



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Women parliamentarians of The Bahamas take part in a caucus formation retreat hosted by ParlAmericas, CIWiL Bahamas, UN Women Caribbean, and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association**

On November 18 and 19, 2022, a meeting to formulate a women's parliamentary caucus in The Bahamas was hosted by ParlAmericas, CIWiL Bahamas (the national chapter of Caribbean Women in Leadership), UN Women Caribbean, and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in Nassau, The Bahamas. This caucus formation retreat brought together current and former women parliamentarians from both political parties and chambers for two days of training and deliberations.

The caucus formation retreat, facilitated by representatives from CIWiL Bahamas, opened with remarks from parliamentarians from both chambers and parties: the Hon. Patricia Deveaux, Speaker of the House of Assembly; Senator the Hon. LaShell Adderley, President of the Senate; the Hon. Glenys Hanna-Martin, Minister of Education and Technical and Vocational Training; and Senator the Hon. Michela Barnett-Ellis. A keynote panel comprising distinguished former parliamentarians then focused on the importance of women's full participation in parliamentary spaces, including impacting legislative agendas and processes. Speakers on this panel included the Rt. Hon. Dame Janet Bostwick; Cynthia "Mother" Pratt; Italia Johnson; Allyson Maynard Gibson; and Agatha Marcelle.

Other training sessions during the two-day meeting covered national issues related to gender equality and women's rights, with presentations by UN Women Caribbean and the Department of Family and Gender Affairs, and applying a gender lens in legislative work and advancing gender equality themes in parliament, led by UN Women Caribbean, Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, and ParlAmericas.

The training sessions also contributed important inspiration and background information to the planning for the formation of a women's parliamentary caucus in The Bahamas, which was the meeting's core purpose. Further insights were contributed through a presentation on the structure, objectives, and impact of women's parliamentary caucuses delivered by ParlAmericas, as well as a case study on Belize's experience thus far forming such a caucus shared by the Hon. Valerie Woods, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Belize. These sessions then led directly into guided dialogues among the current and former women parliamentarians of The Bahamas on the objectives and structure for their own women's caucus. The meeting concluded with consensus around the next steps for the caucus' formation.

For more information about our work, see our respective websites and social media: ParlAmericas ([website](#) and [Twitter](#)); CIWiL Bahamas ([website](#) and Facebook); UN Women - Caribbean ([website](#) and [Twitter](#)); and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association ([website](#) and [Twitter](#)).