

**AGENDA**

***The Role of Parliaments in Transforming Digital Economies in the Caribbean***

**Miami, United States  
September 7 and 8, 2024**

<b>September 7, 2024</b>	
<b>8:00 - 8:30</b>	<b>Transfer from hotel to Florida International University (FIU)</b> 11200 SW 8th St, Miami, FL 33199
<b>8:30 - 9:00</b>	<b>Registration and Coffee</b>
<b>9:00 - 10:00</b>	<p><b>Session 1: Welcome &amp; Introductions</b></p> <p>This session will include a welcome from the House Democracy Partnership, International Republican Institute, National Democratic Institute, ParlAmericas, and Florida International University. This will also serve as a time for the CARICOM country legislators to introduce themselves.</p> <p><b>Opening Remarks</b>  <i>Mr. Derek Luyten, Executive Director, House Democracy Partnership</i>  <i>Ms. Alisha Todd, Director General, ParlAmericas</i>  <i>Dean Shlomi Dinar, Florida International University, Green School of International and Public Affairs</i></p>
<b>10:00 - 10:15</b>	<b>Group photo</b>
<b>10:15 - 11:15</b>	<p><b>Session 2: What is the Digital Economy, and what is the Legislature's Role in its Transformation?</b></p> <p>In the rapidly evolving landscape of the digital economy, parliamentarians play a pivotal role in shaping laws and policies to foster innovation and sustainable development. This session will delve into the multifaceted responsibilities of parliamentarians in driving digital transformations in their respective nations to promote inclusive economic growth in the digital age.</p>

	<p><i>The Hon. Hannes Astok, Executive Director, eGovernance Academy</i>  <i>Mr. John Paul Farmer, President, WeLink Cities</i>  <i>Ms. Irma Gonzalez, Senior Project Manager for Digital Governance, City of Monterrey</i>  <i>Ms. Marci Harris, Executive Director, POPVOX Foundation</i></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> <i>Mr. Derek Luyten, Executive Director, House Democracy Partnership</i></p>
<p><b>11:15 - 12:15</b></p>	<p><b>Session 3: Overview of Current Policy Approaches in the Region</b></p> <p>This session will be a brief presentation to provide an overview of regional approaches to these issues to set the table for all participants. There will be an opportunity for questions and answers at the end of the overview.</p> <p><i>Mr. Cleveland Thomas, ITU Area Representative, Caribbean Countries</i>  <i>Ms. Jennifer Britton, Deputy Programme Manager of Information and Communication Technology for Development, CARICOM Secretariat</i>  <i>Ms. Tonni Brodber, Representative of the UN Women Multi-Country Office for the Caribbean</i></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> <i>Ms. Alisha Todd, Director General, ParlAmericas</i></p>
<p><b>12:15 - 13:15</b></p>	<p><b>Lunch</b></p>
<p><b>13:15 - 14:15</b></p>	<p><b>Session 4: Bridging the Divide: Enhancing Digital Infrastructure in the Caribbean</b></p> <p>This session addresses the critical need for robust digital infrastructure in the Caribbean. It will include strategies to enhance connectivity, broadband access, and overall technological infrastructure to bolster the digital economy in the region. The conversation will also touch on the critical need to engage the private sector to address these infrastructure gaps and will highlight examples of successful public-private partnerships in building a robust and healthy digital economy and its supporting infrastructure.</p> <p><i>The Hon. Hannes Astok, Executive Director, eGovernance Academy</i>  <i>Mr. John Paul Farmer, President, WeLink Cities</i></p>

