



## 4th Gathering of the ParlAmericas Open Parliament Network

[#ParlAmericasOPN](#)

The 4<sup>th</sup> Gathering of the ParlAmericas Open Parliament Network, hosted by the National Assembly of Ecuador, brought together parliamentarians with subject matter specialists to share experiences, knowledge, and strategies to strengthen parliaments' oversight work through open parliament action plans and initiatives developed in collaboration with civil society. The Gathering's theme, *Beyond the Walls of Parliament: Strengthening Parliamentary Oversight*, focused on the important role of parliament to advance higher standards of transparency and accountability in all branches of government, a necessary condition for achieving progress on the anti-corruption measures outlined in the [Lima Commitment](#), and to foster more effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its [Sustainable Development Goals](#).

### THEME

Beyond the Walls of Parliament:  
Strengthening Parliamentary  
Oversight

### LOCATION

Quito, Ecuador

### DATES

March 12-14, 2019

### PARTICIPANTS

More than 100 parliamentarians,  
parliamentary staff, and civil society  
representatives from 27 countries



This activity is aligned with SDG 16



Hon. Elizabeth Cabezas



Senator Blanca Ovelar



Hon. Robert Nault

The gathering was opened by the Hon. **Elizabeth Cabezas** (Ecuador), President of the National Assembly and Vice-President of ParlAmericas; the Hon. **Robert Nault** (Canada), Member of Parliament and President of ParlAmericas; and Senator **Blanca Ovelar** (Paraguay), President of the ParlAmericas Open Parliament Network.

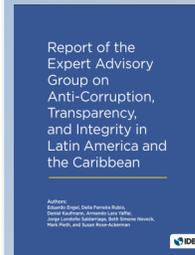
The inauguration was followed by a series of working sessions, where participants engaged in productive exchanges of experiences and good practices. Discussions explored key features of corruption in the region and proposed an ambitious agenda toward more systemic transformation, as well as strategies and mechanisms to strengthen parliamentary oversight of legislative frameworks and practices to open governments, prevent corruption, prosecute perpetrators and recover stolen assets.

Round table work centered on the development of concrete actions that can be taken by parliaments to foster a more open State. Participants explored opportunities to apply open parliament approaches to legislative work on important public policy issues like gender equality, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction, and the inclusion of indigenous peoples. Participants also discussed their experiences and ideas for collaboration with civil society to strengthen parliamentary oversight of sustainable development issues.

## Working Session 1: Towards a Systemic Transformation to Counter Corruption

Following the Lima Commitment adopted at the 8th Summit of the Americas on “Democratic Governance Against Corruption”, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) commissioned a Report by an Expert Advisory Group on Anti-Corruption, Transparency, and Integrity in Latin America and the Caribbean to identify innovative and effective approaches to combat corruption in the region. Based on this report, this session analyzed the key features of corruption in the region and proposed an ambitious agenda toward more systemic transformation, focusing on the implementation of the rule of law and in controlling corruption. The session was moderated by Member of Congress **Cecilia Chacón** (Peru), ParlAmericas Board Member, and featured two keynote presentations. **Juan Ricardo Ortega** ([presentation](#) in Spanish), Senior Advisor at the Inter-American Development Bank, presented the highlights of the IDB report, examining the breadth of efforts required at domestic, regional, and global levels to systematically address corruption in the hemisphere. **Shaazka Beyerle** ([presentation](#)), Senior Research Advisor for the Program on Nonviolent Action at the United States Institute of Peace, offered insights on the links between corruption, insecurity and violent conflict, and discussed opportunities for greater collaboration with civil society to counter this phenomenon.

### Report of the Expert Advisory Group on Anti-Corruption, Transparency, and Integrity in Latin America and the Caribbean



The Inter-American Development Bank’s (IDB) 2018 report gathers decades of experience from governance and anti-corruption scholars and practitioners, identifying a multi-layered strategy to combat corruption in the Americas and the Caribbean. The report brings innovative approaches for a systemic transformation to strengthen the rule of law, ensure a competitive economy with incentives for ethics in business, establish open procurement and contracting processes, regulate political financing, end secretive ownership of companies and financing sources, adopt innovations in the public sector, and open governments to citizens’ contributions and experiences through a participatory focus on fighting corruption. Consult the [full report at this link](#).

