



PRESS RELEASE

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CARICOM and UN Women Caribbean, in collaboration with ParlAmericas, organized a multi-stakeholder sensitization meeting ahead of CSW66

Today, the CARICOM Secretariat and the UN Women Multi-Country Office for the Caribbean, in collaboration with ParlAmericas, offered a sensitization meeting in preparation for the 66th session of the Commission of the Status of Women (CSW66), which will take place virtually and at United Nations Headquarters in March 2022. The priority theme for this year is “Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes.”

This virtual meeting highlighted Caribbean priorities in light of the CSW66 theme and a grounding in why climate change and disaster risk resilience are gender issues, with multi-stakeholder participation that included ministers with responsibility for gender affairs, parliamentarians, UN representatives, heads of the National Gender Machineries, and representatives of civil society organizations and academia.

Following a series of technical presentations about the CSW negotiation process, a keynote was delivered by Dr. Asha Kambon, renowned specialist on disaster risk management and gender equality. A panel then featured commentary by the Honourable Carolyn Trench-Sandiford, President of the Senate (Belize) and ParlAmericas Board member; Ms. Elizabeth Riley, Executive Director of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA); Ms. Joanna Edghill, Co-Founder and Director of Megapower Limited; and Ms. Sarah Bailey, Head of Programme at the UN World Food Programme - Caribbean Multi-Country Office.

In her participation, the Honourable Carolyn Trench-Sandiford spoke about the different manners in which parliaments can be involved in strategies to enhance adaptive capacity for inclusive, gender-responsive disaster risk management in the Caribbean Small Island Developing States. In addition to contributions related to lawmaking, for which she drew on examples from the Belizean legal landscape, she noted the importance of parliamentarians’ work with their constituents and at the community level in the context of disaster preparation and recovery efforts.

Moving forward, the inputs from the sensitization meeting will inform the crafting of the CARICOM statement for CSW66, which will reinforce region-specific priorities for centering gender-sensitive solutions for climate change and disaster risk issues. The CARICOM Statement for CSW 66 will be negotiated by Ministers with responsibility for gender/women’s affairs on February 17.

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