador

Cecilia Romero Castillo
Senator
Senate of Mexico
Mexico

María Antonieta Saa
Congresswoman
Congress of Chile
Chile

Noemí Sanín
Former Foreign Minister
Colombia

Marta Suplicy
Mayor Elect
City of São Paulo
Brazil

Minou Tavárez Mirabal
Former Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs
Dominican Republic

Alexandra Vela Puga
Congresswoman
Congress of Ecuador
Ecuador

INVITED GUESTS:

Ivonne A-Baki
Ambassador to the United States
Ecuador

Gail Bamford
Market Segment Executive Women Entrepreneurs, Latin America
IBM
United States

María Ignez Barbosa
Embassy of Brazil to the United States

Carmen Barroso
Director, Population Area
John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
United States

Barbara Bennett
Managing Director, Latin America
Riggs Bank
United States

Nancy Birdsall
Senior Associate
Carnegie Endowment for International Peace
United States

Cecilia Blondet M.
Director
Institute of Peruvian Studies
Peru

Nora Boustany
Diplomatic Columnist
The Washington Post
United States

Rosiska Darcy de Oliveira
President
Center for Women's Leadership
Brazil

Mónica Delta
Journalist
Panamericana Television
Peru

Mary Dempsey
Up Front Editor
Latin Trade
United States

Cristina Eguizábal
Program Officer
The Ford Foundation
United States

Ingrid Eide
WID Advisory Council Member
Inter-American Development Bank
Norway

Margarita Escobar
Ambassador to the OAS
Permanent Mission of El Salvador

Sonia Goldenberg
President
TRAMAS
Peru

Mari Pili Hernández
President
Canal 8
Venezuela

Mala N. Htun
Assistant Professor
The New School University
United States

Ana Julia Jatar
Senior Fellow
Inter-American Dialogue

Sonia Johnny
Ambassador to the OAS
Permanent Mission of St. Lucia

Laura Liswood
Secretary General
Council of Women World Leaders
United States

Theresa Loar
Senior Coordinator of International Women's Issues
U.S. Department of State
United States

Carmen Lomellín
Executive Secretary
OAS Inter-American Commission of Women
United States

Donna McLarty
Co-chair
Vital Voices Global Partnership
United States

Laura Elena Nuñez de Ponce
Ambassador to the OAS
Permanent Mission of Honduras

Silvana Paternostro
Senior Fellow
World Policy Institute
United States

Jan Piercy
U.S. Executive Director
World Bank
United States

Beatríz Ramacciotti
Ambassador to the OAS
Permanent Mission of Peru
United States

Nobina Robinson
Executive Director
Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL)
Canada

Gloria Rodríguez
President and CEO
MAPA Communications
United States

Michael Shifter
Senior Fellow
Inter-American Dialogue
United States

Paula Stern
President
Stern Group, Inc.
United States

Sandy Vogelgesang
Former U.S. Ambassador to Nepal
United States

Catalina Wainerman
WID Advisory Council Member
Inter-American Development Bank
Argentina

SPONSORING INSTITUTIONS:

Kelly Alderson
Program Assistant
Inter-American Dialogue

Ajay Bhardwaj
Managing Research Director
The Gallup Organization

Ana María Brasileiro
PROLEAD Program Coordinator
Inter-American Development Bank

K. Burke Dillon
Executive Vice President
Inter-American Development Bank

Mayra Buvinic
Chief of Social Development Division
Inter-American Development Bank

Joan Caivano
Deputy to the President and Director of Special Projects
Inter-American Dialogue

Cristen Dávalos
PROLEAD Program Assistant
Inter-American Development Bank

Muni Figueres
External Relations Advisor
Inter-American Development Bank

Ana Milena Gaviria
Coordinator for the Women's Leadership Conference of the Americas (WLCA)
Colombia

Marianne C. Gillet
Consultant
Inter-American Development Bank

Peter Hakim
President
Inter-American Dialogue

Enrique V. Iglesias
President
Inter-American Development Bank

Cheryl Morden
Director of Policy Communications
International Center for Research on Women (ICRW)

Vivian Roza
PROLEAD Program Officer
Inter-American Development Bank

Gabriela Vega
Chief, Women in Development Unit
Inter-American Development Bank

Ana Milena Gaviria, Enrique Iglesias, Lourdes Flores Nano

Politics Matter: A Dialogue of Women Political Leaders

Enrique V. Iglesias, President, Inter-American Development Bank
Washington, D.C.—13 November 2000

GOOD MORNING. I WOULD LIKE TO BEGIN BY EXTENDING A warm welcome to everyone and thanking our good friends from the Inter-American Dialogue, the International Center for Research on Women, and the Women's Leadership Conference of the Americas (a network of women leaders organized by the Dialogue and the Center) for their support in making this event possible. We feel strongly about the importance of such initiatives, and today's meeting is one way of showing that. I would especially like to thank Ana Milena de Gaviria—whose idea it was to hold this seminar—for her unflagging and generous support.

What, we may ask, is it that brings us together here today? Looking back over the events of the last 15, 20, or 25 years in Latin America, we see that significant progress has been made on all fronts. In the economic arena, our societies and our role in the global setting have changed radically for the better, and noteworthy advances have also been made in the political sphere and in the area of regional integration. These achievements are undeniable and bear testimony that progress has been made. At the same time, however, the dawn of the new millennium finds our region still suffering from two crucial areas of vulnerability. Economically, we continue to be a highly volatile region, as witnessed by the recurring crises that have beset us recently. And socially, Latin America continues to be plagued by unrelenting poverty and social inequality. With one out of every three Latin Americans living in poverty, ours is also the developing region that displays the greatest degree of inequality in relative terms. Large segments of our population have been left behind—mainly members of ethnic groups, including indigenous communities and those of African descent—and open and hidden unemployment remain at high levels.

Poverty reduction and social exclusion constitute without a doubt our most serious challenge as we move into the new millennium. In rising to this challenge, we must remember that our region is part of a changing world and that it is immersed in a far-reaching, relentless process of globalization that holds unique opportunities as well as considerable risks. Change is spreading at such a pace that if the region does not undertake a serious effort to make adjustments on all levels—especially in the economic and social spheres—we risk widening rather than closing the gap that today separates us from the industrialized countries.

To tap the opportunities offered by globalization and strengthen our areas of vulnerability, it will not be enough to adopt and sustain economic models and paradigms that ensure macroeconomic equilibrium. Our region must go further than that and address two serious shortcomings. First, our institutions have not yet advanced to where they are able to deal with the complex challenges and problems we face in these new times. In Latin America, there is a pressing need for reform of the state, of local government, of judicial systems, and of legislatures; and this poses a major challenge in institutional terms. The other critical shortcoming lies in our democracies. The region's democratic deficit is in some measure a consequence of long-standing social problems that have arisen from the exclusion of broad sectors of our societies. As long as this problem persists, our democracies will exist in name only. We cannot content ourselves with simply having representative democratic systems in place; we must make sure that our democracies are participatory. Democracy should not be understood as a goal to be attained, but rather as a dynamic process of constant adjustment and refinement.

An element often overlooked in debate on development issues is their relationship to politics. It may strike you as odd that a development bank would want to talk about politics, but politics are indisputably a core component of social and economic development. We have learned that politics indeed matter if we are to rise to the challenge of attaining the three key objectives of development: first, to achieve solid, competitive, and dynamic growth; sec-

ond, to address social issues; and third, to bolster democracy. These three objectives are pursued by all governments in the region and, I daresay, in the world. They need to be approached from a perspective that includes a political dimension. And it is also from a political standpoint that we need to address the issue of gender.

Billie Miller, deputy prime minister of Barbados and chairwoman of the Bank's External Advisory Council on Women in Development, put it very eloquently when she said "We will not discuss whether women are better than men in politics, but we will state clearly that democracy is incomplete without them." That is indeed the point, and that is why a discussion of women's leadership in the political arena is crucial to bringing the democratic process to full fruition in our region.

Balbina Herrera, María Emma Mejía, Maria Echaveste, Guadalupe Jerezano

There is no denying—and your presence here today is ample proof of this—that impressive progress has been made in this area in recent years. All branches of government now enjoy the participation of capable women leaders in the various arenas of political action. You, yourselves, are a very clear example of this. In the past ten years, two women have served as president of their countries: I am thinking, of course, of Violeta Chamorro in Nicaragua and Mireya Moscoso in Panama. Women are also present in the legislature: they are presidents of senates, speakers of the house, and members of ministerial cabinets and municipal governments. Just to mention two recent examples, we have with us today Rosario Robles, mayor of Mexico City, and Marta Suplicy, mayor-elect of São Paulo. They are living testimony of women's heightened profile in the region's political life.

The objective of this gathering is, in part, to discuss issues that have arisen in association with this emerging leadership and the challenges that women must contend with in order to play a more meaningful role in society.

In conjunction with the Beijing Conference on Women, the Bank made a pledge to work towards this end and, since then, it has approved several million dollars in nonreimbursable technical cooperation to support and raise the profile of women in development. Furthermore, our External Advisory Council on Women in Development has proven to be a very thought-provoking instrument and has provided advice and the means to monitor the gradual introduction of the issue of women's leadership into our work. One of the higher profile programs that the Bank has worked with in this area is the Program for the Support of Women's Leadership and Representation (PROLEAD), which has already invested over US$4 million to support efforts by governmental agencies, the private sector, and NGOs, and which will continue to receive targeted investments for Central America. Bank projects in Guatemala are strengthening dialogue with indigenous women in the crucial area of peace processes and boosting the number of women on voter registers. We are also supporting the establishment of a women's leadership center in Rio de Janeiro; the center—managed by Rosiska Darcy de Oliveira—uses innovative methods such as the Internet to create networks of leaders. The Bank has also been active in a program to train municipal officials in the first election since the passage of legislation establishing gender-based quotas in Brazil. In sum, we are working on numerous fronts to mainstream and champion this issue: to get people talking about it and to spur stakeholders to become involved in actions that will have an impact.

This meeting provides us with an opportunity to promote the exchange of ideas and experiences among women who have broad-based political experience in the region; to build a stronger presence and stronger skills; and to discuss public policy in areas of mutual interest such as those that will be looked at here today. It will also provide impetus to the net-

works that link women political leaders, building on such hemispheric arrangements as the Women's Leadership Conference of the Americas. The exchanges that take place here today will undoubtedly be taken into account by that network with a view to providing input for the upcoming Summit of the Americas to be held in Canada in 2001.

That, then, is the objective that brings us together here today. I would like to thank you all, once again, for coming and for the honor of your presence. You are an inspiration for us to continue working in these areas and making a contribution, however modest it may be. Considering the good friends who are with us today, I firmly believe that your work here will bring us closer to achieving our stated objectives.

I wish you a very successful meeting.

Rapporteur's Report

DURING A STIMULATING DAY OF DISCUSSION, PARTICIPANTS in *Politics Matters* analyzed the important issues facing the countries of the Americas today. Topics ranged from economic development strategies and the prospects of democratic governance in the region to women's opportunities and contributions to democracy. An overarching concern was the need to rectify what Enrique Iglesias referred to as the "institutional and social deficits" currently plaguing many countries.

ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT

Remarks by Nancy Birdsall generated considerable debate. Her intervention was based on a paper by Birdsall and Augusto de la Torre that presented a series of proposals for moving beyond the "Washington Consensus," which promoted a range of measures involving trade liberalization, privatization, and fiscal and monetary discipline to control inflation. Though the Washington Consensus had been implemented in most Latin American countries, the results—modest growth rates, a relatively small decline in poverty, and no change in income distribution—had been disappointing. Birdsall recommended ten concrete policy tools, including the elimination of tax loopholes, adoption of rules for fair and transparent business practices, "repairing land markets," and "automatic social safety nets," to achieve "equity with growth" in Latin America.

Participants in the meeting agreed with Birdsall that the Washington Consensus had failed to bring about equitable growth. Yet many rejected Birdsall's suggestion that the Washington Consensus serve as a baseline of a new development model.

Many participants noted that to be perceived as legitimate, policy instruments need to flow from a process of debate and consensus building within Latin American countries.

Some participants had specific policy recommendations. They argued that to involve poor people in development, provision of credit needs to expand dramatically. The decline in real wages is also a serious problem that will not necessarily be solved by making labor laws more flexible. Other participants suggested that new economic policies be oriented toward the growing economic interdependence and integration of Latin American countries, and that they address the microeconomic incentives that sustain corruption in business and politics. To break out of the cycle of corruption, economic agents need alternatives to corrupt behavior over the longer term.

Finally, one participant noted that productivity and economic growth in today's world stems from improvements in technology and the production and expansion of knowledge. It is imperative that international institutions and governments study how to stimulate and improve access to technological innovation.

DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

A paper and presentation by Michael Shifter of the Inter-American Dialogue set the tone of the discussion. Shifter acknowledged the achievements in democratic governance in the region, evident in the periodic occurrence of free and fair elections, improved defense of human rights, freedom of the press, and a decline in political persecution. Still, these democratic achievements have been more procedural than substantive. Politicians must deliver justice, employment, and security, not just talk about them.

Shifter claimed that a central challenge facing democracy in the Americas is to build and renew political parties. Parties, which channel citizen preferences into the political system and provide for competition among policy programs, are the central political institutions of democratic governance.

Many participants in the meeting criticized a minimalist, proceduralist vision of democracy that focuses merely on the occurrence of elections, and endorsed a more substantive vision of democracy that respects civil rights, creates equal opportunities for everyone, and provides for social well being.

Others insisted on the interconnectedness of democracy and economic development. The ability of governments to provide a minimum level of economic security is crucial for democratic legitimacy and popular participation in the democratic process. Democracies have also failed to include indigenous peoples.

There was also criticism of the zero-sum vision of the relationship between the state and society. Various participants claimed American countries need a stronger state and a more robust society. These two poles can foster one another.

Roles of Women in Politics

In the afternoon sessions, participants analyzed the results of a public opinion survey on women in leadership and discussed their own experiences as women politicians. Mayra Buvinic of the Inter-American Development Bank presented an overview of the study, conducted by Gallup in October of 2000 on behalf of the Dialogue and the Bank. The survey produced some surprising results. It showed that those Latin Americans surveyed are willing to vote for women candidates and believe that women leaders are superior to men in dealing with many problems. A majority of those surveyed said that women's representation in leadership is good for their countries and that quota systems have been beneficial overall. A majority claimed that a politician's stand on women's rights is important to their voting decisions.

Elisa Carrió

Some participants reaffirmed the results of the survey by recounting personal experiences about the importance of women's issues in politics. Contrary to the conventional wisdom that few people care about women's issues, they were central elements in political campaigns and careers. Fifty-seven percent of those surveyed in the Gallup poll, for example, claimed that women's issues would be very important in their decision about whom to vote for in the next presidential election. One participant called on others "not to be afraid of women's issues." Another pointed out that "women's rights *are* the big issues," and that these issues are not politically costly but, rather, advantageous.

Lourdes Flores Nano, Mala Htun

Others cautioned that the results of the survey are overly optimistic. Women politicians reported suffering from stereotypes associating femininity with weakness and portraying intelligent women as overly aggressive. Moreover, male politicians continue to be reluctant to embrace women's rights. In the debate over the quota law in Colombia, for example, most male politicians saw it as a "second rate" law. Issues like domestic violence are not major political issues because they are seen as "women's" issues, not as issues affecting all of society. As a result, many women still feel that they risk "ghettoization" by focusing on women's rights in politics.

The emergence of women in Latin America's "crisis of representation" was the main theme of the afternoon presentation by Cecilia Blondet of the Institute of Peruvian Studies. Blondet claimed that traditional politicians have been unable to resolve problems of violence, poverty, and unemployment, leading voters to look for new leaders. This has created an extraordinary opportunity for women, as voters see them as a refreshing alternative. Yet there is some risk that the public's views of women leaders may prove a trap. Popular attitudes that women are better than men and less corrupt in office may inflate expectations and enhance pressures on women who are actually elect-

ed. Among women there are potential democrats, dictators, virtuous individuals, and corrupt politicians. As one participant remarked, "corruption has no gender." Another added: "We are not good simply because we are women." Voters should realize that women are diverse human beings whose political behavior and views will be as diverse as men's.

The group confronted one of the major questions of gender theory and practice, namely, how to construct a common gender identity while still recognizing the differences among women. Other participants argued against "feminine essentialism"—the claim that all women share certain innate characteristics—as oppressive and destructive to women's individuality. Others argued that women can avoid essentialism while focusing on the histories that unite them, particularly women's exclusion from public life and seclusion in private life.

Even when many women are in power, the results are not always those expected. Women's presence may be merely symbolic, and not all women are committed to resolving women's problems. One participant pointed out that women's inability to change things may be due to the fact that women have not yet reached a critical mass in power. Other participants argued that women's rights should not be solely the responsibility of democrats or feminists; everyone must be involved.

Women should not rest content with merely being "alternatives" to discredited male politicians. Women must have a proactive agenda that amounts to more than a critique of past practices. In the past, women have not succeeded in mastering and proposing detailed plans of *how* to move forward. Women must devise concrete solutions and seize today's opportunities to implement this agenda.

At the conclusion of the meeting, participants discussed plans to continue the dialogue and sustain their energy. Many expressed a desire to formalize a network of women politicians and continue meeting on a regular basis in order to exchange ideas and experiences, and offer support and advice to one another. In the immediate term, the conference organizers plan to create an interactive Website allowing participants to communicate with one another, to post news of their activities, and to seek information on the status of women and policy initiatives around the region.

Women's Leadership in Latin America: Trends and Challenges

Mala N. Htun

THE 1990S WITNESSED UNPRECEDENTED ADVANCES in women's leadership in Latin America. An overall improvement in women's capabilities and opportunities, changing attitudes about women's participation in politics, and the consolidation of democratic institutions in most countries have created a favorable climate for record numbers of women to ascend to positions of power. Today, women make up about 13 percent of the lower or single house of congress in Latin America (15.4 percent if North America and the Caribbean are taken into account). In the early 1990s, women's presence was 10 percent. Twelve Latin American countries have adopted quota laws establishing a minimum level of 20 to 40 percent for women's participation as candidates in national elections. On average, these quota rules have served to boost women's presence in congress by five percentage points. Furthermore, women of different political parties and ideological orientations have united in political alliances to lobby for change on issues that affect women. Their work led to the enactment of domestic violence laws in at least 12 countries, constitutional articles on sex equality, the creation of hundreds of women's police stations, and family law reform to grant women equal property and parental rights.

To produce change, women must not only be present. Women must be powerful, and power involves more than a title or office.

This paper identifies several regional trends in women's leadership in Latin America. Though the advances are impressive, major challenges remain. The recent gains in women's leadership are unevenly distributed across countries. Women's presence in the lower house of congress is as high as 27 percent in Argentina and as low as 3 percent in Paraguay. In Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Venezuela, no women occupy cabinet seats. Moreover, the diversity of electoral institutions in place in different countries leads to tremendous variation in the success of quota laws in getting more women elected. Finally, the mere existence of women in decisionmaking positions does not always lead to the introduction of law and policy changes to benefit women. To produce change, women must not only be present. Women must be powerful, and power involves more than a title or office.

1. In global perspective, women leaders of the Americas are faring well, though levels of representation are higher in the Caribbean than in Latin America.

In terms of women's presence in congress, the Americas has the second highest regional average in the world (see Table 1). Taking into account North America, Latin America, and the Caribbean, the regional average for women's presence in both houses of congress is 15.2 percent. The Americas lag only Nordic Europe, which, at 38.8 percent, far exceeds levels of women's representation elsewhere in the world. The world average is 13.8 percent. If we take into account only the 19 Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking Latin American countries, however, the averages drop. Women make up 13.2 percent of the lower or single house of congress in Latin America and 9 percent of the senate.

2. There has been steady growth in women's presence in decisionmaking at the national and local levels in virtually every country. Nonetheless, there continues to be significant variation in the representation of women in power across countries.

More women have been appointed to ministerial positions in the late 1990s than ever before and are entering national legislatures in record numbers. Women's presence among ministers has increased in some countries, dramatically so (see Table 2). In Chile, for example, the government

of Ricardo Lagos that assumed power in March of 2000 appointed five women to his cabinet of 16 ministers (31 percent). In Costa Rica, five of 17 ministers are women (29 percent). In Colombia, El Salvador, Panama and Venezuela, women make up one-quarter of cabinet members.

On the other hand, women have made few inroads to the highest national office. In August of 2000, there was only one woman who held the presidency of a Latin American country, Mireya Elisa Moscoso of Panama. She is the second woman to have been elected president of a Latin American country after Violeta Chamorro of Nicaragua (1990–96). Isabel Perón of Argentina (1974–76)[1] and Lidia Gueiler of Bolivia (1979–80) served as heads of state without being elected.

Women's representation in national parliaments has expanded (see Tables 6 and 7). In Argentina, women's presence in the Chamber of Deputies, at 26 percent, is the highest in the Latin American region. In 1991, women made up a mere 6 percent of the Argentine Chamber. In the April 2000 elections, women's representation in Peru's unicameral parliament jumped from 11 to 22 percent (from 13 to 26 out of 120). In Ecuador's congress, women's presence increased from 4 to 17 percent, and in Costa Rica's congress, from 14 to 19 percent. Women topped political party lists in national elections in several countries, including Mexico, Guatemala, Argentina, and Costa Rica.

In other countries, women's representation in political decisionmaking continues to be low. Women make up a mere 6 percent of Brazil's Chamber of Deputies and seven percent of the Senate, a figure that has changed little in the 1990s. In Paraguay's Chamber, women occupy a mere 3 percent of seats (though they account for 18 percent of Senators). In Venezuela, women's presence in congress has dropped. Under the previous system, women made up 13 percent of the Chamber of Deputies and 9 percent of the Senate. After the 2000 elections, women account for 8 percent of the unicameral parliament.

Some scholars and activists predict that women's opportunities to exercise power are greater at the local than at the national level, where competition may be less fierce and where politics centers on social service provision (Massolo 1998: 193–4). As one Brazilian politician put it, "Women have a much easier time at the local level, which can serve as a stepping stone for women to enter national politics."[2] In the 1990s, women's participation in provincial (or state) and municipal legislative councils increased in many countries, but women's representation among mayors and governors is still low (see Tables 4, 5, and 8).

[1]Isabel Perón was elected vice president to Juan Perón, and assumed the presidency upon his death in 1974.

[2]Interview with Deputy Iara Bernardi, Brasília, March 2000.

Cecilia López

The profile of women leaders is changing. In the past, most of the women who reached positions of power were the wives (or more commonly the widows), daughters, or sisters of prominent men. Their political careers were tied to the reputations of relatives and not always to their own achievements. Women's function in politics was largely to act as their husbands' agents. (To be sure, many of the men in politics owe their success to family names as well.) In the late 1990s, though many political women still come from political families, a greater number have risen on their own merits.

Still, women's presence at the top lags behind women's participation at the middle and bottom of organizations. Women's participation in political parties is around 30 to 40 percent, and women make up over half of the electorate. In general, women's presence in decisionmaking conforms to a pyramidal structure. That is, women's representation narrows as you move closer to the top of the pyramid. In Brazil, for example, about 46 percent of public sector managers are women. But women make up only 13 percent of those with the most senior decisionmaking status, and no women occupy ministerial posts (Articulação das Mulheres Brasileiras 2000: 48). Data published by FLACSO in 1995 reveal that women's presence in the judiciary also resembles a pyramid. In Latin America as a whole, women make up 45 percent of trial court judges, 20 percent of appellate court judges, and virtually zero percent of supreme court judges.

3. Improvements in women's social position, cultural changes, and democratization have expanded opportunities for women to exercise leadership.

How can women's growing presence in power be explained? The first factor to take into account is the overall expansion in women's capabilities and opportunities. Life expectancy has increased from 54 years in the 1950s to 72 years in the 1990s. In 1970, women made up 20 percent of the labor force; today, they are 35 percent of the labor force overall and as much as 40 percent in several large economies. Fertility dropped from six children per woman in the 1950s to three children per woman in the 1990s. Women make up half of secondary school students and half of post-secondary school students. The general improvement in women's position in society means that more women form part of the "pools" of qualified people out of which leaders emerge and are recruited.