We have taken the decision, through a reform of the Standing Orders of the National Assembly, to establish the Legislative Research Analysis Center, which will allow us to have a much more expeditious analysis of legislation, both ex ante and ex post, and above all, strengthen transparency mechanisms to inform citizens as well as the links that we are weaving with different civil society organizations.



The Honourable **Elizabeth Cabezas** (Ecuador), President of the National Assembly and Vice-President of ParlAmericas

Democracy is vital for progress, but it is also fragile. As elected officials, we have an obligation to lead by example and are in a unique position to create spaces for collaboration with civil society to strengthen our oversight of the implementation of laws and public policies that affect their lives. It is crucial that the public feel that they are being properly represented and included.



The Honourable **Robert Nault** (Canada), Member of Parliament and President of ParlAmericas

Various regional initiatives of high and altruistic aspirations that summon nations and their representatives often succumb to a mountain of bureaucracy that serves no one. Where papers are completed, plans are made, but everything remains the same. We need to improve the quality of governments and the political response to the needs of the people. That is the foundation that moves us and that is where the efforts of ParlAmericas are oriented.



Senator **Blanca Ovelar** (Paraguay), President of the ParlAmericas Open Parliament Network

When we talk about proactive citizen engagement, we mean regular people exerting power and acting as protagonists to curb corruption, increase transparency, gain accountability, improve governance and all these interlinked challenges in our society.



**Shaazka Beyerle**, Senior Research Advisor, Program on Nonviolent Action, United States Institute of Peace

We have to close the gaps (of poverty and inequality) that exist in our countries that have been the breeding ground for corruption [...] Let us use and take advantage of this opportunity provided by ParlAmericas and the open parliament movement to share our experiences.



**Cecilia Chacon** (Peru), Member of Congress and ParlAmericas Board Member

Public procurement has to be strengthened. We must create a link with citizens and provide information that is useful. Giving citizens a contract does not help. It is when you take the time to tell them what they are going to receive, what they should see, what quality of materials should be used, how long the work will last, what goods and services will be provided, that you are going to meet their needs (for their understanding and active participation). When that information is given, then you can have transparency in public procurement.



**Juan Ricardo Ortega**, Senior Advisor, Inter-American Development Bank

## Working Session 2: Strengthening Parliamentary Oversight to Promote Openness and Counter Corruption

An open parliament is transparent, accountable, creates opportunities for citizen participation and respects the highest ethical standards. It also promotes the application of these principles in the executive branch of government, through its oversight function. This session explored strategies and mechanisms to strengthen parliamentary oversight of legislative frameworks and practices to open governments, prevent corruption, prosecute perpetrators and recover stolen assets. It was moderated by **María Inés Solís Quirós** (Costa Rica), Vice-President of the Legislative Assembly and ParlAmericas Board Member and featured presentations from four anti-corruption experts.

**Anande Trotman-Joseph** ([presentation](#)), Chairperson of the Integrity and Anti-Corruption Commission of Grenada, discussed the key aspects of a public integrity regime. **Esteban Fullin** ([presentation](#)), Advisor on Anti-Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism for Latin America and the Caribbean at the International Monetary Fund, spoke about the components of an effective anti-money laundering regime, including beneficial ownership. **Juan Ricardo Ortega** ([presentation](#) in Spanish), Senior Advisor at the Inter-American Development Bank, focused on legislative tools to recover stolen assets and instruments to support international collaboration in the area. **Jaime B. Guerrero** ([presentation](#)), Partner at Foley & Lardner LLP, discussed key elements of anti-corruption compliance regimes in the private sector and good practices in national and extraterritorial anti-corruption legislation.

Following these presentations, **Randy Boissonnault** (Canada), Member of Parliament and Vice-President of the ParlAmericas Open Parliament Network facilitated group discussions during which parliamentarians identified actions they can undertake in their respective countries to address a fictitious anti-corruption case. In doing so, they considered challenges, legislative solutions, and strategies to engage with civil society to improve oversight of legislation and public policies relevant to their case.



