PRESS RELEASE
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Official release of the Legislative Transparency Toolkit, a joint initiative by the Network for Transparency and Access to Public Information, EUROsociAL+ and ParlAmericas

On Thursday, October 1, 2020, the virtual meeting "Transparency is not in Quarantine: Launch of the Legislative Transparency Toolkit", a joint initiative by the Network for Transparency and Access to Public Information (RTA), the European Union program, EUROsociAL+, and ParlAmericas, took place with the aim of continuing to foster the design and implementation of good practices in transparency within national parliaments of the Americas and the Caribbean. After a year of meetings held to produce this publication, five tools were presented in detail, namely: active transparency, requests for access to public information, open data, communication and accessibility, and document management, incorporating a gender perspective and the Sustainable Development Goals in a comprehensive manner. These tools include key concepts and considerations for their implementation, as well as indicators and over 100 pertinent good practices selected from Europe, the Americas and the Caribbean. The meeting involved the participation of more than 80 people representing transparency enforcement bodies, parliaments, international and civil society organizations, specialists and journalists from across the region.

In her welcome remarks, Senator Blanca Ovelar (Paraguay), President of the ParlAmericas Open Parliament Network, noted, "In being transparent and facilitating access to public information, we strive to strengthen public integrity, policy quality and, above all, take a vital step toward empowering the citizenry and bringing policies much closer to the needs of the citizens that demand our attention." Dr. Gabriel Delpiazzo, Executive Council Chairman of Uruguay's Unit for Access to Public Information (UAIP), the institution that presides over the RTA, highlighted the importance of the Toolkit, noting that its "capacity to influence and bring about change, and the potential unleashed by its implementation (…) under more transparent parliaments, can achieve greater citizen engagement and representation, leading to a more democratic society." Lastly, Ms. Anna Herrero, representative of the European Commission's Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development, stated, "We are convinced that the tools compiled in this document will be useful to legislators and officials of the Americas and the Caribbean and the European Union in their aims to press onward with modernization processes and implement the open parliament agenda, even in scenarios as complex as those brought about by the COVID pandemic."

After these speeches, there was a presentation on the steps to be worked on, the organizations involved and the important aspects of the Legislative Transparency Toolkit by Ms. María José Méndez, consultant for EUROsociAL+, who also moderated the panel that followed this presentation, with the participation of Ms. Blanca Lilia Ibarra, Commissioner of the National Institute for Transparency, Access to Information and Protection of Personal Data (INAI) of Mexico, Member of the Chamber of Deputies Javier Macaya (Chile), Vice-President of the ParlAmericas Open Parliament Network, and Mr. Marcelo Espinel, Project

Director of Fundación Ciudadanía y Desarrollo, a coordinating organization of the Latin American Network for Legislative Transparency. Following this session, parliamentary officials of Latin America and Spain presented the good practices included in the publication. Mr. [Miguel Ángel Gonzalo](#), Chief of the Project Coordination and Planning Unit pertaining to the Cabinet of the Secretary-General of the Congress of Deputies of Spain, presented good practices from Spain and the United Kingdom in the areas of active transparency, communication and accessibility. Representing Latin America, Ms. [María Liz Sosa](#), Director General of Legislative Strengthening and External Cooperation of the Senate of Paraguay, and Mr. [Manuel Cotado](#), Director of the Program for Parliamentary Modernization, Innovation, Transparency and Democratic Strengthening of the Chamber of Deputies of Argentina, presented the [Congreso2030py](#) platform and the [Open Data Portal](#), respectively, exemplifying good practices in the application of Sustainable Development Goals and open data development. This session was moderated by Mr. Juan Carlos Chavarría, Director of the Citizen Participation Department of the Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica, and included commentary and questions by meeting participants.

To conclude the meeting, final thoughts were offered by Mr. Adrián Alcalá, Secretary of Access to Public Information of the INAI, Jeremy Bentley, Coordinator of Public Access to Documents under the Transparency Unit of the European Parliament, and Senator Antares Vázquez (Mexico), ParlAmericas Board Member, who thanked the panelists and participants for contributions shared during this meeting.

To access the [Legislative Transparency Toolkit](#) and learn more about the Network for Transparency and Access to Public Information ([website](#) and [Twitter](#)), EUROsociAL+ ([website](#) and [Twitter](#)) and ParlAmericas ([website](#) and [Twitter](#)), visit the linked websites and social media channels.