DEMOCRACY, RIGHTS, AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE AMERICAS AND THE CARIBBEAN

Parliamentary Perspectives for a Renewed Inter-American Agenda

Report of the ParlAmericas Parliamentary Delegation to the Organization of American States

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Message from the President of ParlAmericas



It is an honour to present the report of the 2026 ParlAmericas Annual Parliamentary Delegation to the OAS, convened to address *Democracy, Rights, and Development in the Americas and the Caribbean: Parliamentary Perspectives for a Renewed Inter-American Agenda*.

In the year marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of ParlAmericas, this delegation, bringing together 30 parliamentarians from 21 countries, proved a timely occasion to reflect on the path travelled by parliamentary diplomacy within the inter-American system.

At ParlAmericas, we do not only advocate for legislative engagement in hemispheric affairs; we work to make it a reality. On one hand, by strengthening the parliamentary dimension of the region's multilateral architecture and consolidating our role as a recognised parliamentary interlocutor within the inter-American system; on the other, by ensuring that regional debates are informed by legislative perspectives, grounded in national political realities, and attentive to the concrete concerns of citizens.

We put forward a programme designed against a complex regional backdrop, marked by pressures on democracy, geopolitical uncertainty, economic volatility, security challenges, and questions about the capacity of inter-American multilateralism to respond to the needs and expectations of our societies. At moments of uncertainty, the legitimacy and effectiveness of hemispheric cooperation depend on its capacity to remain anchored in democratic representation, attentive to changing social realities, and open to the plurality of voices that shape public life across the Americas and the Caribbean.

We are convinced that collaboration with the institutions of the inter-American system strengthens the political role of legislative engagement within hemispheric cooperation. Parliaments are the most direct expression of citizens' democratic will within hemispheric governance. Their participation in regional dialogue is therefore not merely complementary, but essential to its democratic legitimacy. This is particularly significant when democracy, rights, and development are increasingly intertwined, and when effective responses to shared challenges require dialogue that cuts across institutions, sectors, and borders.

I express my deepest and most sincere appreciation to all members of the delegation, as well as to the parliaments, institutions, and partners that contributed to this programme. The fact that this delegation took place at this moment in history is not a minor detail: it is in itself a political statement, the affirmation that the will for dialogue and cooperation persists, and that parliaments are prepared to advance it.

Iván Flores García

Senator, Chile
Head of Delegation
President of ParlAmericas

Executive Summary

From March 17 to 19, 2026, ParlAmericas convened its Annual Parliamentary Delegation to the Organization of American States in Washington, D.C., bringing together 30 parliamentarians from 21 countries of the Americas and the Caribbean under the theme *Democracy, Rights, and Development in the Americas and the Caribbean: Parliamentary Perspectives for a Renewed Inter-American Agenda*. Held in the year marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of ParlAmericas and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Inter-American Democratic Charter, the delegation offered a timely opportunity to demonstrate the evolving role of parliamentary diplomacy within the inter-American system.

The 2026 delegation took place at a moment when the inter-American system is being called upon to demonstrate its relevance amid political distrust, insecurity, economic strain, and fragmented regional consensus. In that context, the programme highlighted the value of parliamentary diplomacy as a channel for keeping hemispheric cooperation connected to representative institutions, national political realities, and the public concerns that shape democratic life across the Americas and the Caribbean

The delegation's institutional engagements at the OAS reflected the growing maturity of this parliamentary channel. Exchanges with the Secretary General, the Assistant Secretary General, the Chair of the Permanent Council, representatives of Permanent Missions, and the Secretariat for Strengthening Democracy provided spaces for high-level reflection on democratic governance, civic participation, institutional trust, multilateral legitimacy, and regional cooperation. The high-level dialogue with Permanent Missions, held in the context of the anniversary of the Inter-American Democratic Charter, was a particularly significant expression of ParlAmericas' institutional positioning within the inter-American system.

Substantive sessions throughout the delegation highlighted the interconnected nature of the regional agenda. Discussions on democratic resilience, Haiti's roadmap for stability and peace, multidimensional security, the Women, Peace and Security agenda, mental health, labour policy, and economic development underscored that democracy, rights, security, social well-being, and development cannot be approached as separate policy domains. Across these exchanges, parliamentarians considered how inter-American commitments and technical cooperation can remain connected to legislative debate, institutional reform, public policy, and the concerns of the communities they represent.

The delegation also strengthened cooperation with specialized bodies of the inter-American system by creating spaces where parliamentarians could engage directly with regional expertise and policy agendas carrying clear legislative implications. In this context, the signing of a cooperation agreement between ParlAmericas and the Pan American Health Organization represented a concrete institutional advance, creating a stronger basis for future collaboration on shared health priorities, including mental health and its social determinants.

Engagement with members of the United States House of Representatives, organized in collaboration with the House Democracy Partnership, remained an important component of the delegation. In a political context in which recent domestic policy decisions in the United States are being felt across the region, the dialogue provided a constructive legislative space to address issues with direct hemispheric implications and reaffirmed the importance of preserving parliamentary channels across borders when confidence in regional cooperation is under strain.

Taken together, the 2026 delegation demonstrated the political relevance of parliamentary diplomacy in a changing hemisphere. It further consolidated ParlAmericas' contribution to legislative engagement within the inter-American system, strengthened dialogue across parliamentary, diplomatic, and technical spaces, and demonstrated the importance of regional cooperation that is democratically grounded, institutionally connected, and responsive to the complex realities facing the Americas and the Caribbean.