It is very important when implementing an anticorruption system that you have a strategy to do so. You do so nationally, but your stakeholders have to be regional and global. It is very important to take opportunities such as this to support one another, to share knowledge and remind ourselves that political will and leadership are necessary to fully implement policy frameworks, legislative agendas, national strategies, budgets that really allow our integrity and anti-corruption networks to work independently, training development, public education and other relevant areas.



**Anande Trotman-Joseph**,  
Chairperson, Integrity and  
Anti-Corruption Commission  
of Grenada

The last major change that occurred in international standards goes hand in hand with the transparency of legal persons. [...] The figure of the beneficial owner was created, and States are called upon to have some kind of registry or information about who is the beneficial owner of a company [...], the natural person or persons that ultimately own or control a customer or on whose behalf a transaction is being conducted. It is important that information on beneficial ownership is available to competent authorities without impediments.



**Esteban Fullin**, Regional Adviser for  
Latin America and the Caribbean on  
Anti-Money Laundering, International  
Monetary Fund

Private sector entities are undertaking innovative efforts to curb corruption, for example by using technology, including artificial intelligence, to review, analyze and identify potential corrupt activities, as well as to streamline due diligence efforts related to third party intermediaries (consultants, agents, distributors, etc.).



**Jaime B. Guerrero**, Partner,  
Foley & Lardner LLP



# Summary of Round Table Report Back: Challenges and solutions to ensure the effective parliamentary oversight of openness and anti-corruption measures by government institutions

Challenges	Solutions
<p><i>Timely access to information is limited:</i></p> <p>Reports requested by the parliament are not answered or information is shared late which undermines the research and data necessary to make decisions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Establish more drastic sanctions against public institutions that do not respond in a timely manner to requests for reports.</li> <li>➤ Adopt provisions to limit ministerial privileges for reasons of transparency.</li> <li>➤ Establish or institutionalize protocols or mechanisms of collaboration with other instances and branches of the State that guarantee access to timely information.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Reduced ability to conduct investigations:</i></p> <p>Limited ability to summon witnesses and ask questions, as well as carry out investigations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Strengthen research and oversight committees within parliaments.</li> <li>➤ Grant committees the ability to invite any witness.</li> <li>➤ Create incentives for reporting so that information about misconduct or illegal actions by companies is shared.</li> <li>➤ Review anti-corruption legislation covering private sector entities and consider, for example, the criminal liability of legal entities, transparency standards for companies, the creation of a specialized enforcement body that oversees compliance and integrity systems, among others.</li> <li>➤ Hold special reserved and confidential committee meetings to listen to the declarations and information of the executive.</li> <li>➤ Allocate adequate resources for committees that address public integrity to allow for appropriate and independent investigations of parliament and government.</li> </ul>

Challenges	Solutions
<p><i>Few resources for the exercise of parliamentary oversight:</i></p> <p>Lack of personnel in the parliament dedicated to post-legislative scrutiny to ensure that laws include appropriate enforcement provisions for their effective implementation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Establish one or more parliamentary committees responsible for scrutinizing existing laws in order to ensure that they effectively contribute to the fight against corruption.</li> <li>➤ Create a database showing the historical cost of public works to enable comparisons and help oversee public contracting and identify and justify any important discrepancies.</li> <li>➤ Strengthen mechanisms to facilitate post-legislative scrutiny, for example through the establishment of a strong integrity and anti-corruption commission, access to information law, and whistleblower protections, among others.</li> <li>➤ Establish permanent and transparent accountability mechanisms, including requiring asset declarations that allow for citizen and parliamentary oversight.</li> <li>➤ Expand the scope of these declarations to also include family members of high level public officials.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Absence of collaboration mechanisms:</i></p> <p><i>Lack of collaboration at the international and national levels, as well as few cooperation channels between the parliament and the judiciary or enforcement entities, as agreements and collaboration are normally carried out with the executive branch.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Consider transnational corruption as part of the national risk management strategy and develop bilateral relations and treaties between countries to promote collaboration in the fight against corruption.</li> <li>➤ Establish permanent cross-border communication systems to exchange fiscal information across different instances, including through inter-parliamentary channels.</li> <li>➤ Adopt cooperation agreements between parliaments to facilitate parliamentary diplomacy and the access of information on corruption cases.</li> <li>➤ Promote a better collaboration with judicial and fiscal entities (supreme audit institution, attorney general, financial investigation units) in the work of parliamentary committees.</li> </ul>

