



## PRESS RELEASE

*For immediate publication*

Ottawa, March 9, 2023

### **Women parliamentarians of Jamaica plan for the mobilization of the newly established Bicameral Caucus of Women Parliamentarians**

On March 4-5, 2023, women parliamentarians from both chambers and Parties, with technical support from ParlAmericas, UN Women Multi-Country Office - Caribbean, the Bureau of Gender Affairs in the Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, and the Houses of Parliament, gathered for a second training retreat to support the implementation of the Bicameral Caucus of Women Parliamentarians in Jamaica.

On February 1, 2023, the Jamaican Houses of Parliament officially created the Bicameral Caucus of Women Parliamentarians following approval by the Senate of an amendment of the Standing Orders of the Senate to establish the group as a Sessional Select Committee in that chamber. The House of Representatives passed a similar motion on December 14, 2022, and the two committees will sit jointly.

The hosting of the follow-up meeting, which focused on the mobilization of the caucus, was a commitment made during the first training retreat, held on December 3-4, 2022, and built on the prior dialogues through a focus on multi-partisan collaboration to undertake transformative action in support of gender equality goals and the practical next steps needed to enable the caucus to begin to meet.

The meeting opened with welcoming remarks by Ms. Alisha Todd, Director General of ParlAmericas, Ms. Tonni Brodber, Representative of the UN Women Multi-Country Office for the Caribbean, Dr. Angela Brown Burke, Member of Parliament and Chairman of the People's National Party, and The Honourable Olivia Grange, OJ, CD, MP, OJ, Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment, and Sport and Deputy Leader of the House, whose intervention was delivered by Senator Natalie Campbell-Rodriques.

The virtual feature address was delivered by Congresswoman Brenda Lawrence (D) and Congresswoman Connie Morella (R), former members of the U.S. House of Representatives and former chairs of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues in the United States. The presentation, and the dialogue that followed, which was facilitated by gender and development specialist Dr. Rosina Wiltshire, explored the benefits of women's parliamentary caucuses and strategies to work within and across party lines. Dialogue also focused on legislative actions to promote gender equality through the caucus, supported by a presentation by Ms. Tonni Brodber on new research by UN Women Caribbean on the [economic cost of violence against women and girls in Jamaica](#). Remarks were also offered during the retreat by Mrs. Sharon Coburn Robinson, Principal Director of the Bureau of Gender Affairs, Minister Fayval Williams, and Senator Donna Scott-Mottley.

The meeting concluded with the decision makers in attendance agreeing on the next steps for the Bicameral Caucus of Women Parliamentarians in Jamaica, facilitated by ParlAmericas representatives.

For more information about the work of the organizing partners, see our respective websites and social media: ParlAmericas ([website](#) and [Twitter](#)) and UN Women - Caribbean ([website](#) and [Twitter](#)); and the Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment, and Sport ([website](#) and [Twitter](#)).

--	--	--

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).