



## Press Release

*For immediate release*

March 29, 2019

### **ParlAmericas participates in regional forum on gender equality and health to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals**

On March 27-29, ParlAmericas participated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bi-Annual Regional Forum on the Sustainable Development Goals, titled *Agenda 2030: Prioritizing Investment in Health and Gender Mainstreaming – Advancing Health and Gender Balance in the OECS*. The forum was organized by the Ministry of Health and Gender Affairs and the Ministry of Culture, Youth, Sports, Community Development and Telecommunications and Information of the Nevis Island Administration, respectively led by the Hon. Hazel Brandy-Williams and the Hon. Eric Evelyn, and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

The forum brought together representatives from OECS countries to coordinate actions on issues related to gender equality and health to support collective achievement of the corresponding Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Each day centred on key actors that play a role in this work, including the executive and legislative branches of government, technical staff, and civil society, and on the need for partnership among these groups.

Parliamentarians' role in advancing the 2030 agenda was a topic of focus on the first day of the forum. A parliamentary panel highlighted efforts currently underway in OECS countries to address priority concerns like gender-based violence, national healthcare, and poverty alleviation, among others. Throughout the presentations, emphasis was placed on the ways in which inter-island cooperation with other OECS members has served as a strategy to build on individual strengths and ensure the continued success and sustainability of development efforts. Panellists also discussed parliamentarians' specific roles in furthering progress to achieve the SDGs more broadly through their representative, legislative, and oversight functions.

The forum concluded with the launch of a new online portal by the Ministry of Social Development that seeks to raise citizen awareness on the SDGs and allow for monitoring of government action and progress to achieve this agenda. The website can be accessed at this link: <http://www.niasdu.com>.

-30-

**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).