



PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Ottawa, October 1, 2020

ParlAmericas convenes parliamentarians and youth from the Americas and the Caribbean on the occasion of the 12th Gathering of its Parliamentary Network for Gender Equality

ParlAmericas, with the support of the Congress of Colombia and the Parliament of Granada, is organizing the 12th Gathering of the Parliamentary Network for Gender Equality, [Designing inclusive futures in partnership with youth](#). The gathering, which is taking place as a series of online events in September and October 2020, brings together parliamentarians from more than 20 countries and young leaders from various youth organizations across the hemisphere.

The Gathering was inaugurated with two keynote interviews, one in English and one in Spanish, that were structured as intergenerational dialogues between former parliamentarians and young leaders. In the [keynote interview in Spanish](#), Solangel Robinson, a young Panamanian leader and member of the National Forum of Women in Political Parties (FONAMUPP in Spanish), spoke with Dr. Cecilia López Montaña, a Colombian economist, former minister and former senator. The [keynote interview in English](#) featured Dr. Jean Augustine, former minister and former Canadian-Grenadian parliamentarian, and young leader and activist Ashlee Burnett, President of the Trinidad and Tobago Chapter of Caribbean Women in Leadership (CIWIL). The interviews address issues such as women's political inclusion, gender-based violence, and the care economy.

The Gathering also included two working group sessions, one in English on September 23 and one in Spanish on September 25, entitled "Advancing gender equality solutions with youth partners." The Spanish session featured remarks by the Honorable Germán Blanco, co-host of the meeting and President of the House of Representatives of Colombia; Member of the Chamber of Deputies Maya Fernández Allende of Chile, President of the ParlAmericas Parliamentary Network for Gender Equality; and Ms. Lucía Martelotte, programme coordinator at UN Women Argentina.

The session in English included interventions by the Honorable Chester Humphrey, co-host of the meeting and President of the Senate of Grenada; the Honorable Bridgid Annissette-George, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Trinidad and Tobago; and Ms. Tonni Brodber, representative of the UN Women Multi-Country Office for the Caribbean.

The working groups provided an opportunity for parliamentarians and young leaders to hold proactive dialogues around the following topics, approached from a gender equality perspective: girls, STEM, and the future of work; climate change and disasters; women in leadership and decision-making; promoting co-responsibility in care work; gender-based violence; and protecting women's health.

The Gathering will conclude with a plenary session, to be held on Friday, October 2, which will explore parliamentary and political mechanisms to promote the inclusion of youth in decision-making from a gender equality perspective. During the plenary session, reports from the rapporteurs of the working groups will also be delivered and the Gathering's final declaration will be read.

President Germán Blanco, as co-host of the meeting, pointed out that “the youth of the Americas and the Caribbean have called on the State and society as a whole with their demands, and the parliaments of the hemisphere, heeding this call, have opened the doors of congress to welcome them and listen to their voices.”

In turn, co-host President Chester Humphrey shared Grenada's achievements in women's political inclusion, but recalled that "it is critical not to lose sight of these goals to ensure that this progress continues to manifest well into the future; the prominence of diverse voices in all decision-making is essential to ensuring that the legislation and policies we enact are responsive to the varied needs of our populations.”

As President of the ParlAmericas Parliamentary Network for Gender Equality, Member of the Chamber of Deputies Maya Fernández Allende stressed the importance of legislating while being mindful of the diversity of youth that "must necessarily be considered when proposing public policies for youth. We must insist on the need for desegregated information that accounts for this wide and varied universe of people."

Member of the National Assembly Elizabeth Cabezas (Ecuador), President of ParlAmericas, noted that "the lessons learned, the experiences shared, and the innovative solutions that we have exchanged during these days will serve not only to guide parliamentary work, but also to insist on the need to strengthen spaces for youth participation in deliberative forums in political parties and parliaments.”

For further information on the work carried out by ParlAmericas, visit www.parlamericas.org and follow @ParlAmericas on social media.