


 **THEMES:** Parliamentary Diplomacy, Organization of American States, Inter-American System

 **DATES:** March 12 to 14, 2024

 **LOCATION:** Washington D.C., United States of America

 **PARTICIPANTS:** Parliamentary delegation of 22 parliamentarians representing 17 parliaments from the Americas and the Caribbean



*This activity aligned with SDGs 16.*



## ParlAmericas Parliamentary Delegation to Washington, D.C.

ParlAmericas organized a parliamentary delegation to Washington D.C. to further strengthen its institutional collaboration ties with the Organization of American States (OAS) and engage in high-level discussions with members of the US Congress and representatives of other partner organizations.

The delegation's agenda also included participation in a special joint session of the Committee on Juridical and Political Affairs and the Committee on Inter-American Summits Management and Civil Society Participation in OAS Activities on legislative cooperation. During the session, ParlAmericas presented a proposal to continue improving parliamentary participation in the OAS, which was well-received by Member States.



## BRIEFING SESSIONS WITH SECRETARIATS OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES

(March 12, 13 and 14)

The delegation held a series of discussions with representatives of different OAS Secretariats to learn in greater detail about the work they are carrying out and exchange perspectives on central issues on the regional agenda, such as the fight against transnational crime, the strengthening of democracy and the rule of law, the advancement of gender equality, the promotion of human rights, climate action and sustainable economic development.

### Dialogue with the Secretariat for Strengthening Democracy

- **Francisco Guerrero**, Secretary for Strengthening Democracy and *ex officio* member of the Board of Directors of ParlAmericas

### Dialogue with the Secretariat for Multidimensional Security

- **Gastón Schulmeister**, Director of the Department against Transnational Organized Crime

### Dialogue with the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development

- **Cesar Parga**, Chief of the Competitiveness, Innovation and Technology Section
- **Jesús Giacoman**, Director of the Department of Human Development, Education and Employment

### Dialogue with the Secretariat for Hemispheric Affairs

- **María Fernanda Trigo**, Director of the Department for Effective Public Management

### Dialogue with the Executive Secretariat of the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM)

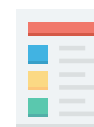
- **Marta Martínez**, Specialist at the Executive Secretariat of the CIM
- **Beatriz Piñeres**, Specialist at the Executive Secretariat of the CIM
- **Yasmin Solitahe Odium**, Specialist and Coordinator for the Caribbean of the Executive Secretariat of the CIM

### Dialogue with the Executive Secretariat of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR)

- **María Claudia Pulido**, Assistant Executive Secretary for Monitoring, Promotion and Technical Cooperation
- **María Clara Nazar**, Specialist in the Technical Cooperation and Public Policy Section

### Dialogue with the Secretariat for Access to Rights and Equity (SARE)

- **Maricarmen Plata**, Secretary for Access to Rights and Equity



[AGENDA](#)



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## BRIEFING SESSIONS WITH SECRETARIATS OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES

(March 12, 13 and 14)







## VISIT TO THE CAPITOL (March 12)

### Meeting with US Senators Ben Cardin and Roger Wicker

The meeting with Senator **Ben Cardin** (Democrat - state of Maryland), Chair of the Foreign Relations Committee, and Senator **Roger Wicker** (Republican - state of Mississippi), ranking member of the Armed Services Committee, was held in follow up to previous exchanges between the senators and ParlAmericas representatives about the need to strengthen parliamentary participation in the OAS.

Building on those discussions and with this common goal, the US senators and delegation members exchanged perspectives on ParlAmericas' role as a coordinating body for parliamentary participation in the OAS.

The ParlAmericas delegation reiterated its willingness to work with the US Congress on concerted solutions to the critical issues affecting the hemisphere.

### Visit to Congress organized in collaboration with the House Democracy Partnership of the United States House of Representatives

The House Democracy Partnership of the United States House of Representatives organized a visit to the US Congress that included a meeting with Representative **Sydney Kamlager-Dove** (Democrat – state of California). During the meeting with Representative Kamlager-Dove, participants addressed issues such as the role of the United States in the region, priorities on the political agenda in the hemisphere and the importance of parliamentary involvement in regional multilateral bodies.

As part of its visit to the US Congress, the delegation also had the opportunity to take a guided tour of the Capitol.





## DIALOGUE SESSIONS (March 12)

### Roundtable with the House Democracy Partnership of the United States House of Representatives, the National Democratic Institute, and the International Republican Institute

The roundtable, dedicated to analyzing the role of parliamentary diplomacy as a safeguard for democracy, was hosted by Senator **Blanca Ovelar** (Paraguay), President of ParlAmericas, and **Thomas Hastings**, Deputy Chief of Mission of the Permanent Mission of the United States to the OAS.

The dialogue featured participation by the Honourable **Ileana Ros-Lehtinen**, former US Congresswoman, former Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the US House of Representatives and member of the Board of Directors of the International Republican Institute; the Honourable **Hattie Babbitt**, former Ambassador of the United States to the OAS and member of the Board of Directors of the National Democratic Institute; Member of the Chamber of Deputies **Margarita Stolbizer** (Argentina); and the Honourable **Joseph T. Isaac**, Speaker of the House of Assembly (Dominica).

In their interventions, panellists emphasized the importance of parliamentary diplomacy as a tool for strengthening democracy and regional integration in the hemisphere, promoting and protecting human rights and jointly addressing global phenomena such as climate change, political violence against women and the effects of artificial intelligence on democratic governance.