# Summary of Round Table Report Back: Opportunities for collaboration with civil society to contribute to more effective parliamentary oversight of openness and anti-corruption measures by government institutions

- Consider the findings and information released by campaigns or initiatives conducted by citizens as part of parliamentary oversight practices.
- Empower civil society with information and spaces for training geared towards understanding corruption cases, as well as promote their ability to organize.
- Develop laws in a collaborative way, by working together with civil society on these issues and establishing spaces for co-creation.
- Facilitate accompaniment by civil society in the investigations and resulting denunciations made by parliament, to strengthen their credibility and visibility among the public.
- Encourage participation and collaboration among interest groups, non-profit organizations and all political parties to develop joint solutions.
- Encourage reporting and research in the media to address corruption cases.
- Establish training for young people in universities to better understand this issue.
- Establish or strengthen citizen participation mechanisms through legislation.
- Promote academic research that allows for better analysis and access to information on topics related to corruption.
- Guarantee the right of access to information for the media.
- Promote the participation of civil society in oversight and auditing processes, and strengthen their knowledge of the legal instruments available and the processes to request these, so that they can exercise their right to hold public institutions accountable.
- Promote the creation of mixed commissions that include the participation of civil society and other institutions where required.
- Create sets of tools for the visualization of public contracting data in order to promote civil society oversight.

## Working Session 3: Applying Openness Practices to Advance Sustainable Development



Parliament's oversight role goes beyond good governance frameworks to everyday issues, including those covered within the Sustainable Development Goals, which truly impact citizens' lives. Promoting the application of openness principles in government policies and programming related to these issues, as well as in the parliament's oversight of these areas, can strengthen this process and lead to better public policy. This session focused on developing concrete actions that can be taken by parliaments to foster a more open State, through case studies focusing on gender equality, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction, and the inclusion of indigenous peoples. It was moderated by His Honour **Arthur Holder** (Barbados), Speaker of the House of Assembly and ParlAmericas Board Member, and featured presentations from three civil society representative working on these issues.

**Juana Herrera** ([presentation](#)), President of the National Forum of Women in Political Parties (FONAMUPP), discussed initiatives to overcome barriers to women's participation in political life and presented proposals for collaboration with civil society to address this issue. **Leví Sucre** ([presentation](#)), Coordinator of the Atlantic Block of the Bribri Cabécar Indigenous Network, presented the achievements that have resulted from a collaboration with the executive branch of government to include indigenous peoples in public decisions that impact them. **Zakiya Uzoma-Wadada** ([presentation](#)), Chair of the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI), provided advice to strengthen collaboration between parliament and civil society to advance progress to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, based on CANARI's civil society and governance program.

Following the panel, **Cristina Cornejo** (El Salvador), Member of the Legislative Assembly and ParlAmericas Board Member facilitated group discussions where the parliamentarians shared their experiences and ideas for collaboration with civil society to strengthen parliamentary oversight of sustainable development issues, more specifically gender equality, inclusion of indigenous peoples, and climate change mitigation and adaptation.



The fact that the government provided open data, making this information available to us, allowed us to have more time to generate our proposals regarding government initiatives. An important part of having this open data is that it allowed us to bring information to our communities without distortion [...] It is easier to build an agenda with the government and monitor it when you have the right information and when you have it on time.



**Leví Sucre**, Coordinator, Atlantic Block of the Bribri Cabécar Indigenous Network



Parliaments can engage civil society in the formal process to monitor national implementation (of legislation and public policies to govern natural resources), while recognising the value of independent monitoring and review by civil society, for example through shadow or spotlight reports.



**Zakiya Uzoma-Wadada**, Chair, Caribbean Natural Resources Institute



There is an opportunity for collaboration between parliamentarians and civil society organizations to break the barriers that impede the equal participation of women in elected positions and, in this way, guarantee the active involvement of women in politics.



