



PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

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ParlAmericas and the Chamber of Deputies of the Dominican Republic organized the inter-parliamentary meeting: "Promoting Legislative Openness in the Region", within the framework of the Open Americas Regional Conference

On September 28, 2022, in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, an inter-parliamentary meeting was held, bringing together legislators and staff from the national parliaments of 10 countries as well as representatives of international organizations and civil society with the objective of working towards the strengthening of the region's parliaments through legislative openness.

This meeting was attended by Senator Eduardo Estrella (Dominican Republic), President of the Senate and Senator Santiago Zorrilla (Dominican Republic), Vice-President of the Senate and featured welcoming remarks by Member of the Chamber of Deputies Alfredo Pacheco Osoria (Dominican Republic), President of the Chamber of Deputies; Member of the Chamber of Deputies Nelsa Shoraya Suárez Ariza (Dominican Republic), Secretary of the Board of Directors and host of the inter-parliamentary meeting; and Senator Bertha Caraveo (Mexico), Vice-President for North America of the ParlAmericas Open Parliament Network. Among these interventions, Senator Caraveo emphasized that "strengthening transparency and access to information, accountability, citizen participation, and ethics and probity is an urgent need and a commitment of those who recognize that legislative openness is an integral principle for good governance." Mr. Pacheco Osoria also noted that "exchanging experiences on strengthening transparency improves the region's legislative work."

The first panel explored the progress and good practices of open parliament in the region. Spanning key aspects of co-creation processes to commitments and initiatives on transparency, accountability, citizen participation, and ethics, the panel was moderated by Guadalupe Valdez, former Member of Parliament of the Dominican Republic and former ParlAmericas Board member. It also included the participation of Member of the Legislative Assembly Carolina Delgado (Costa Rica), ParlAmericas Board member; Ms. María Baron, Global Executive Director of the Fundación Directorio Legislativo; Member of the Chamber of Deputies Vlado Mirosevic (Chile), ParlAmericas Board member, Member of the Chamber of Deputies Elías Baez de los Santos (Dominican Republic); Member of the National Assembly Nathalie Arias (Ecuador); María Liz Sosa, Director General, Directorate of Institutional Development and External Cooperation of the Chamber of Senators of Paraguay; and Ms. Rosario Pavese, Regional Leader for South America, Country Support Section and Senior Parliamentary Advisor at the Global level of the Open Government Partnership (OGP).

This activity also included working groups where participants discussed key aspects to further strengthen parliamentary work with a particular focus on legislative openness. Ms. Rocio Noriega, advisor to the Bicameral Group on Transparency of the National Congress of Chile, guided this session and moderated the final reflections of the working group discussions which addressed citizen participation and public integrity in greater depth and were led by Senator Caraveo and Member of Congress Karina Paz (Guatemala), respectively. Within these working groups, representatives of the parliaments and civil society exchanged their experiences and lessons learned regarding initiatives to involve citizens, especially young people, as well as measures to promote ethics and probity within parliaments, taking into consideration a gender perspective and initiatives to increase the participation of women in these processes.

To conclude the meeting, Ms. Suárez Ariza reiterated that "strengthening public integrity must be an objective that involves not only the powers of the State, but society as a whole to build a culture of integrity under which interactions between the public and private sectors, civil society, and individuals are mediated by the highest legal and ethical standards." In her intervention, Member of the Chamber of Deputies Corina Cano (Panama), Vice-President for Central America of the ParlAmericas Open Parliament Network, mentioned that "expanding and strengthening spaces for citizens to participate substantively in the discussion of public affairs and in the decision-making processes in parliament calls for strengthening the supply of virtual mechanisms for participation."

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