

## PRESS RELEASE

*For immediate release*

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### **CARICOM and UN Women MCO - Caribbean Organize a Multi-Stakeholders Meeting for a Coordinated Caribbean Position ahead of CSW65, with the support of ParlAmericas and Other Regional Partners**

On February 8 and 12, 2021, the CARICOM Secretariat's Gender and Development Programme and the UN Women Multi-Country Office for the Caribbean, along with ParlAmericas, Caribbean Women in Leadership (CIWiL), and the Institute for Gender and Development Studies at the University of West Indies are organizing a preparatory meeting ahead of the 65th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW65), in recognition of the importance of the Caribbean region convening in a multi-stakeholder setting to establish its priorities and develop a concrete position in advance of the global proceedings.

CSW65 will take place at UN Headquarters on March 15-26, with opportunities for virtual participation; the priority theme is "Women's full and effective participation and decision-making in public life, as well as the elimination of violence, for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls."

This preparatory meeting, titled ***Building a Coordinated Caribbean Position for CSW65***, will convene ministers with responsibility for gender affairs, parliamentarians, heads of the national gender machinery, representatives of civil society, and academia. These actors will hold a focused dialogues on the CSW process, this year's priority theme, and a CARICOM position.

The meeting will offer a variety of sessions that include a parliamentary panel on "The Impact of Women's Leadership." This panel will be moderated by Senator the Honourable Ranard Henfield (The Bahamas), Vice-President for the Caribbean of the ParlAmericas Open Parliament, and it will include presentations by the Honourable Penelope Beckles (Trinidad and Tobago), MP and Minister of Housing and Urban Development; and by the Honourable Dr. Vindhya Persaud (Guyana), MP and Minister of Human Services and Social Security.

In the words of the Honorable Bridgid Annisette-George, Vice-President of ParlAmericas, "Supporting women's leadership is a critical goal in itself, and it is also an objective that has myriad positive impacts for the inclusiveness and quality of our decision-making processes and their outputs. Collaborating with our partners in all sectors is essential to ensuring that we continue to advance women's representation in the region, and intergovernmental processes like CSW provide an excellent opportunity for focused dialogue, reflection, and then further action."

The outcome of this meeting will be the adoption of a CARICOM statement for CSW65 that will reinforce regional alignment and support initiatives addressing goals related to women’s political leadership, the elimination of gender violence, and the empowerment of all women and girls.

For further information on the work carried out by ParlAmericas and to participate in this meeting virtually, please use #ParlAmericasGEN.