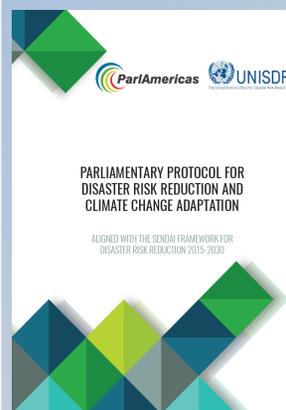
**Juana Herrera**, President, National Forum of Women in Political Parties (FONAMUPP)

# Summary of Round Table Report Back: General opportunities for collaboration with civil society to strengthen parliamentary oversight of sustainable development issues

- Create spaces for the participation of citizens and non-governmental organizations in budget discussions, such as pre-budget consultations and public hearings, allowing them to understand the budget and contribute to parliamentary discussions on budget oversight.
- Create spaces for the participation of citizens and non-governmental organizations in the oversight of legislation, such as public hearings, to ensure that it takes into account cultural realities and that these are addressed with sensitivity during its implementation.
- Establish citizen analysis forums that allow for open participation without any restrictions, to review legislation, bills in process, executive branch actions, and budgetary allocations and propose amendments to legislation and/or propose other political actions to parliament based on an agreement achieved by those who participate in this space.
- Develop collaboration mechanisms to carry out training and awareness raising campaigns on the legislative process and agenda, to educate civil society and promote effective future participation.
- Promote and widely disseminate information on the above mentioned collaborative spaces.



## Parliamentary Protocol for Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation



This new publication developed by ParlAmericas and UNISDR was launched at the Gathering. It aims to orient and support legislative work by the national parliaments throughout the Americas and the Caribbean as they implement the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 to help enhance their country's adaptive capacity and resilience. The Protocol is aligned with the four priorities identified within the Sendai Framework – understanding, governance, financial investment, and enhancing

preparation – and presents recommended actions to parliaments to develop or adapt legislation on disaster risk. Moreover, the protocol seeks to ensure that legislative actions are inclusive and based on human rights principles, with the application of an intersectional gender lens and the active participation of women, indigenous peoples, and traditionally marginalized groups in decision-making processes.

# Summary of Round Table Report Back: Actions to strengthen collaboration with civil society to improve parliamentary oversight of legislation and public policies related to the promotion of gender equality, the inclusion of indigenous peoples in public decision-making, and the mitigation and adaptation to climate change and disaster risk



Collaborate with non-governmental organizations and schools in educational campaigns to promote gender equality, and counter discrimination and violence against women.



Decentralize responsibilities to promote collaboration with municipalities and local organizations on disaster recovery and resilience plans, based on specific needs. In addition, promote appropriate reconstruction plans for each locality, identifying, for example, problems on the coastlines, and guaranteeing budgets for these actions.



Establish a permanent space for the participation of indigenous representatives, bearing in mind the need for a cultural mediation for effective dialogue, for the discussion of issues that affect them or are a priority to address, such as the Sustainable Development Goals, ILO Convention 169, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the procedures for prior consultations, among others.



Establish early warning mechanisms where citizens can report cases of aggression against women. This data produced through this instrument can be analyzed jointly by the executive and legislative branches, as well as civil society, to determine the legislative and policy actions that should be implemented to prevent this issue.



Strengthen the dialogue between institutions that have relevant information related to deforestation or the growth of the agricultural frontier so that parliament can act as a mediator for dialogues between communities or sectors of the population and those public institutions that must provide figures and technical elements for the achievement of public policies and the national budget.



Adopt actions in favour of indigenous peoples and in respect of their rights in national development plans, and allocate a specific budget for organizations that represent indigenous groups.

# Presentation of Open Parliament Commitments and Results

Parliamentary delegations were provided an opportunity to present the results of previously submitted national level commitments for applying open parliament measures in their parliaments, and to share new commitments to be implemented in the coming year, to be captured in the ParlAmericas Open Parliament Commitment Tool. These sessions were moderated by **Maritza Espinales** (Nicaragua), Member of the Legislative Assembly and ParlAmericas Board Member and the Honourable **Andy Daniel** (Saint Lucia), Speaker of the House of Assembly and ParlAmericas Board Member respectively.