Objectives of the Delegation

- To affirm the role of parliaments as essential democratic actors in sustaining hemispheric cooperation at a moment when regional dialogue, confidence in multilateral institutions, and the responsiveness of collective action are being tested;
- To further consolidate legislative engagement with the inter-American system by cementing ParlAmericas' role as the mandated parliamentary interlocutor connecting legislative perspectives to regional dialogue on priority public policy, governance and multilateral issues across the Americas and the Caribbean.
- To ensure that discussions on inter-American priorities are informed by parliamentary perspectives, national political realities, citizen concerns, and legislative agendas that shape how regional commitments are understood and carried forward at the national level;
- To examine democracy, rights, development, security, social well-being, and economic opportunity as interconnected dimensions of hemispheric stability, inclusion, and democratic governance, requiring responses that cut across institutions, sectors, and borders;
- To preserve direct parliamentary channels with members of the United States Congress at a time when shifts in United States policy are carrying regional consequences for democratic governance, economic stability, security cooperation, migration, development, and confidence in hemispheric cooperation.

Parliamentary Dialogue with OAS Leadership and Permanent Missions

The delegation's institutional engagements at the Organization of American States were shaped by a shared concern: how democratic governance, regional cooperation, and multilateral legitimacy are being tested under ever more complex global and hemispheric conditions. Across meetings with senior OAS leadership, the Chair of the Permanent Council, and representatives of Permanent Missions, discussions converged around the pressures affecting democratic institutions and the importance of sustaining channels that keep regional political coordination anchored in democratic deliberation and informed by legislative perspectives.

In that setting, the delegation also illustrated how ParlAmericas has come to occupy a more established place within hemispheric political exchange: not only as a regular parliamentary presence, but as an increasingly recognized space for engaging with regional democratic challenges across diplomatic and legislative spheres.

Inter-Parliamentary Exchange with the Secretary General of the OAS

The exchange with His Excellency **Albert Ramdin**, Secretary General of the Organization of American States, brought several of the delegation's central themes into a broader hemispheric frame, linking democratic resilience, institutional trust, regional security, and cooperation to the wider pressures currently affecting the inter-American system. Framing the regional outlook against a global context marked by conflict, inflationary pressures, and supply-chain disruptions, Secretary General Ramdin argued that developments beyond the hemisphere are already producing direct institutional, economic, and social consequences across the Americas and the Caribbean,



reinforcing domestic pressures on governance and making regional cooperation increasingly necessary at a time when skepticism toward multilateralism has become more visible.

A related concern was the erosion of democratic confidence across the region. Alongside the OAS mandate to support representative democracy through electoral observation, technical cooperation, and institutional accompaniment, he pointed to declining trust in democratic processes and weakening public confidence, especially among younger generations, as one of the most consequential political trends facing the hemisphere. In that same context, transnational organized crime emerged not only as a security concern, but as a structural challenge to governance itself, as criminal networks become more and more sophisticated and exploit legal and institutional weaknesses faster than states are often able to respond.

Haiti occupied a central place in this diagnosis as a defining test for hemispheric cooperation. Secretary General Ramdin described the country's situation as one that brings together the four foundational pillars of the OAS agenda: democracy, human rights, security, and development. Rather than presenting Haiti only as a national crisis, his intervention framed it as a shared regional responsibility requiring security stabilization, humanitarian support, political dialogue, credible elections, and economic recovery, while remaining anchored in Haitian leadership and realistic expectations regarding implementation.

The dialogue that followed deepened this framing by bringing parliamentary perspectives to questions of implementation, political follow-through, and regional cooperation. Several interventions underscored the importance of moving beyond expressions of concern toward sustained accompaniment and practical follow-up. In that context, **Karina Banfi**, Member of the Chamber of Deputies of Argentina proposed the creation of a parliamentary friendship group within ParlAmericas to support continued inter-parliamentary engagement with Haiti's stabilization process.

More broadly, the exchange reinforced the Secretary General's call for a whole-of-Americas approach, in which parliaments, governments, civil society, the private sector, and specialized institutions each have a role to play in rebuilding trust, strengthening democratic governance, and sustaining cooperation across the hemisphere.

Inter-Parliamentary Exchange with the Assistant Secretary General of the OAS

In a conversation led by The Honourable **Alvina Bertram Reynolds**, President of the Senate of Saint Lucia and Vice-President of ParlAmericas, the dialogue with Her Excellency **Laura Gil**, Assistant Secretary General of the Organization of American States, centered on one of the most persistent tensions facing the inter-American



system: how democratic legitimacy can be sustained when multilateral institutions are increasingly perceived as distant from the societies they are meant to serve. Framing civil society participation as more than an administrative question, Assistant Secretary General Gil argued that current pressures on multilateralism also reflect a deeper leadership deficit and longstanding institutional shortcomings that have weakened trust in collective mechanisms of cooperation.

She emphasized the need to narrow the distance between multilateral institutions and social realities across member states through stronger listening practices, more coherent engagement with civil society, and forms of participation that extend beyond formal access. In this context, she noted that, as part of an October restructuring, member states moved the OAS civil society unit to the Office of the Assistant Secretary General, with the aim of overcoming siloed approaches and creating more meaningful channels for civil society to inform the work of the Organization.

The conversation also connected institutional openness to wider questions of representation and internal transformation. Particular attention was given to women's leadership and to the need for advances in visibility to be matched by real decision-making authority, alongside the importance of incorporating younger generations whose perspectives, in the Assistant Secretary General's view, are essential to reimagining multilateral cooperation under conditions of growing institutional strain. These reflections pointed to a broader challenge shared across hemispheric institutions: how to become more open, representative, and responsive while preserving the institutional capacity needed to act with coherence and purpose.

