



2ND GATHERING OF THE PARLIAMENTARY NETWORK ON CLIMATE CHANGE

#STOPCC17

This gathering was jointly organized by [ParlAmericas](#) and [Parlatino](#) ([link available in Spanish](#)) under the umbrella of the Parliamentary Network on Climate Change (PNCC). It considered different socio-economic dimensions of renewable energy development and its links to adaptation and mitigation commitments proposed by countries across the Americas and the Caribbean in the [Intended Nationally Determined Contributions](#) (INDCs) under the [Paris Agreement](#).

The gathering was opened by Member of the National Assembly **Elías Castillo** (Panama), President of Parlatino; Senator **Marcela Guerra** (Mexico), President of ParlAmericas; Member of the National Assembly **Javier Ortega** (Panama), President of the Parliamentary Network on Climate Change – ParlAmericas; Member of the National Assembly **Rolando González** (Cuba), Secretary of Permanent Commissions of Parlatino; and specialist Dr. **Gisela Alonso**, former member of the [United Nations High Level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda](#).

DATE

August 3-4 2017

LOCATION

Panama City, Panama

PARTICIPANTS

46 parliamentarians from 23 countries and territories, 7 international organization specialists, and representatives of 2 networks of non-governmental organizations



President of
ParlAmericas
**MARCELA
GUERRA**

“The Nationally Determined Contributions submitted by the countries in the context of the Paris Agreement depend to a great extent on energy transformation as a key factor for their fulfilment. It is our duty as parliamentarians to ensure that legislation and budgets in our countries guarantee a just and wide-reaching transition to a zero emissions economy, diversifying the benefits generated by renewable energy.”

“The United States’ announcement of their withdrawal from the Paris Agreement is troubling and reminds us that grave environmental problems are not exclusive to matters related to science or availability of resources, but to the political will of the governments and the role that decision makers have at all levels.”



President of
Parlatino
ELÍAS CASTILLO



Member of the National Assembly
JAVIER ORTEGA
(Panama),
President of the Parliamentary Network on Climate Change – ParlAmericas

“It is necessary to speed up the pace of work and encourage all actors at the public and private levels to act in a coordinated manner through inclusive processes to allow us to solve the problems generated by unsustainable economic growth, which cannot be uncoupled from climate change.”

“Science has convincingly shown the transversal influence of environmental processes on the economy and society, which must now be incorporated into new legislation, regulations, and environmental tools.”



Dr. **GISELA ALONSO**,
former member of the United Nations High Level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda

“In the face of climate change impacts, we are not only facing a scientific task or financial resources; we are facing a challenge that requires above all political will.”



Member of the National Assembly
ROLANDO GONZÁLEZ
(Cuba)

CLIMATE CHANGE

A Comparative Overview of Legislative and Executive Responses in the Americas



CLIMATE CHANGE

A Comparative Overview of the Rights Based Approach in the Americas



On the occasion of this gathering, ParlAmericas and the **Organization of American States (OAS)** launched two complementary publications on climate change: [A Comparative Overview of Legislative and Executive Responses in the Americas](#), and [A comparative Overview of the Rights Based Approach in the Americas](#).

These publications are intended to brief parliamentarians on developments in the Inter-American agenda that relate to climate change, and its linkages with environmental and human rights law; and to provide a comparative analysis of trends in the development of legislation and executive policies to address climate change at the national level. **Claudia de Windt** of the Department of Sustainable Development of the OAS presented the publications via video conference.

ParlAmericas developed briefing cards containing summaries of the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) of 34 countries across the hemisphere that are signatories to the Paris Agreement. This resource provides parliamentarians with a basis for quick reference and comparison of mitigation and adaptation commitments in the region to identify areas for legislative action.

Legislative Ecology of Climate Change: A Systems Perspective for Parliamentary Action

The first session of the gathering, moderated by Member of the National Assembly **Ana Belén Marín** (Ecuador), explored the relationship between sectorial national legislation and climate change adaptation and mitigation commitments to identify existing gaps and synergies. Through their presentations, the expert panelists proposed ways to incorporate mitigation and adaptation measures in legislation to advance national commitments and encourage parliamentarians to consider climate change as a new requirement in legislative activities.

Elliot Sucari, Associate in the [Department of Sustainable Development at the Organization of American States](#) (OAS) presented on government responses and approaches to climate change, and the roles and responsibilities of legislations, asking parliamentarians to reflect on how

they can contribute to prioritizing and harmonizing international environmental agreements and sustainable development targets under the 2030 Agenda at the national level.

During his presentation, **Orlando Reyes**, Researcher in the Climate Change Unit of the [Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean](#) (ECLAC) highlighted the links between public policies and climate change pointing to the needs to undertake transformative changes in legislation to implement the commitments of the climate agenda.

Environmental Attorney **Derrick Oderson**, an environmental expert representing the [Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre](#), in turn, discussed the implications of the Paris Agreement and renewable energy integration for national legal systems.