	<p><i>Ms. Irma Gonzalez, Senior Project Manager for Digital Governance, City of Monterrey</i> <i>Mr. Cleveland Thomas, ITU Area Representative, Caribbean Countries</i></p> <p><b>Discussant:</b> <i>Hon. Warren Kwame Mc Coy, MP, Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister (Guyana)</i></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> <i>Mr. Mateusz Trybowski, Deputy Director ParlAmericas</i></p>
<b>14:15 - 15:15</b>	<p><b>Session 5: E-Governance and the Digital Transformation of Government Services</b></p> <p>This session will highlight examples of digital transformation initiatives of government services, and consider how these can promote the growth of digital economies. The session will consider legislative, as well as regulatory, infrastructure, and operational considerations necessary for these innovations and how digitizing government services and economies can help address national issues related to digital equity, internet access, privacy concerns, entrepreneurship, and innovation. It will also explore how these issues tie to concerns that parliamentarians grapple with to ensure that all segments of society benefit from digital transformations.</p> <p><i>The Hon. Hannes Astok, Executive Director, eGovernance Academy</i> <i>Mr. John Paul Farmer, President, WeLink Cities</i> <i>Ms. Marci Harris, Executive Director, POPVOX Foundation</i> <i>Ms. Tonni Brodber, Representative of the UN Women Multi-Country Office for the Caribbean</i></p> <p><b>Discussant:</b> <i>Hon. Dwight Sibbles, Member of Parliament, Jamaica</i></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> <i>Mr. Derek Luyten, Executive Director, House Democracy Partnership</i></p>
<b>15:15 - 15:30</b>	<b>Coffee Break</b>
<b>15:30 - 16:30</b>	<b>Session 6: Climate Resilience in the Digital Age</b>

	<p>While climate change affects all nations across the globe, the Caribbean faces unique vulnerabilities and risks. Digital tools can provide individuals and governments methods to continue operations during climate disasters and even mitigate certain factors that contribute to climate change. As governments and the region continue to consider digital frameworks and legislation, it will be critical to mainstream climate considerations into policy conversations. This session will consider the principles of effective resilience strategies to safeguard digital infrastructure to mitigate disruption to access and connectivity.</p> <p><i>Ms. Tonni Brodber, Representative of the UN Women Multi-Country Office for the Caribbean</i>  <i>Mr. Cleveland Thomas, ITU Area Representative, Caribbean Countries</i>  <i>Ms. Marci Harris, Executive Director, POPVOX Foundation</i></p> <p><b>Discussant:</b> <i>Hon. Carolyn Ann Trench Sandiford, President of the Senate, Belize</i></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> <i>Ms. Alisha Todd, Director General, ParlAmericas</i></p>
<p><b>16:30 - 17:30</b></p>	<p><b>Session 7: Leaving No One Behind in the Digital Economy</b></p> <p>This session will further explore opportunities and barriers to the inclusion of women, youth, and traditionally marginalized groups in the digital economy. Panelists will consider the importance of digital policies that focus on availability, accessibility, affordability, and literacy to help women, youth, and other digitally marginalized communities like rural populations, indigenous populations, people with disabilities, and the elderly to maximize the benefits of a digital economy.</p> <p><i>The Hon. Barbara Lee, Member of Congress, U.S. House of Representatives</i>  <i>Ms. Irma Gonzalez, Senior Project Manager for Digital Governance, City of Monterrey</i>  <i>Ms. Tonni Brodber, Representative of the UN Women Multi-Country Office for the Caribbean</i>  <i>Mr. Cleveland Thomas, ITU Area Representative, Caribbean Countries</i></p>



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



In partnership with  
**Canada**

	<p><b>Discussant:</b> <i>Senator Lisa Jawahir, Vice-President for the Caribbean of the ParlAmericas Gender Equality Network, Saint Lucia</i></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> <i>Mr. Derek Luyten, Executive Director, House Democracy Partnership</i></p>
<b>17:30 - 17:45</b>	<p><b>Session 8: Reflection of Day 1</b></p> <p>This conversation will serve as a chance for the entire group to raise their top takeaways from the day, ask questions about any material covered in the previous sessions, and prepare for the sessions of the following day.</p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> <i>Mr. Nathan Riggins, Senior Program Manager, National Democratic Institute</i></p>
<b>17:45</b>	<p><b>Welcome Reception Hosted by Florida International University</b></p> <p>Florida International University kindly invites all delegates to attend a welcome reception to mingle following a robust program. Drinks and hors d'oeuvres will be served.</p> <p><b>Reception Remarks:</b>  <i>Dean Shlomi Dinar, Florida International University, Green School of International and Public Affairs</i>  <i>The Hon. Mario Diaz-Balart, Member of Congress, U.S. House of Representatives</i>  <i>The Hon. Barbara Lee, Member of Congress, U.S. House of Representatives</i></p>
<b>19:45</b>	<p><b>Transfer of participants to hotel</b></p>



