



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Representatives of ParlAmericas participated in the Open Parliament Regional Forum, 'Legislative Openness: Experiences and Challenges over the Upcoming Decade'**

On Thursday, September 24, 2020, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) held the [Open Parliament Regional Forum, 'Legislative Openness: Experiences and Challenges over the Upcoming Decade'](#) in Colombia, with the purpose of presenting progress made and challenges faced in advancing the open parliament agenda by different actors and legislative bodies in the region, while considering the impact of the pandemic on these efforts and the role of civil society organizations in the future of legislative openness.

The first session featured a conversation between parliamentarians representing Argentina, Chile, Colombia and Ecuador, and included the participation of Member of the National Assembly of Ecuador and President of ParlAmericas, Elizabeth Cabezas. This panel highlighted the importance of continuing to pursue open parliament initiatives and commitments during the pandemic, given the valuable contribution that these efforts make to a stronger and more inclusive democracy and their influence on citizen trust in parliament. On this note, Member of the National Assembly Cabezas stated, "All of these conflicts (lack of citizen trust in politics and public institutions, and social conflict) should prompt us to think about how to rebuild trust among citizens, but above all, how to establish new rules on engaging citizens that would allow for representation that's more genuinely felt, more real, just and equitable." The panelists ended this session with final thoughts on recently adopted open parliament initiatives and issues to be further explored in the future, such as measures needed to regulate conflicts of interest and accountability, open data policies, the role of social media, and efforts required to counter misinformation, as well as innovation and technology to promote openness.

This talk was followed by a keynote address on the future of legislative openness by Mr. Rafael Rubio, Professor at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, and ended with a panel on promoting legislative transparency from civil society organizations, which was moderated by Ms. Natalí Casanova, Senior Program Officer - Open Parliament at ParlAmericas. The panel included the participation of Ms. Noel Alonso, Executive Director of the Directorio Legislativo Foundation of Argentina, and Ms. Daniela Moreno, Researcher for Congreso Visible, a project by Universidad de Los Andes of Colombia. During the discussion, both organizations presented initiatives for contributing to parliamentary openness processes in their respective countries, including the Legislative Transparency Index developed by the Latin American Network for Legislative Transparency as a tool for measuring progress made in this agenda within the region.

This regional forum ended with final thoughts by Representative Germán Blanco, President of the Chamber of Representatives of Colombia and former ParlAmericas Board Member, who highlighted the

sustained political determination of the Colombian parliament's general committees to co-create action plans that have gathered not only civil society organizations but also presidents and officials of chambers who are directing key offices within the Congress of Colombia.

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