



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **ParlAmericas participated in the Third Caribbean Clerks Programme held in Bridgetown, Barbados**

On January 26 and 27, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (United Kingdom of Great Britain) held a meeting that brought together parliamentary staff to strengthen parliaments and promote intra-regional cooperation.

During the gathering, parliamentary staff and invited specialists delivered presentations and participated in dialogue sessions to discuss topics such as administrative and procedural parliamentary functions, working effectively with parliamentarians, support and research services, the work they perform in parliamentary committees, and inclusive citizen participation.

The meeting opened with remarks by the Honourable Reginald Farley (Barbados), President of the Senate and Vice-President for the Caribbean of the ParlAmericas Open Parliament Network, who stated: "This program will offer the opportunity for parliamentary staff to share on experiences and good practices that can strengthen our parliaments to become more effective, inclusive, and representative to citizens' needs and interests."

During the session "Developing Effective Working Relationships with Parliamentarians," Beverley Gibbons, Deputy Clerk (Barbados) and Regional Coordinator for the Caribbean of the ParlAmericas Open Parliament Network, explained that the [Road Map towards Legislative Openness 2.0](#) is a tool that has enabled the prioritization of modernization strategies within parliaments. She also stated that the Parliamentary Staff Network on Open Parliament has been a learning space for promoting greater inclusion within parliamentary work in the region.

The session entitled "Inclusive Citizen Participation in Parliaments," moderated by Alvaro Teran, Parliamentary Relations Coordinator of ParlAmericas, discussed the role of parliamentary staff in facilitating engagement between the general public and parliament. It was stressed that there is a need to consider how parliament communicates its work and how citizens can participate in its functioning so that legislatures avoid limiting engagement to the "usual suspects" and adopt a proactive and inclusive approach that promotes the participation of underrepresented groups.

In closing, participants were invited to take part in upcoming ParlAmericas activities, including the 7<sup>th</sup> Gathering of the Open Parliament Network, to be held in April in Santiago, Chile.

ParlAmericas is the institution that promotes parliamentary diplomacy in the inter-American system. Composed of the 35 national legislatures in North, Central and South America, and the Caribbean, ParlAmericas promotes cooperative political dialogue, facilitates the exchange of good legislative practices, and produces tailored resources to support parliamentarians in their work. The International Secretariat of ParlAmericas is headquartered in Ottawa, Canada. For more information, visit [www.parlamericas.org](http://www.parlamericas.org) or write to [info@parlamericas.org](mailto:info@parlamericas.org).