Closing remarks were offered by Member of Congress **Andrea Villagrán Antón** (Guatemala), Second Vice-President of the ParlAmericas Parliamentary Network for Gender Equality.







## DIALOGUE SESSIONS (March 12)

### Dialogue on the 10th Summit of the Americas

Looking ahead to the 10th Summit of the Americas, to be held in the Dominican Republic in 2025, the delegation had the opportunity to speak with Ambassador **James Lambert**, Secretary for Hemispheric Affairs of the OAS; Ambassador **Mayerlyn Cordero Díaz**, Permanent Representative of the Dominican Republic to the OAS; and the Senator **Ricardo de los Santos Polanco**, President of the Senate (Dominican Republic).

During the session, participants discussed the Dominican Republic's expectations for the 10th Summit, as well as the importance of the Summits of the Americas as the highest political forum of the hemisphere and the role of parliamentarians in implementing and monitoring adopted commitments.

In addition, Senator **Ricardo de los Santos Polanco**, announced that his parliament is working with ParlAmericas on coordinating the parliamentary gathering in the framework of the 10th Summit. It is important to note that ParlAmericas has a mandate to promote parliamentary participation as an integral part of the Summits of the Americas Process.





## MEETING WITH THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE OAS, LUIS ALMAGRO (March 13)

In his intervention, the Secretary General emphasized that parliamentary diplomacy is a crucial instrument for strengthening dialogue and cooperation to address common issues and challenges that require timely and appropriate legislative responses. In this context, he highlighted that ParlAmericas, as a parliamentary organization established under an OAS resolution, is an indispensable body in the architecture of the Inter-American System and reiterated the need to further strengthen cooperation between the two organizations.

To close, he reaffirmed his willingness to continue expanding spaces for collaboration between the OAS and ParlAmericas. After his remarks, an open discussion was held regarding hemispheric challenges such as the state of democracy, climate change, the regional security situation and the complex situation in Haiti.







## SPECIAL JOINT SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON JURIDICAL AND POLITICAL AFFAIRS AND THE COMMITTEE ON INTER-AMERICAN SUMMITS MANAGEMENT AND CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION IN OAS ACTIVITIES (March 14)

The special joint session on legislative cooperation, held in follow-up to the provisions of an OAS General Assembly resolution, provided Member States and the delegation with the opportunity to discuss the proposal presented by ParlAmericas for improving parliamentary participation in the OAS.

The proposal, which was presented by Senator **Blanca Ovelar** (Paraguay), provides a road map for regularizing and strengthening parliamentary involvement in the OAS through ParlAmericas. The document was well-received by all Member States. The agenda also included interventions by the Honourable **Bridgid Annisette-George** (Trinidad and Tobago), Speaker of the House of Representatives and Vice-President of ParlAmericas; the Honourable Senator **Ricardo de los Santos Polanco** (Dominican Republic), President of the Senate; and the Honourable Senator **Peter Boehm** (Canada), Chair of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

It should also be noted that, prior to the session, Senator **Ben Cardin** and Senator **Roger Wicker** submitted a letter in which they expressed their approval of ParlAmericas' proposal as a basis for advancing parliamentary participation in the OAS in the immediate future and called on the OAS and its Member States to provide the necessary financial resources to support greater institutional integration with ParlAmericas.







## MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION

- Senator **Blanca Ovelar** (Paraguay), President of ParlAmericas
- The Honourable **Bridgid Annisette-George** (Trinidad and Tobago), Speaker of the House of Representatives and Vice-President of ParlAmericas
- Senator **Verónica Noemí Camino Farjat** (Mexico), Second Vice-President of ParlAmericas
- Senator **Javier Macaya Danús** (Chile), Second Vice-President of ParlAmericas
- Member of the Chamber of Deputies **Margarita Stolbizer** (Argentina)
- His Honour **Arthur E. Holder** (Barbados), Speaker of the House of Assembly
- The Honourable **Carolyn Trench Sandiford** (Belize), President of the Senate
- Senator **Peter Boehm** (Canada)
- Member of Parliament **Anthony Rota** (Canada)
- Senator **Germán Blanco Álvarez** (Colombia)
- Member of the Legislative Assembly **Carolina Delgado Ramírez** (Costa Rica)
- The Honourable **Joseph T. Isaac** (Dominica), Speaker of the House of Assembly
- Senator **Ricardo de los Santos Polanco** (Dominican Republic), President of the Senate
- Member of the Chamber of Deputies **Nelsa Shoraya Suárez Ariza** (Dominican Republic)
- Senator **Carlos Manuel Gómez Ureña** (Dominican Republic)
- Senator **José del Castillo Saviñon** (Dominican Republic)
- **Henry Kronfle** (Ecuador), Speaker of the National Assembly
- Member of Congress **Andrea Villagrán Antón** (Guatemala)
- Member of Congress **Yessica Rosselli Amuruz Dulanto** (Peru)
- The Honourable **Alvina Reynolds** (Saint Lucia), President of the Senate
- The Honourable **Marinus Bee** (Suriname), Speaker of the National Assembly

## COUNTRIES REPRESENTED



Argentina



Barbados



Belize



Canada



Chile



Colombia



Costa Rica



Dominica



Dominican Republic



Ecuador



Guatemala



Mexico



Paraguay



Peru



Saint Lucia



Suriname



Trinidad and Tobago

## ORGANIZING PARTNERS



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