High-Level Dialogue with Representatives of Permanent Missions to the OAS - The Inter-American Democratic Charter at 25: Reaffirming a Hemispheric Commitment to Democracy and Human Rights

The high-level dialogue between the parliamentary delegation and representatives of Permanent Missions to the OAS reflected one of the clearest expressions of ParlAmericas institutional positioning within the inter-American system: the sustained incorporation of parliamentary perspectives into diplomatic conversations that shape hemispheric political cooperation. Held in the context of the 25th anniversary of the Inter-American Democratic Charter, and coinciding with the 25th anniversary of ParlAmericas, the exchange also reflected the shared origins of these milestones in a broader wave of institutional efforts to strengthen the democratic foundations of the inter-American system. It further highlighted how dialogue between hemispheric diplomacy and parliamentary institutions has become an established feature of inter-American engagement. What began as periodic

institutional contact has evolved into a structured channel through which parliamentary perspectives enter more directly into hemispheric political reflection, giving practical expression to a form of legislative participation now increasingly recognized within the broader architecture of inter-American dialogue.

Across the interventions, a common thread emerged: the continued relevance of hemispheric democratic commitments depends less on commemorative reaffirmation than on their capacity to retain practical political meaning under evolving circumstances. Several representatives pointed to pressures that have intensified and evolved since the time of the Charter's adoption — including disinformation, organized crime, climate vulnerability, prolonged institutional mistrust, and widening inequality — in a context increasingly shaped by rapid digital transformation and the emergence of artificial intelligence, which are amplifying the scale, speed, and impact of these challenges; and stressed that democratic resilience now requires institutions capable not only of protecting constitutional order, but of responding credibly to changing social expectations. The exchange also underscored that democracy and development remain closely intertwined, particularly where institutional legitimacy is to a greater extent judged by the capacity of public institutions to deliver inclusion, stability, and tangible public outcomes.

A recurring emphasis throughout the dialogue was the role of legislatures in sustaining that democratic continuity. Parliamentary institutions emerged as essential spaces where pluralism, accountability, and legal continuity converge, particularly when democratic systems face fragmentation or political fatigue. This discussion reinforced the value of ParlAmericas as a structured channel through which parliamentary perspectives can enter hemispheric dialogue more directly, not as an external complement to intergovernmental processes, but as part of the institutional fabric through which democratic commitments are interpreted, renewed, and increasingly connected to national legislative action.

Political Dialogue with the Chair of the Permanent Council

The exchange with His Excellency Ambassador **Luis Ernesto Vargas**, Permanent Representative of Colombia to the OAS and Chair of the Permanent Council, highlighted the continuing relevance of the Permanent Council as a space where differing national positions can be articulated within a shared political and institutional framework. At a moment marked by democratic uncertainty and geopolitical strain, the conversation demonstrated the importance of preserving multilateral settings where disagreement can be managed through dialogue, procedure, and sustained diplomatic engagement.

Ambassador Vargas situated that reflection within a broader international context shaped by instability and growing pressure on multilateral cooperation, noting that the erosion of habits of dialogue carries direct implications for democratic governance and regional coordination. Particular attention was also given to the long-term character of several challenges facing the region, including climate governance and development pressures, whose political management increasingly depends on continuity across electoral cycles and stronger alignment between multilateral commitments and domestic decision-making. In that context, parliamentary diplomacy emerged as an important channel through which hemispheric debates can remain connected to national democratic processes under conditions of growing policy volatility.

Supporting Democratic Governance across the Hemisphere

Across the hemisphere, democratic governance is increasingly being tested not only by electoral pressures or political polarization, but by the ability of institutions to remain credible, responsive, and operational under continued strain and in the face of rising citizen expectations. In that context, exchanges with the Secretariat for Strengthening Democracy and the briefing on the Haitian-led roadmap for stability and peace illustrated two closely related dimensions of democratic cooperation within the inter-American system: strengthening institutional resilience across member states, and sustaining coordinated political support where democratic fragility has become especially acute.

Taken together, both discussions highlighted that democratic cooperation in the hemisphere requires approaches that strengthen institutional capacity, sustain political attention beyond moments of crisis, and foster stronger alignment among the actors working to uphold democratic governance through regional cooperation.

Building Democratic Resilience: Interactive Working Session with the Secretariat for Strengthening Democracy

The exchange with the Secretariat for Strengthening Democracy offered parliamentarians a broad view of how democratic support is being advanced within the OAS at a time when confidence in public institutions is shaped not only by electoral credibility, but also by institutional responsiveness, access to rights, and the effectiveness of public administration. The discussion reflected a broader understanding of democratic resilience, one in which institutional legitimacy depends on the capacity of public institutions to respond credibly to changing social expectations under increasingly demanding political conditions.

Opening the session, **Sebastián Kraljevich**, Secretary for Strengthening Democracy, situated the Secretariat's work within a broader understanding of democratic legitimacy, emphasizing the relationship between electoral credibility, institutional functioning, and public performance. His presentation also reflected recent adjustments within the Secretariat itself, including the incorporation of public management and access-to-rights agendas into the democracy pillar, with the aim of enabling more integrated responses to democratic challenges that increasingly cut across institutional sectors.

That institutional perspective was further developed through contributions from senior officials across the Secretariat's principal operational areas: **María Teresa Mellenkamp**, Officer in Charge of the Department of Sustainable Democracy and Special Missions; **María Fernanda Trigo**, Director of the Department for Effective Public Management; **Cristóbal Fernández**, Chief of the Electoral Technical Cooperation Section; and **Claudia González-Bengoa**, Specialist at the Department of Social Inclusion. Their interventions illustrated how democratic cooperation is being articulated across electoral integrity, institutional reform, public-sector effectiveness, and access to rights. Together, the presentations underscored that democratic confidence depends not only on electoral guarantees, but also on whether public institutions can deliver credible responses in areas that directly shape citizens' everyday relationship with the state.