### Open Parliament Commitment Tool

**Overview**

Parliaments across the Americas and the Caribbean are undertaking efforts to open their institutions through the implementation of commitments adopted as part of an Open Parliament Action Plan, an Open Government Action Plan submission to ParlAmericas.

This tool allows users to visualize, compare, download and track parliaments' progress on the achievement of their open parliament commitments using a traffic light model.

●  
Information not available

●  
Not started

●  
Started but not achieved

●  
In process or partly achieved

●  
Achieved

**Methodology**

This tool contains commitments adopted by Member Parliaments through one of the following methods:

- Commitments in an Open Parliament Action Plan adopted by the legislature, either as a stand-alone plan or as an add-on to the country's Open Government Partnership Action Plan
- Legislative commitments adopted by the legislature and included in an Open Government Partnership Action Plan
- Commitments presented by parliamentary delegations attending gatherings of the ParlAmericas Open Parliament Network

Progress to achieve each commitment is measured by the respective parliament and reported to ParlAmericas. Comments were taken verbatim from each parliament's official documents and translated where required.

**Commitments by Open Parliament Pillar**

View all parliamentary commitments by thematic area according to the pillars of the ParlAmericas Road Map towards Legislative Openness.

●  
Accountability

●  
Citizen Participation

●  
Ethics and Probity

●  
Strategic Planning

●  
Transparency

**Commitments by Parliament**

View all parliamentary commitments by country

	2017-2018 Open Parliament Action Plan	Commitment
	2014-2016 Open Parliament Action Plan	Commitment
	2015-2019 3rd Gathering of the ParlAmericas Open Parliament Network	Commitment
	2017-2018 Action Plan for an Open and Transparent Congress	Commitment
	2016-2017 Action Plan for an Open and Transparent Congress	Commitment
	2017-2019 Open Government Partnership Action Plan	Commitment
	2016-2017 Open Parliament Action Plan	Commitment
	2015-2016 Legislative Openness Action Plan	Commitment

## ParlAmericas Open Parliament Commitment Tool

Parliaments across the Americas and the Caribbean are undertaking efforts to open their institutions through the implementation of commitments adopted as part of an Open Parliament Action Plan, an Open Government Action Plan or other initiatives reported to ParlAmericas. The ParlAmericas Open Parliament Commitment Tool allows users to visualize, compare, download and follow parliaments' progress on the achievement of their open parliament commitments using a traffic light model. Commitments can be viewed by country and by Open Parliament Pillar (Transparency, Accountability, Citizen Participation and Ethics). Parliaments are invited to [consult the tool here](#) and submit their commitments to [parlamericasopn@parlamericas.org](mailto:parlamericasopn@parlamericas.org).



# Achievements since the 3rd Gathering of the ParlAmericas Open Parliament Network

Country	Pilar	Achievements
Argentina	 Strategic planning	Capacity building sessions in the Chamber of Deputies on what is an open parliament and how it can be achieved.
	 Transparency and access to information	100% response rate for 86 requests received by the Office of Access to Information that was created in parliament following the approval of the Law on Access to Public Information.
	 Transparency and access to information	Open Data Portal launched in the Chamber of Deputies.
	 Citizen participation	Open Parliament Network including 6 civil society organizations that meets with the President of the Chamber of Deputies every two months to debate.
Ecuador	 Strategic planning	Formed the Group on Open Parliament for Ethics and Transparency of the National Assembly, with multi-partisan membership.
Costa Rica	 Strategic planning	Agreement signed March 6, 2019 by the leaders of all political parties and members of the Board of the parliament expressing their commitment to work on the 4 pillars of open parliament.
	 Strategic planning	Advances towards the finalization and approval of the Open Parliament Policy, following meetings with a delegation from ParlAmericas and civil society dialogue.
Paraguay	 Accountability & Citizen participation	Advances towards the participation of citizens in the national budget debate through requests for reports and public audiences.
	 Strategic planning	Bi-monthly meetings of the Senate Committee on Open Parliament where directors of administrative departments hear requests, observations and evaluations from stakeholders and civil society organizations in order to monitor the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Open Parliament Action Plan more closely.
Suriname	 Transparency and access to information	More extensive information on draft legislation, including amendments, included on the parliament's website.
	 Citizen participation	Expansion of parliamentary programs for children and youth, as well as a pilot program for seniors.
	 Strategic planning	Initiatives to strengthen the institution of parliament, its independence and its professional capacity.