The second factor affecting women's opportunities is changing public attitudes toward women's leadership. Cecilia Blondet notes that there is a "a new 'common sense' about the role of women in society that has changed women's own attitudes toward politics and power." (Blondet 1999: 3). Moreover, national surveys reveal that Latin American public opinion is highly favorable toward women's assumption of political power. About 70 percent of those polled in Peru in 1998, for example, believed that women's participation in decisionmaking should increase. Women were perceived to be more honest, more concerned with the poor, and more democratic. The vast majority of those surveyed declared that a candidate's sex was not important in their decision about who to vote for in national elections (Blondet 1998). These changing public attitudes have encouraged political parties to include more women among lists of candidates and helped convince party leaders that promoting women to power helps to gain, rather than lose, votes.

Finally, the transition to democracy in the Latin American region spurred the emergence of women's social movements. Political parties reached out to include and/or coopt these movements, drawing many women into leadership ranks. Some of the most prominent women in Latin American politics today first entered the public eye as leaders in the human rights organizations, neighborhood associations, and labor unions. Women gained experience in politics as these organizations grew more militant during the struggle against authoritarian rule and under the impact of economic crises in the 1980s, preparing them to step into national decisionmaking in the 1990s.

4. In the second half of the 1990s, the number of women holding elected legislative office has surged, with some countries experiencing dramatic increases in the numbers of women elected to congress.

In May of 1997, women held a mere 10 percent of seats in the lower or single house of parliament in Latin America and the Caribbean; by the middle of 2000, this had grown to 15.4 percent. If the growth in women's leadership were attributable exclusively to the socio-structural and cultural factors mentioned above, the changes would be gradual. By contrast, women's representation in power, particularly in legislative decisionmaking, increased at a rapid rate in the late 1990s. Women's presence in congress in LAC expanded by 50 percent in three years (see Constance 1998). To explain this surge in women's leadership in the region, it is imperative to analyze the affirmative action policies being introduced around the region. Latin American leaders are acting deliberately to boost women's presence in power by adopting quota rules for elections at the national and local level.

5. Twelve countries have introduced quota laws establishing a minimum level for women's participation as candidates in national elections. The adoption of quota legislation was influenced by international trends and the desire of politicians to court women's votes.

Between 1991 and 2000, twelve Latin American countries adopted quota laws establishing a minimum level of 20 to 40 percent for women's participation as candidates in national elections (see Table 10). With the exception of Argentina (where quotas were approved in 1991), all of the quota laws were passed within a relatively short time period, which suggests that they had regional or international causes (see Htun and Jones, forthcoming).

Indeed, the approval of quotas followed the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing and a series of regional meetings between Latin American women politicians. In May of 1995, Latin American legislators gathered at the Parlatino in São Paulo to consider the experience of quotas in Argentina and around the world. In November of 1995, the Platform for Action endorsed in Beijing called on governments to insure "women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decisionmaking," and to adopt affirmative action measures to achieve this goal.

The Beijing Platform helped to generate legitimacy for the idea that quotas represented an acceptable form of positive discrimination (or affirmative action). Previously, quotas had been criticized for violating constitutional principles of sex equality by discriminating against men. In the late 1980s, for example, Costa Rican jurists believed that if the proposed "Women's Equality Law" contained a quota it would be rejected by the Supreme Court (Saint-Germain and Morgan 1991). After Beijing, it became more widely accepted that under certain circumstances disadvantaged persons could be treated differently without compromising the principle of equal rights. To be sure, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979, had already declared that temporary affirmative action measures designed to mitigate sex

Otilia Lux de Coti

inequality did not constitute discrimination. But the Beijing meeting gave force to the idea that countries could adopt quotas while upholding broader principles of equality under the law.

Finally, quotas were approved because several powerful male politicians supported them. In Argentina and Peru, the endorsement of quotas by male presidents was decisive for the approval of quota laws by congress. In Argentina, the quota proposal would have been defeated in congress were it not for last minute efforts of persuasion by President Menem and his interior minister. In Peru, legislators were skeptical of quotas until President Fujimori made known that he supported the quota proposal. Subsequently, Congress approved the quota law unanimously.

What motivated these male politicians? Women voters are reluctant to vote for parties perceived to be *machista*. As one Mexican politician put it, "No one votes for a party of *machos*. From a practical point of view, it benefits [male leaders] to include women."[3] Since women make up more than half of the electorate in most Latin American countries, rational politicians must pay attention to their concerns. The desire to win women's votes constitutes a powerful motivation for politicians to take into account women's interests.

[3]Interview with PANista leader Margarita Zavala, Mexico City, July 2000.

6. There is tremendous variation in the success of quota laws. The details of the law and the nature of a country's electoral system determine whether quotas get more women elected.

On average, quotas have boosted women's presence in power by five percentage points, an impressive leap from one election to the next (see Table 11). However, the effects of quotas have varied dramatically, and in only three countries (Argentina, Paraguay and Peru) has women's presence come close to reaching the level of the quota (for more information, see Htun and Jones, forthcoming). In Argentina, women's presence in the lower house of congress leapt from 6 to 27 percent. Women's representation in the Paraguayan Senate jumped from 11 to 20 percent. In Peru's April 2000 elections, women's presence in Congress doubled (from 13 to 26 of 120, or from 11 to 22 percent). In other countries, such as the chambers of deputies of Bolivia, Brazil, Panama, and Paraguay, and the senates of Bolivia and Venezuela, the effects of quotas have been minimal. A great deal of this variation can be explained by differences in the quota laws themselves and the nature of the electoral system the laws are applied to.

Details of the Quota Law

In the first place, the quota law itself must be obligatory, must specify how the quota is to be applied, and contain a placement mandate for women candidates. The quota laws in some countries, in spite of establishing a minimum percentage for women's candidacies, take the form of a recommendation to political parties rather than an obligation. In Brazil, for example, the quota law states that parties must *reserve* 25 percent of candidate slots for women. The law does not require parties to actually *fill* these slots with women candidates. Since Brazilian law allows parties to field 50 percent more candidates than seats contested in a district, a party can run a full slate in a district without any women candidates. If a district elects ten members to congress, for example, each party is permitted to offer 15 candidates to the electorate. The quota law requires that a party *reserve* four of these slots for women. If a party is unable or unwilling to recruit women, it may offer 11 male candidates to the electorate without any women on the ticket.

In Mexico, the quota law is vague and does not prohibit parties from complying with the quota by placing women on the ballot as *suplentes*. Mexico's quota law calls on political parties to contemplate, in their internal statutes, the postulation of no more than 70 percent of candidates of the same sex. In other words, the law leaves it open to political parties to decide how to comply with the quotas. Not surprisingly, party responses have varied substantially, with the PRI statutes addressing the quota in most detail and the PAN the least, though all three major Mexican parties

applied some affirmative action measures in the postulation of candidates.

In the Mexican elections of July 2000, virtually every party and coalition complied with the 30 percent quota, though they did so by including the majority of women candidates as *suplentes* on the ballot. In the proportional elections for the Mexican Chamber of Deputies (200 chamber seats are elected through party list, and 300 from single-member districts), about 60 percent of the suplentes on the three largest lists were women.[4]

Finally, in closed-list electoral systems, quota laws need to contain a placement mandate to prevent parties from clustering women at the bottom of party lists where they stand no realistic chance of getting elected. The Argentine *Ley de Cupos* (1991) requires that women make up at least 30 per cent of the candidates on the party list and that these women be placed in *electable* positions. That is, every third (and sixth, ninth, etc.) candidate on the party list must be a woman. In Bolivia, one of every three positions on the list must be a woman, and in Paraguay, at least one of every five candidates on the lists presented in party primaries must be a woman. By contrast, the quota laws in Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic and Venezuela say nothing about the location of women on party lists, allowing parties to place women in decorative positions at the bottom of the list. In a decision issued in early 2000, however, the Costa Rican Supreme Electoral Court ruled that parties had to place women in electable positions on party lists, though the Court left it up to parties to decide how to interpret "electability."[5]

Quota laws in Costa Rica, the D.R. and Venezuela allow parties to place women in decorative positions at the bottom of the list.

THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM

Quotas work best in countries where legislators are elected by closed lists in large districts (see Htun and Jones, forthcoming). In a closed-list system (Argentina, Bolivia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Paraguay and Venezuela), each party controls the placement of candidates on the party lists, and voters vote for a party, not for a candidate. The quantity of votes received by each party determines the number of candidates elected from the list. As a result, candidates from the same party campaign together at election time to maximize votes for their party. In an open-list system (Brazil, Ecuador, Panama, and Peru), by contrast, voters select individual candidates, not entire party lists (this is called exercising a preference vote). The number of votes received by each candidate individually determines who wins a seat. As a result, elections involve competition within each party for preference votes in addition to competition across parties. In general, preference voting systems work to the disadvantage of women candidates who are less well known and have fewer resources to finance their campaigns.

Peru may be an exception to the general rule about open-list systems. Peruvian voters may exercise two preference votes to elect their 120 members of Congress in a single national district (the two votes must be for candidates of the same party). Parties present an ordinal ranking of candidates to the electorate, though the ranking is merely symbolic since the number of preference votes determines who gains a seat. In the elections of April 2000, many voters exercised their preference vote in favor of women. Four of the 10 individuals with the highest number of preference votes in the country were women (40 percent). As mentioned above, women's presence in the Peruvian Congress doubled (from 11 to 22 percent) after the application of the quota law.[6]

A large district size helps women candidates in the following way. (District size refers to the number of seats contested in a given geographical area.) In small districts, a party will typically only win one to two seats. In a closed-list system, men will likely occupy the top two positions on the list. This means that even if a woman is in the third position, she will stand little chance of getting elected. The more seats being contested in the district, the more likely it is that candidates from lower positions on the list will be elected. In other words, the larger the district, the better the chances that women have.

[4]Interview with Jacqueline Peschard and Eduardo Ramírez, Instituto Federal Electoral, Mexico City, July 2000. I thank Jacqueline and Eduardo for providing me with data on the July 2000 elections.
[5]Interview with Congresswoman Sonia Picado, Washington, D.C., June 2000.

[6]I thank Ana María Yañez and Vicky Villanueva of the Movimiento Manuela Ramos for providing me with data on the 2000 Peruvian elections.

7. The greater number of women in decisionmaking have put women's rights issues on the national policy agenda. New legislative initiatives have been implemented, but many challenges remain.

Scholars and activists have long predicted that the presence of a "critical mass" of women in power would generate law and policy initiatives to advance women's position and opportunities in economy and society. To a certain extent, these expectations have borne true. In the 1990s, political alliances of women legislators introduced an unprecedented array of policy measures to improve women's lives, particularly in the area of violence against women. Yet progress has not been made on all issues. Though women legislators have united around domestic violence, sexual violence, and quotas, they remain divided on questions of reproductive health, particularly abortion.

In general, women's alliances are more successful at introducing laws establishing commitments of principle or normative frameworks than at securing budgetary outlays for women's programs. In 1999, women in Brazil's congress spearheaded legal changes in several areas. Congress approved legislation prohibiting employers from making reference to gender in job announcements, using gender as a criterion in hiring and promotion, or administering pregnancy tests to women workers. A law assuring free plastic surgery for women victims of breast cancer was introduced. Congress approved a law guaranteeing unemployment insurance to domestic workers and a law offering state compensation to the stable partners of workers killed in accidents, though both of these laws were later vetoed by the president (the unemployment insurance law, however, was replaced by an executive decree.) (*Fêmea* February 2000). Yet political alliances of Brazilian women had more trouble securing sufficient funds for women's projects. Women legislators gained the allocation of only 1 million reais (about 600,000 U.S. dollars) from the 1999 budget for the construction of nine battered women's shelters. The sum is not insubstantial, but woefully insufficient for a country as large as Brazil.

Women politicians who believe abortion should be decriminalized or that the conditions for legal abortion should be expanded have not succeeded in modifying the criminal code in any country. Lack of public support for liberalized abortion, opposition from the Roman Catholic Church, and a culture of impunity and double discourse surrounding the practice of abortion discourage the formation of broad-based coalitions backing the relaxation of restrictions on abortion. However, in many cases women's alliances have succeeded in resisting additional restrictions on abortion, such as the introduction of "protection of life at conception" clauses into national constitutions. In Argentina in 1994 and Brazil in 1995, constitutional amendment proposals to ban abortion absolutely were rejected following the mobilization of women politicians and women's groups. In Mexico in 2000, women from all parties have united to pressure the governor and state legislature of Guanajuato to reverse the recent law criminalizing abortions performed on women victims of rape.

The mere presence of women in positions of power will not automatically produce policy outcomes favorable to women's interests. (In societies as diverse as Latin America's, moreover, differently situated women have different interests.) It is one thing to raise issues for discussion and put policy proposals on the agenda. It is far more difficult to build coalitions for change that are durable enough to withstand the impact of competing interests. Women owe primary political loyalty to their political parties and to their mentors and constituencies within the party. Few women are elected to office on a platform of women's rights. In a pinch, if the interests of the political party contradict the interests of women's alliances, most women will opt to vote with their party and not with other women.

8. Even when women do enter national decisionmaking, their presence may be more symbolic than effective. The highest circles of power remain predominantly masculine.

More women than ever before are present in leadership positions. The growth in women's representation is attributable to social and cultural changes, quota policies, and the desire of leaders to court women's votes in elections. Still, the highest circles of power remain predominantly masculine. These circles have been constructed over the course of decades, and trace their roots to an era when women did not enjoy the social position and opportunities they do today. The rules of the political game were constructed as men's rules. The endurance of these rules marginalizes women in practice without the need for men to actively discriminate against women.

The masculine nature of power inspired many women to favor quotas as the only way for women to gain entrance into decisionmaking. As Mexican senator Amalia García put it, "Politics is a rude fight, in which what matters is beating the other, not your ideas. Women shouldn't have to lower themselves to this."[7] Other women politicians who were initially skeptical about quotas changed their minds after observing how male cronyism and favoritism continued to exclude women from top posts. When quotas work, they allow women to bypass traditional male channels of recruitment and ascension to arrive directly at the top.

What a few years experience with quotas is demonstrating, however, is that women's presence does not on its own change the nature of power. Women may enjoy formal titles

[7]Interview, Mexico City, January 1999.

and hold office, but the rules of politics remain unchanged. Insiders report that few women actually wield substantial amounts of power, even when many women hold senior decisionmaking positions.

9. Political parties are the gatekeepers to women's advancement in politics. Though parties were initially seen as obstacles to women's leadership, in the 1990s many parties have adopted affirmative action measures to promote women.

Political parties control women's access to political power. Yet historically, the way parties incorporated women into their ranks thwarted their advancement. Whereas men were recruited into sectors of parties associated with their class position or occupation, such as peasants, laborers, students, or professionals, women were recruited into women's departments or secretariats "on the basis of their gender identity — simply as women, whose primary association as a group was with private life." As Friedman explains, this precluded women from exercising mainstream leadership roles within political parties:

Beatríz Paredes Rangel

> Because the sectoral grouping of women was not derived from a class position or socioeconomic function around which they could unite for common demands, there was no "women's union" in which to hold elections on a party ticket and in whose name women could claim party favors such as leadership positions, candidacy, material benefits, and influence on policy. Thus the women's bureau, instead of leading to the promotion of women and women's issues in party life, fulfilled the traditional "function" of women as a whole: reproduction…. The primary duties of the first women's bureau's were "keeping house" (hosting meetings, making coffee and copies, throwing fundraising parties, and running raffles) and raising "the children" (turning out the vote during elections) (Friedman 1998: 122).

In the 1990s, there are signs that the old party model is changing. Women's bureaus are no longer charged with performing housekeeping functions but rather with advancing women's rights and leadership. The women's bureau of Mexico's Partido de Acción Nacional (PAN), for example, had long functioned as an organization that primarily took care of the wives of party militants and elected officials. When Patricia Espinosa assumed control of the bureau in 1996, however, she gave it a new twist. Espinosa built ties to women's groups in civil society and to women from other political parties, and turned the PAN's National Secretariat for the Political Promotion of Women into a base from which to advocate for women's rights and to promote women to mainstream leadership within the PAN.[8] Prior to national elections in 1997 and 2000, the Secretariat lobbied party leaders at all levels to include women on party lists and to field women candidates in majoritarian elections. The Secretariat also encouraged women in all parts of the country to offer themselves as candidates. Current executive secretary Margarita Zavala explained that the Secretariat is not meant to be a "party within a party" but rather a stepping stone helping women to assume leadership in all areas of the party.[9]

In the 1990s, many of the region's political parties adopted quotas for internal elections and for the construction of party lists for general elections. Latin American parties that have voluntarily adopted a women's quota include: Argentina's Partido Justicialista (30 percent on party lists; 25 percent for internal leadership posts) and Frente Grande (40 percent); Brazil's Partido dos Trabalhadores (30 percent); Chile's Partido Socialista (30 percent), Partido por la Democracia (40 percent), and Partido Demócrata Cristiano (20 percent); Costa Rica's Partido Unidad Social Cristiano (40 percent); El Salvador's Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (35 percent); Mexico's Partido Revolucionario Democrático (30 percent) and Partido Revolucionario Institucional (30 percent); Nicaragua's Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional (30 percent); Paraguay's

[8]Interview with Deputy Patricia Espinosa, Mexico City, July 2000.
[9]Interview with PANista leader Margarita Zavala, Mexico City, July 2000.

Asociación Nacional Republicana (20 percent); and Venezuela's Acción Democrática (20 percent). Moreover, in 2000, the presidents of Mexico's PRI, Mexico's PRD, and Costa Rica's PLN were women.

The advancement of women to positions of power within parties will help promote a women's rights agenda in national politics. However, women need to make an effort to accumulate power and command loyalty within parties. It is not enough to be content with a formal title or office. A woman can promote a feminist agenda of women's rights only if she has a power base within the party. Promoting feminist issues without a strong leg to stand on will result in a woman's marginalization in the party.

Furthermore, promoting women's interests exclusively has not proven to be the best route for women to acquire power. A Mexican politician notes that power revolves around social and economic problems such as wages and prices, employment, and the conditions of production. To gain power, women have to first involve themselves in the struggle to resolve these problems.[10] So-called "women's issues" like domestic violence, maternal mortality, and day care are, to be sure, major social problems, but political mobilization around these issues is relatively recent. The resources, coalitions, and power dynamics at stake in these issues are not as central to national politics as those surrounding issues like wages and employment.

In some cases, there appears to be an inverse relationship between the amount of power a woman commands and her explicit dedication to gender-related policy issues. Peruvian congresswoman Martha Chávez, a close associate of President Fujimori, is arguably the most powerful woman in the country. Chávez has never acted on behalf of women's rights and even opposed initiatives proposed by other women legislators in this area. Of course, there are many examples of women politicians who enjoy both national prominence and an impressive track record on women's rights. Still, few of these women rose to power on a women's rights platform.

THE 1990S WITNESSED IMPRESSIVE ACHIEVEMENTS IN women's leadership. More women than ever have advanced into positions of power. These women have used their positions to advocate for law and policy changes to improve women's lives. Male politicians and political party leaders recognize the deficit in women's leadership as a problem to be solved and have endorsed affirmative action and other measures to promote women. National publics have expressed the belief that women should exercise power and that women's leadership will benefit all of society.

Marta Suplicy, Benedita da Silva, Rosiska Darcy de Oliveira

Nonetheless, in few instances have women been able to acquire power equivalent to men's. When women have achieved the highest positions of power, few have behaved differently from men. Yet the fact that the nuclei of power and the rule of the political game remain predominantly masculine should not be a reason for despair. Women's real insertion into power requires profound cultural changes that have begun only recently. Women must keep the faith while the culture of power adapts to incorporate them.

Mala N. Htun is Assistant Professor of Political Science at the New School University in New York. She is the author of several articles on women in politics and women's rights in Latin America. Htun has her Ph.D. in political science from Harvard University. She serves as consultant to the Inter-American Dialogue and Women's Leadership Conference of the Americas (WLCA).

[10]Interview with Senator Beatríz Paredes, Mexico City, July 2000.

Tables

1. WOMEN IN PARLIAMENT WORLDWIDE

	Lower House (or Unicameral Parliament)	Upper House (or Senate)	Both Houses Combined
Nordic countries	38.8%	—	38.8%
Americas	15.3%	14.4%	15.2%
Asia	14.5%	17.6%	14.7%
Europe (excluding Nordic countries)	14.0%	13.9%	14.0%
Sub-Saharan Africa	12.4%	13.9%	12.6%
Pacific	11.9%	25.6%	13.5%
Arab States	3.8%	2.9%	3.6%
World Average	13.9%	13.6%	13.8%

Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union (August 6, 2000).

2. WOMEN MINISTERS IN LATIN AMERICA[11]

Country	Year	Number of Women Ministers	Total Number of Ministers	Women as % of Total
Argentina	2000	1	13	8%
Brazil	2000	0	?	0%
Chile	2000	5	16	31%
Colombia	2000	4	17	24%
Costa Rica	2000	5	17	29%
Cuba	2000	2	25	8%
Dominican Republic[12]	2000	2	22	9%
Ecuador	2000	1	15	7%
El Salvador	2000	3	13	23%
Guatemala	2000	1	13	8%
Honduras	2000	3	18	17%
Mexico	1998	2	22	9%
Panama	2000	3	12	25%
Paraguay	2000	1	12	8%
Peru	2000	1	15	7%
Uruguay	2000	0	14	0%
Venezuela	2000	4	14	29%

[11]I thank Kelly Alderson of the Inter-American Dialogue for gathering this data.
[12]Included are members of the president's cabinet, not including the vice president.

3. WOMEN IN PUBLIC SECTOR DECISIONMAKING

Country	Year	
Argentina	2000	3 women secretarias del estado; 5 women sub-secretarias
Brazil	Data published in 2000	18 women among 136 senior decisionmakers in Executive Branch (13%); 5 of 98 ambassadors (5%)
Guatemala	1998	15 women out of a total of 75 senior decisionmakers (20%), including ministers, vice ministers, secretaries, directors, managers, etc.
Mexico	1998	360 women out of a total of 2630 in senior decisionmaking posts[13] (14%); including 5 out of 106 subsecretaries (5%); 335 out of 2336 director generals (14%); and 9 out of 135 ambassadors (7%).
Peru	2000	6 women vice ministers out of a total of 17 (35%)
Venezeula	2000	4 women vice ministers

4. WOMEN GOVERNORS

Country	Date	Number of Women	% of Total
Argentina	2000	0 of 24 governors; 4 of 24 vicegovernors	0%
Brazil	1999–2003 1995–1999	1 out of 27 1 out of 27	4% 4%
Chile	1997	2 of 13 regional governors; 5 of 50 provincial governors	15% 10%
Costa Rica	1994	5 of 7	71%
Venezuela	2000	2 of 23	9%

5. WOMEN MAYORS

Country	Year	Number of Women	% of Total
Argentina	2000	157 of 2154	7%
Brazil	1997–2001 1993–1997	303 of 5505 171 of 4972	5.5% 3.4%
Chile	2000	32 of 341	9%
Dominican Republic	1998	?	6%
Guatemala	1998	3 of 330	1%
Mexico	2000 1998 1995	85 of 2427 79 of 2418 94 of 2395	3.5% 3.27% 4%
Peru	1998 (elections) 1995	54 of ? 54 of ?	

[13]Senior decisionmaking posts include: secretary, subsecretary, director general, magistrate, ambassador, etc.