Following the plenary presentations, the session transitioned into a rotating small-group format designed to facilitate more direct and focused exchanges. This format allowed parliamentarians to engage directly with departmental leadership on current priorities, national experiences, and possible avenues for collaboration, while



also creating space for OAS representatives to hear directly how parliamentarians are approaching these issues in their national contexts and the priorities emerging from the communities they represent. It reinforced one of the session's central messages: democratic resilience is not built through isolated interventions, but through sustained institutional work across electoral systems, public administration, rights protection, and legislative practice. It also highlighted the value of maintaining practical channels between parliamentary institutions and the Secretariat areas most directly engaged in democratic accompaniment across the hemisphere.

Technical Briefing: Haitian-led Roadmap for Stability and Peace with Regional and International Support

The technical briefing on Haiti brought into focus one of the hemisphere's most demanding tests of continuous political coordination: how to support a national process of stabilization under Haitian leadership while responding to a crisis whose effects increasingly extend beyond national borders. Presented through the *Haitian-led Roadmap for Stability and Peace*, the session framed Haiti's present situation not only as a national emergency, but as a multidimensional challenge with direct implications for regional stability, migration dynamics, and transnational security.

Moderated by Haitian-Canadian Senator **Suze Youance**, the session opened with reflections by Dr. **Guy Metayer**, Minister-Counsellor at the Permanent Mission of Haiti to the OAS, who offered parliamentarians a political framing of Haiti's current situation and the broader significance of the roadmap. His intervention situated the immediate security emergency within longer structural dynamics, underscored the importance of sustained alignment behind Haitian-defined priorities, and highlighted the value of parliamentary involvement in maintaining political attention around forms of cooperation that move beyond short-term humanitarian response toward institutional and socio-economic recovery.

The roadmap was then presented by **Betilde Muñoz-Pogossian**, Director of the Department of Social Inclusion, as a practical instrument for aligning regional and international support around priorities identified by Haitian authorities across security, governance, elections, humanitarian response, and long-term development. Advanced under the leadership of Secretary General Ramdin, it was framed not as a parallel mechanism, but as a means of strengthening coordination among existing actors, including CARICOM and the United Nations, while sustaining political commitment to institution-building, development, and Haitian ownership over the country's path toward stability and peace.

Security and Peacebuilding in a Changing Hemispheric Context

Security challenges across the hemisphere are increasingly shaped by overlapping risks that cut across institutional, social, and transnational dimensions. Organized crime, illicit markets, armed violence, and emerging forms of insecurity place direct pressure not only on public safety, but also on democratic governance, institutional capacity, and social cohesion.

In this context, meetings on the hemisphere's evolving security landscape and the Women, Peace and Security agenda underscored that regional security can no longer be approached through isolated or exclusively sectoral responses. It requires forms of cooperation capable of linking institutional strengthening, prevention, rights-based approaches, and inclusive political participation.

Security and Institutional Cooperation: Insights from the Inter-American System

The session, moderated by The Honourable **Lanein Blanchette**, Speaker of the National Assembly of St. Kitts and Nevis, Vice-President for the Caribbean of the ParlAmericas Parliamentary Network on Security, examined how security threats across the hemisphere more and more emerge through overlapping criminal economies rather than isolated illicit activities. Contributions from **Michael Bejos**, Officer in Charge of the Department against Transnational Organized Crime; **Pier Angelli De Luca**, Chief of the Conventional Arms, Ammunition and Explosives Section of the Department of Public Security; and **Antonio Lomba**, Chief of the Institutional Strengthening Unit, Executive Secretariat of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), highlighted the ways in which drug trafficking, firearms diversion, trafficking in persons, financial crimes, cyber-enabled operations, and territorial control interact through shared routes, financial circuits, and adaptive organizational structures.

The presentations framed criminal convergence as an operational reality with direct implications for democratic governance and state capacity. Organized criminal groups are increasingly able to combine illicit markets, diversify revenue streams, exploit regulatory gaps, and penetrate territories and institutions in ways that outpace fragmented state responses. Rather than confronting separate criminal manifestations, states now face integrated systems whose capacity for adaptation and coordination places sustained pressure on public institutions.

Illicit firearms, ammunition, and explosives were identified as central enabling factors of criminal power in the region. Weaknesses in marking systems, ammunition traceability, regulation of parts and components, control of emerging technologies such as 3D printing, and destruction procedures for seized stockpiles continue to create opportunities for diversion from legal markets into illicit circulation. In this context, the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials (CIFTA) was presented not only as a legal instrument, but as a platform for legislative modernization and greater operational coherence across jurisdictions.

Drug-related violence added another institutional dimension to the conversation. Synthetic drugs, chemical precursors, prison overcrowding, alternative sentencing, and asset forfeiture were examined as areas where legislative design directly affects whether public policy can move beyond reactive enforcement toward more coherent and sustainable responses. Parliamentary action was therefore framed not as a secondary contribution, but as a necessary condition for sustaining effective security policy over time.

Interventions from parliamentarians reinforced that, despite differing national realities, many countries confront similar structural concerns: institutional fragility, porous borders, uneven investigative capacity, insufficient financial tools, and legal asymmetries that organized crime exploits across jurisdictions. Several delegates called for closer technical cooperation with the OAS to identify legislative gaps and support more consistent legal responses, particularly in relation to financial investigations, arms regulation, and institutional safeguards against corruption. The exchange also reaffirmed the relevance of sustaining parliamentary dialogue on security through the ParlAmericas Parliamentary Network on Security as a space for translating hemispheric diagnosis into legislative action.

