

# DECLARATION



## THE AMERICAS SUMMIT FOR TRANSPARENT LEGISLATURES

Buenos Aires  
August 26-29, 2019



# THE BUENOS AIRES DECLARATION ON TRANSPARENT LEGISLATURES

## *Preamble*

We, the members and parliamentary staff representing Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, and the United States,

Having met in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from August 26 to August 29, 2019, on the occasion of The Americas Summit for Transparent Legislatures hosted by the House Democracy Partnership, USAID, the International Republican Institute, the National Democratic Institute and the Argentine Chamber of Deputies,

Reaffirming its commitment to advancing public ethics and transparency in Americas, and the fight against corruption,

With the goal of sharing information and best practices through a regional partnership and the creation of new levels of cooperation among Members of Parliament and parliamentary staff,

Recognizing the need for continued commitment to addressing integrity, equality and citizen engagement shortcomings to build trust between citizens and their institutions,

*Proclaims that:*

## **PRINCIPLE 1**

We believe accountable, responsive, inclusive and transparent parliaments are the cornerstone of democratic rule and the most powerful vehicle to overcome the decline of citizen trust in their officials, particularly those who are elected;

## **PRINCIPLE 2**

We acknowledge the progress made in advancing public ethics and transparency in the Americas, from the adoption of codes of ethics to the enactment of access to information laws, as well as the role of civil society in pushing the anti-corruption agenda forward;

## **PRINCIPLE 3**

We share the conviction that, within a system of separation of powers, democratic parliaments play a critical role in preventing corruption, including through advancing public ethics and transparency;

## **PRINCIPLE 4**

We reaffirm the relevant international commitments that are our nations have adopted and believe that effective implementation of existing mechanisms and strengthening international cooperation among parliaments in the region is needed to achieve transparent legislatures that uphold the highest standards of integrity and are tireless in fighting corruption.

*Therefore,*

The current and former representatives and staff of nine parliaments of the Americas have pledged to advance the following reforms and principles of legislative ethics and transparency:




## Adopting Strong Ethical Standards

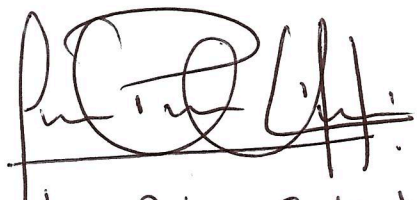
1. In order to improve public trust, Members of Parliament and parliamentary staff should actively and visibly carry out their democratic roles in the public interest and do so in a transparent manner that meets societal expectations of ethical behavior;
2. Parliamentary standards for behavior should be routinely revisited and adapted to reflect changing citizen expectations, national customs, as well international standards and ethical values;
3. The establishment of Ethics Committees that are impartial and have specialized staff, which is critical for ensuring that Members of Parliament and parliamentary staff behave in accordance with ethics and integrity;
4. Ethics rules need to be comprehensive and encompass regulations regarding transparency, among those the public disclosure of assets, official missions, conflicts of interest and separating legislative business from personal business;
5. Committee investigations are a critical mechanism to ensure the enforcement of ethics rules as well as to provide the necessary oversight to warrant parliamentary integrity;

## Improving Parliamentary Transparency to Counter Corruption

6. Access to information (ATI) is a fundamental right and as such ATI laws and rules should subject all branches of government and require active transparency practices, including open data portals and the establishment of ATI commissions independent from the executive which are tasked with overseeing the effective implementation of the law;
7. Parliaments should promote and adopt legislative proposals that address anti-corruption challenges: beneficial ownership, whistleblowing protections, campaign finance reform, private sector corruption, effective citizen participation, among others;
8. Investing in the technical competencies of parliamentary staff and promoting parliaments that are open to the citizenry are critical to improve the capacity of parliaments to fight corruption.





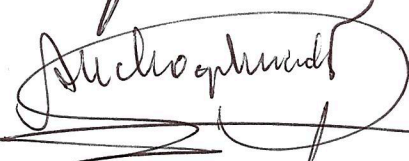

  
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Rep. a la Cámara (Col.)

Rina Campain  
Andrés Villagrán  
Roberto Ayala  
Ana María Choquehua

  
Rina Campain

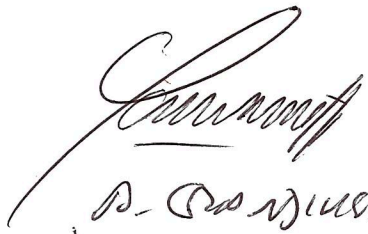
Derek Luyten  
CREXEL, WILLA



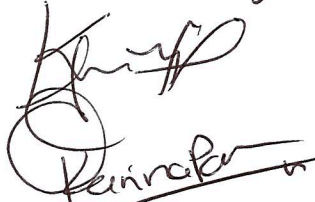
EN RECONOCIMIENTO A LOS COSTOS  
VISITANTES

Karla Martínez

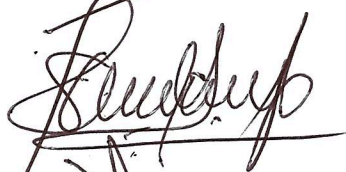
  
D. CAROLINA

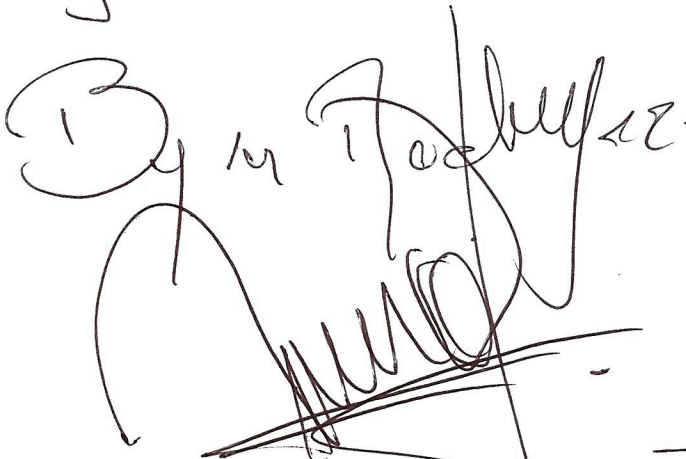
Karina Paz

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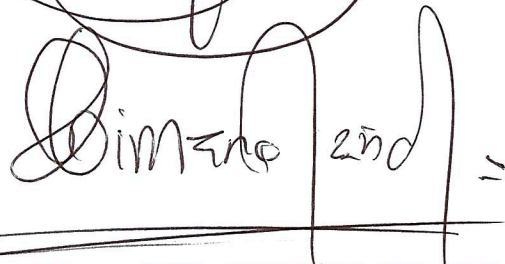
  
Karina Paz

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Dimitro 200



Paloma Noce da

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ANALISA VILELA

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