6. WOMEN IN THE LEGISLATURE (BICAMERAL PARLIAMENTS)

	SENATE			CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES		
	Year	Number of Women	% of Seats held by Women	Year	Number of Women	% of Seats held by Women
Argentina	1998	2 of 72	3%	1999	68 of 257	26%
Bolivia	1997	1 of 27	4%	1997	15 of 130	12%
Brazil	1998	6 of 81	7%	1998	29 of 513	6%
Chile	1997	2 of 49	4%	1997	13 of 120	11%
Colombia	1998	13 of 102	13%	1998	19 of 161	12%
Dominican Republic	1998	2 of 30	7%	1998	24 of 149	16%
Mexico	2000	20 of 128	16%	2000	78 of 500	16%
Paraguay	1998	8 of 45	18%	1998	2 of 80	3%
Uruguay	1999	3 of 31	10%	1999	12 of 99	12%

7. WOMEN IN THE LEGISLATURE (UNICAMERAL PARLIAMENTS)

Country	Year	Number of Women	% Seats held by Women
Costa Rica	1998	11 of 57	19%
Cuba	1998	166 of 601	28%
Ecuador	1998	18 of 123	15%
El Salvador	2000	5 of 84	6%
Guatemala	1999	10 of 113	9%
Honduras	1997	12 of 128	9%
Nicaragua	1996	9 of 93	10%
Panama	1999	7 of 71	10%
Peru	2000	26 of 120	22%
Venezuela	2000	18 of 165	11%

8. WOMEN LEGISLATORS IN STATE/PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLIES

Country	Date	Women as % of Total
Argentina	2000	25%
Brazil	2000	10%
Mexico's	2000	33% (22 of 66)
Federal District	1997	26% (17 of 66)
Venezuela	1995	15%

9. WOMEN IN MUNICIPAL COUNCILS

Country	Year	Women as % of Total
Brazil	2000	12%
	1996	8%
Chile	2000	14%
Dominican Republic	1998	14%
Peru	1998	24%
	1995	8%

10. QUOTA LAWS IN LATIN AMERICA

Country	Year Adopted	Legislative House	Quota Percentage
Argentina	1991	House of Deputies	30%
Bolivia	1997	House of Deputies	30%
		Senate	25%
Brazil	1997	House of Deputies	25/30%
Colombia	1999	House of Deputies	30%
		Senate	
Costa Rica	1997	House of Deputies	40%
Equador	1997	House of Deputies	20%
Panama	1997	House of Deputies	30%
Paraguay	1996	House of Deputies	20%
		Senate	20%
Mexico	1996	House of Deputies	30%
		Senate	30%
Peru	1997	House of Deputies	25%
Dominican Republic	1997	House of Deputies	25%
Venezuela	1998	House of Deputies	30%
		Senate	30%

11. QUOTA LAWS AND THE ELECTION OF WOMEN

Country	Legislative Branch	% Women prior to Law	% Women after Law	% Change	Minimum set by Quota Law
Argentina	Chamber	6%	28%	22%	30%
Bolivia	Chamber	11%	12%	1%	30%
	Senate	4%	4%	0%	25%
Brazil	Chamber	7%	6%	–1%	25%
Costa Rica	Chamber	14%	19%	5%	40%
Dominican Republic	Chamber	12%	16%	4%	25%
Ecuador	Chamber	4%	17%	13%	20%
Mexico[14]	Chamber	17%	16%	–1%	30%
	Senate	15%	16%	+1%	30%
Panama	Chamber	8%	11%	3%	30%
Paraguay	Chamber	3%	3%	0%	20%
	Senate	11%	20%	9%	20%
Peru	Chamber	11%	22%	11%	25%
Venezuela (pre-2000)	Chamber	6%	13%	7%	30%
	Senate	8%	9%	1%	30%
Average		9%	14%	5%	27%

[14]These data refer to the difference between the 1997 and 2000 elections. Quotas were first applied in the 1997 elections.

Sources

Articulação das Mulheres Brasileiras. 2000. *Políticas públicas para as mulheres no Brasil. 5 anos após Beijing.* Brasília: AMB.

Blondet, Cecilia. 1998. "El poder político en la mira de las mujeres." *Poder político con perfume de mujer. Las cuotas en el Perú.* Lima: Movimiento Manuela Ramos/Instituto de Estudios Peruanos.

Blondet, Cecilia. 1999. "Las mujeres y la política en la década de Fujimori." Documento de Trabajo no. 109. Instituto de Estudios Peruanos.

Constance, Paul. 1998. "Sudden Surge in Women's Representation." *IDB America* (September/October).

El Cuarto Femenino. Lima: Movimiento Manuela Ramos.

Fêmea. Brasília: CFEMEA.

FLACSO. 1995. *Latin American Women. Compared Figures.* Santiago: FLACSO.

Friedman, Elisabeth. 1998. "Paradoxes of Gendered Political Opportunity in the Venezuelan Transition to Democracy." *Latin American Research Review* 33, no.3.

Grupo Impulsor. 2000. *Balance del grado de cumplimiento de la Plataforma de Acción Mundial en el Perú.* Lima: Grupo Impulsor Nacional/Mujeres por la Igualdad Real.

Htun, Mala N. and Mark P. Jones. Forthcoming. "Engendering the Right to Participate in Decisionmaking: Electoral Quotas and Women's Leadership in Latin America." In: *Gender, Rights and Justice in Latin America.* Eds. Nikki Craske and Maxine Molyneux. London: Macmillian.

INEGI. 2000. *Mujeres y hombres en México.* Mexico: INEGI.

Miguel, Sonia Malheiros. 2000. *A política de cotas por sexo.* Brasília: CFEMEA.

Mijangos, Eugenia, Olga Dalila de la Cruz Alvarez, and Berta Hilda Marroquín de Alcántara. 1999. "Situación de las mujeres guatemaltecas: Salud, educación, trabajo y legislación." In: *La Situación de las mujeres en Centroamérica: Una evaluación en el umbral del siglo XXI.* Ed. Ana Isabel García Q. San José: GESO.

Saint-Germain, Michelle and Martha Morgan. 1991. "Equality: Costa Rican Women Demand 'The Real Thing'." *Women and Politics* 11 (3).

César Gaviria, Ana Milena Gaviria, Rosario Robles

Latin American Women in Leadership
A Survey of Public Opinion

Inter-American Dialogue / Gallup Organization
Executive Summary for Public Dissemination
November 13, 2000

In the late 1990s, public attitudes about differences between men and women and equal opportunities in society changed. The public's greater confidence in gender equality was brought about by the movement of record numbers of women into positions of political power. Women's assumption of national leadership has demonstrated that women are competent and effective, contributing to cultural transformations at all levels of society.

Public views do not constitute a salient obstacle to women's access to power in Latin America. Not only is the public willing to vote for women candidates, but also believes that women are superior to men in dealing with the issues facing contemporary societies. Voters fed up with intractable problems of corruption, crime, and poverty may be turning to women to represent a different face and hope for the future.

Promoting women's issues may be politically advantageous. Many politicians, particularly women politicians, have shunned women's issues out of the belief that voters care about other things. Yet voters place a premium on a candidate's position on women's rights. Politicians may find that promoting women's rights serves their self interest as well as women's interests.

These are some of the findings from a recent survey conducted by Gallup on behalf of the Inter-American Dialogue. More detailed study results are shown below.

Not only is the public willing to vote for women candidates, but also believes that women are superior to men…

Women's Capabilities as Leaders

A majority of Latin Americans see women as more honest and better able than men to deal with problems like poverty, corruption, education, and environmental protection. Women are deemed superior at managing the economy and conducting foreign relations.

- A majority of Latin Americans maintain that women public officials would do better than men at dealing with a wide range of issues and problems. Importantly, the belief in women's greater competence extends beyond social policy to economic management, foreign affairs, and fighting corruption.
- Sixty-two percent of people express the belief that women would do better than men at reducing poverty, 72 percent at improving education, 57 percent at combating corruption, 64 percent at protecting the environment, 59 percent at managing the economy, and 53 percent at conducting diplomatic relations.
- On defending public security, 44 percent say women would do a better job and 34 percent said that sex would not make a difference (a mere 18 percent said women would be worse than men). The only area where men are held to perform better than women is directing the military. Fifty percent say women would be worse than men, 23 percent say sex would not matter, and

20 percent say women would be better than men managing military affairs.

- Sixty-six percent agree that women are more honest than men, and 85 percent agree that women are good decisionmakers.

Support for Women in Politics

Latin Americans say that women's representation in leadership is generally good for their countries and claim to support women candidates equally with men, but tend to stereotype women as more likely to get upset in difficult situations.

- Fifty-seven percent say that having more women in political office would lead to better government (23 percent say that more women will not make a difference). Sixty-five percent maintain that quota laws for women in government are "mostly good" for the country. Only 15 percent see quotas as "mostly bad."
- Over 90 percent claim they would be willing to vote for a well-qualified candidate for president who happened to be a woman, and 69 percent believe that their country will elect a woman president over the next 20 years.
- When asked whether they agree or disagree that "Women are more likely than men to get upset when faced with difficult issues at work," 50 percent agree. However, there are significant differences by sex, with 56 percent of men agreeing compared to 44 percent of women.
- On the other hand, 66 percent agree that women who assume public office become as aggressive and competitive as men. And, a majority (52 percent) disagree with the idea that women's responsibilities at home make them less productive in demanding jobs (43 percent do agree that women are less productive, however).

Impact of Women's Issues on Voting Decisions

In a clear message to rulers, Latin Americans claim that a politician's stand on women's rights, including their willingness to appoint women to positions of power, is important to their voting decisions.

- Fifty-seven percent declare that a candidate's opinion on women's issues would be "very important" to their voting decision in the next presidential election (an additional 23 percent said that women's issues would be "somewhat important" to their vote).
- Forty-four percent would be more likely to vote for a candidate who promises to appoint men and women in equal proportions to the cabinet, and 42 percent say this promise would not make a difference (only 10 percent said they would be less likely to vote for this candidate).

Changing Views on Gender Equality

Public attitudes toward gender equality have changed as more women have entered into positions of power, though men are more confident of an equal society than are women.

- Between 1996 and 2000, people in Colombia, El Salvador, and Mexico (countries for which data from both years were available) changed their assessment of the differences between men and women.[1] In 1996, about 40 percent of people in these countries said that men and women are basically the same. Four years later, this had grown to over 60 percent in these same three countries.
- In 2000, 60 percent of people living in the cities studied declared that men and women have equal opportunities to gain access to political office. However, 50 percent report that more generally, society continues to favor men.
- Men are more confident of women's equality than women. Sixty-one percent of men, compared to 51 percent of women, state that men and women are "basically similar in their personalities, interests and abilities" (apart from physical differences). A mere 37 percent of men, compared to 47 percent of women, report that men and women are "basically different." The same pattern holds for views of equal opportunities. Men are less likely to admit that society favors men (47 percent) than women (53 percent). Men are more likely to declare that women enjoy equal job opportunities (51 percent) than women (46 percent).

The results from this study are based on 2,022 interviews with adults in major cities within five Latin American countries (about 400 interviews per country). Random sampling procedures were used, and quotas were set by age, sex, education level, and head of household occupation. The margin of error for the sample is plus or minus 5 percentage points at the country level. The aggregate figures used in this summary represent simple averages across the six cities included in the survey (Bogotá, Buenos Aires, Mexico City, Rio de Janeiro, San Salvador, and São Paulo). They do not represent the cities in proportion to the national population. Where possible, trend comparisons are shown to a 1996 international Gallup study in Colombia, El Salvador and Mexico.

[1] The temporal comparison is based on a March 1996 international Gallup study that included Colombia, El Salvador, and Mexico.

Latin American Women Leadership Study

A look at the changing attitudes of Latin Americans toward gender and women's leadership capabilities.

SUMMARY

At first glance, the results from the recently completed Gallup Latin American Women Leadership Study, conducted with the Inter-American Dialogue, are not entirely encouraging. For example:

- Across countries, about half say that *society generally favors men over women*, while only about one-third think the two sexes are favored equally. Since 1996, there was no change in opinion on this question in Mexico and Colombia, and there was a decrease in the perceptions of equality in El Salvador.
- Only about one-half think that women have the same job opportunities as men in their country, and *there has been a significant decrease in the proportion who say there is equality in the workplace* in Mexico and El Salvador.
- A majority say that the ideal family structure is one where both parents share the responsibility for income and childcare—however—in spite of a preference for shared responsibility, across countries, *only 20% of the families with children said that both parents share equally in raising the children.*
- *Only about half have ever had an opportunity to vote for a woman*, that is, have ever seen any woman's name on a ballot.

About three-quarters say they think a woman will be elected president of their country during the next 20 years.

However, these findings are not necessarily negative… it is more likely that they reflect an increasingly high level of awareness regarding inequalities between men and women—and positive indicators that women are increasingly welcome in the workplace and in political office. Additionally, there are many positive indicators within the data as outlined below:

- *Physical differences aside, men and women are more often considered "similar" than "different"*—and this proportion has increased since 1996 in those countries where trends are available.
- Most think that *women have the same opportunities as men when running for political office* and most know of a woman who holds an important political office in their country.
- There is considerable support for increasing the number of women in politics—solid majorities say their *country would be better off if more women were elected.* The areas in which women would clearly have a more positive impact than men are: protecting women's rights, improving education, protecting the environment and reducing poverty.
- Women are generally *thought to have positive leadership skills*—to be good decisionmakers, and to be more positive than men.
- If a candidate were to promise to appoint a cabinet composed of 50% women, the net impact would be positive in all of the countries studied. Moreover, about two-thirds in each country think that *gender quotas are "mostly good" for the country.*
- Regardless of the gender of the candidate, half of the adults studied say *women's issues are "very important"* when they vote in a presidential election.
- About three-quarters say they think *a woman will be elected president of their country during the next 20 years.*

- Virtually all respondents say that they *would vote for a female candidate* for president, mayor or community leader if she were the most qualified person. Additionally, a strong majority of those who say they have had an opportunity to vote for a woman said they have in fact voted for a female candidate.

Far more differences were seen across countries than were found between men and women. Respondents in Argentina and Brazil consistently voiced the lowest levels of equality, but this probably results from a higher level of consciousness in those two countries. Especially since Brazilians were far more likely than others to say they know of women who currently have important political positions. In El Salvador, the trend since 1996 also shows a decreased perception of equality—but again that is probably resulting from increased awareness.

There were some critical differences seen by sex, such as:

- Men are more likely to say that the sexes are similar, to know of women holding important political offices, and to say that men are better leaders than women.
- Women are more likely to say that society favors men, that women do *not* have equal job opportunities, that the country would be better off if more women were in political office, and to say that a candidate's position on women's issues influences their vote.
- However, no differences are seen between the sexes in:
  - preference regarding traditional vs. modern family structure,
  - perception that women have political equality,
  - preference regarding gender quotas in cabinet,
  - having voted for a woman, or
  - believing that a woman will be elected president in the next 20 years.

Perhaps more compelling than differences by sex are those differences that are seen related to education and age:

- Those with a college education are significantly more likely than others to say that society favors men, that women do *not* have the same job opportunities or political opportunities as men do, and that there will *not* be a woman president during the next 20 years. They are also disproportionately likely to have voted for a woman.
- A difference in attitude is also seen based on whether someone is over or under age 50. Those over 50 are especially likely to say that only one person should work outside the home, that men and women *are* treated equally in society, and that there will *not* be a female president in the next 20 years.
- In spite of the strong perceptions of inequality seen among the college educated and adults under age 50, women's issues are not particularly relevant—the well-educated and younger adults are not any more likely than others to consider "women's issues" an important factor when voting for president. They are also not any more or less likely to say the country would be a better place if more women were in office.

METHODOLOGY

The results of this study are based on approximately 2,022 in-home interviews with adults age 18 plus in five Latin American countries. The study was conducted in October 2000 within main cities as shown below.[1]

Country	Cities	Sample Size
Argentina	Buenos Aires	n=407
Brazil	São Paulo	n=256
	Rio de Janeiro	n=150
Colombia	Bogotá	n=400
Mexico	Mexico D.F.	n=409
El Salvador	San Salvador	n=400

To ensure that the results are representative of the adult population in the cities studied, random sampling procedures were used. Additionally, quotas were set by gender, education of head of household, and age, based on population figures provided by the Inter-American Dialogue. For results based on a sample size of 400, one can say with 95 percent confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects is plus or minus 4.9 percentage points.

As a way of summarizing the findings, there are some instances in this report where the total aggregated finding is referred to, including 2,022 respondents across cities. This number is not a weighted aggregate, it is simply a straight average. It does not reflect the cities proportionate to their population. The margin of sampling error for 2,022 interviews, at the 95 percent confidence level, is plus or minus 2.2 percentage points.

To demonstrate potential shifts in opinion, comparisons are shown for repeat questions between the current study and a March 1996 international Gallup survey which included Colombia, El Salvador and Mexico. The 1996 survey was conducted in a slightly larger number of key cities, with approximately the same sample size as the current study.

[1]Although the comparisons between countries in the report refer to the country name, it is important to remember that the results are projectable only to the cities shown, in which interviewing was conducted.

GENDER ROLES

Perceived Differences between Men and Women

Although the physical differences between men and women are obvious, there has always been debate regarding the degree of difference in personalities, interests and abilities between the two sexes. In three out of the five Latin American countries studied (Mexico, El Salvador and Colombia) more people said the sexes are similar than said they are different (with the gap ranging from 40% in Mexico and 10% in Colombia). Argentines were evenly split in their opinions while in Brazil, more said there is a difference than said the sexes are similar (52% vs. 45%). (see Table 1)

The perception that men and women are basically the same is most widely held among those under age 50, among those with at least some high school education, and among men. The finding that men are more likely than women to say there are similarities is consistent with Gallup's prior gender research in Latin America and in the U.S.

This question was previously asked by Gallup in 1996 in three of the countries, and the trend shows that more and more people now believe that men and women are basically the same. The largest shift of opinion occurred in Mexico, with a large proportion of the population changing their opinion from believing that men and women are different to a more egalitarian belief about the sexes (40% shift). The shift has also been greater among men than among women.

Nature vs. Nurture

Those who consider the sexes dissimilar were asked what they consider the root of the discrepancy, whether men and women are born different or raised different. The nurture theory seems to win in these five Latin American countries, as has been seen in prior Gallup research in western cultures. (see Table 2)

In the current study, about half of those who perceive a difference attribute that difference to the way male and female children are raised. The rest tend to be evenly split between those who think both nature and nurture play a role, and those who think men and women are already different at birth. The only exception is El Salvador, where this trend is reversed. The majority of Salvadorians (55%) believe women and men are inherently different and only 17% believe the environment creates the differences.

Women are especially likely to say that gender differences result from environmental factors while men, especially in Brazil and Colombia, are disproportionately likely to say gender differences are present at birth. Interestingly, *parents* are also disproportionately likely to say those differences are inherent.

Although little change was seen in Mexico, there were sharp decreases since 1996 in the proportion of Colombians and Salvadorians who exclusively cite nurture as the source of differences. During the same time frame, there have been increases in the proportion who think there are differences at birth and/or who think that both nature and nurture work together in the formation of gender differences.

Ideal Family Structure

In four out of five of the Latin American countries surveyed (Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and El Salvador), a majority say the ideal family structure is one in which both parents are responsible for income and child rearing. Roughly a third, though, (37%) still prefer the more traditional family structure in which one parent works outside the home while the other stays home to take care of the home and the children. (see Table 3)

The only country that differs is Argentina, where 63% favor a family structure where only one parent works and the other parent is responsible for the children. However, in Argentina women are less inclined than men to revere the traditional arrangement (56% vs. 71%).

Harriet Babbitt

Outside of Argentina, no dramatic differences were found between the opinions of men and women regarding role definition. Age of the respondent, however, does play a major role across countries. The older the respondent, the more likely they are to believe in the traditional family model, while close to three-quarters of those under 30 say the best scenario is when both parents are responsible for family income and childcare.

Additionally, a preference for shared responsibility of children and wage earning is higher among better educated individuals, among those living in households with a higher income, and in those households where there is a female wage earner.

Since 1996, there has been a decrease in the proportion of people in El Salvador who say the more traditional fami-

ly structure, where only one person works outside the home, is what is best and "ideal." No change was seen in Colombia or Mexico.

It is important to note, that although there is a general preference for sharing childcare and domestic duties, only 20% of the parents across the region say that they share the responsibility of raising the children—and this proportion is much higher among men (27%) than among women (13%). Sharing responsibility is highest in Argentina (27%), Colombia (24%) and lowest in Brazil (16%) and El Salvador (15%). Shared responsibility for the children is lowest when couples are under age 30 (10%) than among those age 30 plus (22%). No differences are seen based on education or income.

Conditions of Power

Gender Favored by Society

Overall, half of the respondents surveyed say that at the current time, society in general in their country favors men over women. A third tend to say society does not favor one sex over the other and about 14% across countries say society favors women. (see Table 4)

Perceived gender inequality is most rampant in Brazil, with only a fifth (20%) of respondents saying Brazilian society treats the sexes equally (compared to 32% across countries). Brazil is also the only country where marked differences are seen between men and women regarding gender preference—a solid majority of women say the men are preferred (69%) while a disproportionate number of men (21%) consider women to receive preferential treatment.

El Salvador seems to have the least male dominated society—or perhaps the lowest level of consciousness regarding gender inequality. Only 39% say men are favored. This is changing though, since 1996 there has been a decreased perception of "equality" and an increased likelihood to consider one of the sexes to be favored in society.

Income and education have a dramatic impact on gender perceptions. When aggregated regionally, 76% of those in the highest income bracket say that men are favored, and 70% of those with a college education say that men receive preferential treatment. Similarly, those under age 50 are more likely than their older counterparts to say that men are favored.

Equal Job Opportunities

The highest level of recognition that there is inequality between the sexes in the workplace is found in Argentina or Brazil, where 57% of the respective populations say that women do not have equal job opportunities. Slightly less than half think women are discriminated against in Mexico (47%), Colombia (45%) and El Salvador (42%). (see Table 5)

Interestingly, there are not significant differences in perceptions regarding a woman's role in the workplace between men and women in most countries. Colombia is the one exception, where women are far more likely than men to say there is a lack of equality (54% vs. 37%). Even more important than one's own gender—roughly 70% of the wealthiest and best-educated in each country say that women do *not* have the same opportunities as men in the workplace.

While Colombia has remained stable since 1996, there has been a considerable drop in perceived equality for women in Mexico and El Salvador (minus 20% each). This is probably not due to any actual changes in the workplace, but due to increased awareness of equality between the sexes.

Equal Political Opportunities

Equal opportunities are more often available for women in the political arena than in the workplace. As was seen regarding workplace equality, the greatest barriers for women politicians are seen in Argentina and Brazil, where less than half (42% and 49% respectively) say that women have the same opportunity as men when running for political office. Again, it is safe to assume that this reflects a higher degree of consciousness rather than a greater inequality than found in other countries. Solid majorities perceive political equality between the sexes in El Salvador (75%), Mexico (68%) and Colombia (65%). (see Table 6)

No differences were seen between men and women in their opinions regarding political equality. Income and education are more important determinants with over half of the wealthiest and best-educated individuals—regardless of gender—saying that women do not have the same opportunities as men in political elections.

Images of Women Politicians

Women in Government

When adults in five Latin American countries are asked if they know of any women who hold positions of power in the current government, most say they *do* know of such women in Mexico (80%), El Salvador (75%), Brazil (71%) and Colombia (64%). However, only 45% say they know of women holding important political offices in Argentina. (see Table 7)

The Brazilian results demonstrate that knowing of a woman holding a position of power in politics does not necessarily imply that women have equal footing. In that country most people know of a female political officeholder (71%), but relatively few think women have an equal opportunity of gaining political office (57%). Perhaps the Brazilians have witnessed how difficult is has been for these women to gain their political positions.

In Mexico and El Salvador, men are more likely than women to say they know of female politicians, while no differences are seen between men and women in the other coun-

tries. Adults with a college education and those under age 30 are also disproportionately likely to know of women in office.

Impact if More Women in Political Office

There is solid public support for more women in political office. Over half (57%) of all respondents say their country would be better off if more women were elected in Brazil (66%), Colombia (66%), Mexico (55%), and Argentina (52%), while the balance generally say there would not be a difference if more women were elected. Salvadorians are less enthusiastic about a gender shift—only 44% think the country would be better off with more women in office, and 15% say it would be worse. (see Table 8)

Women are more likely than men to say their country would be better off if more women were in political office—especially in Colombia, El Salvador and Argentina. Men in those countries are disproportionately likely to say there would be "no difference." There were no significant differences in opinion based on age or social status.

Since 1996, there has been a significant increase in the proportion of the population that thinks the country would be better off if more women were in politics in Mexico (plus 16%) and in El Salvador (plus 14%). This shift occurred among both men and women. There was no change in opinion in Colombia.

Strengths/Weaknesses of Women in Political Office

Nine specific areas were probed in the survey to understand which public office areas women would deal with better than men, and which ones they would deal with worse. (see Table 9)

Across countries, women are thought to be better suited than men in the areas of:

- Promoting women's rights
- Improving education
- Protecting the environment
- Reducing poverty

And women are thought to be about on par with men in the areas of:

- Managing the economy
- Combating corruption
- Conducting diplomatic relations
- Defending public security

Women are considered far *inferior*, however, to male political leaders in terms of directing the military.