Women, Peace and Security: Parliamentary Action for Inclusive and Sustainable Peace

Moderated by **Carolina Delgado Ramírez**, Member of the Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica, the session examined how the Women, Peace and Security agenda has evolved in the Americas and the Caribbean as both a normative framework and an increasingly relevant lens for addressing the region's changing forms of insecurity. **Hilary Anderson**, Senior Gender Specialist at the Inter-American Commission of Women, opened the discussion by noting that United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 built on earlier regional and international instruments, including the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women, and the Beijing Platform for Action, which had already established important foundations for linking women's rights, violence prevention, and democratic governance. She emphasized that implementation in the hemisphere requires ever more attention to forms of instability shaped by organized crime, armed violence, institutional fragility, migration pressures, climate impacts, and shrinking civic space.

H.E. Ambassador **Ana Irene Delgado**, Permanent Representative of Panama to the OAS, situated the agenda within current hemispheric debates on multilateral cooperation and democratic governance, stressing that sustainable peace depends on women's full participation in decision-making and that parliaments play a central role in translating international commitments into legislation, budgets, and public policy. **Diana María Parra**, Gender Advisor on Feminist Foreign Policy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Colombia, joining remotely from Bogotá, presented Colombia's first national action plan on Women, Peace and Security as an example of implementation grounded in broad consultation, involving more than 1,500 women across diverse territories and populations, with defined institutional responsibilities and a long-term policy horizon.

The open dialogue with parliamentarians brought the discussion to questions of implementation, political ownership, and institutional capacity. Participants reflected on how national action plans gain credibility when supported by consultation, accountability mechanisms, and dedicated resources, and noted that advancing this agenda increasingly requires coalition-building across institutions, including stronger engagement of men in political and security leadership spaces. Caribbean experiences linking Women, Peace and Security to organized crime, gang violence, migration, and climate vulnerability further illustrated the agenda's relevance across diverse regional contexts.

For delegates, the session reinforced that inclusive peace in the Americas and the Caribbean depends not only on increasing women's representation, but on embedding gender-responsive perspectives into how states understand insecurity, govern crises, and design democratic responses to the region's evolving forms of conflict and instability.



Social Cohesion, Well-Being, and Economic Opportunity

Social cohesion, well-being, and economic opportunity were examined through two areas that are increasingly moving beyond traditional sectoral boundaries: mental health, and economic development and labour. The discussions showed that mental health cannot be addressed only through health systems, just as labour and economic development cannot be approached only through growth, competitiveness, or employment indicators. Both agendas are shaped by deeper social conditions, including inequality, violence, displacement, discrimination, informality, and unequal access to rights and opportunity.

In this sense, the sessions pointed to a shared institutional challenge: how to design public policies that respond to the interconnected realities affecting people's well-being, livelihoods, autonomy, and participation in society. For parliamentarians, this underscored the importance of legislative frameworks that link social protection, productive development, access to rights, and institutional coordination, while helping ensure that inter-American cooperation contributes to more inclusive and cohesive societies across the Americas and the Caribbean.

Transforming Mental Health in the Americas through Inter-American Cooperation

Moderated by **Karina Banfi**, Member of the Chamber of Deputies of Argentina, the session reflected the extent to which mental health has moved from a primarily sectoral concern to a matter of growing political attention within the inter-American system. Taking place shortly after the adoption of a new OAS resolution on mental health and in the context of a cooperation agreement between the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and ParlAmericas, the dialogue was framed by a clear forward-looking institutional agenda.

Dr. **Renato Oliveira e Souza**, Chief of the Mental Health and Substance Use Unit at PAHO, and **Sara Mia Noguera**, Chief of the Equity Promotion Section of the OAS Department of Access to Rights, emphasized that mental health can no longer be addressed solely through clinical systems. Instead, it must be understood in relation to broader structural factors, including poverty, violence, discrimination, displacement, and unequal access to rights. Data presented during the session demonstrated the scale of the challenge, including persistent treatment gaps, rising suicide rates, and the wider economic and social costs of untreated mental distress.

The institutional implications were central to the conversation. Participants noted that many systems remain centered on under-resourced institutional models, while community-based care, prevention, and early

intervention remain uneven. This prompted a more extensive reflection on how legislation should protect dignity and autonomy, integrate mental health into primary care, and shift policy responses away from reactive approaches focused only on severe cases.

The newly established **Inter-American Working Group on Mental Health** was presented as a key mechanism for strengthening political coordination within the inter-American system. **Larisa Ferreira da Silva**, Second Secretary and Alternate Representative of Brazil to the OAS, and **Joy-Dee Davis-Lake**, Minister-Counsellor and Alternate Representative of Antigua and Barbuda to the OAS, speaking on behalf of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Working Group, respectively, highlighted its role in moving beyond political recognition of the issue toward the development of a hemispheric declaration, a regional plan of action, and more structured forms of cooperation capable of linking technical evidence with public policy decisions.

Exchanges with parliamentarians brought the issue into concrete legislative terrain, linking mental health to labour precarity, ageing, school violence, addiction, crime prevention, and the particular constraints faced by small states. Across these interventions, a consistent message emerged: mental health policy cannot be confined to stand-alone legislation, as many of its drivers originate in other policy domains, including education, labour, social protection, and justice. Parliamentary action was therefore framed not only as supportive, but as structurally necessary to ensure that growing political visibility translates into sustained institutional change.

