Eva Perón’s Announcement of Women’s Suffrage Law,
23 September 1947

Women of my country:

I hold here today the law, passed by the National Government, which consecrates our civic rights. And I hold it before you certain that I do so, in the name and representation of all Argentine women. I feel my hands shake with jubilation when they hold the honored symbol that proclaims victory.

Here it is, my sisters, summarized in a few words, one long history of struggle, setbacks, and hopes. For that reason there are in it wisps of indignation, shadows of menacing defeats, but also the happy dawn of triumph!... and this triumph, which translates woman’s victory over the lack of understanding, negations, and reactionary interests created by our national awakening, has only been possible in the atmosphere of justice, reconstruction, and national rejuvenation that stimulates and inspires the work of the government of General Perón, leader of the Argentine people.

**Triumph of an Ideal**

My dear compañeras:

We have reached the goal that we set, after arduous struggle. We had to endure calumny, insult, shame. Our eternal enemies, the enemies of the people and their claims, used all the oligarchy’s resources to prevent our triumph. From a sector of the press to the service of anti-Argentine interests, this legion of women who today accompany me were ignored; a very small sector of Parliament tried to delay the enforcement of this law. This maneuver was overcome, thanks to the decisive and brave attitude of our deputy, Eduardo Colom. He dismisses the demagogues, the men repudiated by the people on the 24th of February, who raised their ventriloquist-like voice, in service to interests foreign to the Nation. But nothing could stop the decisiveness, tenacity, and firm resolve of a people like ours, who, on 17 October, with colonel Perón at the forefront, traced its historic destiny. Then, as in the dawn of our political independence, the Argentine woman had to play her role in the struggle. We have broken the old prejudices of a defeated oligarchy. We have reached, I repeat, the objective that we had set, that we caressed lovingly throughout the day. The way has been long and laborious. But for the glory of woman, indefatigable defender of her essential rights, imposing obstacles did not frighten her. On the contrary, they served as stimulus and incentive to her to continue the fight. As those obstacles multiplied, our enthusiasm intensified. The more they grew, the greater was our determination to win. And finally, on the verge of triumph, the chicanery of a falsely progressive opposition, tried to strike the last blow to delay the law’s implementation.

The maneuver against the people, against women, increased our faith. It was and is the faith placed in God, in the future of our country, in general Perón, and in our rights. Thus we stripped the false apostles of their masks to lower the curtain on this undemocratic play.
Overcoming Obstacles

But blessed be the struggle forced upon us by the lack of understanding and the lies of the country’s enemies. Blessed are the obstacles that the leaders of the false democracy of oligarchical privilege and national negation use to block our way! Negative agents who ignore the people, despise labor and toy with it, unable to understand its combative reserves. Those lies, those obstacles, that lack of understanding, emboldens (retemplaron) our spirits. And, today victorious, we arose conscious and emancipated, fortified, and full of faith in our own strength. Today, we added our civic determination to the national will to follow the dignified (dignificadoras) and recuperadoras lessons of our leader, general Perón. We march with the vanguard of the people who are using the ballot box to build the country’s future, longing for a greater, more prosperous, happier, socially just, and effectively Argentine Nation for Argentineans.

Rights and Duties

I have traveled across the old countries of Europe, some devastated by war. There, in contact with the people, I have learned one more of life’s lessons. The exemplary (ejemplarizadora) lesson of the self-sacrificing working woman, who fights side by side with man to peace and reconstruction. Women who joined together their will, capacity and tenacity. Women who forged arms for their brothers, who fought next to them, were equal in value and heroism.

My dear compañeras:

Let’s take inspiration in their example! Our triumph imposes a high duty to the people and to the country. The right to vote, which enables us to participate in the national future, places on our shoulders a heavy responsibility. It is the responsibility to elect. Rather, of knowing how to elect, so that our cooperation pushes the nation towards the high stages that destiny reserves to it, sweeping away the debris (resabios) of whoever opposes the people’s happiness and the Nation’s well-being.

Consolidation of Conquest

With our triumph we have accepted this responsibility and we will not renounce it! The experience of these last years, in which a long repressed national interest in economic, political, and social justice confronted the old political bosses who denied popular rights, must serve as an example to us. In these grave moments, Argentine men knew to elect the leader of their destiny and identified in General Perón all their denied desires, vilified (vilipendiadas) and scorned by the oligarchy that serves foreign interests. Can we Argentine women do other than consolidate that historical conquest? I say “no!” I proclaim “no!” And I swear “no” to all the compañeras of my country.

The vote that we have conquered is a new tool in our hands. But our hands are not new to struggle, to work, and to the repeated miracle of creation.
We embroidered the colors of the country on the liberating flags of half a continent! We sharpened the ends of heroic lances that defended national sovereignty against invaders!

We fertilized the Earth with the sweat of our brows and we dignified (dignificamos) the factory and the workshop with our work. And we will vote with the conscience and dignity of our condition as women, having recently achieved the civil age of majority under the recuperator government of our head and leader, General Perón.

**To Fight for Peace**

My sisters, we have a high mission to fulfill in the coming years. To fight for peace. But the fight for peace is also a war. A war declared without quarter against the privileges of the parasites who again try to sell (negociar) our Argentine patrimony. A war without quarter against those who, in the recent past, shamed the nation. A war without quarter against those who again want to impose injustice and subjugation on our people. In this battle for the future, within dignity and justice, the country will show us a place that we will fill with honor. With honor and conscience. With dignity and self-confidence (altivez). With our civic and labor rights.

**To Perfect Democracy**

We are women, missionaries of peace. Until now, the sacrifices and struggles have only served to multiply our faith. All together, let us raise that faith and illuminate with it the path of our destiny. It is a great, passionate, and happy destiny. To conquer and deserve it, we have three uncompromising, unyielding foundations: a limited confidence in God and his infinite justice; an incomparable country to love with passion, and a leader whom destiny molded to confront our problems victoriously: General Perón. With him and with the vote, we will contribute to the perfection of Argentine democracy. Nothing else.