Argentines and Salvadorans were slightly less likely than people living in Brazil, Colombia or Mexico to consider women politicians superior across all nine of the areas studied, although no dramatic differences in opinion are seen across countries.

Although men and women generally do not differ greatly in their responses regarding women's capabilities, women are more likely than men to say female officeholders would do a better job managing the economy.

Leadership Capabilities

Regardless of whether or not the differences are based on nature or nurture, there is a general consensus that women and men have different talents, and react differently to different situations. A series of questions were asked in the survey to develop a clearer understanding of opinions regarding the leadership capabilities of women. The consistent finding is that *there is not strong resistance to the idea that women are capable leaders.* (see Table 10)

Most agree that women:

- Are good decisionmakers (85% across cities)
- Are more honest than men (66%–73% vs. 59%)

And fewer than half agree that:

- Men are better leaders than women. (36%—lowest among women, 28%; college educated, 23%; and those age 30 to 49, 30%)
- Women have domestic responsibilities that make them less productive in demanding jobs. (43% across cities—only in El Salvador do a greater proportion agree with this statement)

Two important reservations were voiced, though:

- Majorities say women get upset when faced with difficult issues in the workplace in Brazil (71%) and El Salvador (60%)—Well under half have this opinion in Mexico (38%), Colombia (39%) and Argentina (42%)—Also, this opinion is much more often held among men than women (56% vs. 44% regionally)
- There is also general agreement—without saying whether it is good or bad—that women become as aggressive and competitive as men do after assuming a political office (66% regionally with no large differences across countries).

GENDER ISSUES IN ELECTIONS

Importance of Women's Issues in an Election

When asked the importance of "women's issues" in a presidential election, slightly over half (57%) say this issue is "very important." Although this seems like a high degree of importance, it should be cautioned that the importance of other issues was not measured and there are no contextual comparisons available.

Women's issues seem to be most important in Colombia and El Salvador (64% say "very important" in each country)

and least important in Argentina (51%) and Brazil (53%). (see Table 11)

Women are more likely than men to consider women's issues an important consideration when casting their vote in Brazil (15% diff.), Mexico (14% diff.) and Colombia (11% diff.). However, no significant differences are seen based on age, education or income.

Half of Cabinet Composed of Women

If a candidate were to promise to appoint a cabinet composed of 50% women, the net impact would be positive in all of the countries studied. Across all five countries, nearly one-half say this would make them more likely to vote for the candidate, while the balance tend to say there would be no impact. Only in Mexico and El Salvador do over one in ten (15% each) say this would have a *negative* influence. Brazilians are least likely to change their vote based on a promise to appoint 50% women to congress (52% say no impact). (see Table 12)

Women are more likely than men to say an evenly distributed cabinet would have a positive influence on their vote. Those who have not attended college are also slightly more inclined to respond affirmatively than those who have at least some college education.

Opinion of Quotas for Women in Government

After defining current existing gender quotas, which require about 30% of all political party candidates to be female, respondents were asked if they thought these gender quotas are mostly good or mostly bad for their country. About two-thirds of those polled thought that gender quotas in the government are "mostly good." Salvadorans are least likely to voice a positive opinion, but also least likely to give a negative opinion, but that is because so many (26%) volunteered that they had not heard of gender quotas. Nearly one in five consider gender quotas mostly bad in Argentina (18%) and Mexico (19%). (see Table 13)

Across the cities studied, no significant differences were found based on sex, age or education.

POLITICAL BEHAVIOR

Loyal to Party, Regardless the Candidate

The majority of the respondents in our survey are loyal to a candidate more so than to a party. Across countries, a majority says that if their political party nominated a candidate that they did not like, they would not remain loyal to their party and vote for the candidate anyway—ranging from a high of 78% in Brazil to 52% in El Salvador. The highest degree of party loyalty is seen in Mexico and El Salvador (32% and 33% respectively). (see Table 14)

The only demographic difference in party was found based on education—those with the highest degree of education are more likely than others to say they would vote for the qualified candidate rather than vote the party line.

Gender, Race and Ethnicity of Public Officials

The race and sex of political candidates is found to have minimal relevance in the five Latin American countries studied. About nine in ten Latin Americans are willing to vote for a well-qualified presidential or mayoral candidate, even if they happen to be female, black or indigenous. The same degree of acceptance is seen when asking with regard to elected positions in the community.[2] **(**see Tables 15,16, 17)

Although a majority of Brazilians and Salvadorians say they would vote for candidates of indigenous descent, these are the two countries least tolerant of that ethnicity (only about 75% say they would vote for an indigenous person for the positions measured).

For the most part, the younger generations are the most tolerant. Significant differences were found when comparing the younger respondents to the older ones, regarding their likelihood to vote for a mayor or president that was not a white male. Younger respondents were much more likely to vote for a woman and a black or indigenous person, regardless of their sex. In El Salvador, where there is considerable resistance to voting for a candidate of indigenous descent, the younger respondents were more likely than others to vote for women and blacks, but not for an indigenous president or mayor.

Woman President in the Next 20 Years

Future elections in Latin America may prove to be precedent setting as Latin Americans are increasingly expressing openmindedness toward electing a woman to the presidency. Across the board, Latin Americans are optimistic about leadership in their country coming from the hands of women and a majority believe voters will elect a woman for president in the next 20 years. In Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and El Salvador, about three-quarters of people believe voters will elect a woman president in the next 20 years. Argentines are the least optimistic about a woman rising to the presidency in their country, with only 47% considering this a possibility. (see Table 18)

The college educated, and people who are 50 or older, are least optimistic about a woman president being elected in the next 20 years in their countries. There is not a difference based on the respondent's sex.

---

[2]Respondents were asked to say if they would vote for a well-qualified political candidate who is 1) a white woman; 2) a black woman; 3) a black man; 4) an indigenous woman and 5) an indigenous man. When sex was found to have no impact on the results in any country, the responses for "black" and "indigenous" were aggregated regardless of gender for purposes of race analysis.

In a Gallup poll in 1989, close to half (46%) of those polled believed there would be a female American president by the year 2010. This figure is similar to the current Argentina result, but well below the average for the other four countries.

Voting Behavior for Woman Political Candidates

Brazilians have had the most opportunities to vote for women—80% have voted in an election where a woman is on the ballot and 66% have voted for a female political candidate. Opportunities to vote for a female candidate have been much lower in Argentina, Colombia and Mexico, hovering around 50%, and only 42% of Salvadorians have seen a female candidate on a ballot for public office. Only about 10% of all adults, across countries, have had the opportunity but chose not to vote for a female candidate. (Table 19)

No differences are seen in voting behavior based on age or sex. Those with little education and/or low incomes are least likely to say they have voted for a female candidate—and least likely to say they have had the opportunity to vote for a woman in an election.

Technical Note

Since the results from this study varied at times more by education and age than by sex, it seems fitting to conduct a review of the demographic differences between men and women in the Latin American cities studied to better understand who they are. Those differences are summarized in the following table:

Aggregated Demographic Results Across 6 Key Latin American Cities

Variable	Men are…	Women are…
Occupation	More likely employed (75%, and 23% have a professional occupation) or retired (13%)	More likely housewives (47%)—only 12% have a professional occupation
Wage Earner	Usually primary wage earner (55%)	Rarely primary wage earner (14%)
Domestic Responsibilities	Unlikely to have primary responsibility for children (9% among parents)	Likely to have primary responsibility for children (65% among parents)
Education	No significant differences	No significant differences
Income	Slightly higher annual household income ($8,172)	Slightly lower annual household income ($7,512)
Age	No significant differences	No significant differences

Since the study results do not demonstrate differences between men and women based on education or age, it can be concluded that any gender differences seen are truly based on differences in opinion or behavior between the two sexes.

Nina Pacari, Otilia Lux de Coti, Susana González de la Vega, Mercedes Pulido Briceño

1. NOW, THINKING ABOUT MEN'S AND WOMEN'S PERSONALITIES, INTERESTS AND ABILITIES. NOT INCLUDING THE PHYSICAL DIFFERENCES, DO YOU THINK THAT MEN AND WOMEN ARE BASICALLY THE SAME OR BASICALLY DIFFERENT?

	TOTAL							MEN							WOMEN							
	Similar		Different		DK/ Ref		Difference b/t Different and Similar	Similar		Different		DK/ Ref		Difference b/t Different and Similar	Similar		Different		DK/ Ref		Difference b/t Different and Similar	Difference b/t Different, among men and women
	2000	change*	2000	change*	2000	change*		2000	change*	2000	change*	2000	change*		2000	change*	2000	change*	2000	change*		
Argentina	50%	na	47%	na	3%	na	3%	54%	na	44%	na	1%	na	10%	46%	na	51%	na	4%	na	-5%	-7%
Brazil	45%	na	52%	na	3%	na	-7%	55%	na	44%	na	1%	na	11%	36%	na	60%	na	4%	na	-24%	-16%
Colombia	54%	12%	44%	-12%	2%	0%	10%	61%	21%	37%	-22%	2%	1%	24%	48%	3%	50%	-3%	2%	-1%	-2%	-13%
Mexico	70%	40%	30%	-38%	0%	-2%	40%	76%	48%	24%	-47%	0%	-1%	52%	65%	33%	35%	-31%	0%	-2%	30%	-11%
El Salvador	60%	15%	39%	-14%	1%	-1%	21%	61%	19%	38%	-18%	1%	-1%	23%	58%	10%	40%	-10%	2%	0%	18%	-2%

2. DO YOU THINK MEN AND WOMEN ARE BASICALLY DIFFERENT BECAUSE THEY ARE BORN DIFFERENT, OR BECAUSE THEY ARE RAISED DIFFERENTLY?

	TOTAL							MEN							WOMEN							
	Born Different		Raised Different		Both		Difference b/t Born and Raised	Born Different		Raised Different		Both		Difference b/t Born and Raised	Born Different		Raised Different		Both		Difference b/t Born and Raised	Difference b/t Raised, among men and women
	2000	change*	2000	change*	2000	change*		2000	change*	2000	change*	2000	change*		2000	change*	2000	change*	2000	change*		
Argentina	29%	na	47%	na	22%	na	-18%	34%	na	39%	na	25%	na	-5%	24%	na	54%	na	19%	na	-30%	-15%
Brazil	26%	na	58%	na	14%	na	-32%	34%	na	51%	na	13%	na	-17%	19%	na	64%	na	15%	na	-45%	-13%
Colombia	26%	13%	52%	-25%	19%	9%	-26%	41%	27%	42%	-34%	15%	5%	-1%	16%	5%	59%	-19%	23%	14%	-43%	-17%
Mexico	25%	5%	64%	6%	11%	-10%	-39%	27%	2%	63%	5%	10%	-6%	-36%	25%	9%	64%	6%	11%	-14%	-39%	-1%
El Salvador	55%	11%	17%	-27%	28%	18%	38%	61%	10%	11%	-29%	28%	20%	50%	50%	12%	22%	-26%	27%	16%	28%	-11%

* Gallup Poll, 1996

na = not available

3. WHICH IS BETTER FOR SOCIETY, A FAMILY WHERE BOTH PARENTS WORK FOR MONEY, TAKE CARE OF THE HOUSE AND CHILDREN—OR ONE WHERE ONE PARENT WORKS AND THE OTHER TAKES CARE OF THE HOUSE AND CHILDREN?

	TOTAL							MEN							WOMEN							
	Both Work		Only 1 Works		Other		Difference b/t Both and One	Both Work		Only 1 Works		Other		Difference b/t Both and One	Both Work		Only 1 Works		Other		Difference b/t Both and One	Difference b/t 1 Works among men and women
	2000	change*	2000	change*	2000	change*		2000	change*	2000	change*	2000	change*		2000	change*	2000	change*	2000	change*		
Argentina	31%	na	63%	na	3%	na	-32%	24%	na	71%	na	3%	na	-47%	38%	na	56%	na	4%	na	-18%	15%
Brazil	73%	na	25%	na	1%	na	48%	69%	na	29%	na	1%	na	40%	78%	na	21%	na	1%	na	57%	8%
Colombia	61%	3%	38%	-3%	1%	1%	23%	65%	8%	34%	-8%	1%	1%	31%	59%	0%	40%	0%	1%	1%	19%	-6%
Mexico	60%	-2%	38%	4%	1%	-3%	22%	65%	0%	33%	1%	1%	-2%	32%	55%	-3%	43%	8%	0%	-6%	12%	-10%
El Salvador	77%	14%	22%	-14%	1%	0%	55%	79%	18%	20%	-17%	1%	0%	59%	74%	9%	24%	-10%	1%	0%	50%	-4%

4. DO YOU THINK THAT IN THIS COUNTRY, SOCIETY GENERALLY FAVORS MEN AND WOMEN EQUALLY, OR DOES IT FAVOR WOMEN OVER MEN, OR MEN OVER WOMEN?

	TOTAL							MEN							WOMEN						
	Equal		Women		Men		Difference b/t Men and Woman	Equal		Women		Men		Difference b/t Men and Woman	Equal		Women		Men		Difference b/t Men and Woman
	2000	change*	2000	change*	2000	change*		2000	change*	2000	change*	2000	change*		2000	change*	2000	change*	2000	change*	
Argentina	31%	na	9%	na	54%	na	45%	33%	na	11%	na	51%	na	40%	28%	na	6%	na	60%	na	54%
Brazil	20%	na	14%	na	60%	na	46%	24%	na	21%	na	51%	na	30%	17%	na	8%	na	69%	na	61%
Colombia	35%	3%	16%	4%	45%	-9%	29%	38 %	4%	17%	5%	43%	-9%	26%	32%	2%	15%	4%	48%	-7%	33%
Mexico	39%	1%	8%	-2%	52%	2%	44%	38%	-2%	8%	-5%	52%	6%	44%	39%	3%	8%	1%	53%	-1%	45%
El Salvador	37%	-26%	20%	9%	39%	17%	19%	37%	-25%	19%	7%	41%	18%	22%	36%	-28%	22%	12%	36%	14%	14%

* Gallup Poll, 1996

na = not available

5. DO YOU THINK THAT WOMEN IN THIS COUNTRY HAVE EQUAL JOB OPPORTUNITIES WITH MEN, OR NOT?

	TOTAL							MEN							WOMEN							
	Yes		No		DK/ Ref		Difference b/t Yes and No	Yes		No		DK/ Ref		Difference b/t Yes and No	Yes		No		DK/ Ref		Difference b/t Yes and No	Difference b/t Yes, among men and women
	2000	change*	2000	change*	2000	change*		2000	change*	2000	change*	2000	change*		2000	change*	2000	change*	2000	change*		
Argentina	40%	na	57%	na	3%	na	-17%	42%	na	54%	na	4%	na	-12%	38%	na	61%	na	1%	na	-23%	4%
Brazil	43%	na	57%	na	0%	na	-14%	46%	na	54%	na	0%	na	-8%	40%	na	60%	na	0%	na	-20%	6%
Colombia	52%	-2%	45%	0%	3%	2%	7%	60%	2%	37%	-4%	3%	2%	23%	44%	-6%	54%	6%	2%	0%	-10%	16%
Mexico	51%	-20%	47%	19%	2%	1%	4%	51%	-23%	49%	24%	0%	-1%	2%	52%	-16%	46%	16%	2%	0%	6%	-1%
El Salvador	56%	-20%	42%	21%	2%	-1%	14%	58%	-20%	39%	19%	3%	1%	19%	54%	-21%	44%	23%	2%	-2%	10%	4%

6. DO YOU THINK THAT MEN AND WOMEN HAVE THE SAME OPPORTUNITIES TO GAIN POLITICAL OFFICE IN OUR COUNTRY, OR DO YOU THINK THAT THEY DO NOT?

	TOTAL				MEN				WOMEN				
	Yes	No	DK/ Ref	Difference b/t Yes and No	Yes	No	DK/ Ref	Difference b/t Yes and No	Yes	No	DK/ Ref	Difference b/t Yes and No	Difference b/t No, among men and women
Argentina	43%	54%	4%	-11%	45%	53%	2%	-8%	40%	55%	5%	-15%	-2%
Brazil	49%	49%	2%	0%	48%	50%	2%	-2%	50%	49%	1%	1%	1%
Colombia	65%	34%	1%	31%	68%	32%	0%	36%	62%	36%	2%	26%	-4%
Mexico	68%	31%	1%	37%	69%	30%	1%	39%	66%	33%	1%	33%	-3%
El Salvador	75%	22%	3%	53%	73%	24%	3%	49%	76%	21%	3%	55%	3%

* Gallup Poll, 1996

na = not available

7. AS FAR AS YOU KNOW, ARE THERE ANY WOMEN WHO HOLD POSITIONS OF POWER IN THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT?

	TOTAL				MEN				WOMEN				
	Yes	No	DK/ Ref	Difference b/t Yes and No	Yes	No	DK/ Ref	Difference b/t Yes and No	Yes	No	DK/ Ref	Difference b/t Yes and No	Difference b/t No, among men and women
Argentina	45%	46%	9%	-1%	47%	47%	6%	0%	42%	46%	12%	-4%	1%
Brazil	71%	23%	6%	48%	75%	19%	6%	56%	67%	26%	7%	41%	-7%
Colombia	64%	29%	7%	35%	68%	24%	7%	44%	60%	33%	7%	27%	-9%
Mexico	80%	17%	3%	63%	87%	10%	3%	77%	74%	23%	3%	51%	-13%
El Salvador	75%	20%	5%	55%	82%	14%	4%	68%	69%	25%	6%	44%	-11%

8. DO YOU THINK THIS COUNTRY WOULD BE GOVERNED BETTER OR WORSE IF MORE WOMEN WERE IN POLITICAL OFFICE?

	TOTAL						MEN						WOMEN						
	Better	change*	Worse	No Diff	DK/Ref	Diff. b/t Better/Worse	Better	change*	Worse	No Diff	DK/Ref	Diff. b/t Better/Worse	Better	change*	Worse	No Diff	DK/Ref	Diff. b/t Better/Worse	Diff. b/t Better, among men and women
Argentina	52%	na	8%	24%	16%	44%	47%	na	11%	26%	16%	36%	57%	na	6%	21%	16%	51%	-10%
Brazil	66%	na	10%	15%	9%	56%	61%	na	11%	20%	8%	50%	70%	na	10%	11%	9%	60%	-9%
Colombia	66%	4%	5%	23%	6%	61%	59%	4%	6%	30%	5%	53%	74%	6%	4%	17%	5%	70%	-15%
Mexico	55%	16%	8%	28%	9%	47%	51%	15%	10%	29%	10%	41%	60%	18%	6%	26%	8%	54%	-9%
El Salvador	44%	14%	15%	25%	16%	29%	37%	12%	19%	27%	17%	18%	51%	16%	12%	22%	15%	39%	-14%

* Gallup Poll, 1996

na = not available

9. DO YOU THINK WOMEN IN PUBLIC OFFICE WOULD DO BETTER, WORSE, OR THE SAME AS MEN IN DEALING WITH THE FOLLOWING ISSUES?

	TOTAL					MEN					WOMEN					
REGIONAL RESULTS	Better	Worse	No Diff	DK/Ref	Diff. b/t Better/Worse	Better	Worse	No Diff	DK/Ref	Diff. b/t Better/Worse	Better	Worse	No Diff	DK/Ref	Diff. b/t Better/Worse	Diff. b/t Better, among men/women
Reducing poverty	62%	4%	30%	4%	58%	58%	5%	33%	4%	53%	66%	3%	27%	5%	63%	-8%
Improving education	72%	3%	23%	2%	69%	71%	3%	24%	1%	68%	73%	3%	22%	2%	70%	-2%
Combating corruption	57%	10%	29%	4%	47%	54%	12%	31%	4%	42%	60%	8%	27%	5%	52%	-6%
Promoting women's rights	84%	2%	12%	2%	82%	82%	2%	15%	2%	80%	86%	1%	10%	3%	85%	-4%
Protecting environment	64%	6%	28%	3%	58%	60%	8%	30%	2%	52%	67%	4%	26%	3%	63%	-7%
Defending public security	44%	18%	34%	4%	26%	40%	22%	34%	3%	18%	49%	14%	33%	4%	35%	-9%
Managing economy	59%	10%	27%	4%	49%	53%	14%	29%	4%	39%	64%	7%	25%	4%	57%	-11%
Conducting diplomatic relations	53%	10%	32%	5%	43%	50%	12%	33%	5%	38%	55%	9%	31%	5%	46%	-5%
Directing military	20%	50%	23%	7%	-30%	16%	59%	19%	6%	-43%	24%	41%	27%	8%	-17%	-8%

10. PLEASE TELL ME IF YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH EACH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS…

	TOTAL				MEN				WOMEN				
REGIONAL RESULTS	Agree	Disagree	DK/Ref	Diff. b/t Agree/disagree	Agree	Disagree	DK/Ref	Diff. b/t Agree/disagree	Agree	Disagree	DK/Ref	Diff. b/t Agree/disagree	Diff. b/t Agree, among men/women
Women are good decisionmakers	85%	10%	5%	75%	81%	14%	5%	67%	90%	5%	5%	85%	-9%
Women are more likely to get upset when faced with difficult issues in the workplace	50%	45%	5%	5%	56%	40%	4%	16%	44%	50%	6%	-6%	12%
Women's domestic responsibilities make them less productive in demanding jobs	43%	52%	5%	-9%	44%	51%	5%	-7%	42%	54%	4%	-12%	2%
Women are more honest than men	66%	25%	9%	41%	59%	31%	10%	28%	73%	18%	9%	55%	-14%
Women who assume public office become as aggressive and competitive as men	66%	29%	5%	37%	68%	28%	4%	40%	64%	30%	6%	34%	4%
Men are better leaders than women	36%	57%	7%	-21%	45%	48%	7%	-3%	28%	65%	7%	-37%	17%

11. NOW, PLEASE THINK ABOUT THE NEXT PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION AND THOSE ISSUES THAT MIGHT AFFECT YOUR VOTE. WILL THE CANDIDATE'S OPINIONS REGARDING WOMEN'S ISSUES BE VERY IMPORTANT TO YOU, SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT TO YOU, NOT TOO IMPORTANT TO YOU, OR NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT?

	TOTAL					MEN					WOMEN					
	Very imp.	S/what imp.	Not too imp.	Not at all imp.	DK	Very imp.	S/what imp.	Not too imp.	Not at all imp.	DK	Very imp.	S/what imp.	Not too imp.	Not at all imp.	DK	Diff. b/t Very, among men and women
Argentina	51%	25%	10%	8%	6%	49%	26%	10%	9%	6%	52%	23%	10%	8%	7%	-3%
Brazil	53%	23%	7%	14%	3%	45%	26%	8%	17%	4%	60%	21%	5%	12%	2%	-15%
Colombia	64%	20%	6%	7%	3%	59%	24%	6%	8%	3%	70%	16%	7%	5%	2%	-11%
Mexico	56%	29%	11%	3%	1%	49%	35%	11%	5%	0%	63%	23%	11%	2%	1%	-14%
El Salvador	64%	20%	10%	4%	2%	61%	21%	12%	4%	2%	66%	19%	8%	4%	3%	-5%

12. IF A PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE PROMISED TO APPOINT A CABINET COMPOSED OF 50% WOMEN, WOULD THAT MAKE YOU MORE LIKELY TO VOTE FOR THAT CANDIDATE, LESS LIKELY, OR WOULDN'T IT MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE TO YOU?

	TOTAL					MEN					WOMEN					
	More	Less	No Diff	DK/Ref	Diff. b/t More/Less	More	Less	No Diff	DK/Ref	Diff. b/t More/Less	More	Less	No Diff	DK/Ref	Diff. b/t More/Less	Diff. b/t More, among men/ women
Argentina	43%	6%	46%	5%	37%	44%	7%	45%	5%	37%	41%	6%	48%	6%	35%	3%
Brazil	37%	9%	52%	2%	28%	34%	12%	53%	1%	22%	40%	6%	51%	3%	34%	-6%
Colombia	49%	6%	42%	3%	43%	45%	8%	44%	3%	37%	53%	3%	41%	3%	50%	-8%
Mexico	44%	15%	40%	1%	29%	40%	17%	42%	1%	23%	47%	14%	38%	1%	33%	-7%
El Salvador	49%	15%	32%	4%	34%	41%	19%	37%	3%	22%	57%	10%	28%	5%	47%	-16%

13. AS YOU MAY ALREADY KNOW, WOMEN MUST COMPRISE 30 PERCENT OF POLITICAL PARTY CANDIDATES IN GENERAL ELECTIONS. WHAT IS YOUR GENERAL OPINION OF THIS QUOTA FOR WOMEN—DO YOU THINK IT IS MOSTLY GOOD FOR THE COUNTRY OR DO YOU THINK IT IS MOSTLY BAD FOR THE COUNTRY?

