



THEMES: Digital economy, digital infrastructure, inclusive digital governance, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity

DATES: September 7-8, 2024

LOCATION: Miami, United States

PARTICIPANTS: More than 40 parliamentarians, parliamentary staff, and representatives of civil society and international organizations and academia from 12 countries

ORGANIZING PARTNER: HDP, NDI, IRI, USAID, CARICOM, FIU



This activity aligned with SDGs 5, 8, 9, 10, 13 and 17



The Role of Parliaments in Transforming Digital Economies in the Caribbean

This two-day forum brought together parliamentarians from CARICOM countries and the United States alongside technical experts to explore strategies to enhance digital transformations in the Caribbean through the sharing of global good practices on digital economy legislation and policies using a gender and inclusion lens.

The sessions focused on topics related to digital transformation, bridging the digital divide, e-governance, climate resilience in the digital age, empowering women, youth, and traditionally marginalized groups in the digital economy, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity and financial technology.



AGENDA HIGHLIGHTS

Opening remarks:

- **Derek Luyten**, Executive Director, House Democracy Partnership
- **Alisha Todd**, Director General, ParlAmericas
- **Shlomi Dinar**, Dean, Florida International University, Green School of International and Public Affairs

Panellists:

- Hon. **Barbara Lee** (United States), Member of the House of Representatives
- Hon. **Hannes Astok**, Executive Director, e-Governance Academy
- **John Paul Farmer**, President, WeLink Cities
- **Irma Gonzalez**, Senior Project Manager for Digital Governance, TecMilenio University
- **Marci Harris**, CEO and co-founder, POPVOX
- **Cleveland Thomas**, International Telecommunication Union Area Representative, Caribbean Countries
- **Jennifer Britton**, Deputy Programme Manager of Information and Communication Technology for Development, CARICOM Secretariat
- **Tonni Brodber**, Representative, UN Women Multi-Country Office for the Caribbean
- **Bridget Boakye**, Senior Policy Advisor for Artificial Intelligence, Tony Blair Institute for Change
- **Luis Marrero**, Country Leader for the Caribbean, Amazon Web Services
- **Antonio Garrastazu**, Senior Director, IRI Latin America & Caribbean Division

Discussants:

- Hon. **Marsha Caddle** (Barbados), MP, Minister of Industry, Innovation, Science and Technology
- Hon. **Carolyn Ann Trench-Sandiford** (Belize), President of the Senate
- Hon. **Fenella Wenham** (Dominica), Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Education, Human Resource Planning, Vocational Training and National Excellence
- Hon. **Leo Cato** (Grenada), Speaker of the House of Representatives
- Hon. **Kwame Mc Coy** (Guyana), MP, Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister
- **Dwight Sibblies** (Jamaica), Member of Parliament
- Senator **Lisa Jawahir** (Saint Lucia), Vice-President for the Caribbean of the ParlAmericas Parliamentary Network for Gender Equality
- Senator **Laurence Hislop** (Trinidad and Tobago)
- Hon. **Wayne R. Munroe** (The Bahamas), MP, Minister of National Security



[AGENDA](#)



[PRESS RELEASE](#)



[PHOTO GALLERY](#)



KEY CONCLUSIONS

- Digital infrastructure has to be considered with a view to accessibility, both at a systems and an individual level. Governments across the region are implementing initiatives to this end with the goal of enabling greater digital access to remote communities and marginalized population groups.
- AI was acknowledged as a powerful tool for boosting worker productivity, however it must be employed with an intersectional gender perspective and upskilling of the labour force to mitigate the risks of bias and job displacement.
- Building public trust for digital tools is crucial for driving the growth of the digital economy. Maintaining certain paper-based systems can support inclusivity for certain population groups, such as older adults.
- Education reform and education bonds are key strategies to drive cultural changes, accelerate digital transformation, and encourage youth - particularly young women - to pursue careers in STEM.
- A coordinated Caribbean approach to digital transformation can maximize efforts. By leveraging existing mechanisms for cooperation, such as through CARICOM, the Organization of American States (OAS), and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the region can harmonize policies, combine resources, and foster collaborative solutions to shared challenges.

COUNTRIES REPRESENTED



Antigua and Barbuda



Barbados



Belize



Dominica



Grenada



Guyana



Jamaica



Saint Kitts and Nevis



Saint Lucia



Suriname



Trinidad and Tobago



United States



In partnership with

Canada

This activity was made possible with the generous support of the Government of Canada through Global Affairs Canada.



Subscribe to the [ParlAmericas Podcast](#), where you can listen to sessions from ParlAmericas activities.



Is the institution that promotes **PARLIAMENTARY DIPLOMACY** in the **INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM**



Mainstreams **GENDER EQUALITY** by advocating for women's political empowerment and the application of a gender lens in legislative work



Works towards strengthening democracy and governance by accompanying **ELECTORAL PROCESSES**



Is composed of the **35 NATIONAL LEGISLATURES** of the countries of North, Central and South America and the Caribbean



Fosters **OPEN PARLIAMENTS** by advancing the principles of transparency, accountability, citizen participation, ethics and probity



Organizes consultations and builds **MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS** with young leaders and civil society organizations



Facilitates the exchange of parliamentary **GOOD PRACTICES** and promotes **COOPERATIVE POLITICAL DIALOGUE** in pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals



Promotes policies and legislative measures to mitigate and adapt to the effects of **CLIMATE CHANGE**



Is headquartered in **OTTAWA, CANADA**

International Secretariat of ParlAmericas

703-155 Queen Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 6L1 Canada

Telephone: +1 (613) 947-8999

Email: info@parlamericas.org