## New commitments to be implemented in 2019-2020

Country	Pilar	Achievements
Argentina	 Strategic planning	<b>Open Parliament Program</b> Establish an open parliament program in the Chamber of Deputies.
	 Citizen participation	<b>Open Law Portal</b> Launch an online portal allowing the public to contribute to draft legislation, thereby improving the quality of legislation through distributed collaboration, increasing transparency of the process for creating laws and giving visibility to bills produced by Members of the Chamber of Deputies by promoting a dialogue on these issues.
Ecuador	 Strategic planning	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Open Parliament Action Plan</b> Co-create and adopt an Open Parliament Action Plan with civil society.
Paraguay	 Ethics	<b>Legal Framework for Conflict of Interests</b> Establish a broader legal framework to manage conflicts of interests in public entities.
Canada	 Strategic planning	<b>Steps for an Open Parliament Action Plan</b> Develop a guide for how to engage in a formal process in the Parliament of Canada to co-create an Open Parliament Action Plan with civil society.
Saint Lucia	 Citizen participation	<b>Citizen Participation Opportunities</b> Review the standing orders of the parliament to ensure their alignment with modern day practice and increase the participation of citizens in the legislative process, particularly public attendance at sittings of the House of Assembly.
Suriname	 Citizen participation	<b>Session with Civil Society Organizations</b> Organize a session(s) with civil society organizations to discuss possibilities to structure collaboration with the National Assembly.
	 Citizen participation	<b>Explanatory video</b> Publish a video explaining the legislative process.
	 Transparency and access to information	<b>Increased Transparency through Parliamentary Website</b> Provide access to more types of legislative information on the website of the National Assembly.

## Training Session: Post Legislative Scrutiny

Within the framework of the Gathering, a workshop on post-legislative scrutiny – the practice used to monitor and evaluate the implementation of legislation, ensuring laws benefit society in the way originally intended by lawmakers – was offered in collaboration with the [Westminster Foundation for Democracy](#) (WFD). Facilitated by **Franklin De Vrieze**, WFD Senior Governance Adviser, and **Devin O’Shaughnessy**, WFD Director of Programmes, the workshop provided an [introduction](#) and an overview of [the principles of post-legislative scrutiny by parliaments](#), and included a panel-session with examples of practices as applied in the hemisphere, followed by a round-table exercise where participating parliamentarians worked in groups to prepare a plan to scrutinize model legislation to evaluate its effectiveness.

### LOCATION

Quito, Ecuador

### DATE

March 12, 2019

### PARTICIPANTS

More than 70 parliamentarians, parliamentary staff, and civil society representatives from 27 countries

Moderated by **Fernando Burbano** (Ecuador), Member of the National Assembly, the panel included presentations of case-studies from four countries: Senator **Percy Downe** ([presentation](#)) (Canada) considered Canada’s experience with statutory review provisions and sunset provisions, as well as Canada’s Statutes Repeal Act and the Parliamentary Budget Office, among others. **Angelique Massiah** ([presentation](#)), Parliamentary Clerk at the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago presented post-legislative scrutiny as a standing objective of most inquiries undertaken by parliamentary committees through a case study on the scrutiny of the Administration of Justice Act. **María Fernanda Arreguín Gámez** ([presentation](#)), Coordinator of Post Legislative Scrutiny at the State Congress of Guanajuato in Mexico, discussed the work of the Legislative Impact Monitoring and Analysis Unit responsible for reviewing whether obligated subjects have issued the secondary legislation needed to implement the law and evaluating its economic and social impact. The panel ended with a presentation on the work of the Department on Law Evaluation of the Chamber of Deputies of Chile ([presentation](#)). The round table exercise presented parliamentarians with the opportunity to exchange experiences and insights from their respective countries as they evaluated the effectiveness of model legislation related to access to information, violence against women and whistleblower protection.



