



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **ParlAmericas shares experiences in a webinar on LegisTech for Democracy on the occasion of the International Day of Democracy.**

On Tuesday, September 15, Bússola Tech, a Brazilian organization that promotes the exchange of experiences and initiatives for bringing citizens and their representatives closer with the aid of technology, organized the webinar “LegisTech for Democracy” which brought together representatives from over 20 parliaments across the world to share their experiences with virtual deliberation systems for parliamentary sittings and committee meetings. Ms. Emilie Lemieux, Deputy Director - Open Parliament and Sustainable Development of ParlAmericas joined parliamentary representatives from Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico and Trinidad and Tobago, among others to discuss such experiences within the Americas and the Caribbean.

Presentations demonstrated how the COVID-19 pandemic became a catalyst for quick innovation in parliaments, with many national parliaments transitioning to virtual sessions and meetings using adapted or new technologies. Parliamentary representatives showcased these new systems and the process by which they were established, which in some cases included changes to standing orders or legislation. They discussed the various issues posed by security concerns, voting practices, tradition, knowledge gaps and the digitization of other aspects of administrative processes, in addition to those resulting from the political landscape in their respective countries, and how these are being addressed to establish effective remote deliberation systems.

To introduce the experiences of the Americas and the Caribbean, Ms. Lemieux provided an overview of the challenges and solutions discussed by parliamentary representatives in the hemisphere through ParlAmericas’ [virtual meetings](#) and consultations for the development of [resources](#) on virtual parliamentary sittings. She stressed the importance of digital transformation, not as a goal in and of itself, but as a means towards modernizing practices and enabling parliament to better perform its functions to achieve better results for citizens: “These initiatives are part of a larger set of efforts towards creating more open parliaments, parliaments that work in collaboration with civil society to continuously improve their practices to be more transparent, facilitate access to information, be accountable to the public, provide opportunities for public participation and uphold the highest ethical standards. It’s important that these objectives remain top of mind as parliaments continue to operate remotely.”

The webinar provided an opportunity to exchange experiences to support the development of virtual parliamentary solutions across the world, to address the similar challenges that many parliaments face in their efforts to continue undertaking their critical functions and ensure effective and sustainable responses to support citizens and address this pandemic.

For more information on the work carried out by ParlAmericas, go to [www.parlAmericas.org](http://www.parlAmericas.org) and follow @ParlAmericas on social media.

ParlAmericas is the institution that promotes parliamentary diplomacy in the inter-American system. Composed of the 35 national legislatures in North, Central and South America, and the Caribbean, ParlAmericas promotes cooperative political dialogue, facilitates the exchange of good legislative practices, and produces tailored resources to support parliamentarians in their work. The International Secretariat of ParlAmericas is headquartered in Ottawa, Canada. For more information, visit [www.parlAmericas.org](http://www.parlAmericas.org) or write to [info@parlAmericas.org](mailto:info@parlAmericas.org).