

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

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Young Women of Antigua and Barbuda Take Their Seats in Parliament

On November 23, 2020, young women from across Antigua and Barbuda took part in a historic, all-women simulated parliamentary debates of the House of Representatives and the Senate within the Parliament of Antigua and Barbuda. These Sittings marked the culmination of the Young Women in Leadership – Antigua and Barbuda (YWiLAB) programme organized by [ParlAmericas](#), [Caribbean Women in Leadership \(CIWiL\)](#), and the Parliament of Antigua and Barbuda, in which more than 40 young women leaders between the ages of 18-25 from across the country participated.

The YWiL programme seeks to support young women in preparing for future leadership by providing training and education on political leadership, encouraging consideration of leadership and service from a transformational perspective, and creating a space to foster supportive communities of women and other allies. In line with these goals, the YWiLAB programme consisted of virtual and in-person training sessions that ran throughout October and November and focused on the programme's core components: transformational leadership, gender equality and inclusive decision-making, parliamentary procedure, and strategies for effective leadership. The sessions were led by distinguished facilitators, including parliamentarians, civil society leaders, practitioners from various fields, and other leaders from Antigua and Barbuda and across the region.

During the YWiLAB Parliamentary Sittings, participants in the programme had the opportunity to apply their learning while serving as a parliamentarian or officer of parliament in a debate on a budget amendment bill developed through a gender-responsive budgeting process. The Bill considered by both chambers proposed funding reallocations among various ministries in line with identified gender equality priorities, which participants reviewed and shared responses on, drawing on their expertise and research and in line with their assigned role. Following the programme's conclusion, participants are also encouraged to share the learning and skills gained within their communities.

This initiative was one in a series of such activities that will be organised in countries across the region, forming a core component of the ParlAmericas-CIWiL joint project to advance women's political participation in the Caribbean, supported by the Government of Canada through Global Affairs Canada. The first YWiL was held in Trinidad and Tobago in March 2020 in partnership with the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago.

Find more information on the initiative on social media using #YWiLAB, or by visiting the [YWiL webpage](#) on the CIWiL website.