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



In partnership with  
**Canada**

<b>September 8, 2024</b>	
<b>8:00 - 8:30</b>	<b>Transfer from hotel to FIU</b>
<b>8:30 - 9:00</b>	<b>Registration and Coffee</b>
<b>9:00 - 10:00</b>	<p><b>Session 9: Artificial Intelligence: Legislative and Economic Considerations</b></p> <p>This session will provide an overview of the global state of AI and its current impact on the Caribbean. It will examine how AI technologies are influencing various sectors and specific ways in which parliamentarians in the region are likely to encounter and address these developments. The session will offer considerations for developing legislation that integrates safeguards to responsible utilization of AI in business and additionally explores how parliamentarians can leverage AI in their own work in parliament.</p> <p><i>Ms. Bridget Boakye, Senior Policy Advisor for Artificial Intelligence, Tony Blair Institute for Change (virtual)</i>  <i>Mr. Luis Marrero, Country Leader for the Caribbean, Amazon Web Services</i>  <i>Ms. Marci Harris, Executive Director, POPVOX Foundation</i>  <i>Mr. Antonio Garrastazu, Senior Director, IRI Latin America &amp; Caribbean Division</i></p> <p><b>Discussant:</b> <i>Hon. Leo Cato, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Grenada</i></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> <i>Mr. Derek Luyten, Executive Director, House Democracy Partnership</i></p>
<b>10:00 - 10:15</b>	<b>Coffee Break</b>
<b>10:15 - 11:15</b>	<p><b>Session 10: Cybersecurity and Parliaments</b></p> <p>In an era of increasing digitalization, safeguarding against cyber threats, including cybercrime, has emerged as a critical need. This session will discuss strategies to strengthen parliament cybersecurity and protect citizens from cybercrime. This session will cover key cybersecurity principles, best practices for threat mitigation, and the implementation of robust defense mechanisms</p>

	<p>and legislation to counter evolving cyber threats, including those posed by external actors that may seek to influence legislative processes or harm citizens.</p> <p><i>The Hon. Hannes Astok, Executive Director, eGovernance Academy</i>  <i>Ms. Marci Harris, Executive Director, POPVOX Foundation</i>  <i>Mr. John Paul Farmer, President, WeLink Cities</i>  <i>Ms. Jennifer Britton, Deputy Programme Manager of Information and Communication Technology for Development, CARICOM Secretariat</i></p> <p><b>Discussant:</b> <i>Hon. Marsha Caddle, MP, Minister of Industry, Innovation, Science and Technology, Barbados</i></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> <i>Mr. Derek Luyten, Executive Director, House Democracy Partnership</i></p>
<p><b>11:15 - 12:15</b></p>	<p><b>Session 11: Leveraging the Private Sector and FinTech for Digital Economic Growth</b></p> <p>This session will delve deeper into the critical role of the private sector in driving digital economic growth and development. Recognizing the benefits of private enterprises, this session will focus on how legislators can collaborate with businesses and financial technology experts to identify and implement innovative solutions to economic challenges. The discussion will center around fostering an enabling regulatory environment, promoting public-private partnerships, incorporating financial technology in day-to-day operations, and incentivizing entrepreneurship and investment.</p> <p><i>Mr. John Paul Farmer, President, WeLink Cities</i>  <i>Ms. Jennifer Britton, Deputy Programme Manager of Information and Communication Technology for Development, CARICOM Secretariat</i>  <i>Ms. Marci Harris, Executive Director, POPVOX Foundation</i>  <i>Ms. Irma Gonzalez, Senior Project Manager for Digital Governance, City of Monterrey</i></p> <p><b>Discussant:</b> <i>The Hon. Wayne R. Munroe, MP, Minister of National Security, The Bahamas</i></p>