Derrick Oderson raised several key questions for legislators during his intervention:

“What is the status and strength of existing legal frameworks?, and in the absence of legal force at the domestic level, can the preparation, submission and implementation of nationally determined contributions be treated as a policy intervention as opposed to a strictly legal obligation? And finally, what happens if there is inaction by state parties which fail to implement agreed targets at all? How can commitments be enforced? And by whom?”



DERRICK ODERSON,
Environmental Expert,
Caribbean Community Climate
Change Centre



ORLANDO REYES,
Researcher,
Climate Change
Unit, ECLAC

“The Nationally Determined Contributions describe the national efforts towards low emissions and climate resilient development, but preliminary analysis suggests that these will not be sufficient to achieve the goal of maintaining climate change below 2 degrees with current consumption and production patterns. We therefore need measures that modify these patterns to ensure that climate change policies are implemented.”

“Our challenge is to transform global conversations into regional and local actions; it is of the utmost importance to include civil society participation in decision-making on sustainable development to ensure the safeguarding of rights.”



ELLIOT SUCARI,
Associate,
Department of
Sustainable
Development, OAS

Interrogating New Renewable Energy Projects

The second session explored socio-economic dimensions of renewable energy projects, including consideration of gender-specific and Indigenous perspectives. The session was moderated by Member of the Chamber of Deputies **Teresa Lizárraga** (Mexico) and featured expert presentations on various types of indicators that can be used to assess the benefits of renewable energy integration and on how these indicators can be used by parliamentarians in legislative work related to climate change and renewable energy.

Byron Chilibingua, Manager in the [Latin American Energy Organization](#) (OLADE, link in Spanish), presented case studies of rural electrification projects to demonstrate the economic and social benefits of deploying renewable energy



BYRON CHILIBINGUA,
Manager,
OLADE

“Self-management with proper capacity allows communities to grow in a sustainable manner. In these processes, legislative functions are fundamental to facilitating capacity-building with the support of the private sector.”

technologies in remote rural areas of Guatemala for crop and wood transformation activities in small communities.

Neeraj Negi, Senior Evaluation Specialist of the [Independent Evaluation Office of the Global Environmental Fund](#) (GEF), presented program and project level indicators to inform monitoring functions of legislations, for example measuring installed solar capacity, electricity generated and number of people benefiting from the deployment of renewable energy technologies.

Itza Castañeda, Specialist at the [Global Gender Office of the International Union for Conservation of Nature](#) (IUCN) emphasized ways to integrate the gender considerations in energy legislation.



ITZA CASTAÑEDA,
Specialist,
Global Gender
Office, IUCN

“It is important to recognize and transform the existing legal, technical and institutional barriers. It is not about adding or aggregating gender; it is a process of integration.”

INTEGRATING GENDER CONSIDERATIONS IN RENEWABLE ENERGY POLICY

- ⇒ Build understanding around the existing legal, technical and institutional barriers to mainstreaming gender. Design interventions that target these barriers.
- ⇒ Promote the collection of adequate intersectional data to measure energy poverty in households.
- ⇒ Ensure that the data about energy use and access is disaggregated by sex in addition to other relevant social factors such as age, ethnicity, rural/urban, etc.



NEERAJ NEGI,
Senior Evaluation
Specialist,
Independent
Evaluation Office,
GEF

“Parliamentarians can utilize indicators as useful tools for the oversight and supervision of renewable energy projects to take corrective measures, find value for money, and understand the effects of new projects on vulnerable populations.”

“I will explore the possibility of implementing legislation that gives priority to renewable energies to strengthen small island states’ contributions to environmental protection through the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.”



Member of the
Chamber of Deputies
PRICE CYPRIEN (Haiti)

Renewable Energy and the Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Nexus

The third session, moderated by Senator **Harcourt Husbands** (Barbados), focused on actions that can simultaneously reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and address the impacts of climate change. Particular attention was devoted to overlaps and synergies between different adaptation and mitigation measures.

Marianela Curi, Executive Director of [Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano](#), presented concrete examples of the challenges and benefits of acting in an integrated manner, and the

importance of engaging non-governmental organizations in parliamentary dialogues to advance climate compatible sustainable development.

Gustavo Mañez, Regional Coordinator for Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation at the [United Nations Environment Programme](#) (UNEP) presented the challenges for moving towards electric transportation and the potential contributions of this technology to climate change mitigation efforts in the region.

“This type of event is about best practices and understanding the struggles across the region. We really will not get the type of action that we need and deserve without going forth as a group... this type of forum moves the agenda forward.”



Senator
MATTHEW SAMUDA
(Jamaica)



MARIANELA CURI,
Executive Director, [Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano](#)

“Adaptation and mitigation are addressed separately and have not seen the adoption of an integrated approach. They are in fact two sides of the same coin, but there are different priorities for planning and implementation; specific options operate at different scales and institutional levels, in addition to country priorities providing more support for mitigation.”



