



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Women parliamentarians and alternate parliamentarians from the National Assembly of Panama met to lay the foundations of a women's parliamentary caucus**

On Wednesday, ParlAmericas, the International Republican Institute (IRI), and the International Relations Unit of the National Assembly of Panama co-organized the virtual meeting “Laying the foundations for the Caucus of Women Parliamentarians and Alternate Parliamentarians of Panama” to advance the development of this group in Panama. National-level women parliamentarians, alternate (*suplente*) parliamentarians, and an eminent panel featuring representatives from Costa Rica, Ecuador, and El Salvador, attended the meeting.

During the meeting, a representative from each party caucus of Panama's National Assembly delivered opening remarks highlighting the importance of promoting multi-party work to address barriers to women's equality and political participation. This included statements by Member of the Chamber of Deputies Zulay Rodríguez, from the Democratic Revolutionary Party; Corina Cano, from the Molirena Party; Yesenia Rodríguez from the Panameñista Party; Ana Giselle Rosas from the Democratic Change Party; and alternate Member of the Chamber of Deputies Walkiria Chandler, from the independent caucus.

The meeting also featured a distinguished panel of representatives from women's parliamentary groups in the region, moderated by Ms. Vonetta Sterling, vice-president of Panama's National Forum of Women in Political Parties (FONAMUPP, in Spanish). Former Member of the Legislative Assembly Maureen Clarke Clarke (Costa Rica), founder of the Parliamentary Group of Women Members of the Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica, discussed the process of institutionalizing a group that transcends legislatures. Ms. Carolina Villeda de Rivera, head of the Gender Unit of the Legislative Assembly of El Salvador, shared a presentation on the Women's Parliamentary Caucus of the Legislative Assembly of El Salvador and its process to develop work plans. Member of the National Assembly Mónica Alemán (Ecuador), chair of the Parliamentary Group for the Guarantee of Women's Rights, shared strategies for building partnerships with civil society organisations.

The meeting concluded with a dialogue on further steps for establishing the Caucus of Women Parliamentarians and Alternate Parliamentarians of the National Assembly of Panama.

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