	TOTAL					MEN					WOMEN					
	Good	Bad	Never Heard	DK/Ref	Diff. b/t Good/Bad	Good	Bad	Never Heard	DK/Ref	Diff. b/t Good/Bad	Good	Bad	Never Heard	DK/Ref	Diff. b/t Good/Bad	Diff. b/t Good among men/ women
Argentina	66%	18%	4%	13%	48%	66%	17%	3%	14%	49%	65%	19%	5%	11%	46%	1%
Brazil	72%	13%	9%	6%	59%	69%	16%	10%	5%	53%	74%	11%	8%	7%	63%	-5%
Colombia	68%	13%	13%	6%	55%	73%	12%	9%	6%	61%	63%	15%	16%	6%	48%	10%
Mexico	68%	19%	10%	3%	49%	67%	19%	11%	3%	48%	68%	18%	10%	4%	50%	-1%
El Salvador	50%	9%	26%	15%	41%	50%	11%	26%	13%	39%	49%	8%	26%	17%	41%	1%

14. IF YOUR PARTY NOMINATED A CANDIDATE THAT YOU DID NOT LIKE, WOULD YOU REMAIN LOYAL TO THE PARTY AND VOTE FOR THE CANDIDATE ANYWAY, OR WOULD YOU VOTE FOR THE OTHER PARTY'S CANDIDATE?

	TOTAL				MEN				WOMEN				
	Yes	No	DK/Ref	Difference b/t Yes and No	Yes	No	DK/Ref	Difference b/t Yes and No	Yes	No	DK/Ref	Difference b/t Yes and No	Difference b/t Yes, among men and women
Argentina	17%	70%	13%	-53%	17%	72%	11%	-55%	17%	68%	15%	-51%	0%
Brazil	17%	78%	5%	-61%	19%	78%	3%	-59%	16%	78%	6%	-62%	3%
Colombia	12%	72%	16%	-60%	12%	72%	16%	-60%	13%	73%	14%	-60%	-1%
Mexico	32%	65%	3%	-33%	34%	64%	2%	-30%	30%	66%	4%	-36%	4%
El Salvador	33%	52%	15%	-19%	38%	50%	12%	-12%	29%	53%	18%	-24%	9%

15. IF YOUR PARTY NOMINATED A GENERALLY WELL-QUALIFIED PERSON FOR PRESIDENT (OF THE COUNTRY) WHO HAPPENED TO BE _____ WOULD YOU VOTE FOR THAT PERSON?

	TOTAL				MEN				WOMEN				
REGIONAL RESULTS	Yes	No	DK/Ref	Difference b/t Yes and No	Yes	No	DK/Ref	Difference b/t Yes and No	Yes	No	DK/Ref	Difference b/t Yes and No	Difference b/t Yes, among men and women
A White Woman	93%	5%	2%	88%	94%	4%	2%	90%	92%	5%	3%	87%	2%
A Black Woman	90%	7%	3%	83%	90%	8%	2%	82%	90%	6%	4%	84%	0%
A Black Man	89%	8%	3%	81%	90%	8%	2%	82%	88%	8%	4%	80%	2%
An Indigenous Man	83%	13%	4%	70%	83%	14%	3%	69%	84%	12%	4%	72%	-1%
An Indigenous Woman	83%	13%	4%	70%	82%	15%	3%	67%	84%	12%	4%	72%	-2%

16. NOW THINKING OF A LOCAL ELECTION SUCH AS MAYOR, IF YOUR PARTY NOMINATED A GENERALLY WELL-QUALIFIED PERSON FOR MAYOR WHO HAPPENED TO _____ WOULD YOU VOTE FOR THAT PERSON?

	TOTAL				MEN				WOMEN				
REGIONAL RESULTS	Yes	No	DK/Ref	Difference b/t Yes and No	Yes	No	DK/Ref	Difference b/t Yes and No	Yes	No	DK/Ref	Difference b/t Yes and No	Difference b/t Yes, among men and women
A White Woman	94%	4%	2%	90%	95%	3%	2%	92%	93%	4%	3%	89%	2%
A Black Woman	91%	7%	2%	84%	91%	7%	2%	84%	91%	6%	3%	85%	0%
A Black Man	90%	7%	3%	83%	90%	8%	2%	82%	89%	7%	4%	82%	1%
An Indigenous Man	85%	12%	3%	73%	85%	12%	3%	73%	84%	12%	4%	72%	1%
An Indigenous Woman	85%	12%	3%	73%	84%	13%	3%	71%	85%	12%	3%	73%	-1%

17. IF YOUR PARTY NOMINATED A GENERALLY WELL-QUALIFIED PERSON FOR A LEADERSHIP POSITION IN COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS (SUCH AS, SCHOOL ASSOCIATION, COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION ETC.) WHO HAPPENED TO BE _____, WOULD YOU VOTE FOR THAT PERSON?

	TOTAL				MEN				WOMEN				
REGIONAL RESULTS	Yes	No	DK/Ref	Difference b/t Yes and No	Yes	No	DK/Ref	Difference b/t Yes and No	Yes	No	DK/Ref	Difference b/t Yes and No	Difference b/t Yes, among men and women
A White Woman	94%	3%	3%	91%	95%	3%	2%	92%	94%	3%	3%	91%	1%
A Black Woman	91%	6%	3%	85%	91%	7%	2%	84%	91%	5%	4%	86%	0%
A Black Man	90%	7%	3%	83%	91%	7%	2%	84%	89%	7%	4%	82%	2%
An Indigenous Man	85%	12%	3%	73%	86%	12%	2%	74%	85%	11%	4%	74%	1%
An Indigenous Woman	86%	11%	3%	75%	85%	12%	3%	73%	86%	10%	4%	76%	-1%

18. DO YOU BELIEVE THE VOTERS WILL ELECT A WOMAN PRESIDENT OF OUR COUNTRY DURING THE NEXT 20 YEARS, OR NOT?

	TOTAL				MEN				WOMEN				
REGIONAL RESULTS	Yes	No	DK/Ref	Difference b/t Yes and No	Yes	No	DK/Ref	Difference b/t Yes and No	Yes	No	DK/Ref	Difference b/t Yes and No	Difference b/t Yes, among men and women
Argentina	47%	38%	15%	9%	48%	39%	13%	9%	46%	37%	17%	9%	2%
Brazil	77%	19%	4%	58%	76%	21%	3%	55%	78%	17%	5%	61%	-2%
Colombia	77%	17%	6%	60%	80%	17%	3%	63%	75%	17%	8%	58%	5%
Mexico	66%	26%	8%	40%	65%	28%	7%	37%	66%	25%	9%	41%	-1%
El Salvador	79%	13%	8%	66%	81%	11%	8%	70%	78%	14%	8%	64%	3%

19. HAVE YOU EVER VOTED FOR A WOMAN POLITICAL LEADER FOR ANY OFFICE?

20. HAVE YOU EVER HAD AN OPPORTUNITY WHERE YOU COULD HAVE VOTED FOR A WOMAN POLITICAL LEADER, BUT CHOSE NOT TO?

	TOTAL					MEN					WOMEN					
	Yes	"No, couldn't"	"No, Could"	DK/Ref	Difference b/t Yes and No	Yes	"No, couldn't"	"No, Could"	DK/Ref	Difference b/t Yes and No	Yes	"No, couldn't"	"No, Could"	DK/Ref	Difference b/t Yes and No	Difference b/t Yes among men and women
Argentina	43%	43%	8%	6%	35%	43%	45%	7%	5%	36%	43%	41%	9%	7%	34%	0%
Brazil	66%	19%	14%	1%	52%	68%	19%	13%	0%	55%	65%	19%	15%	1%	50%	3%
Colombia	43%	43%	13%	1%	30%	42%	45%	12%	1%	30%	43%	42%	14%	1%	29%	-1%
Mexico	43%	47%	8%	2%	35%	42%	48%	7%	3%	35%	43%	47%	8%	2%	35%	-1%
El Salvador	31%	54%	11%	4%	20%	32%	50%	14%	4%	18%	30%	58%	8%	4%	22%	2%

Women Political Leaders: Political Roles, Bases of Support, and Strategies

By Jorge I. Domínguez

THE CENTRAL QUESTION FOR WOMEN IN ROLES OF political leadership is how to be effective politicians without forgetting that they are women. Every politician should seek to win. For most politicians in democratic political systems, this means winning elections or winning public office through constitutionally sanctioned appointment procedures. For all politicians, even those who lead small political parties or social movements, this means influencing public policy and, perhaps more importantly, helping to shape the wise restraints that make us free.

This distinction also implies that some politicians may choose to forego electoral victory because they embrace political goals not yet supported by a significant proportion of the public. These politicians refuse to "move toward the center" where most votes may be found because they prefer to advocate political values that they hold dear. Nonetheless, they seek influence. Influence can be defined, minimally, as helping to shape outcomes about which we care.

The central question for women is how to be effective politicians without forgetting that they are women.

In most Latin American countries for many years, for example, market-oriented economic policy preferences—what in the 1990s came to be known as neoliberal economic policies—had little political support. Yet some politicians supported those views in many countries because they thought them right even if such views doomed them to electoral defeat for many years. Their ideas, their contribution to public debate, and their actions would in due course influence significantly the course of policy. They started to win elections. Outcomes changed. They were influential even before they become electorally successful.

Similarly, Latin American politicians who support "abortion on demand" elicit relatively little electoral support for those views, even if significant proportions of the electorate of various Latin American countries might support abortion in a few well-specified cases. At one time, the same was true in North America and Western Europe, yet influential advocates worked through the courts and parliaments to change outcomes in due course. They, too, would win elections but they, too, were influential even before they were electorally successful.

Politicians who are women face this choice between styles of politics, too. All politicians seek to advance some goals; some politicians value those goals more than they value the public offices they might occupy. At this meeting, I assume that most politicians present seek both to hold public office and to influence outcomes. Therefore, I turn to consider public opinion and elections and their effect on outcomes.

Public Opinion, Elections, and Policy Outcomes

Some fraction of the electorate in most Latin American countries remains unwilling to vote for some candidates because they are women, according to Latinobarómetro polls. Moreover, public opinion surveys indicate that citizens worry principally about issues of food, jobs, shelter, and wider concerns associated with the performance of the economy and its impact on their lives; there is little evidence that citizens accord high priority to addressing gender-related issues when they are asked for their views in open-ended questions. Women and men express fairly similar priorities about national political issues, although the extent of gender dif-

ferences in priority setting has not been researched well in Latin America.

There is a ¨gender gap¨ between male and female voters in many Latin American countries. Differences by gender, however, are often much less significant statistically in attempts to explain voting intentions once other variables are inserted to assess the relative weight of each. Consider the following illustration. In many Latin American countries, public opinion surveys often show that women and men differ in their voting intentions. When more sophisticated statistical models for the analysis of voting behavior are employed, however, the explanatory significance of gender for the voting decision wanes. Why? The first example of this process was evident in Chilean public opinion polls—among Latin America's oldest and most reliable at the time—between 1958 and 1973. There seemed to be at first a huge gender gap, with women being less likely to vote and, when they voted, more likely to vote against the Left. It soon became evident that women voted at a lower rate in 1958 because they had just been enfranchised for voting in presidential elections; in most countries new voters typically vote at lower rates than older voters. In time, women's voter turnout approximated that of men. And, when other variables were included for simultaneous analysis, it turned out that less-educated persons were less likely to vote for the Left; the anti-Left vote of many women was better explained as a function of low education than as a function of gender. Controlling statistically for educational differences, the gender gap in Left-Right voting became smaller, especially with the passing of time.

A similar analysis may be applied to Mexico in the 1990s. At first appearance, there is a gender gap, with fewer women voters supporting the Party of the Democratic Revolution. With proper statistical controls, the gender gap narrows. The anti-PRD votes of many women were better explained by their assessments of the president's performance or their views on economic trends than by the fact of their gender. With such statistical controls, gender made no difference in explaining turnout in Mexico's July 2000 national elections.

Nonetheless, a gender gap often remains even after the application of these statistical controls but it is unclear whether there is a connection between this gap and "gendered attitudes" toward policy issues. For example, in elections held in 2000, Mexican or Chilean women were less likely to support Left candidates, yet it would be inaccurate to argue that the candidates of the Left were anti-women. On the contrary, some would say that Left candidates were pro-feminist. It might be tempting to suggest, therefore, that most women voters are anti-feminist, but it has yet to be demonstrated that the generally slight bias among women voters against Left candidates is to be explained in terms of the Left's position on gendered issues (divorce, abortion) or, simply, in wider terms

Billie Miller, Fernando Remírez, chief of the Cuban Interests Section

about bundles of issues. This brief analysis of trends in voting behavior has specific consequences for women politicians.

1. Women politicians who seek public office, not just influence over outcomes, should seek to appeal to a broad public that will be voting for or against them on the basis of concerns other than the candidate's gender and other than their views on gendered issues.

2. Yet some significant fraction of voters (men and women) prefer not to vote for women for public office, especially not the presidency in national elections. This set of attitudes varies enormously by country and has declined over a long period of time. It is, for example, not a major factor any longer in Colombia.

3. To the extent that there is a gender gap, it favors parties of the Center and the Right. Other things being equal, women politicians are more likely to be elected to office with greater support from women in parties of the Center and the Right. However, many women politicians have feminist views on issues, thus the number of elected women politicians may be larger on the Left as a result of the choices of candidates for their partisan affiliation, not as the result of the preferences of voters.

4. The public accords low priority to gendered issues, not because it actively resists such attention, but because it is more concerned over economic performance, crime,

schooling, etc. This has as a consequence that there is a "policy window" to address gendered issues provided they are presented in the wider context of bundles of issues. For example, improving access to schooling in rural areas can be defended on many grounds; one such grounds is that girls in rural areas are more likely than boys to be denied access to school.

These observations, in turn, suggest strategies for action for women politicians who retain an interest in gendered issues and who have not forgotten that they are women. They are more likely to succeed if they can frame their policy views as part of a broad set of concerns, not just concerns of interest to women. They are more likely to succeed if they act as politicians, not as women politicians; that is, they should be seen as advancing the values and interests of all citizens. This mode of action should not be difficult but it requires conscious attention. There is no evidence that female politicians govern less effectively than male politicians once in office, or that they are less likely to succeed in negotiations or in making difficult decisions. But their opponents sometimes succeed in portraying them as less capable of governing because they are women, playing up to residual prejudices in public opinion noted above, or less capable of governing on behalf of all citizens because their views on gendered issues are alleged to be unrepresentative of the wider population. In the late 1990s, the defeat of the very capable Graciela Fernández Meijide for governor of the Province of Buenos Aires is an unfortunate illustration of this problem.

Politicians who are women are more likely to succeed in affecting gendered outcomes if they come from parties of the Center and the Right; for women Left politicians, the corollary is that they are more likely to succeed in shaping gendered outcomes if they can form an alliance on these issues with members from other parties.

Finally, some issues are best presented as advancing the wise restraints that make all citizens free. This emphasis on procedures for civilized life seeks to build support for issues that are unavoidably gendered. Decades ago, women's enfranchisement was one such issue. It would eventually be successful when it was framed in terms of the rights of all citizens under liberal democratic procedures and institutions, restraining the grip on elections by some citizens just because of their gender. Preventing, deterring, and punishing domestic violence may be a similar issue today; it, too, calls for the imposition of wise restraints and penalties for their violation. Thus the framing and transformation of issues to garner wide public appeal may be the most effective strategy to advance goals that are of special concern to women, that is, they become issues that ought to concern all human beings.

Jorge I. Domínguez is Director of the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs at Harvard University, an Associated Fellow of the Inter-American Dialogue, and a visiting scholar at the Fundación para las Relaciones Internacionales y el Diálogo Exterior in Madrid. (Drafted 12 October 2000)

Ana María Campero, Erika Brockman

Lessons from the Participation of Women in Politics

By Cecilia Blondet M.

THE GROWING PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN political and economic decisionmaking has brought up new questions, enlivening the debate among feminists in particular, and those interested in politics throughout the world in general. What effect, if any, does the increased percentage of women in positions of power and influence have on the issues of non-discrimination or democracy? In other words, do women really help bring about less discrimination and more democracy? Do the increased numbers of women in positions of power and influence in the legislative, judicial, and executive branches of government, in boardrooms and executive suites and in social institutions, enhance the possibilities of achieving conditions of equality among men and women? Do "feminine interests" exist distinct from "masculine interests" and, if so, are these comparable to the interests of ethnic groups, children, or the disabled? Do women constitute a representative social group? Don't women have ethnic, political, economic and social differences among themselves?

A caricature of female perfection can be counterproductive, reinforcing historical forms of discrimination.

These questions, among many that beckon in these times, highlight two central issues: that of essentialism, that is to say, how do feminine-specific issues correlate with the bias toward the search for consensus, cooperation, altruism, and political representation by women as women. This paper will deal with these issues. I hope to illustrate some of the challenges facing women involved in the current Latin American political environment using three examples culled from the Peruvian political arena.

Domestic violence legislation was enacted in Peru in 1993 and later modified and improved following a series of discussions in 1996. The nation's congresswomen played a key role on both occasions. The subject would not even have come up for debate were it not for the efforts of these women, who also counted on the support of feminist organizations. Additionally, putting aside any differences, the congresswomen voted unanimously to approve the proposal.

This issue, directly linked to "matters of interest to women," fueled the feminist essentialist debate, which is plagued with stereotypes: women are capable of coming to an agreement and setting aside political, ideological and other differences. The number and enthusiasm of the commentaries reached a crescendo, going so far as to say that such a feat was possible because they were women, because women don't fight, because they solve their differences and conflicts with dialogue and because they have different ways of acting in politics. In other words, because they are essentially peaceful and consensus-oriented, in contrast with men who are conflictive, aggressive, competitive and unable to forge an agreement. Over the years, these concepts have become increasingly relative and many women have moderated this perception of feminine virtue. Nevertheless, the Fujimorist women who voice the "official rhetoric" and who have, more than ever, an overwhelming presence in the media, make indiscriminate use of these notions to represent themselves as champions of democracy, the feminine vanguard and national unity. A caricature of female perfection can be counterproductive, reinforcing historical forms of discrimination.

When in 1998 a proposal for a quota law was presented, (25% of candidate lists had to be women) the situation was not so exemplary, although the outcome was. While opposition congresswomen and some of those affiliated with Fujimori's "official" party supported the proposal, pointing out that it would be the first step in correcting the serious problems of discrimination towards women in politics, there were other voices among the men and Fujimorist

women that openly opposed the law. A harsh debate ensued with the opposition pointing to the irrelevance of a regulation that, in principle, treated women as inferior beings incapable of competing on their own merits with men on a level playing field, and thus requiring protective legislation to give them an unfair advantage. The Fujimorist women opposing the law felt particularly threatened by the proposed legislation and demonstrated their dissatisfaction by arguing their position. The debate ended there. Nevertheless, in the following congress, and to the surprise of the plenary session, the proposal for a quota law was again presented and both the male and female representatives of the "official" party voted massively for its passage.

Miraculously, the differences had vanished, the erstwhile opposition congresswomen suddenly supported the law, and it was approved without reservations. They might have changed their minds upon further reflection after the initial debate—which would be a favorable explanation of this change of heart—sold on the positive aspects of this reverse discrimination and in an act of unusual flexibility, voted for passage. The real reasons, however, lay elsewhere. The supreme leader, President Fujimori, had called them to order and in a clear expression of authority, forced his party members to vote in favor of the law. His interest and his strategy were clear. The capture and control of women is considered prized booty in the contemporary political market. This practice, added to other patronage maneuverings directed at women of impoverished social sectors was calculated to expand the president's social base.

In this second case, it could again be said that the issue was one of "feminine interest," albeit with divergent postures, as turned out to be the case. The areas of agreement or disagreement were not centered, however, on the relevance or acceptance of these issues, but rather, on the will and the interests of the leader and the party. The women opted for loyalty to the chief rather than speak their disapproval out loud; they silenced their position and subordinated themselves in the face of authority on an issue that, apparently, relates directly to them as women. That is to say, for one reason or another, women's issues are not necessarily treated as such, or put another way, not all that affects women is of equal interest to women in politics.

It is pertinent to take note of an apparent dilemma as we survey the landscape beyond the behavior of the Fujimori women. It is one thing to contemplate the intentions of those who seek to manipulate this practice, as in the case of the quota law and many other laws as well, using social policy to "co-opt" social groups for political gain. It is something else again to consider the consequences and the effects of these policies on the population. Although the intention was to make them beholden for favors rendered, in practice the capacity to control and patronize women could be eroded. This specific issue was debated widely, spawning much controversy among the many different feminist groups in Peru. Some thought that the opportunity to expand and democratize the condition of women should be seized, in spite of the recognized differences with the government. Others, standing on principle and core democratic values, argued that this type of Machiavellian alliance would most likely be a hapless one in the long run; they would be "whitewashing" an authoritarian régime, and given the context in which this legislation was achieved, there were no guarantees of major changes in the medium and long term.

Mayra Buvinic

In addition, the nation's political environment had varied considerably from 1993 or 1996 to 1998, by which time the régime had become openly authoritarian. The polarization became increasingly evident. On the one hand, the executive's party apparatus, through an assortment of legal chicaneries, had gained increasing control of the other branches of government and its main institutions, and routinely imposed its decisions in an arbitrary way, while on the other hand, the opposition fought to preserve minimal democratic enclaves. Thus the need of the Fujimorists to act as a monolithic group in which any discrepancy would be viewed as personal disloyalty to its chief; and of the democratic female sectors to keep their distance, having reservations, as they applauded the government's reforms, even when these seemed favorable.

Finally, the third case unfolds in the year 2000 on a political stage fraught with confrontation and a crumbling authoritarian régime.

After the fraudulent elections of May 2000, and ignoring the clamoring voices of broad segments of society as well as national and international political institutions, President Fujimori was sworn into office and began his third term with a very special and novel Congressional Directive Council. For the first time in the history of the country and of Latin America, the congressional leadership was in the hands of four women. The decision was made by the president himself, who bypassed constitutional hierarchy and protocol and hand picked its members over the serious objections and roadblocks put up by the different groups of his own political party.

The monolithic Fujimorist block was cracking, and the unashamed power plays by the leaders of each sub-group within the Fujimorist camp were becoming increasingly more apparent. Faced with this situation, the president opted to put the women of each faction—not the men who were their bosses—in charge no less, as a way to appease the conflicts and to solve the situation quickly, and as a way of teaching the wrangling men a lesson and of convincing public opinion that his front was united and that women are an example of consensus-takers who do not participate in divisive games. Indeed, they smiled, accepted the responsibility and, with their hands raised high in celebration, played the game of communion and "feminine fraternity."

While the official rhetoric delighted from so creative a resolution of the crisis, exalting the virtues of the "ladies" as they were repeatedly referred to, praising the novelty of the Peruvian situation and the importance of having a modern and forward-looking government able to recognize the value of women, the differences among the women were deepening. The non-Fujimorists, and I would dare say that many of the Fujimorists also didn't display enthusiasm or pride over the "promotion," rather, a clear sensation of discomfort could be gleaned in the different public forums of many of the opining women. Women's groups, increasingly more organized and cohesive in their defense of democracy, such as the Women's Movement for Democracy (Movimiento de Mujeres por la Democracia-MUDE) among others, showed their indignation at the coarse use of gender, relegating the women of the régime to the defense of "feminine fraternity." But, since in politics as in life, situations are rarely clear-cut or linear but most often multifaceted, there were women's voices, albeit a minority, that said they preferred four authoritarian women to four authoritarian men. It is clear that both the congresswomen of the Directive Council and the "gender rhetoric" were pawns and that, in spite of the political clout that they had acquired in previous years, they were also lending themselves to this disgraceful if picturesque performance and in consequence, were being used. Naiveté was not the operative principle at work here, but rather an expedient exchange of conveniences: political capital to be cashed in for a key role or opportunity later on. They displayed the same pragmatic attitude that has characterized the politics of this régime.

