
 **THEMES:** Gender equality, parliamentary oversight, budgeting, parliamentary representation, constituency engagement, gender responsive legislation

 **DATES:** December 4-6, 2024

 **LOCATION:** Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago

 **PARTICIPANTS:** More than 60 parliamentarians, parliamentary staff, and representatives of international organizations and academia from 11 countries in the Caribbean



*This activity aligned with SDGs 5, 10, 16, and 17.*



## Making the Work of Parliaments Responsive to the Needs of Women and Men

This three-day workshop brought together parliamentarians, civil society representatives, and experts from Caribbean countries to enhance parliamentarians' capacity to adopt an inclusive and gender-responsive approach to their legislative responsibilities.

Participants took part in interactive exercises, policy dialogues and thematic working sessions on applying a gender lens to parliamentary oversight, legislative processes, workplace practices and constituency engagement. The workshop also laid the groundwork for a gender equality guide for Caribbean parliamentarians that will provide practical strategies and references to ensure that diverse experiences, particularly of those most marginalized, are meaningfully considered across all aspects of parliamentary work.



## AGENDA HIGHLIGHTS

### Opening remarks:

- **Tonni Brodber**, Representative, UN Women Multi-Country Office for the Caribbean
- **Stephen Twigg**, Secretary-General, Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)
- Hon. **Bridgid Annisette-George** (Trinidad and Tobago), Speaker of the House of Representatives and Vice-President of ParlAmericas

### Facilitators:

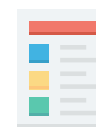
- Dr. **Rosina Wiltshire**, gender and development specialist
- **Alisha Todd**, Director General, ParlAmericas

### Panellists and moderators:

- Hon. Dr. **Dessima Williams** (Grenada), President of the Senate and ParlAmericas Board member
- Hon. **Bridgid Annisette-George** (Trinidad and Tobago), Speaker of the House of Representatives and Vice-President of ParlAmericas
- Hon. **Pennelope Beckles-Robinson** (Trinidad and Tobago), Minister of Planning and Development
- Hon. Justice **Peter Jamadar**, Caribbean Court of Justice
- **Bénite Dibateza**, Programmes Manager and Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Network Coordinator, CPA
- **Monique Long**, Planning and Coordination Specialist, UN Women Caribbean
- **Terry Ince**, Founder and Convenor, CEDAW Committee of Trinidad and Tobago
- **Dara Healy**, Founder, Idakeda Group & Indigenous Creative Arts Network
- **Renee Atwell**, Attorney at Law, Founder of Girls of Impact
- **Amilcar Sanatan**, Interdisciplinary Caribbean Artist, Educator and Activist
- **Leah Thompson**, Chapter Liaison, Caribbean Women in Leadership (CIWIL)
- **Kevin Liverpool**, Men and masculinities practitioner
- **Chantal La Roche**, Clerk of the Senate (Ag.), Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago
- **Chrisette Benjamin**, Program Officer - Gender Equality, ParlAmericas

### Closing remarks:

- **Stuart Shaw**, Political and Public Affairs Counselor, High Commission of Canada in Trinidad and Tobago
- Senator the Hon. **Nigel de Freitas** (Trinidad and Tobago), President of the Senate



[AGENDA](#)



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## KEY CONCLUSIONS OF THE MEETING

- Gender identity contributes to narrow societal expectations of all individuals, including their interests, careers, household responsibilities, ability to express emotion and other traits. These expectations are the product of historical experiences and patterns that have reinforced the roles of women and men and manifested in the inequalities that continue to exist. Gender inequality is also [at the core of various developmental challenges](#), including the prevalence of gender-based violence and unequal participation in education and workforce settings, resulting in harms to society and the economy writ large.
- Addressing gender inequality requires evidence-based, gender-responsive approaches that consider class, income, and other intersecting factors, as well as specific attention on the root causes of inequality, including the education and socialisation of boys and girls.
- Legislation alone cannot shift entrenched gender norms, but developing gender-responsive laws, aligning parliamentary efforts with international conventions, creating mechanisms to track progress and fostering public awareness of legislative measures are critical to fostering social transformation and advancing gender equality.
- [Gender-sensitive parliaments](#) are characterized by equality across parliamentary participation, infrastructure, culture and policy. Achieving this requires acknowledging gender barriers, championing equality and conducting self-assessments. Specific initiatives to promote equality in parliaments as workplaces can include care facilities, gender equality training, cybersecurity measures, sexual harassment policies and establishing codes of conduct.
- Parliamentary engagement with the public is another key avenue to promote gender equality, challenge gender stereotypes and create safe spaces for dialogue. Multi-party women's caucuses, youth-focused initiatives, mentorship programs, engaging men as allies, stakeholder outreach and collaboration with NGOs, CSOs and communities are all avenues that can contribute to these objectives.





## COUNTRIES REPRESENTED



Antigua and Barbuda



Dominica



Jamaica



The Bahamas



Barbados



Grenada



Saint Lucia



Trinidad and Tobago



Belize



Guyana



Suriname

## ORGANIZING PARTNERS



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