



PRESS RELEASE

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Caribbean presiding officers participate in a working meeting on open parliament

On April 19, ParlAmericas will host the Working Meeting of Caribbean Presiding Officers on Open Parliament which will bring together parliamentarians and clerks from 8 countries in the Caribbean to identify key priorities and corresponding challenges for openness reforms in accordance with the [Road Map towards Legislative Openness](#), which is currently being updated through a collaborative process. It will aim to contribute to the development of a strategy to support the implementation of these legislative openness priorities by member parliaments in the Caribbean.

The Honourable Bridgid Annisette-George (Trinidad and Tobago), Speaker of the House of Representatives and Vice-President of ParlAmericas noted that “as parliamentarians, our institutions are at the core of democratic systems, and ensuring that we are open to our citizens is critical to building trust in public institutions and contributing to public policies and services that benefit all sectors of our populations. This is even more important in crisis situations like the pandemic we face today, and the increasing amount of disasters caused by natural hazards that affect our countries, which require swift and efficient government action that can only take place when the public has a certain level of trust in its institutions.”

“This is why it is so critical for our parliaments to prioritize initiatives that strengthen the openness of democratic institutions by implementing mechanisms (or reinforcing the mechanisms we have in place) to ensure transparency and access to public information, the accountability of democratic institutions, the participation of citizens in legislative decision-making, and a culture of ethical behaviour in our national legislatures. This meeting will allow us to identify common priorities, regional successes and concerns and then contribute to a joint work plan to advance the aforementioned initiatives across all of our parliaments,” added Senator, the Honourable Ranard Eric Henfield (The Bahamas), Vice-President of the ParlAmericas Open Parliament Network for the Caribbean.

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