The situation might have been contained had the virulent practices of the government not been brought explosively to light: corruption, arms trafficking, the blackmailing of high-ranking officials and politicians to assure a majority in congress and to perpetuate power, compromising top government officials, including the armed forces and accelerating its decomposition. A motion to censor the congress' Directive Council tested the correlation of forces between the pro-government and the pro-democracy factions, and in passing, between the women and the men. Without a doubt, the vote was cut short for political reasons, not because of the gender issue. None of the opposition women even considered the possibility of a non-censure vote based on gender. Is political

Muni Figueres, Alejandra Krauss

power gender blind? Or, is democracy not assured simply because those who hold power are women?

With an extremely weakened stage director (Fujimori) and without an assistant director (Montesinos) the authoritarian montage in Peru is in free fall, the stage self-destructs and the actors and actresses fight without any pretenses of fraternity or affinity based on ideology or gender. In these last days, Peruvian men and women have witnessed, in a stupor, the worst accusations among the militant Fujimorists, led, paradoxically, by the women of the régime. Exalted declarations of loyalty to the president, competing for truest believer status, are common to them all. This, while the president lasts. Could we add, then, the question on the pacifism and the sublime capacity to forge consensus among women?

By way of conclusion, I want to focus on some of the lessons that can be distilled from these stories:

1. I believe that today more than ever, we need to consider the true, relative nature of "absolute truths," the identities, fraternities and absolute loyalties, the sweeping and grandiloquent proclamations. Ambiguity is a refined value of these times. The "woman half" of humanity as Elena Soriano, the Spanish writer, refers to the feminine 50%, is not a homogeneous group and is therefore not, in itself, representative. One cannot speak on behalf of women, because women are legion: Black or indigenous; illiterate and professional; from Quispillacta in Ayacucho or from Prague and Cairo; Quechua, gypsy or Maori; because they are democratic, authoritarian, indifferent. We could continue pointing out differences and distinctions endlessly. In that sense women, as such, don't constitute a group, but are as many as their different interests, which lead them to associate, coordinate demands and elect representatives, alone or with other members of the society to which they belong and with which they share their dreams and realities, histories and futures.

2. The single fact that there is a growing number of women in positions of power and influence, that they have lost their fear of power, has positive connotations independent of the achievements that their presence may have gained in favor of women's issues or democracy. It is part of a new common sense in society by which no one is surprised to see women in positions of authority, or as artists or refereeing a soccer match.

In symbolic terms, new "woman" paradigms with the attributes of power and decision-making ability are constructed and diffused through the roles that women carry out in politics, even those that are associated with Fujimori, appearing in the mass media and advocating their positions on very different issues with great aplomb and conviction. This contributes to the expansion, diversity and enrichment of role models of what it means to be a woman, but perhaps more importantly, to be a woman with personal power in the conceptual universe of feminine and masculine imagery and imagination. The old stereotypes that pigeonhole women exclusively in their traditional roles as service providers to husbands, communities or the nation, are breaking down. The variety of feminine participation today, often taking on very controversial issues or positions, humanizes the feminine figure and highlights the differences that exist among women. The different positions that they can and do advocate in the exercise of power thus help to dispel the myth of the idyllic "feminine fraternity."

In practical terms, the presence of many women, though not all, promotes the discussion of issues and the proposal of laws that defend women's rights. Without a doubt, much of today's legislation benefiting women would not have gained consideration, let alone passage, were it not for the presence of women in the corridors of political power. Curiously, this interest in the feminine question is not associated with nor does it suppose a feminist or democratic affiliation. Precisely because we now understand the heterogeneous nature of women.

3. Beware the resurgence of "womanism" and of the "hurray for women" mindset. Not all women are the same nor are they sisters, therefore, the WOMEN category as a homogeneous force that hides ethnic, social, political and economic differences must be avoided. They are honest and corrupt, pragmatists and idealists, authoritarian and democratic, poor and rich, each one with well-differentiated interests. In addition, not all women are good, honest, loyal, worthy and sensitive. In fact, one of the contributions of the feminist movement is the acknowledgement of difference. We must not lose this perspective.

4. There are issues that bring women together, because they are of common interest to society, and that for a variety of reasons are best explored at another time, have been historically excluded from the political agenda. Family violence is one of these issues, reproductive health is another that correlates closely with female sexuality: abortion, maternity and child rearing. All of these have an impact on the relationship of women to the labor market and on economic emancipation. Other issues on the feminine agenda are those linked to discrimination and decision-making in general, due to gender-based unequal access and treatment. And finally, those issues linked to the conditions of poverty that, though not exclusive to women, are aggravated by entrenched patriarchal systems that often generate situations of inequality and discrimination.

Finally, I want to pose what I consider to be pivotal questions in both the debates on the presence of women in politics and of the policies targeting the female population:

- To what extent do quota laws and other targeted legislation and policy initiatives favoring women serve to contribute to a change in the "formal" aspects of democracy, without these changes necessarily improving the realities facing women?
- Why are so many women still the poorest of the poor and who, even now, have the highest probabilities of staying poor in spite of the changes in legislation, targeted policies, and a media presence that does not always dignify them as people?
- In short, how do we bridge the chasm, common in our countries, between "formal" democracy and real democracy, the one in which we all live our daily lives, and not just during electoral periods or within the confines of congress?

Cecilia Blondet M. is director of the Institute of Peruvian Studies in Lima, Peru.

Please Speak Out: A Plea to the Women in Power in Latin America

By Silvana Paternostro

As the author of a book about women in Latin America, I have been asked to write about what I think is the biggest challenge facing women who are political leaders in the region today. I will answer with one word: *machismo*. I am sure that all of you, as Latin American women, will know exactly what I mean. I know I will not have to explain *machismo* to any of you as I had to a young English woman in her early twenties.

I was visiting a friend when my book, *In the Land of God and Man*, was published. My friend's daughter, who had just graduated from college, wanted to know what it was about. "About *machismo*," I told her.

"*Machismo*?" she asked, confused. "Wasn't he a poet in the seventeenth century?"

I laughed, not because I thought she was joking, but at the beautiful significance of her ignorance. Gender inequality undoubtedly remains an issue in England, as elsewhere. But the fact that *machismo* is not a recognizable concept to a young, educated woman, means that things must have changed since that afternoon in the early twenties when Virginia Woolf spoke about the need for a woman to have a room of one's own.

How much has our culture changed since the cloistered days of Sor Juana?

I explained to my friend's daughter, Dixie, that *machismo* means that there are laws in Latin America—constitutional and customary—that perpetuate the inequality between men and women. That there are rules that women don't want but cannot change. That, for example, in Nicaragua, a woman can be punished for adultery, and a man cannot. That in 13 countries in Latin America, a rapist can be acquitted if he offers to marry the woman he raped. That women go to job interviews and are required to take pregnancy exams and if hired need to report their menstrual cycles every month. That regardless of the fact that there are women, like you, entering the political life of our region, our laws still benefit men. That many sew their hymens pretending to be virgins on their honeymoon. That regardless of the fact that 50% of our labor force is female and half of our university graduates are women, our culture still believes only men have a right to be sexual and women, despite their education, are still encouraged to be submissive and docile.

Why are women who arrive virgins to their wedding nights, being infected with HIV by their husbands? Machismo.

Dixie's response had been the exact opposite reaction I had received when I explained to women in Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Brazil or Mexico that I was writing a book about *machismo*. With her, I was forced to explain what I had gotten away with so easily before. *Machismo* had become my alibi during the four years I spent researching, reporting and writing my book—a book I refer to, half in jest and half in total seriousness, as my political manifesto in the wrong language. I wrote it in English, it was published here, and like my friend's daughter, many of the critics in this country felt my radical attack on *machismo* and my impassioned call for women to take control of their lives was totally demodé. Gloria Steinem and the sexual revolution happened 30 years ago, they claimed. (Again, I am not implying that that there are no traces of *machismo* north of the border but it is undeniable that its manifestations have less drastic results than they do in Latin America.) We need to go through our own sexual revolution!

We cannot enter globalization or pretend we will live in democracy without opening the discourse about women's rights. And you as women in power have a duty to do so because the men in power will not. If you are concerned

K. Burke Dillon

about the need to not be too drastic, to think that these things need to be addressed with caution, let me share with you what I learned from talking to women from all walks of life about how they feel about *machismo*. They recognize the word immediately—even the most oppressed ones. It sends chills down their spines; it smells of alcohol and forced sex. In the lightest of cases, it is dismissed by the more liberated women with a roll of the eyes. But it is recognized and disliked, if not outright hated—as women we are taught to not be opinionated, only melodramatic.

But what was so starkly evident to me is that women are scared of it, paralyzed by it. They know how engrained and how powerful it is, how it permeates everything in their daily lives (and for you, I would think, in your public lives) and how they mostly feel it is indestructible, *un mal necesario*, an enemy they are bound to live with always. A monster that cannot be stomped down but that we have to live with, by gingerly stepping around it. Do you as women in political power feel that you cannot address certain issues—the right to safe abortions, to mention one—because they are political bombs? Do you feel that to have a political future, it is safer to talk about trade pacts than it is about reproductive rights?

I am not a theoretician. I am not an academic. I am not a professional feminist, a policymaker or a politician. I do not know what the best strategy is for you to address the issue of *machismo* in your political platforms. But as a journalist who went out to explore what the consequences of *machismo* in women's daily lives are, I can assure you that they are devastatingly desperate to hear you talk about it.

I did not set out to write a book about *machismo*, per se. I was investigating the transmission pattern of AIDS in Latin America. I found out that, like in Africa, women, especially married, monogamous, mothers — *señoras de su casa* — bear the brunt of the epidemic. Why are women who arrive virgins to their wedding nights, being infected with the HIV-virus by their husbands? The answer is simple: *machismo*.

I was not the one who came out with this answer. The women themselves did. At an AIDS awareness workshop in Rio de Janeiro, I heard a nurse explain to more than a dozen married women the importance of protected sex. The women told the nurse that they understood what she was telling them but that they could never ask their husbands—although they all knew they had unfaithful husbands—to use condoms. Why not? asked the nurse. The women answered with one word: *machismo*.

So I decided to turn my story about AIDS into an investigation about *machismo*. I tackled it the same way a foreign correspondent would report war or a natural disaster. I traveled throughout Latin America looking for the stories that would show how *machismo* keeps women at risk: at risk of being HIV positive; at risk of dying from a self-induced abortion or from the violent blows of an abusive partner; at risk of waking up having to marry the man who raped her.

I translated the scary statistics of four million clandestine abortions into the story of Josefa, a woman in her early forties, a grandmother of five, who has had ten abortions—regardless of the fact that she goes to church every Sunday and proudly displays a leather-bound Bible in her home. As I sat in her modest and sparkling kitchen, Josefa spoke nonstop about the most intimate of things: how her husband orders her to have sex and she does although she feels no pleasure; that she has serious health problems due to ten self-induced abortions; that what looks like a "happy home, is not." Again, she blamed *machismo* for the misery in her life.

It was not hard to find women who would talk. Sadly, it was very easy. All I had to do was ask. Women, once asked to participate (granted, in a safe place), will open up the most recondite places and will speak to their heart's content about their condition, about how they wish things were different. They want to be educated about their rights, about their bodies. As women in power you might think you will lose votes, support, if you mention these inequalities out loud. You might want to use the argument that these are foreign feminist impositions, that women are fine with the state of their condition. I've talked to enough women to know I can shatter that argument. *Machismo* is not a question of cultural relativism. *Machismo* is a human rights violation. Women are ready to hear you speak about abortion, sex, AIDS, divorce. You will not be shunned.

Many women dismiss *machismo* as harmless and irrelevant. They argue that real power lies with the mothers

and the wives. These women will say conspiratorially that we just let men think they have the power, that ours is the real power. "It is just a silent power," an Argentine woman told me once. She came of age in the dark years of the Dirty War and saw a group of women who took their mourning, as the mothers of the disappeared, to the plaza facing the halls of power, to confront that power and demand answers. I agree with her. *Las Madres de la Plaza de Mayo* are heroes. They made the world aware of the atrocities committed by a group of men in uniform. But they were far from silent.

There is some truth in her comment about mothers and wives being able to influence men. Our societies and our religion are deeply respectful of the maternal. Latin American men are close to their mothers. But we need to recognize the difference between the influence that a mother can have on an adult son and the real power needed to change our societies and our lives for the better. Men in Latin America will visit their mothers every day and they might make madonnas out of their wives, but this does not necessarily translate into power for women.

If power is to be real, it can't stay silent. Silent power has the same connotations as our secret revirginizations, our secret abortions, and our secret orgasms—something manipulative, clandestine, forbidden. We might briefly rattle or subvert institutions by these means, but such measures can never satisfy and they are not true expressions of our desires, our strengths, our goals. If we accept silent power as our only agent of influence, women will forever be marginalized in both public life and in their most intimate relationships.

In New York, where I live, there is an Off-Broadway play called "The Vagina Monologues." It is both a celebration of women and a reminder of the injustices that women still endure. During the performance one hears not only the moans of sexual pleasure but the cries of raped women. The play has been such an inspiration that top-rate actresses like Whoopi Goldberg and Glenn Close have performed. So has Gloria Steinem. This week, the wife of Mayor Guiliani is a guest. Whenever I see the ads for it and I see a public figure get up on stage and celebrating womanhood like this, I think we need a version of "The Vagina Monologues" in Latin America. Would any of you be willing to participate?

Women cannot wait for more soft talk. Women cannot wait for trade agreements to be signed, for crime and corruption to be rooted out. The situation of women in Latin America is as detrimental to democracy as impunity and devaluations. How can you call our country a democracy when half of the constituents are not being considered? Think of the situation of women every day you spend in public life. Speak out without fear, *sin pelos en la lengua.* Then we can start talking seriously about democracy. And, perhaps, our daughters will also think that *machismo* was a poet of the past.

Manuela Alvarado

Silvana Paternostro is a Colombian journalist and author who lives in New York City where she is Senior Fellow at the World Policy Institute at the New School for Social Research. Her recent book, In the Land of God and Man, *will be published next year in Spanish.*

Closing the Gap between Women's Abstract Rights and Effective Rights: The Need for Executive Action

Mala N. Htun
November 2000

THE CHALLENGE FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS ADVOCATES in Latin America is not the adoption of new laws but the implementation of those laws that already exist. Though the gap between law and practice is a perennial problem in the region, recent experience suggests that focused executive action can make women's rights effective. A larger question is how the executive can be compelled to promote these changes.

In the past two decades, women's presence in power in Latin America has increased impressively. This growth, however, is not evenly distributed. Women are most successful gaining access to elected office in the legislative branch. In Latin America and the Caribbean, women make up 15.4 percent of the lower house of congress. Women's presence in provincial or state assemblies and in municipal councils is also relatively high. On the other hand, women's presence in the executive is still low. Only one woman is president of a Latin American country, very few women are governors, and women's presence among mayors rarely exceeds 5 percent.

When the executive takes an interest in women's rights, the results have been stunning.

Women's low presence in the executive branch may pose a major obstacle to advances in women's rights. The legislature can establish a normative framework for women's rights policies and reduce sex discrimination in existing legislation. The executive, however, has the power to propose the budgetary changes and institutional transformations necessary to make women's formal rights concrete.

The growth in women's presence in legislatures, combined with the influence of international norms and agreements, led to major law and policy changes in the 1990s. Twelve countries adopted quota laws establishing a minimum percentage of candidates in national elections, 15 Latin American countries approved legislation to punish and prevent violence against women, and legislatures modified constitutions, civil, and criminal codes to reduce sex discrimination. Yet many of these laws suffer from problematic implementation and lack of sufficient funding. Quota laws, for example, have been only mildly successful in increasing women's presence in power, and in some countries have had very little effect. Domestic violence laws contemplate public policies that many countries have not launched. Constitutions grant women rights that exist in name but not in practice.

Closing the gap between women's abstract rights and their effective rights requires executive action. When the executive takes an interest in women's rights, the results have been stunning. Consider the following three examples:

1. Argentina's quota law of 1991. The success of Argentina's quota law, which caused women's presence in the Chamber of Deputies to grow from 6 to 28 percent, is attributable to executive action. The first factor explaining the success of the law is the placement mandate contained in the law's *reglamentación*, established in a decree issued by President Menem in 1993. The *reglamentación* states that women must be placed in electable positions on party lists. Without this executive decree, the quota law would have produced few results, since parties would have placed women in low positions on the list, giving them little chance to get elected. The second factor is the national

campaign waged by the National Women's Council, an executive branch agency, in 1993 and 1995 to challenge in court those party lists that failed to comply with the electability rule. The campaign established judicial precedents and norms of compliance among parties. In short, the mere existence of a quota law did not guarantee success. Executive action to establish the electability rule and to monitor compliance with quotas was necessary to make quotas work.

2. Abortion in Mexico. In 2000, Rosario Robles, the mayor of Mexico City, spearheaded reforms to the city's laws on abortion.[1] This was unprecedented. In the past, no major national officeholder in any Latin American country had publicly supported the liberalization of restrictions on abortion. As a result, laws on abortion had not changed since the adoption of modern criminal codes decades ago. Individual members of congress in several countries had introduced bills to liberalize abortion, but these bills generated more controversy than support. The experience of Mexico demonstrates that executive action can break the historic stalemate over abortion law, and that an elected official can support the liberalization of laws on abortion and not lose popularity.

3. Women's health in Brazil. The appointment of José Serra as minister of health in Brazil led to the adoption of several new programs to improve women's health, particularly reproductive health. After assuming office, Serra made women's health a priority of the Health Ministry. The Ministry organized a Campaign to Prevent Cervical Cancer that attended 3.5 million women in 1998, and issued a technical norm requiring all public hospitals to perform legal abortions and provide emergency contraception at the request of women who had been raped. The Ministry also launched programs to reduce the high incidence of caesarian sections and promote "natural" birth, reduce maternal mortality, increase the supply of contraceptives distributed at health posts, expand HIV testing and treatment for those with AIDS, and promote greater attention to the health of Afro-Brazilian women. Many of these actions had been anticipated by a formal women's health policy adopted in 1983, but were never implemented until a minister committed to women's health arrived on the scene.

The policies mentioned above all resulted from officials in senior positions—presidents, mayors, and ministers—exercising individual initiative.

Executive action should not be confused with the activities of women's agencies. Most countries have established

Dulce María Pereira, Ana María Brasileiro

women's agencies in the executive branch to propose and coordinate policies directed at women. These women's agencies have performed important functions, such as proposing legal reforms in Chile, organizing women's literacy campaigns in Peru, and monitoring compliance with quotas, as in the Argentine case mentioned above. Though they vary in power and status in different countries, for the most part women's agencies have an advisory role. They can assist other agencies in executing public policies for women but lack executive authority on their own. Moreover, the mission and status of women's agencies has changed from one administration to the next. In Brazil, for example, the National Council for Women's Rights was demoted to a department within the Secretariat of Human Rights in the Ministry of Justice. The point is that women's agencies lack the power and the authority to issue binding resolutions and commit resources to implement women's rights. Women's agencies, even those with broad mandates, may complement but cannot substitute high-level executive action.

How can we compel executive action to implement women's rights? The elected officials in the examples mentioned above were motivated both by the desire to gain votes and to promote change on an issue they cared about. Another motive, most relevant to the case of Robles, was to isolate a rival political party, and claim for one's own party an issue favored by a majority of voters.[2] The common denominator here is that advancing women's rights was not merely seen as charitable, but politically profitable.

[1] The new Criminal Code adds two grounds to legal abortion: if the mother's *health* (not merely her life) is at risk, and if the fetus has severe birth defects.

[2] Public opinion surveys demonstrate that over 80 percent of capital city residents favor permitting abortion in the circumstances contemplated by Mexico City's reformed criminal law.

Politicians are most interested in helping women when by doing so they help themselves.

The problem, as Jorge Domínguez's memo contends, is that Latin American voters demonstrate more interest in food, jobs, crime, and shelter than in women's rights. As a result, leaders gain little political advantage by focusing on women's rights in elections or while ruling. Framing women's rights as questions of citizens' rights or equality, Domínguez suggests, may enlarge the constituency backing change. Conceptualizing domestic violence as a human rights and public security issue is one example. There may be other alternatives. We need to further publicize research showing how improvements in women's lives contribute to economic growth, social development, and democracy so the public sees the linkages between women's rights and problems of food, jobs, crime, and shelter. When Latin American publics are convinced that women's rights are issues to confront today, these issues may become politically advantageous to the region's male and female leaders.

Mala N. Htun is Assistant Professor of Political Science at the New School University in New York. She is the author of several articles on women in politics and women's rights in Latin America. Htun has her Ph.D. in political science from Harvard University. She serves as consultant to the Inter-American Dialogue and Women's Leadership Conference of the Americas (WLCA).

César Gaviria, Ana Milena Gaviria, Joan Caivano

ANNEX I

Background Papers on Economic and Social Policies, and Democracy and Governance Issues Facing Political Leaders in the Americas

Enriching the Washington Consensus: Equity with Growth in Latin America

Chairs: Nancy Birdsall and Augusto de la Torre

Summary and Excerpts from the Chairmen's Report,
Commission of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and
Inter-American Dialogue, on
Economic Reform in the Unequal Societies of Latin America

September 13, 2000

THE 1990 ARTICLE BY JOHN WILLIAMSON THAT described the Washington Consensus, set out 10 economic reform policies. The policies emphasized control of inflation and reliance on the market, and aimed at making developing economies more efficient and competitive so as to raise and sustain higher growth rates. During the 1990s, these policies were embraced firmly by the technical and political leadership in Latin America, with substantial backing from the international financial institutions and the U.S. Treasury.

Some time after the original publication, its author noted that the consensus views he compiled were distinctly efficiency oriented, not equity oriented. "I deliberately excluded from the list anything which was primarily redistributive … because I felt the Washington of the 1980s to be a city that was essentially contemptuous of equity concerns."

But times have changed. In Latin America and in Washington, poverty reduction, equity and such non-income objectives as improved quality of urban life have taken center stage. A new consensus has emerged—this time with an emphasis on equity. While this consensus is on the new objective—not on the policy instruments—it is time to identify the policies that would give concrete expression to the new objective.

A new consensus has emerged—this time with an emphasis on equity.

In this spirit, we propose here "10 plus" new policy instruments to improve equity in Latin America. Our instruments provide an agenda for the region to match rhetoric with visible effort—while not sacrificing economic growth. They constitute, in short, an agenda of *equity with growth.*

ECONOMIC REFORM IN THE 1990S

Latin America was the champion of the Washington Consensus throughout the 1990s—with fiscal and monetary discipline to control inflation, dramatic reduction of tariffs and other trade barriers, and a major change in the role of the state in the economy, mainly via aggressive privatization. The results however, in terms of growth, poverty reduction, income distribution and reduced unemployment were discouraging. Annual average growth was a modest 1.5 percent per capita; the number of poor did not decline, remaining at almost 40 percent of the population; income distribution improved in some countries but worsened in others; and unemployment in most countries was as bad or worse at the end as at the beginning of the decade. Though health and education indicators have improved, the gains have been modest. Other measures of the quality of life, such as urban violence and crime, have deteriorated alarmingly.

Nancy Birdsall is Senior Associate, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (nbirdsall@ceip.org); Augusto de la Torre is lead economist, World Bank and a member of the Carnegie Economic Reform Network (adelatorre@worldbank.org). The chairs are grateful to Peter Hakim, president of the Inter-American Dialogue, for his leadership in shaping the commission, and to Rachel Menezes of the Inter-American Dialogue for her enormous contribution in the researching and drafting of the report and in administering the entire commission process. The complete chairmen's report is being finalized and is available in draft along with the listing of members of the commission, from rmenezes@thedialogue.org.

The reforms of the 1990s are not the cause of these disappointments. But the disappointments point to a fundamental insufficiency in the Washington Consensus. Merely sustaining the reforms without change may turn out to be counterproductive—at least politically.