Economic Development and Labour in the Americas and the Caribbean

Held in the context of the thirtieth anniversary of the **Inter-American Council for Integral Development** (CIDI), this session situated economic development and labour policy within a broader hemispheric discussion on competitiveness, social cohesion, and the institutional conditions required for inclusive growth. Moderated by **Joan Manuel Guevara**, Member of the National Assembly of Panama, the exchange brought together H.E. **Néstor Méndez**, Ambassador of Belize to the OAS and Vice-Chair of CIDI; Dr. **Barbara Kotschwar**, Officer in Charge of the OAS Executive Secretariat for Integral Development (SEDI); and **María Claudia Camacho**, Chief of the Labour and Employment Section of the OAS Department of Human Development, Education and Employment.

Speakers emphasized that current economic pressures cannot be separated from deeper structural transformations reshaping labour markets, including technological change, demographic shifts, informality, and uneven access to quality employment. These dynamics reinforced the importance of connecting technical and ministerial processes within the inter-American system with national legislative action capable of translating regional priorities into durable public policy.

SEDI and CIDI were presented as operational platforms that help link political dialogue to concrete cooperation. OAS initiatives to strengthen competitiveness, support micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises, promote digital inclusion, and expand access to skills development were identified as key areas of engagement, especially in light of accelerating digital transformation.

The labour dimension of the session brought particular attention to persistent challenges related to informality, job quality, and unequal access to opportunity, especially among younger populations. Participants noted that employment challenges are increasingly intertwined with education systems, migration dynamics, and wider questions of social mobility and democratic legitimacy.

Delegates also raised concerns about banking restrictions and the pressures that compliance with international

financial standards can place on citizens, entrepreneurs, and small economies across the region. The issue was presented as a practical example of how measures designed to address illicit financial flows and strengthen financial integrity can produce unintended consequences when they restrict access to banking services for ordinary citizens and small businesses seeking to participate in the formal economy, pointing to the need of parliamentary engagement in reviewing and adapting these prescriptions, so that they do not deepen exclusion or limit opportunities for inclusive economic development.

Parliamentarians consistently returned to the legislative dimension of development policy, emphasizing the need for frameworks that enable innovation while safeguarding trust, strengthen productive ecosystems, and ensure that economic modernization contributes to inclusion rather than fragmentation. The session reinforced a conclusion emerging throughout the delegation: economic governance, social cohesion, and democratic resilience are increasingly interdependent, and parliamentary collaboration remains essential to ensuring that hemispheric cooperation is reflected in national policy choices on employment, productivity, skills, and opportunity.

Legislative Dialogue on delivering shared prosperity in the Western Hemisphere - Engagement with Members of the United States House of Representative

Organized in collaboration with the House Democracy Partnership, the legislative dialogue at the U.S. Congress brought the delegation into direct contact with members of the United States House of Representatives on the political conditions shaping cooperation, democratic governance, security, and development across the hemisphere. The meeting is part of an established channel of engagement between ParlAmericas and the U.S. Congress, reflecting the value of maintaining direct legislative dialogue on matters with clear regional implications.

Senator **Iván Flores García** opened the session by underscoring the importance of parliamentary diplomacy and sustained communication among legislators from across the Americas and the Caribbean, particularly in a context of heightened political uncertainty. In conversation with Representative **Dina Titus** (Democrat-Nevada) and Representative **Delia Ramirez** (Democrat-Illinois), delegates addressed a range of issues affecting hemispheric cooperation, including trade and tariff uncertainty, development cooperation, migration, security collaboration, organized crime, and remittances and financial regulation.

The dialogue gave space to concerns about how recent domestic policy decisions in the United States are being felt across the region, while also emphasizing the importance of partnership, mutual respect, and institutional channels capable of sustaining communication in periods of political uncertainty. At a moment when policy uncertainty and decisions with cross-border effects are testing confidence in hemispheric cooperation, the session helped preserve a constructive legislative space for raising regional concerns and identifying areas where continued engagement remains necessary.



Strategic Outcomes and Institutional Advances

1. Consolidation of Legislative Engagement within the Inter-American System

The delegation further consolidated the implementation of the legislative engagement mandate established through successive Organization of American States General Assembly resolutions by sustaining direct political and technical dialogue with senior leadership of the Organization, Permanent Representatives, and specialized secretariats. The breadth and level of participation across the programme reflected the extent to which this annual delegation has evolved beyond a mandated exercise into an increasingly established mechanism for political parliamentary engagement within the inter-American system.

Held in the context of the 25th anniversary of ParlAmericas and the twenty-fifth year since the adoption of the Inter-American Democratic Charter, the delegation also underscored the institutional maturity of this channel of engagement and its growing relevance at a time when democratic pressures, geopolitical uncertainty, and competing policy priorities continue to test hemispheric cooperation.

2. Deepened Political Dialogue Across the OAS Institutional Architecture

The programme strengthened direct parliamentary engagement across multiple levels of the OAS institutional framework, including political dialogue with the Secretary General, the Assistant Secretary General, the Chair of the Permanent Council, and representatives of Permanent Missions. It also facilitated technical exchanges with senior officials from the Secretariat for Strengthening Democracy, ParlAmericas institutional focal point at the OAS; the Secretariat for Multidimensional Security; the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development; and specialized bodies such as the Inter-American Commission of Women. These exchanges provided parliamentarians with direct access to strategic reflections shaping current hemispheric discussions and reaffirmed the value of maintaining open channels between elected representatives and inter-American institutions.

Beyond the substantive agenda of each meeting, the dialogue confirmed growing recognition that parliamentary diplomacy can contribute to sustaining institutional continuity, broadening democratic deliberation, and preserving political dialogue across institutions at a moment when consensus in the region is increasingly difficult to sustain.