## Additional Resources on Post-Legislative Scrutiny

### ➔ [Post-Legislative Scrutiny in the Americas](#)

Describes the process and reasons for Post-Legislative Scrutiny, and examines the relevant trends in by parliaments in this hemisphere.

### ➔ [Principles of Post-Legislative Scrutiny by Parliaments](#)

Aims to assist parliaments interested in initiating or strengthening practices of Post-Legislative Scrutiny by summarizing relevant practices and discussing the mandate to conduct Post-Legislative Scrutiny in Parliament (the “why”), the scope (the “what”), the participants (the “who”), the processes (the “how”) and the timing (the “when”).

### ➔ [London Declaration on Post-Legislative Scrutiny](#)

Calls upon parliaments and other actors involved in the adoption and implementation of laws to commit and contribute to the quality and effectiveness of legislation and its implementation.

Post-legislative scrutiny is crucial to ensure that legislation we approve has the intended effects and results. This evaluation also allows us to be much more effective in our parliamentary oversight work, and based on this scrutiny, we can improve the laws in our countries, the quality of our political representation and build citizens' confidence in our parliaments and promote their participation.



**Fernando Burbano**  
(Ecuador), Member of the  
National Assembly



## DECLARATION HIGHLIGHTS

The 4<sup>th</sup> Gathering of the ParlAmericas Open Parliament Network concluded with the reading of the [Declaration](#) by Member of the National Assembly **Karina Artega** (Ecuador), and the discussion and approval process was moderated by the Hon. **Robert Nault** (Canada), Member of Parliament and President of ParlAmericas. Among the commitments adopted by the convened parliamentary delegations to further advance open parliament principles, tackle corruption and strengthen parliamentary oversight, highlights include:

- Monitoring progress and accompanying the efforts of our States in the fight against corruption, improving collaboration between all branches of the State in pursuit of strengthened democratic governance, which were all aspects of the *Lima Commitment*.
- Establishing opportunities for collaboration with civil society organizations in the development and implementation of strategies to strengthen parliamentary oversight and openness across all sectors of the government with special attention to public policies addressing gender equality, climate change, and the inclusion of indigenous peoples.
- Co-creating and implementing open parliament action plans or other initiatives in collaboration with civil society and parliamentary staff, with the objective of developing tools and participatory processes that contribute to strengthening parliamentary oversight and promoting the opening of government institutions.
- Considering, during the initial phases of drafting legislation, demographic data and relevant evidence that contributes to designing specific indicators and targets, disaggregated by gender and other social factors relevant to the national context, which can later be used to evaluate laws and government policies through these specific lenses. Where relevant data and evidence do not exist, advocating for this to be collected.
- Establishing and strengthening comprehensive mechanisms for legislative scrutiny and analysis that ensure the effective implementation and fulfillment of the intended objectives and promoting the adoption of the Global Declaration on Post-Legislative Scrutiny.



## Parliaments Present:

 Antigua and Barbuda	 Chile	 Grenada	 Paraguay
 Argentina	 Colombia	 Guatemala	 Peru
 The Bahamas	 Costa Rica	 Haiti	 Saint Lucia
 Barbados	 Cuba	 Jamaica	 Suriname
 Belize	 Dominica	 Mexico	 Trinidad and Tobago
 Bolivia	 Ecuador	 Nicaragua	 Venezuela
 Canada	 El Salvador	 Panama	

## Executive Committee of the ParlAmericas Open Parliament Network

During the Gathering, Senator **Ranard Henfield** (The Bahamas) was elected to the position of Vice-President - Caribbean. The OPN Executive Committee now consists of the following members:

### **Blanca Ovelar**

President  
Senator, Paraguay

### **Randy Boissonnault**

Vice-President - North America  
Member of Parliament, Canada

### **Marvin Orellana**

Vice-President - Central America  
Member of Parliament, Guatemala

### **Ranard Henfield**

Vice-President - Caribbean  
Senator, Bahamas

### **Javier Macaya Danús**

Vice-President - South America  
Member of the Chamber of Deputies, Chile

### **Andrés García Zuccardi**

Alternate Vice-President - South America  
Senator, Colombia

### **Williams Dávila**

Observer  
Member of the National Assembly, Venezuela

**Canada**



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# PARLAMERICAS



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