The New Consensus

In formal statements at their summit meetings in 1994 and 1998, the region's heads of state embraced poverty reduction, education, and good governance as fundamental goals—implying a substantial extension beyond the emphasis on adjustment and growth of the Washington Consensus. The new consensus has emerged against a backdrop of growing concern that globalization can bring increasing volatility, job insecurity and wage losses especially for unskilled workers. Adding to the shift is accumulating evidence from economic studies, particularly relevant for Latin America, that poverty and inequality of access to land, education and other assets are not only symptoms of low growth but directly *contribute* to low growth. In countries with weak capital markets, underfunded public schooling, inadequate judicial systems and poor contract enforcement—in short, in developing countries—the poor and the unskilled are likely to be elbowed out of access to credit, to jobs, and in general to opportunities to be productive. In a vicious circle, their lost opportunities can sum up to lower overall growth as well as persistent poverty and inequality.

"10 Plus" Instruments for Equity with Growth

Our 10 plus instruments for equity do not constitute a certain recipe or even a recipe at all. With the possible exception of fiscal discipline (which we count as necessary but not sufficient) and education (where there is already a regional consensus that it is a top priority), we suggest no priorities, no necessary sequence of steps, nor even whether all the instruments are necessary let alone sufficient.

Our focus is on the domestic policy agenda. But responsibility also lies with the industrialized countries—from which much rhetoric about reducing poverty in the developing world emanates. So our "plus" item is a key economic policy instrument by which the advanced industrialized countries too can turn from rhetoric to action.

In the spirit of the Washington Consensus, we confine ourselves almost entirely to *economic* policy instruments. Yet good government of course goes well beyond economics to a broader agenda—of democratization, civil liberties, reduced violence, and the rule of law, all of which are central to equity but which we largely neglect. Though we believe at least some of these instruments can be made politically appealing and sustainable in most countries, we do not address the central political challenge for reformist leaders—of how to build the necessary constituency, attractive not only to the poor but to the middle class and the modern elite.

Despite these shortcomings, we do not want to be too modest. It is high time to move beyond a consensus to concrete instruments—to develop the political backing, to build the institutions, to implement and then to redefine, adjust, and fine tune the policies. Our equity-with-growth instruments, moreover, are much less a matter of money than of rules of the game and of political leadership. Their monetary "costs" are low.

1. Rule-based Fiscal Discipline

- Legal constraints that prevent legislatures from approving unfunded expenditures.
- Rules limiting public sector indebtedness.
- A reputable, institutionalized arbiter (similar to U.S. OMB) to estimate and project revenue and expenditures, independent of the executive and legislative branches.
- Standards and obligations for the disclosure of budget execution to improve accountability of fiscal authorities and enable monitoring by voters.

2. Smoothing Booms and Busts

- Stronger primary surpluses in good times to better cope with bad times.[1]
- Rule-based and transparent self-insurance mechanisms (such as Norway's commodity stabilization fund).
- Prudential standards for the financial system that are more conservative than those in stable industrial economies. Counter-cyclical prudential norms that help build buffers (e.g., adjustable liquidity requirements and adjustable generic provisioning requirements).
- Policies encouraging entry of foreign banks, and promoting foreign investment and trade diversification in general.

3. Schools that Work for the Poor

- *Primary and secondary schooling:* radical decentralization to involve parents and communities in school management (as in rural El Salvador and in Minas Gerais, Brazil); greater competition via increased choice for parents, possibly including vouchers for private schools (as in Chile); system-wide information on school performance, with full disclosure at the school and community level to parents and voters.
- *Post-secondary schooling:* public funding of low-cost alternatives to university training, including post-secondary technical training, two-year community

[1] Primary means excluding interest on public debt.

colleges; tuition and other charges at public universities for students able to pay, (as Mexico has tried), supplemented by loan and scholarship programs; greatly increased public funding for university-based scientific research; evaluation and public disclosure of public university performance.

- *Vocational training:* abandonment of outdated and costly government-run programs in favor of vouchers and subsidies to help the poor pay for privately managed training.
- *Pre-school education:* public funding for all children, to ensure the poor benefit.

4. Social Safety Nets that Trigger Automatically

- Pre-agreed rules ensuring minimum and automatic public spending on social protection during economic downturns—for example rules triggering minimum spending on emergency public works employment and on subsidies to poor families to keep children in school.
- Pre-agreed "sunset" rules for these automatically triggered programs, to reduce their vulnerability to political pressure and to preserve the integrity of multi-year public budgets.
- Transparent rules and sensible incentives to target spending to the truly needy (for instance, in the case of emergency employment programs, wage offers that are set below the prevailing minimum available).
- Systematic data collection on household and community living standards, to help depoliticize social transfers.
- Public disclosure of actual spending; active participation of beneficiaries; politically transparent rules; inclusion of non-government officials in the governance of "social funds"—to immunize transfer programs from the risks of corruption in procurement, clientelism, and political manipulation.

5. Stopping the Pension Hemorrhage and Taxing the Rich

- *Pensions:* full public discussion of the real costs to society of special public pension systems for civil servants, the military, and state enterprise employees.
- Full disclosure and more transparent rules for investment of public and private pension funds.
- *Taxes:* an increase in the proportion of total revenue coming from personal and corporate income taxes, by eliminating loopholes, reducing minimum income thresholds that benefit the rich and savvy, and enforcing collection.
- Increased use of other taxes, beyond the value-added tax, that would be more progressive. Property taxes, and a gross assets tax or a minimum corporate tax on assets are examples.

6. Making Business Play Fair

- Regarding government procedures affecting small businesses: get rid of onerous licensing, simplify red tape, eliminate the cheap credit programs that invite abuse. Do a "spring cleaning" of administrative obstacles that burden small entrepreneurs.
- Coordination by government of job training, information, and technology services for small businesses, to be provided by private entities at fair prices.
- Contract enforcement, a modern bankruptcy law, protection of minority shareholder rights; upgrading of accounting and disclosure standards and corporate governance rules.
- Modernize securities markets; abolish state-owned retail banks; depoliticize state-owned development banks by eliminating their special access to government financing; enable the use of movable collateral to secure credit; encourage private credit bureaus to emerge.
- Encourage entry of NGO-based groups into microfinance, including by their taking deposits and becoming supervised "banks."

7. Dealing Openly with Discrimination

- Recognize the existence of important racial and ethnic differences in their respective societies and start sponsoring assessment of racial and ethnic issues in data collection, e.g. census, and social science research.
- Identify and eliminate barriers that exist repressing the voice of marginalized groups, and develop institutional mechanisms to encourage these groups to exploit their political and social rights, and push for their own advancement.
- Attack lingering discrimination that hurts women: incorporate family planning into public health programs (as in Mexico); subsidize childcare for low-income households (as in Colombia); and attack openly the problem of domestic violence.

8. Strengthening Workers' Rights

- Stimulate and protect workers' rights of association and encourage collective bargaining (covering wages as well as work conditions) at the firm level but within sectoral or economy-wide guidelines. Provide flexible frameworks for negotiation and conflict resolution.

- Establish rules and regulations, emphasizing transparency and accountability, to ensure unions, including public sector unions, are themselves democratic and corruption-free.
- Empower workers to adapt to constant economic change, succeed in multiple career paths, and choose self-employment, including through portability of pensions, health care and other benefits, publicly sponsored programs to enhance worker savings, and linking of pension contributions to responsible access to housing and education loans. For more advanced economies, develop a system of unemployment insurance (in lieu of severance payments) covering all workers in regulated contracts, financed from workers' and employers' contributions and possibly connected to the pension system.

9. Repairing Land Markets

- Aggressive market-compatible programs of land redistribution in rural areas, complemented by credit and technical assistance, and managed and monitored by independent local community-based groups.
- In urban areas, aggressive and broad-ranging programs to formalize land and housing titles, accompanied by access to credit to enable squatters to purchase land and houses.

10. Consumer-driven Public Services

- Legal arrangements for full disclosure of contracts with private providers, particularly with regard to provisions on access, users' rights, performance benchmarks, and pricing.
- Encouragement of monitoring of, and information dissemination on, the quality of services—whether privately or publicly managed—by consumer groups, non-governmental organizations, and the press.
- Elimination of regulations that undercut existing effective private markets for service delivery.
- Administration of subsidies to the poor in a manner that fosters consumer voice.

Plus: Reducing Rich Country Protectionism

- Eliminate agriculture support policies in OECD countries to shift production away from inefficient producers in the OECD toward lower cost farmers in the developing world.
- Pay more attention to the implications of protection in rich country markets for the poor in poor countries. Within rich countries, those calling for social justice on a global level could focus on reducing protectionism.

Beatríz Merino, Michael Shifter

The Fault Line of Latin American Democracy

Michael Shifter
From *The Washington Post*
Sunday, May 28, 2000

For years, the State Department's favorite map of the Western Hemisphere, a fixture at press briefings, showed one bright red dot smack in the middle of two vast green continents. The message: Only tiny Cuba blots an otherwise democratic hemisphere in which every other land—"from Patagonia to Prudhoe Bay," as Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright once put it—is ruled by freely elected, civilian, constitutional governments.

A feel-good symbol of the progress made in the two decades since military rule ended in much of Latin America, the map has since been retired. But its imagery lives on at State, where officials contend that democracy's slow but steady progression across the Americas remains on course. There's something missing, though, from that sea of green: flashing yellow for the wide swath of Latin America that is politically troubled. In the Andean countries of Peru and Venezuela, the turmoil is especially striking.

Both countries have experienced weeks of tension and extraordinary uncertainty leading up to national elections that were scheduled to take place today. On Thursday, Venezuela's high court postponed the vote because of technical problems. In Peru, the government insisted on going ahead with its controversial runoff vote, defying international demands for a delay and ignoring violent demonstrations across the country. Late in the week, several of Peru's most astute political observers told me they had no idea whether elections would take place. Hardly what you'd expect from stable democracies.

Venezuela's president, Hugo Chávez, who was expected to win a six-year term (as mandated by a new constitution adopted last December), conducted a polarizing campaign of virulent rhetoric, including attacks on the media and the Catholic Church. The National Electoral Council, appointed by the solidly pro-Chávez National Constituent Assembly, has serious credibility problems.

Peru is in the midst of the deepest political crisis in the decade-long rule of President Alberto Fujimori. Foreign observers and governments, including Washington, have accused the president of election fraud. His only challenger, Alejandro Toledo, forced a runoff and then made the startling decision last Monday to withdraw from the race. He urged his supporters to withhold their votes rather than participate in what he claims will be a tainted election. The crisis dramatically underscores the precariousness of Peru's democratic institutions and exposes the limits of Fujimori's sustained one-man rule, however popular and successful that rule may once have been.

In Peru and Venezuela (as in Colombia and Ecuador), bad leadership has left government institutions hollow.

In Peru and Venezuela (as in Colombia and Ecuador), bad leadership has left government institutions hollow. U.S. officials have suggested that these are mere "bumps on the road" of political development, and that democratic elections lead eventually, inexorably, to a functioning liberal democracy.

But however much they reflect the will of the people, the elected governments in Peru and Venezuela are not producing the three things that their citizens overwhelmingly say they want most: employment, justice and security. More than a decade after the end of the Cold War and South America's last shift from military to democratic rule (in Chile), the deterioration of political institutions defies long-held assumptions in the United States that these countries were well on their way to developing effective systems of checks and balances. Rather than feeling good about Latin America's political progress, U.S. officials should be profoundly concerned.

To understand the crises in Peru and Venezuela, it's useful to consider their roots. Fujimori and Chávez were swept into office—Fujimori in 1990, Chávez in 1998—when their countries' political systems were discredited by dismal, corrupt performances and had virtually collapsed. In both cases, the public was angered by the massive failure of successive governments to deal with the basic problems that afflicted each society. But since taking office, neither leader has shown interest in the give-and-take of democratic politics. Instead, they have staked their presidencies and their political careers on attacking the old order and appealing directly to "the people." They have been the beneficiaries of broken, old institutions, but have shown no interest in constructing new ones.

Decidedly confrontational, Fujimori and Chávez remain unrepentant about their methods of consolidating power. Fujimori was an elected, civilian president in April 1992 when he suspended the constitution, closed down Congress and took over the courts in a "self-coup." Two months earlier, Chávez, then a lieutenant colonel in the army, tried unsuccessfully to overthrow Venezuela's elected, civilian government.

Today, both men are being tested politically for the first time since taking office. Neither has had a serious challenger until now. Fujimori has reacted by resorting to dirty tricks. He has manipulated the electoral machinery and the judicial system and substantially restricted press freedom to gain political advantage over Toledo, who demanded that such machinations be corrected in time for the vote and requested a three-week delay. Fujimori has refused to budge. He is seeking to extend his increasingly sinister regime and begin a constitutionally dubious third term on July 28 (when both he and Chávez celebrate their birthdays).

Fujimori's popularity—roughly 45 percent of Peruvians still support him—is a measure of his impressive accomplishments early in his presidency. I left Peru in 1992, after having lived and worked there for several years as a Ford Foundation official, because of the security threat posed by the Shining Path guerrilla movement. Fujimori subsequently crippled the insurgency and managed to restore economic order. His authoritarianism was, for a time, effective, giving Peruvians the greater personal security and economic stability they demanded.

Today, however, Peru is badly split. More than half of all Peruvians have grown weary of Fujimori. His authoritarian model is no longer compatible with what Peruvians say they want, but many were hesitant to choose Toledo, who has never held elective office. It is arguable that strongman rule made sense in dealing with chaos on all fronts. But now that minimal conditions of order have been attained, there is in Peru—at least among a significant sector of the population—a yearning for democratic change. About a quarter of Fujimori supporters believed that the first round of voting held last month was marred by fraud, according to exit polls. The feeling I get from conversations with Peruvian political analysts, academics and journalists in recent days is that they will cast their ballots with more shame than pride.

Catalina Wainerman, Gabriela Vega

Though less severe than in Peru, Chávez's control of the electoral machinery and attacks on the press have also raised concerns in Venezuela. Like Fujimori, Chávez faces a polarized and highly uncertain political landscape. In office for some 16 months, and buoyed by high oil prices, he has won a series of elections, but now faces an unexpectedly strong challenge from a former collaborator in the failed coup, Francisco Arias Cárdenas.

So far, Chávez has delivered little to his main constituency, the roughly 80 percent of Venezuelans considered poor. He has fashioned a new constitution, but social and economic policies remain adrift. In a country that has lost 40 percent of its national income over two decades, such acute poverty may soon reach its limit. Violent crime has more than doubled since Chávez came to office. The unemployment rate reached 15.3 percent earlier this year—the highest in more than 30 years. Understandably, Venezuelans are getting weary.

Chávez does, however, have some assets that can keep him in power: What he lacks in discipline he more than makes up for in charisma. In his rhetoric and style, Chávez is a throwback to the Latin leaders of the 1940s and '50s. He is often compared to Argentina's Juan Perón.

Peru and Venezuela are upsetting another of official Washington's presumptions about the region: the gradual subordination of the armed forces to civilian control. On

the contrary, the military has acquired more prominence under both Fujimori and Chávez. Having eschewed political parties and lacking other coherent institutions and pillars of support, Fujimori and Chávez have both turned to the armed forces to sustain their power. This is not the way the script was supposed to read.

To be sure, democratic prospects are more promising in such countries as Chile, Argentina, Brazil and Mexico. Still, Peru and Venezuela are not isolated cases. Between the two lie Colombia and Ecuador, both of which are also in crisis. In January, Ecuador experienced the first successful military overthrow of an elected civilian government in South America in nearly a quarter of a century. Though Colombia's political institutions have long been resilient, they, too, are struggling under relentless disorder and corruption. Ten days ago, there was yet another attempted coup in Paraguay; Haiti, despite recent elections, has long bordered on anarchy; and political institutions in much of Central America remain fragile.

Still, just as Latin America's recent political adventures should not be seen as bumps on the road toward democratic progress, they do not mean a swing of the pendulum back to the dark days of authoritarianism. Polls consistently show that, while most people in the region are dissatisfied with the performance of their governments, they embrace democracy. Generations remember the consequences of the untrammeled authoritarian rule of a previous era.

When I moved to Peru in 1987, there was one word that summed up the place: precarious. For a time, Fujimori made the country seem less so. But it is not enough to make the trains run on time, and the order he created could prove fleeting. In Peru and elsewhere in Latin America, people are uneasy with leaders who have overstepped their bounds. Those leaders need to be reined in. Until that happens, "precarious" may once again be the best way for Washington to think about much of the political landscape to our south.

Michael Shifter, a senior fellow at the Inter-American Dialogue policy group, is an adjunct professor of Latin American Studies at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service.

Carmen Barroso, Peter Boehm, Peter Hakim

ANNEX II

Press Coverage

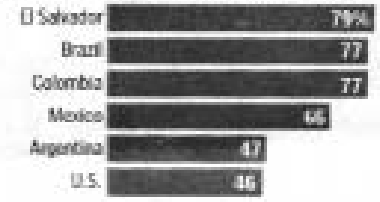
WHAT ON EARTH?

A WEEKLY LOOK AT TRENDS, PEOPLE AND EVENTS AROUND THE WORLD
BY DITA SMITH

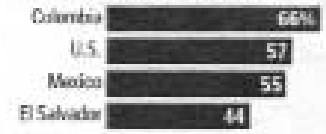
Women and Power

At least two-thirds of people in the major cities of Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and El Salvador believe that their countries will elect a female president in the next 20 years, according to a recent Gallup poll. But only 46 percent believe the same in the United States. The survey, conducted last summer in five Latin American nations, also found that Latin American men and women feel that women are better than men at many political tasks, including reducing poverty and combating corruption.

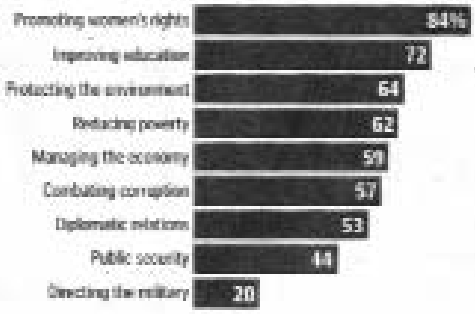
Q: Do you believe your country will elect a female president in the next 20 years? Percentage of respondents who said "yes."



Q: Do you believe government would be better if more women held political office? Percentage of respondents who said "yes."



Q: Do you believe women would do a better job than men at these tasks? Percentage of respondents who said "yes."



The survey was conducted by the Gallup Organization in August and September. About 2,000 men and women responded to the questions in five Latin American capitals — Buenos Aires, Mexico City, Bogota, San Salvador and Brasilia — as well as Sao Paulo. U.S. data is based on separate surveys conducted in 1998 and 1999.

SOURCES: Gallup Organization, Inter-American Development Bank

BY BILL MOEITT—THE WASHINGTON POST

The Washington Post, January 6, 2001

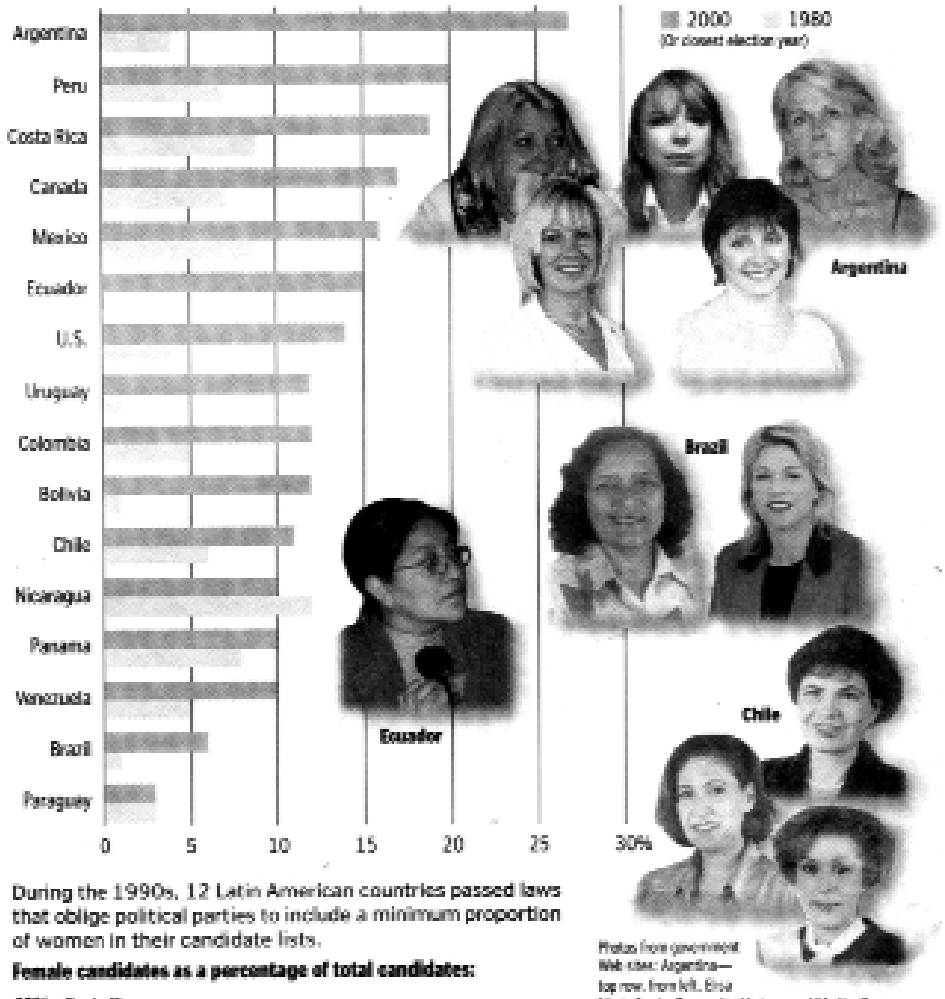
WHAT ON EARTH?

A WEEKLY LOOK AT TRENDS, PEOPLE AND EVENTS AROUND THE WORLD
BY DITA SMITH

Women in the Americas Gain Strength

Women's participation in power has increased throughout the Americas over the past two decades but remains far behind that in Europe's Nordic countries. There are many more female mayors, governors and legislators in the Americas than there were 20 years ago. Women's representation in federal legislatures in the Americas now averages 15 percent, compared with 39 percent in Nordic countries.

Percentage of female lawmakers in federal lower houses or single-chamber legislatures



During the 1990s, 12 Latin American countries passed laws that oblige political parties to include a minimum proportion of women in their candidate lists.

Female candidates as a percentage of total candidates:

40%: Costa Rica
30%: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela
25%: Dominican Republic, Peru
20%: Ecuador, Paraguay

SOURCES: Inter-American Dialogue, Canadian government, U.S. Congress

Photos from government Web sites: Argentina—top row, from left, Elisa Maria Carlio, Rosana Itati Latorre and Martha Carmen Alarcia; bottom row, Maria America Bonasso and Maria Elena Barbagelata. Brazil—from left, Cidinha Pinheiro and Almerinda de Carvalho. Ecuador—Nina Pacari Vega. Chile—from top, Pia Guzman Mena, Adriana Munoz d'Albora and Elena Caraball Martinez.

BY DITA SMITH AND TOBY—THE WASHINGTON POST

The Washington Post, May 19, 2001

Changing Politics

Mary A. Dempsey—Washington, D.C.
Latin Trade Magazine
Government and Politics
February 2001

A WOMAN GOVERNS PANAMA. THE NEWEST MAYOR of São Paulo and the most recent one of Mexico City—two of the world's largest urban areas—are female. Women make up 15% of the legislatures in the Americas, second only to Scandinavia at nearly 39%, and above the world average of less than 14%.

Where men once commanded a monopoly on power, women are turning up in congresses, courts and presidential cabinets. But even women at the vanguard, slicing a swath through the jungle that is political machismo, say it is time to replace the machetes with hammers. Their target: the glass ceiling that has traditionally kept them from the highest posts in the hemisphere.

More women occupy seats in the lower legislative houses, but it is still tough to get past the doors of the good old boys' club—the upper chamber. Females hold cabinet positions but not the most powerful ones. Even Panamanian president Mireya Moscoso is more of a novelty than a trend. She is only the second woman ever elected president of a Latin American country, after Nicaragua's Violeta Chamorro (1990–1996). Argentina's Isabel Perón (1974–1976) and Bolivia's Lidia Gueiler (1979–1980) served their countries unelected.

Women at the vanguard, slicing through the jungle that is political machismo, say it is time to replace the machetes with hammers.

