 **THEMES:** Women's leadership and political participation, gender-based political violence, parity

 **DATE:** March 5, 2024

 **LOCATION:** Virtual

 **PARTICIPANTS:** More than 70 women parliamentarians, former parliamentarians and representatives of political parties women's organizations from Central America and the Dominican Republic



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



## Building More Equal Democracies: Women's Political Participation and Leadership

In the framework of International Women's Day, and as a follow-up to the [First Regional Gathering of the Forums of Women in Political Parties](#), this session presented inter-American standards for preventing and eradicating gender-based political violence. It also covered strategies to achieve parity in political representation, addressing the current challenges and opportunities for women's participation.

The Forums of Women in Political Parties also shared experiences and good practices to strengthen their role as key organizations for the advancement of gender equality in the region.



## AGENDA HIGHLIGHTS

### Welcoming Remarks:

- Senator **Verónica Noemí Camino Farjat** (Mexico), President of the ParlAmericas Parliamentary Network for Gender Equality

### Panellists:

- **Luz Patricia Mejía**, Technical Secretary of the Follow-up Mechanism of the Convention of Belém do Pará (MESECVI) of the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) of the Organization of American States (OAS)
- Former Member of the Chamber of Deputies **Marcela Durrieu** (Argentina) and Founder of *Ojo Paritario*

### Moderators:

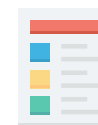
- Member of Congress **Andrea Villagrán** (Guatemala), Vice-President for Central America of the ParlAmericas Parliamentary Network for Gender Equality
- Member of the Legislative Assembly **Carolina Delgado** (Costa Rica), President of the Special Permanent Committee for Women, President of the Costa Rica Forum of Women in Political Parties, and ParlAmericas Board Member

### Closing Remarks:

- Member of the National Assembly **Karla Nuñez** (Nicaragua)
- Member of the National Assembly **Shaira Natasha Downs Morgan** (Nicaragua)

### KEY CONCLUSIONS FROM THE MEETING:

- Addressing gender-based political violence and promoting parity in representation are critical avenues for protecting and promoting women's political rights.
- **Key strategies** to guarantee **the right to exercise political activity free of violence and discrimination** include identifying violence against women in public roles, recognizing its various forms (such as ridicule, humiliation, masculinization, sexualization, invisibilization and dehumanization), dismantling gender stereotypes in public discourse, fostering commitment within political parties (based on this [model protocol](#), in Spanish), building networks that promote women's political leadership, and being able to count on men as allies.
- States have an obligation to create regulations that guarantee women a life free of violence and that promote their active participation in debates and electoral processes. Regional standards like the [Inter-American Model Law on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women in Political Life](#) are tools to guide this work.
- **Quota laws** are an affirmative action that can support in overcoming inequality in women's access to public office; they are temporary measures to accelerate political participation. **Parity**, on the other hand, is a permanent organizing principle for political activity, which strives for equal participation that is free from gender discrimination.
- **Forums of Women in Political Parties** can serve as safe spaces in which to share experiences and good practices that can be applied in partisan spheres, with the aim of institutionalizing mechanisms to promote equality and respect women's political rights and achieve significant changes within parties.



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## COUNTRIES REPRESENTED



## Participating Forums and Fronts of Women in Political Parties:



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