3. Expanded Thematic Cooperation and Inter-Institutional Collaboration

The delegation deepened substantive cooperation with specialized inter-American bodies across a broad

thematic agenda, including democratic resilience, multidimensional security, women, peace and security, public health, labour policy, and economic transformation. These conversations reinforced the role of ParlAmericas as a platform through which legislative actors engage with specialized regional expertise while also helping connect sectoral discussions to legislative priorities emerging across member parliaments.

In this context, the signing of a framework agreement between ParlAmericas and the Pan American Health Organization during the delegation represented a concrete institutional advance, creating a stronger basis for future cooperation on legislative engagement around shared health priorities in the Americas and the Caribbean.

4. Sustained Parliamentary Engagement with the United States Congress

The delegation further strengthened direct engagement with members of the United States House of Representatives through collaboration with the House Democracy Partnership, reinforcing what has become a regular parliamentary space for political exchange on regional priorities.

In a particularly complex hemispheric context, where recent domestic policy decisions in the United States are being felt directly across the region, this dialogue acquired distinct political significance. It helped preserve a constructive legislative space for addressing regional concerns, sustaining communication with U.S. counterparts, and maintaining parliamentary channels at a time when confidence in hemispheric cooperation is under strain.



Annexes

Annex I: Members of the Delegation



Senator Iván Flores García (Chile), President of ParlAmericas

Senator since 2022. He chairs the Senate Health Committee, after having headed the Public Safety and Agriculture Committees. Between 2019 and 2020 he presided over the Chamber of Deputies, where he served for two legislative terms (2014-2022).



The Honourable Alvina Bertram Reynolds (Saint Lucia), President of the Senate and Vice-President of ParlAmericas

Senator since 2021. She has held the position of President of the Senate since 2022. From 2011 to 2016, she served as Minister for Health, Wellness, Human Services, and Gender Relations, and Member of the House of Assembly during the same period.



Patricia Lattanzio (Canada), Member of Parliament and Second Vice-President of ParlAmericas

Member of Parliament since 2019. She is the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, and serves on the House of Commons Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights. She is currently the President of the ParlAmericas Corporation, and Chair of the Canadian Section of the organization.



The Honourable Osbert Frederick (Antigua and Barbuda), Speaker of the House of Representatives

Speaker of the House of Representatives of Antigua and Barbuda since September 2024. He previously served as a Senator in the Upper House, first appointed in 2007, then reappointed in 2014, when he was chosen as Vice President of the Senate, and reappointed again in 2018 and 2023. He currently serves on the ParlAmericas Council, representing the Caribbean.



Member of the Chamber of Deputies Karina Banfi (Argentina)

Member of the Chamber of Deputies of Argentina since 2015. Her work also includes service as Regional Coordinator of transparency programmes with the OAS and as adviser on freedom of expression to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. She previously served as President of the ParlAmericas Parliamentary Network for Gender Equality (2017–2019).



The Honourable John Andrew King (Barbados), Senator

Appointed to the Senate of Barbados in 2022. Previously served as a member of the House of Assembly of Barbados from 2018 to 2021, when he was also Minister of the Creative Economy, Culture, and Sports.



The Honourable Devin Daly (Belize), Member of Parliament and Minister of State in the Ministry of Youth & Sports

Member of the House of Representatives of Belize since his first election in 2025. He has also been appointed Minister of State in the Ministry of Youth and Sports in the Government of Belize.



The Honourable Senator Linsford Castillo (Belize), Vice-President of the Senate

Senator in the National Assembly of Belize since March 2025. He also serves as the Secretary General of the People's United Party (PUP). He was a member of UNESCO's Board of Advisors (2006–2008).



Senator Diego Esteban Mateo Ávila Navajas (Bolivia), President of the Senate

Senator in the Chamber of Senators of Bolivia since 2025. Elected President of the Senate in 2025.



Senator Paola Limbania López Zeballos (Bolivia)

Senator in the Chamber of Senators of Bolivia since 2025. She is a member of the State Security Committee and Secretary of the State Security and Anti-Drug Trafficking Committee.



Sandra Cobena (Canada), Member of Parliament

Member of the House of Commons of Canada since 2025. She is member of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance and is associated with various interparliamentary groups. She currently serves as a Counsellor to the Canadian Section of ParlAmericas.



The Honourable Suze Youance (Canada), Senator

Appointed to the Senate of Canada in September 2024. She is a member of the Committees on National Security, Defence and Veteran Affairs, on the Rules, Procedures and Rights of Parliament, and on Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources. She is the President of the Scientific Council of the UNESCO Chair “Women and Science for Development” in Haiti.



Senator Vlado Mirosevic (Chile)

Elected senator in 2025. Previously served as a member of the Chamber of Deputies from 2014 to 2025. He has served on the committees on Foreign Affairs, Finance, and Extreme Zones, and chaired the Chamber from November 2022 to July 2023. He currently serves on the ParlAmericas Council, representing South America.



The Honourable Elizabeth Jay-Pang Díaz (Colombia), Member of the House of Representatives

Serves as a Member of the House of Representatives since 2018. She is currently a member of the Legislative Committees on International Relations and on the Protection of the Rights of Afro-Colombian Populations. She currently serves on the ParlAmericas Council, representing South America.



Member of the Legislative Assembly Carlos Felipe García Molina (Costa Rica)

Member of the Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica for the 2022–2026 term. He currently chairs the Special Standing Commission on Youth and serves as secretary of the Ordinary Standing Committee of Financial Matters.



