



ParlAmericas and the Ministry of Women of the Republic of Panama Organized an Event on Women's Political Participation and Leadership

PANAMA CITY (PANAMA), August 16, 2023 — On this day, the event [Towards equality: More women shaping politics](#), organized by ParlAmericas and the Ministry of Women of the Republic of Panama, was held in Panama City. The event, which was aimed at strengthening women's participation and leadership in politics, featured opening remarks by H.E. **Juana Herrera Araúz**, Minister of Women and president of the Inter-American Commission of Women; H.E. **Kim Ursu**, Canadian ambassador to Panama; and the Honourable Member of the National Assembly **Kayra Harding-Bart** (Panama), president of the Commission on Women, Children, Youth and Family of the National Assembly and Vice-President for Central America of the ParlAmericas [Parliamentary Network for Gender Equality](#).

The agenda provided multiple perspectives and strategies for the strengthening of inclusive, egalitarian, and transparent electoral and decision-making processes. The discussion moderated by **Lohanniz Gaitán Montenegro**, president of the National Forum of Youth Political Parties, brought together former Honourable Member of the National Assembly **Mariela Vega**, president of the Association of Women Parliamentarians and Former Parliamentarians of the Republic of Panama (APARLESPA) and Professor **Dalila Mosquera**, president of the National Forum of Women in Political Parties (FONAMUPP), who shared tools to promote women's political leadership based on their own experiences and backgrounds.

Additionally, in the panel moderated by substitute judge **Yara I. Campo**, institutional executive director of the Electoral Court, representatives of women's fronts and secretariats of political parties exchanged information on their experiences, lessons learned, and good practices for promoting women's participation and leadership in political parties. The following participated as panellists: **Arelys González**, president of the Women's Front of the Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD); **Katherine Guerra**, secretary of Minutes and Correspondence of the Women's Board of the Panameñista Party; **Berta García de Guerrero**, vice-president of the Women's Secretariat of the People's Party (PP); the Honourable Member of the National Assembly **Ana Giselle Rosas**, national secretary of Women of the Democratic Change Party; **Judy Meana**, vice-president of the MOLIRENA Party; **Amarilis Khadine Smith Saldaña**, head of the Women's Secretariat of the Another Way Movement (MOCA), **Niurka Palacios**, president of the Women's Secretariat of the Realizing Goals Party (RM); **Rudelda Guzmán**, president of the National Women's Secretariat of the Independent Social Alternative Party (PAIS); **Mariela González**, national secretary of Women of the Alliance Party (PA); and **Beisy Broce**, an independent member in the VAMOS Coalition.

At the end of the meeting, a [declaration](#) was read, establishing the women leaders' commitment to continue their work to address the challenges and opportunities for political participation, strengthen spaces for the exchange of information, and join forces to actively promote gender equality at all levels

of politics, including equal representation in electoral processes, access to leadership positions, and decision-making in political roles.

Quotes

Her Excellency Juana Herrera Araúz, Minister of Women and President of the Inter-American Commission of Women

“We are here today, defending women’s political participation as a democratic right and a necessary condition for good governance. The inclusion of women in public policy discussions has renewed debates, providing transformative perspectives with a commitment to equality.”

Her Excellency Kim Ursu, Canadian ambassador to Panama

“There are persistent barriers to equitable political participation. This is why it is necessary to continue to address the gender gap from all angles, including electoral processes, and prioritize the elimination of discrimination and political violence.”

The Honourable Member of the National Assembly Kayra Harding-Bart (Panama), president of the Commission on Women, Children, Youth and Family of the National Assembly and Vice-President for Central America of the ParlAmericas Parliamentary Network for Gender Equality.

“My message to women is always: participate in politics. And for those of us who are already involved in politics, let’s not stop working until we get more women to participate... We ought to have the courage to take that step, because we are prepared and qualified to do it.”

Substitute Judge Yara I. Campo, institutional executive director of the Electoral Court

“Women in political parties manage to reach, if not half, a percentage close to half of total registrants, and in some political groups, more than half. Women are ready to be members of voting tables and political party representatives.”

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