



ParlAmericas and the Federal Senate of Brazil organized a meeting on open parliament and gender equality for parliamentary staff in Latin America

BRASILIA (BRAZIL), August 11, 2023 - Participants from 14 countries attended a joint meeting of the ParlAmericas Parliamentary Staff Network on Open Parliament (OPN-Parliamentary Staff) and the ParlAmericas Parliamentary Staff Network for Gender Equality (PNGE-Parliamentary Staff), "[Open and Inclusive Parliaments: Experiences and Strategies in Latin America](#)." The event, which was co-organized by ParlAmericas and the Federal Senate of Brazil, concluded today following two days of sessions in Brasilia.

Welcoming remarks were delivered by **Ilana Trombka** (Brazil), Director General of the Federal Senate; **Luis Rojas** (Chile), Secretary General of the Constitutional Process and General Coordinator of the OPN-Parliamentary Staff; and **Kathy Ramos** (Panama), Director of the Gender Equality Unit of the National Assembly and Regional Coordinator for Central America of the PNGE-Parliamentary Staff. In her opening remarks, Honourable Representative **Catherine Juvinao** (Colombia), Vice-President for South America of the ParlAmericas Open Parliament Network, highlighted the role of legislative openness and inclusiveness within parliaments as means of strengthening democracy in the region.

Held as part of the commemoration of the 17th anniversary of the *Maria da Penha* law, the first day of the meeting included a keynote address by Dr. **Livia Maria Sant'Anna Vaz**, Attorney General of the Public Prosecutor's Office of the State of Bahia, Brazil, on the importance of regulatory frameworks in preventing and criminalizing gender-based violence. Parliamentary staff also held dialogues on good practices to connect open parliament and gender equality work, sharing initiatives on citizen participation, care policies, and strategies to address gender-based violence, among other topics. Afterwards, **Stella Maria Vaz Santos Valadares** (Brazil), General Coordinator of the Standing Committee for the Promotion of Gender and Racial Equality of the Federal Senate, shared insights on the Senate's experience in this area. To conclude the day, **Tarcila Rivera Zea**, Founder and President of CHIRAPAQ, the Centre for Indigenous Cultures of Peru, and Founder of the Continental Network of Indigenous Women of the Americas (ECMIA, by its Spanish acronym), reflected on the challenges to political participation faced by Indigenous women. This was followed by a short film screening on the subject.

On the second day, parliamentary staff joined representatives from civil society organizations in a co-creation session outlining actions and strategies for open parliament with a gender perspective. Moderated by **Rocío Noriega** (Chile), Advisor to the Bicameral Group on Transparency of the National Congress, the results of this session will be integral to a forthcoming ParlAmericas tool aimed at providing technical support to parliaments across Latin America to promote more inclusive legislative openness mechanisms.

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About ParlAmericas

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.