Voters are not necessarily behind the shutout. A recent Gallup poll in major cities in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and El Salvador showed that the public believes women are more capable of ruling than men. Nearly three-quarters of the respondents said women politicians would do a better job at improving education. They also favored women when it came to protecting the environment, managing the economy, reducing poverty and fighting corruption; male politicians were viewed as more effective only when commanding the military or protecting public safety.

The problem is that political parties are not posting women as candidates for the highest offices, nor are presidents appointing them to the most powerful advisory positions. Gender discrimination lives—for now.

Argentina in 1991 instituted minimum quotas for female candidates in national elections. Within the next six years, 11 other countries followed suit. From 1997 to 2000, those quotas "boosted women's presence in power by 5%, an impressive leap from one election to the next," concludes a report by Mala Htun, a political scientist at New School University in New York and a specialist in women's rights in Latin America. Still, the most coveted political posts remain in the hands of men.

Catalysts for change. In November, the Inter-American Dialogue, a Washington, D.C. think tank, brought together more than three dozen female political figures from Latin America. The *políticas* disagreed on whether women execute public office differently from their male counterparts. But they concurred on one important point: Women are reshaping the political agenda.

Female lawmakers in Venezuela pushed through a hotly debated maternity-leave law. The Brazilian congress, behind the work of women legislators, barred employers from making female job applicants take pregnancy tests. Congresswomen played a key role in broadening domestic violence legislation in Peru. Rosario Robles, whose term at the helm of Mexico City ended with recent elections, spearheaded reforms that expanded the circumstances under which abortion is legal.

To be sure, perception is one thing and results are another. Some female politicians point to their failed efforts to advance abortion rights in the region. Brazilian politicians won a budget allocation in 1999 to address the serious prob-

lem of domestic violence, but the US$600,000 appropriation was enough to build just nine shelters for battered women in a nation with 170 million inhabitants. Female politicians even acknowledge that their stellar reputations may be premature. "It is a fact that women are less corrupt but that's because we've had less of a chance at being corrupt," says São Paulo's new mayor, Marta Suplicy, who campaigned against child prostitution and spousal abuse.

The roadblocks are even greater for female politicians who are black or indigenous.

Otilia Lux de Coti belonged to no political party when she was named Guatemala's minister of culture, the only female serving in the cabinet of President Alfonso Portillo. The longtime activist in native rights organizations says she might as well have put a bull's-eye on her back. "There were virulent attacks against me from both the left and the right. They said I was only capable of carrying baskets and making tortillas," says the indigenous politician, who dresses in traditional clothing.

Still, the future looks brighter. A female jurist, Ellen Northfleet, was recently named to the supreme court in Brazil. São Paulo Mayor Suplicy is widely viewed as a likely presidential contender in 2002 or 2006. And while Mexico City lost Rosario Robles as its chief executive, new Mayor Andrés Manuel López named an unprecedented nine women to his 15-member cabinet. At the same time, the Gallup poll found that the younger generation, or the electorate of the future, is more likely to vote for women.

"It is no longer just a theory that women's involvement in politics… is critical to development," says Harriet Babbitt, deputy administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development. "Where women are held back, countries are held back."

Irene Natividad, Carmen Lomellín

Hillary Clinton, the Best Alternative

Marcela Sanchez
The Washington Post, November 16, 2000

Latin American women leaders, who met in Washington to discuss hemispheric issues, agreed Tuesday that first lady Hillary Clinton would have been a better presidential candidate than Al Gore or George W. Bush. They recognized that it was too soon for her to run, and that she probably would have lost this year, but said she has the capability and the competence to be president.

"For now she will be an extraordinary senator," said Marta Suplicy, mayor-elect of Sao Paulo, a city of 16 million that is the industrial and financial center of Brazil. "Although Congress will be very divided and it will be difficult... she will be a revolutionary member who will provide a spark" to the Senate, she added.

Hillary Clinton's response to the Monica Lewinsky scandal upset feminists, Suplicy admitted. But it also left "an image of strength" that even contributed to her victory in the New York State Senate race, she said.

Rosiska Darcy de Oliveira of the Women's Leadership center in Rio de Janeiro said Clinton is more than a powerful political figure—she is a "stateswoman." Oliveira underlined Clinton's "knowledge, dedication and thoughtfulness concerning international affairs," qualities that are essential for any U.S. president.

A Gallup poll held in six cities in Latin America and released Tuesday said women are generally considered more effective decisionmakers and more honest than men. The survey shows that almost three-fourths of the population in Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and El Salvador think it is possible that a woman may become president of their country in the next 20 years.

Women still face obstacles to advancement, especially the lack of campaign funding, sexist attitudes, and the lack of support networks.

Nevertheless, women still face obstacles to advancement, especially the lack of funding for their campaigns, sexist attitudes and the lack of support networks, according to participants in the conference. The meeting was sponsored by the Inter-American Development Bank, the Inter-American Dialogue and the International Center for Research on Women. Close to 50 women in positions of power throughout the hemisphere participated, including legislators, cabinet ministers and political leaders.

Mayra Buvinic of the Inter-American Development Bank said the proportion of women in power is increasing, especially in Latin America. For example, in the last two years the number of women in Latin American legislatures has increased more than 50 percent. Currently, Latin America ranks second in the world, after Scandinavia, for the number of women in legislatures.

In the U.S. election last week, at least five women in addition to Hillary Clinton were elected to the Senate. Puerto Rico elected Sila María Calderón the first woman governor.

ANNEX III

Conference Agenda
and
Biographies of Participants

Agenda

POLITICS MATTER

Sponsored by:

Inter-American Development Bank

In collaboration with:

Inter-American Dialogue
International Center for Research on Women (ICRW)
Women's Leadership Conference of the Americas (WLCA)

November 13, 2000
Inter-American Development Bank — Andrés Bello Auditorium
1300 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, DC

8:30 to 9:00

Welcoming Remarks:
Enrique Iglesias, Inter-American Development Bank
Lourdes Flores Nano, WLCA

Presentation of Agenda:
Ana Milena Gaviria,
Coordinator for the WLCA

9:00 to 10:30

Session I.
Economic and social policies:
beyond the Washington consensus.

The region's mediocre growth and limited progress in reducing income inequality over the past decade argue for new policy ideas. Is it politically feasible for governments to modify their policies and programs to give increased weight to poverty reduction and greater equity? Is there greater consensus today on the logic of direct policy attacks on non-growth objectives like improved quality of life, reduced poverty, higher life expectancy and educational opportunities?

Moderator:
Peter Hakim, Inter-American Dialogue
Resource person:
Nancy Birdsall, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace
Background papers to inform discussion:
Nancy Birdsall and Augusto de la Torre, "Enriching the Washington Consensus: Equity with Growth in Latin America"
Eduardo Lora, IDB, "Development Challenges for Latin America in the 21st Century"

10:30 to 10:45

Coffee break

10:45 to 12:30

Session II.
Democracy and good governance: what is to be done?

Many governments in the region fail to satisfy their citizens' demands for steady growth, accelerated social progress, full political participation, and greater personal security. Some would argue these failures are responsible for putting democratic politics and good governance at risk. Is it possible to combine the ability to produce results for most citizens with adherence to democratic practice? If so, what would be the key to good, yet effective leadership?

Moderator:
K. Burke Dillon, Inter-American Development Bank
Resource person:
Michael Shifter, Inter-American Dialogue
Background papers to inform discussion:
Michael Shifter, "The Fault Line of Latin American Democracy," Inter-American Dialogue, *The Americas at the Millennium*

12:30 to 2:00

Lunch hosted by the IDB
by invitation only

Welcome & introduction:
K. Burke Dillon, Inter-American Development Bank
Keynote Speaker:
Harriet Babbitt, Deputy Administrator, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

2:00 to 3:30

Session III.

Public attitudes toward women in power.

Does public opinion support or undermine women's access to political power? After a brief presentation of the results of the Gallup poll on public attitudes toward women in power, the group will reflect on the findings, drawing from their personal experience as working politicians. Do the results reflect your sense of your constituents' opinions? Would this information affect your strategy for action as a politician: Your electoral strategy? The policies you choose to promote as priorities? Your methods of promoting those policies?

Moderator:

Billie Miller, Deputy Prime Minister of Barbados

Documentary film:

Una Mujer Al Poder (produced by Sonia Goldenberg, Tramas)

Resource person:

Mayra Buvinic, Inter-American Development Bank

Background papers to inform discussion:

Gallup report based on results of public opinion survey on attitudes toward women in power

Jorge Domínguez, "Women Political Leaders: Political Roles, Bases of Support, and Strategies"

Mala Htun, "Women's Leadership in Latin America: Trends and Challenges"

3:30 to 3:45

Coffee break

3:45 to 5:15

Session IV.

Policy implications of women in political leadership.

How is the political crisis affecting women's opportunities to gain access to elected office? Do women leaders offer distinctive skills or resources to the electorate? Once in decision-making positions, do women exercise power differently from men? Does women's greater presence lead to policy changes to benefit other women?

Moderator:

Lourdes Flores Nano, WLCA

Resource person:

Cecilia Blondet, Center for Peruvian Studies

Background "thought pieces" to inform discussion:

Cecilia Blondet, "Lessons from the Participation of Women in Politics"

Silvana Paternostro, "Please Speak Out: A Plea to the Women in Power in Latin America"

Mala Htun, "Closing the Gap between Women's Abstract Rights and Effective Rights: The Need for Executive Action"

5:15 to 5:30

Closing summary remarks:

Mayra Buvinic, Inter-American Development Bank

6:30 to 8:30

Reception

Hosted by OAS Secretary-General César Gavaria and Mrs. Ana Milena Gaviria at their residence.

Welcome:

President and Mrs. César Gaviria

Opening remarks:

Muni Figueres, Inter-American Development Bank

Introductory speaker:

Peter Hakim, Inter-American Dialogue

Keynote Speaker:

Maria Echaveste, Assistant to the President, Deputy Chief of Staff, The White House

Tuesday, November 14

8:30 to 10:00

Press briefing at the Inter-American Dialogue

1211 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 510, Washington, DC

Moderator:

Peter Hakim, Inter-American Dialogue

Opening remarks:

K. Burke Dillon, Inter-American Development Bank

Findings from meeting:

Lourdes Flores Nano, WLCA

Gallup poll results:

Mayra Buvinic, Inter-American Development Bank

Prominent participants:

Billie Miller, Marta Suplicy, Rebeca Grynspan, and others (Introduce participants and open floor for questions)

Biographies

POLITICS MATTER

Sponsored by:
Inter-American Development Bank

In collaboration with:
Inter-American Dialogue
International Center for Research on Women (ICRW)
Women's Leadership Conference of the Americas (WLCA)

November 13, 2000
Inter-American Development Bank
Washington, DC

Manuela Alvarado is a former congresswoman from Guatemala. She is currently president of PRODEM, which aims to promote the rights of women.

Harriet Babbitt is the deputy administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development. Before joining USAID, Ambassador Babbitt was the U.S. permanent representative to the Organization of American States from 1993 to 1997.

Ingrid Betancourt is a senator in Colombia. Formerly she served as congresswoman, advisor to the minister of finance in 1990, and advisor to the minister of foreign trade in 1992.

Jamileth Bonilla is minister of social action in Nicaragua and election coordinator of Managua for the 2000 municipal elections.

Erika Brockmann is a senator in Bolivia. In addition, she is president of the Commission for Popular Participation, Local Governance and Local Development for the Senate.

Ana María Campero is the ombudsman *(defensora del pueblo)* in Bolivia. Formerly she was a journalist for several newspapers, including *La Razón.*

Elisa María Carrió is a congresswoman in Argentina. She is president of the Commission on Constitutional Issues and a member of the Commission on Political Trials and Justice, Education, and General Legislation.

Arabella Castro is the former minister of education of Guatemala as well as the former president of Congress.

Piedad Córdoba Ruiz is a senator in Colombia. Previously she was a local representative in Antioquia from 1990 to 1994.

Yeda Crusius is a congresswoman in Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. She is the president of the congressional Committee for Finance and Taxation.

Benedita da Silva is the vice governor of Rio de Janeiro under an alliance of opposition parties—Frente Muda Rio. Previously she served as senator from Rio—the first black woman in the Brazilian Senate.

Elsa De Mena is the director of internal revenue in Ecuador.

Maria Echaveste is assistant to the president and deputy chief of staff. Prior to that, she was director of public liaison for the Clinton Administration. From 1993 to 1997, she served as administrator of the U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division, working extensively on their anti-sweatshop effort.

Cecilia Felguerez is vice mayor of Buenos Aires, Argentina. Before that, she served under Mayor de la Rua as co-director of PAMI, overseeing pension funds and services to senior citizens.

Aura Celeste Fernández served as secretary of state for the reform and modernization of justice in the Dominican Republic from 1997 to 2000. She previously served as justice of the Central Electoral Body.

Sarah Flood-Beaubrun is the minister of health and women's affairs in St. Lucia. Formerly she was an executive member of the St. Lucia Labour Party.

Lourdes Flores Nano served as a member of Congress in Peru from 1990 to 2000. She was general secretary of the Popular Christian Party (PPC) and is now Andean area vice-president of the Christian Democratic Organization. She currently practices law in her private firm.

Susana González de Vega is a congresswoman in Ecuador. She also serves as president of the Commission for the Protection of the Consumer in Ecuador.

Rebeca Grynspan is former vice president of Costa Rica (1994–1998). Previously she served as economic advisor to the president and vice minister of finance.

Katherine Harris was elected in 1998 as Florida's 23rd secretary of state where she oversees Florida's international relations, cultural programs, libraries, museums, election process, and corporate registration system. Previously, she served in the Florida Senate where she was chairman of the Senate's Commerce and Economic Development Committee.

Yadira Henríquez is minster of the Department of Women's Affairs in the Dominican Republic. From 1994 to 1998 she was a member of Congress, and is now chief of elections for the nation.

Maxine Henry-Wilson has been minister of information in the office of the prime minister of Jamaica since 1994. She is also the leader of government business in the Senate and general secretary of the People's National Party.

Balbina Herrera is a congresswoman in Panama. She was president of the legislative Assembly from 1994 to 1995 where she served as president of the Commerce Committee and member of the Foreign Relations Committee.

Guadalupe Jerezano Mejía was vice president of Honduras from 1994 to 1998. She is currently a delegate to the Central-American Parliament on behalf of Honduras, serving as president of the Commission on Women, Children, and Families.

Alejandra Krauss is minister of planning and cooperation in Chile. Before that she was general counsel for the Chilean Bar Association.

María Laura Leguizamón served as congresswoman in Argentina from 1993 to 1997. She is currently president of the Counsel on Minors in Buenos Aires and legislator for the city of Buenos Aires.

Cecilia López served as minister of the environment, agriculture and planning in Colombia from 1994 to 1998. She is currently a columnist for *El Espectador.*

Otilia Lux de Coti is minister of culture in Guatemala. Formerly she was an official for USAID-GUATEMALA and served on the Commission for the Truth.

Gladys Marín is the president of the Communist Party in Chile. Formerly she served in the Chilean Congress.

Barbara J. McDougall is president of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs. She was Canadian secretary of state for external affairs, minister of state finance, minister of privatization, and minister of employment and immigration.

María Emma Mejía was Colombian minister of foreign relations, minister of education, and ambassador to Spain. She is a currently member of the president's Advisory Commission on Foreign Relations.

Beatríz Merino Lucero was a member of Congress in Peru from 1990 to 2000, and chaired the environmental and women`s committes. She is director at the University of Lima and senior partner at Merino, van Hasselt & Morales.

Billie Miller is deputy prime minister for foreign affairs and foreign trade in Barbados. She is also a member of parliament for the city of Bridgetown and chairman of the Inter-American Development Bank's Advisory Council on Women in Development.

Viviane Morales Hoyos is a senator in Colombia. Previously she served as a congresswoman and vice minister of development.

Cristina Muñoz is the minister of women's affairs as well as a senator in Paraguay. Previously she was president of the OAS Inter-American Commission on Women (OAS-CIM).

Beatríz Nofal is a congresswoman in Argentina while she also heads her own economic consulting firm ECOAXIS. She played a key role in the negotiation and creation of the Economic Integration Program between Brazil and Argentina that became the founding pillar of MERCOSUR.

Nina Pacari Vega is a member of Congress and second vice president in Ecuador. She is a legal advisor for the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAI), and was a representative to the National Constituent Assembly.

Beatríz Paredes Rangel is a member of Congress in Mexico where she is head of the Committee for Political Coordination. Previously she was a senator and the governor of Tlaxcala.

Dulce María Pereira is executive secretary of the Organization of Portuguese Speaking Countries based in Portugal. She was president of the Palmares Cultural Foundation of the Ministry of Culture in Brazil, and anchor of the radio show, "The Black World: Brasilamerfricaribe."

Mercedes Pulido Briceño was minister of family and women's affairs in Venezuela from 1994 to 1996. Previously she was a senator representing the Federal District.

Mirtha Quevedo is a former congresswoman from Bolivia.

Rosario Robles is the mayor of Mexico City. She is also one of the founders of el *Partido de la Revolución Democrática* (PRD) and has served as a congresswoman.

Ileana Rogel is a congresswoman in El Salvador. Previously she was executive director of the Center for the Consumer.

Cecilia Romero Castillo is a senator in Mexico and a member of the executive committee of the PAN party. Formerly she served as a congresswoman and the president of ANCIFEM, National Civic Institute for Women.

María Antonieta Saa is a congresswoman in Chile. She was the vice president of Congress and president of the Commission for Family Affairs.

Noemí Sanín was Colombian minister of foreign relations from 1991 to 1994. She also served as Colombian ambassador to Venezuela and the United Kingdom.

Marta Suplicy is mayor-elect of São Paulo, Brazil. A member of the *Partido dos Trabalhadores* (Worker's Party), she previously served four years as a congresswoman. She is a psychologist by profession.

Minou Tavárez Mirabal was vice minister of foreign affairs for the Dominican Republic, serving as coordinator for the Second Summit of the Association of Caribbean States. She is currently a political commentator on *Primera Hora*, on Antena Latina.

Alexandra Vela Puga leads congressional representation for the Popular Democratic Party (DP) in Ecuador. She is the former vice president (1997–98).

INVITED GUESTS:

Ivonne A-Baki is the ambassador of Ecuador to the United States. She served as consul general and honorary consul of Ecuador to Lebanon.

María Ignez Barbosa is a former journalist from Brazil. Currently she resides in Washington, D.C. with her husband, Brazilian Ambassador to the United States Rubens Barbosa.

Carmen Barroso is the director of the Population Area Program on Global Security and Sustainability at the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

Barbara Bennett is managing director, Latin America for Riggs Bank in Washington, D.C.

Nancy Birdsall is a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Previously she served as executive vice president of the Inter-American Development Bank.

Cecilia Blondet M. is director of the Institute of Peruvian Studies, the coordinator of the Advisory Council for Transparency, and the leader of the Court of Ethics for Peruvian Press. She is a historian by profession.

Nora Boustany is diplomatic columnist for *The Washington Post.*

Mayra Buvinic is chief of the Social Development Division and special advisor on violence at the Inter-American Development Bank. She previously served as president of the International Center for Research on Women, and is on the steering committee of the Women's Leadership Conference of the Americas (WLCA).

Rosiska Darcy de Oliveira is president of the Women's Leadership Center in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil. Previously, she was president of the National Council for the Rights of Women, the government agency dedicated to the promotion of gender equality in Brazil.

Mónica Delta is a journalist with Panamericana Television in Peru. She covers government news, and is anchor for the news shows *Noticiero Buenos Dias* and *Panorama.*

Mary Dempsey is editor at *Latin Trade* magazine, a 100,000-circulation monthly magazine that covers business, politics and finance in the region.

Cristina Eguizábal is a program officer at the Ford Foundation in the Human Rights and International Cooperation unit. She is responsible for the portfolio on Security and Cooperation in the Western Hemisphere.

Ingrid Eide is a member of the Inter-American Development Bank's Women in Development Advisory Council. She is also a member of UNESCO's Culture and Development Steering Committee and served as chairperson of Norway's National Commission for UNESCO.

Margarita Escobar is the permanent representative of El Salvador to the OAS. Previously, she was ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to Venezuela, Trinidad and Tobago, and Guyana.

Sonia Goldenberg is president of TRAMAS, an organization dedicated to gender, development, and racial issues in Peru. She is also director of Peru 2021, a group which looks to promote social responsibility in the private sector.

Mari Pili Hernández is president of *Venezolana en Television*, Venezuela's national television channel. She serves as a councilor of Caracas, and a deputy to the Congress of Venezuela.

Mala N. Htun is assistant professor of political science at the New School University in New York. She is the author of several articles on women in politics and women's rights in Latin America. Htun has her Ph.D. in political science from Harvard University.

Ana Julia Jatar is a senior fellow at the Inter-American Dialogue. She served as superintendent for the promotion and protection of free competition (the Venezuelan anti-trust agency).

Sonia Johnny is ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to the United States and permanent representative to the OAS for Saint Lucia.

Laura Liswood is secretary general and co-founder of the Council of Women World Leaders, a network composed of women presidents, prime ministers, and heads of government.

Theresa Loar is the senior coordinator of international women's issues at the U.S. Department of State. She is also director of the President's Interagency Council on Women, established to coordinate implementation of the Platform for Action adopted at Beijing.

Carmen Lomellín is executive secretary of the Inter-American Commission of Women for the Organization of American States (OAS-CIM). She formerly worked in the White House under President Clinton as liaison for the US Office of Personnel Management and director of that agency's Office of International Affairs.

Donna McLarty is co-chair and founding member of the Vital Voices Global Partnership, an international non-profit organization dedicated to empowering women in developing countries. She has served as a member of the Inter-American Dialogue, Women's Leadership Conference of the Americas.

Laura Elena Nuñez de Ponce is permanent ambassador of Honduras to the OAS. She serves as president of the Permanent Executive Commission for Interamerican Development and of the Commission for Administrative and Budgetary Matters for the OAS.

Silvana Paternostro is a Colombian journalist and author who lives in New York City, where she is senior fellow at the World Policy Institute at the New School for Social Research. Her recent book, *In the Land of God and Man*, will be published next year in Spanish.

Jan Piercy is U.S. executive director of the World Bank. Previously she served as deputy assistant to the president in the White House. Before moving to the public sector, she was senior vice president of Shorebank Corporation, a Chicago-based bank holding company focused on community economic development.

Beatríz Ramacciotti has been the permanent representative of Peru to the OAS since 1994. She is also a member of the Hague Permanent Court of Arbitration and of the Coordination Group on the Status of Women in the Americas to the Permanent Council of the OAS.

Nobina Robinson is executive director of the Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL). She spent seven years as a diplomat with the Canadian Foreign Service, including three years at the Canadian Embassy in Havana, Cuba, and then as coordinator for Canada's relations with the Organization of American States.

Gloria Rodríguez is a founding member and past chairwoman of the National Hispana Leadership Institute. She is also the president and CEO of MAPA Communications.

Michael Shifter is senior fellow and program director at the Inter-American Dialogue and adjunct professor of Latin American Studies at Georgetown University. He previously directed the Latin American and Caribbean program at the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) and the Ford Foundation's governance and human rights program in the Andean region and Southern Cone.

Paula Stern was chairwoman of the U.S. International Trade Commission. She is now president of The Stern Group Inc., a Washington-based international trade and economic consulting firm. She is a member of the President's Advisory Committee for Trade Policy and Negotiations.

Sandy Vogelgesang was ambassador of the United States to the Kingdom of Nepal and deputy assistant secretary of state for international organizations. She currently heads a trade and investment consulting firm.

Catalina Wainerman is a member of the Inter-American Development Bank's Women in Development Advisory Council. She serves as senior researcher at the National Council for Scientific and Technological Research in Argentina.

Inter-American Development Bank
1300 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20577
Tel: 202-623-1000 Fax: 202-623-3096
Web Site: www.iadb.org

Inter-American Dialogue
1211 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 510
Washington, DC 20036
Tel: 202-822-9002 Fax: 202-822-9553
Email: iad@thedialogue.org Web Site: www.thedialogue.org

International Center for Research on Women (ICRW)
1717 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Suite 302
Washington, DC 20036
Tel: 202-797-0007 Fax: 202-797-0020
Email: info@icrw.org Web Site: www.icrw.org