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Nicaragua: Forum On Women's Issues

by Deborah Tyroler

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On Jan. 24-26 in Managua, about 800 women participated in a national forum on women's problems and issues under a "patriarchal regime." Organizer Teresa Blandon asserted that "women's consciousness is growing" in Nicaragua. She said, "We want democracy and the development of a new political culture, not a centralized, top-down leadership." Blandon told reporters that participants discussed unemployment, suspension and cutbacks of public assistance programs for impoverished women and children, and future changes in legislation governing divorce procedures and paternal child support. Resolutions approved by forum participants are summarized below.

* Women's organizations will demand that the National Assembly approve legislation defining violence against women as a criminal offense. Perpetrators would consequently be subject to criminal prosecution and sanctions. * Establish networks to resolve common problems, rather than creating an umbrella organization. * March 8, International Women's Day, is to be commemorated in the form of street demonstrations demanding respect for life and an end to hunger. * Celebration of international Gay and Lesbian Day. * Organize a network of women journalists to set up a radio station dedicated to women's issues and perspectives. (Basic data from Agence France-Presse, 01/24/92, 01/26/92)

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