GUSTAVO MAÑEZ, Regional Coordinator for Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation, UNEP

BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES FOR INTEGRATING MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION MEASURES INTO CLIMATE CHANGE ACTIONS

Benefits

- ⇒ Long term cost effectiveness
- ⇒ Avoid negative externalities
- ⇒ Achieve sustainable development goals
- ⇒ Transparency and participation of different sectors

Challenges

- ⇒ Transition from a sectorial perspective to a system one
- ⇒ International negotiations remain separated by topic
- ⇒ Additional costs of activities. e.g. in the case of renewable energy, high costs for patents
- ⇒ Monitoring, reporting and verification of synergies and benefits
- ⇒ Linking multisectorial/multilevel dialogue on both topics
- ⇒ Experts focused on just one issue

Moving Forward: Key Outcomes of the 2nd Gathering of the Parliamentary Network on Climate Change

During the 2nd gathering of the PNCC, the four Vice-Presidents of the ParlAmericas PNCC executive committee were elected for two-year terms: Member of Parliament **Dan Ruimy** (Canada) for the sub-region of North America; Member of Congress **Sofía Hernández** (Guatemala) for the sub-region of Central America; Speaker of the National Assembly **Jennifer Simons** (Suriname) and Member of the National Assembly **Ana Belén Marín** (Ecuador) (Alternate Vice-President) for the sub-region of South America; and President of the Senate **Andy Daniel** (Saint Lucia) for the sub-region of the Caribbean.

The parliamentarians from the 23 countries and territories of the Americas and the Caribbean reaffirmed their commitment to strengthen the legislative agenda through a [joint public declaration](#) that aims to contribute to the achievement of the climate change adaptation and mitigation objectives adopted at the Paris [Conference of the Parties \(COP21\)](#) to the [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change \(UNFCCC\)](#) in December 2015.

The declaration outlined several strategic lines of action to advance the climate change agenda from a legislative perspective. First, by responding to the call made by governments at the COP22 in Marrakech to consider the fight against climate change as an urgent issue that requires the highest political commitment and undertaking

concrete legislative actions that advance governments efforts and other social actors to achieve the adaptation and mitigation commitments set out in the Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs).

Parliamentarians also committed to strengthen cooperation between the diverse social and political actors to achieve the goals of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) and the international climate change agreements adopted at the Conference of the Parties, as well as the [Kyoto Protocol](#) on greenhouse gas emissions and the [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction](#). Commitments were also made to promote increases in public budgets to fund scientific and technological research, as well as enhance local capacity.

It was agreed in the declaration that climate change legislation should be gender-sensitive and include considerations of traditionally marginalized groups, such as Indigenous communities and those living in poverty. Guaranteeing transparency and access to climate information and scientific knowledge related to climate change, particularly to encourage decision-makers to use scientific evidence to develop legislative strategies for informed and coherent decision-making was also included.



Speaker of the National Assembly
JENNIFER SIMONS
(Suriname)

“Given the real and immediate danger of climate change for the peoples and economies of the region, the initiative of ParlAmericas to address this issue in a structural and permanent way through the Network on Climate Change, will prove to be of great importance for the hemisphere.”

“It is important that we understand that climate change has severe impacts on smaller countries or smaller islands, which we might not always see. In developing countries, climate change is a more immediate threat that has greater impact on everyday life. This helped me to see what the rest of the world is experiencing with climate change and I can talk more accurately to my constituents about its impacts.”



Member of Parliament
DAN RUIMY
(Canada)

The final declaration from the gathering can be consulted at http://www.parlamericas.org/uploads/documents/Declaration_PNCC_2017_ENG.pdf



Member of the National Assembly
ANA BELÉN MARÍN (Ecuador)

“We have to focus on consumption patterns that are currently unsustainable. We see the climate variations and have many objectives to achieve. Each adaptation and mitigation activity, action and policy must adjust to the reality of each country, territory, or region, and we must work in accordance with these differences.”

“Technical indicators are very relevant for us as parliamentarians. We assign budgets, and knowing how to measure progress is important for monitoring efficiency in public spending.”



Member of the Chamber of Deputies
TERESA LIZÁRRAGA (Mexico)

For any information related to the work of the PNCC, contact the ParlAmericas Climate Change Program: parlamericasc@parlamericas.org

PARLIAMENTS IN ATTENDANCE



PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS



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PARLAMERICAS



ParlAmericas is the institution that promotes **PARLIAMENTARY DIPLOMACY** in the **INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM**



ParlAmericas fosters **OPEN PARLIAMENTS** by advancing the principles of transparency, accountability, citizen participation, ethics and probity



ParlAmericas is composed of the **NATIONAL LEGISLATURES** of the member States of the OAS from North, Central and South America and the Caribbean



ParlAmericas promotes policies and legislative measures to mitigate and adapt to the effects of **CLIMATE CHANGE**



ParlAmericas facilitates the exchange of parliamentary **BEST PRACTICES** and promotes **COOPERATIVE POLITICAL DIALOGUE**



ParlAmericas works towards strengthening democracy and governance by accompanying **ELECTORAL PROCESSES**



ParlAmericas mainstreams **GENDER EQUALITY** by advocating for women's political empowerment and the application of a gender lens in legislative work



ParlAmericas is headquartered in **OTTAWA, CANADA**

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