	<b>Moderator:</b> <i>Mr. Antonio Garrastazu, Senior Director, IRI LAC Division</i>
<b>12:15 - 13:15</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
<b>13:15 - 14:15</b>	<p><b>Session 12: Harnessing the Digital Economy: Opportunities and Challenges for Employment in the Caribbean</b></p> <p>This session will explore opportunities and challenges for leveraging the digital economy to increase employment in the Caribbean. The panelists will discuss how the digital sector can create new and innovative employment opportunities with a focus on exploring how investments in digital infrastructure, skills, and regulations can create new jobs, alter the composition of existing jobs, and boost productivity. The conversation will also touch on how education must change to prepare young people for the digital economy. Panelists will also focus on challenges and discuss best practices for ensuring that social inequalities such as income disparities, unemployment, and gender inequalities are not exacerbated when harnessing the digital economy.</p> <p><i>Mr. John Paul Farmer, President, WeLink Cities</i>  <i>Ms. Jennifer Britton, Deputy Programme Manager of Information and Communication Technology for Development, CARICOM Secretariat</i>  <i>Ms. Tonni Brodber, Representative of the UN Women Multi-Country Office for the Caribbean</i>  <i>Ms. Irma Gonzalez, Senior Project Manager for Digital Governance, City of Monterrey</i></p> <p><b>Discussant:</b> <i>Hon. Fenella Wenham, MP, Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Education, Human Resource Planning, Vocational Training and National Excellence, Dominica</i></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> <i>Mr. Clinton White, Counselor, USAID</i></p>
<b>14:15 - 15:15</b>	<p><b>Session 13: Regulatory Legislation to Enhance the Digital Economy</b></p> <p>This session will explore key dimensions of frameworks to support digital economies. The panelists will share their reflections on how well-designed regulations can promote economic growth, foster innovation, and enhance the</p>



	<p>digital landscape as well as discuss how initiatives can fall short and harm private and public sectors in advancing a strong economy. Speakers will also focus on challenges related to consumer protection in the digital age, including data privacy and security, and will discuss best practices for ensuring strong consumer rights. Speakers will also opine on how to avoid unintended consequences.</p> <p><i>Mr. John Paul Farmer, President, WeLink Cities</i>  <i>Ms. Irma Gonzalez, Senior Project Manager for Digital Governance, City of Monterrey</i>  <i>Mr. Cleveland Thomas, ITU Area Representative, Caribbean Countries</i></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> <i>Ms. Marci Harris, Executive Director, POPVOX Foundation</i></p>
<p><b>15:15 - 17:15</b></p>	<p><b>Session 14: World Cafe Style Legislative Drafting Roundtable</b></p> <p>This final session will be a small group exercise whereby delegates will dive deeper into three selected technical areas for further discussion. Each group will gather as a roundtable to converse on the identified topic, share examples from their home institutions, and troubleshoot challenges on current legislation, implementation, or coordination between ministries and parliament. The expert speakers will serve as subject matter experts and advisors during the exercise for parliamentarians to reference as they move through the exercise.</p> <p>Each table will have a host who will facilitate the conversation and key question(s) for discussion. During each round, the host will take notes on the flipcharts to save key takeaways. Each round will last approximately 20 minutes. Participants will switch tables at the end of each round.</p> <p>During the final 30 minutes of the session, each host and advisor group will present their conclusions with support from participants.</p> <p><b>#1 - Digital Transformation of Government Services</b>  <b>Host:</b> <i>Ms. Wallis Stanfield, Program Manager, International Republican Institute</i>  <b>Group Advisors</b>  <i>The Hon. Hannes Astok, Executive Director, eGovernance Academy</i></p>



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



In partnership with  
**Canada**

	<p><i>Mr. John Paul Farmer, President, WeLink Cities</i></p> <p><b>#2 - Harnessing AI to Enhance the Digital Economy</b>  <b>Host:</b> <i>Ms. Irma Gonzalez, Senior Project Manager for Digital Governance, City of Monterrey</i>  <b>Group Advisors</b>  <i>Mr. Derek Luyten, Executive Director, House Democracy Partnership</i>  <i>Ms. Marci Harris, Executive Director, POPVOX Foundation</i></p> <p><b>#3 - Leaving No One Behind in the Digital Economy</b>  <b>Host:</b> <i>Mr. Nathan Riggins, Senior Program Manager, National Democratic Institute</i>  <b>Group Advisors</b>  <i>Ms. Jennifer Britton, Deputy Programme Manager of Information and Communication Technology for Development, CARICOM Secretariat</i>  <i>Ms. Alisha Todd, Director General, ParlAmericas</i></p>
<p><b>17:15 - 18:00</b></p>	<p><b>Closing Remarks</b></p> <p><i>Mr. Clinton White, Counselor, USAID</i>  <i>Mr. Derek Luyten, Executive Director, House Democracy Partnership</i>  <i>Ms. Alisha Todd, Director General, ParlAmericas</i></p>
<p><b>18:00</b></p>	<p><b>Participants return to hotel</b></p>



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



In partnership with  
**Canada**