Member of the Legislative Assembly Carolina Delgado Ramírez (Costa Rica)

Member of the Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica for the 2022–2026 term. She previously held the same position from 2012 to 2014. She currently chairs the Special Standing Commission on Women and serves as secretary of the Special Standing Committee on Infrastructure. She also serves as secretary of the Front of Women in Political Parties. She currently serves on the ParlAmericas Council, representing Central America.



The Honourable Joseph T. Isaac (Dominica), Speaker of the House of Assembly

Speaker of the House of Assembly of the Commonwealth of Dominica since 2020. He is currently the chairperson of the Standing Orders Committee, the Privileges Committee and the Parliamentary Proceedings and Broadcasting Committee of the House of Assembly. He is also the Chairman of the Constituency Boundaries Commission. He currently serves on the ParlAmericas Council, representing the Caribbean.



Member of the National Assembly María Paula Villacreses Herrera (Ecuador)

Member of the National Assembly of Ecuador since May 2025. She serves on the Permanent Commission on Oversight and Political Control.



The Honourable Dr. Dessima Williams (Grenada), President of the Senate

President of the Senate since 2022. Dr. Williams formerly served as Grenada's Ambassador to the United Nations and the Organization of American States. She currently is a member of the ParlAmericas Council, representing the Caribbean.



Member of Congress Maria Fernanda Sandres (Honduras)

Elected for the 2026–2030 legislative period for her first mandate. She serves as the Vice-Chair of the Committee on Gender Equality. She is also a member of the Committees on Education, on Finance and External Cooperation, and on Science and Technology.



Member of Congress Sara Elizabeth Estrada Zavala (Honduras)

Elected for the 2026–2030 legislative period for her first mandate. She serves as Chair of the Committee on Ethics and Transparency and as Secretary of the Committee on Telecommunications. She is also a member of the Committees on Justice and Human Rights, on Labor and Union Affairs, and on Social Economy.



Member of the Chamber of Deputies Paulina Rubio Fernandez (Mexico)

Member of the Chamber of Deputies of Mexico since 2021, currently in her second term. She was elected in 2025 as Vice President of the Chamber of Deputies. She previously served as Secretary of the Justice and Constitutional Affairs Committees.



Member of the Chamber of Deputies Pedro Haces Barba (Mexico)

Member of the Chamber of Deputies of Mexico since 2024. He was previously a member of the Senate of Mexico (2018–2019). He serves as Vice-President for North America in the ParlAmericas Parliamentary Network on Security.



Honourable Member of the National Assembly Joan Manuel Guevara (Panama)

Member of the National Assembly since 2024. He is Chair of the Committee on Foreign Relations and member of the Committee on Population, Environment, and Development. He currently serves on the ParlAmericas Council, representing Central America.



Senator Derlis Maidana (Paraguay)

Member of the Chamber of Senators of Paraguay since 2023. He was previously a member of the Chamber of Deputies of Paraguay from 2018 to 2023. He currently chairs the Committee on Legislation, Codification, Justice and Labor. He serves as Second Vice-President for South America in the ParlAmericas Parliamentary Network on Security.



Member of Congress Ilich López (Peru)

Member of the Congress of the Republic since 2021. He has been serving as Third Vice-President of Congress since 2025. From 2024 to 2025, he served as Chair of the Economy, Banking, Finance, and Financial Intelligence Committee.



The Honourable Lanein Blanchette (Saint Kitts and Nevis), Speaker of the National Assembly

Speaker of the National Assembly of Saint Kitts and Nevis since 2022, the second woman and youngest person elected to that office. She currently serves on the ParlAmericas Council, representing the Caribbean, as well as First Vice-President for the Caribbean in the ParlAmericas Parliamentary Network on Security.



The Honourable Ronnia Durham-Balcombe (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines), Speaker of the House of Assembly

Speaker of the House of Assembly of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines since December 2025, when she also started her first mandate at the House.



The Honourable Jemalie John (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines), Deputy Speaker of the House of Assembly

Senator and Deputy Speaker of the House of Assembly of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines since December 2025, serving his first mandate.



The Honourable Jagdeo Singh (Trinidad and Tobago), Speaker of the House of Representatives

Speaker of the House of Representatives of Trinidad and Tobago since May 2025, and Chairman of the Public Administration and Appropriations Committee. He currently serves on the ParlAmericas Council, representing the Caribbean.

Annex II: Delegation Agenda

Monday, March 16	
Throughout the day	**Arrival of delegates**
Tuesday, March 17	
08:30	**Meet in the hotel lobby**
08:45 - 09:10	**Transfer to and registration at the Organization of American States** *Rubén Darío Room – OAS General Services Building, 8th floor (1889 F Street NW, 20006)*
09:10 - 09:30	**Welcome Remarks**
09:30 - 10:15	**Civil Society Participation: Cornerstone of Democratic Renewal in the Inter-American System** **Inter-Parliamentary Exchange with Her Excellency Laura Gil, Assistant Secretary General of the Organization of American States** *This session will explore how the OAS is working to strengthen inclusive spaces for dialogue that connect citizens, civil society organizations, and democratic institutions across the region. The discussion will focus on how meaningful participation enhances the quality of democratic decision-making, reinforces the legitimacy of multilateral action, and contributes to more resilient democratic governance.* *Conceived as an open exchange with parliamentarians, the session will invite reflection on how parliaments and the Inter-American system can better align their efforts to support civic participation and strengthen democratic space, reinforcing the democratic legitimacy and relevance of hemispheric cooperation.*
10:15 - 10:30	**Health break**
10:30 - 12:30	**Building Democratic Resilience: Interactive Working Session with the Secretariat for Strengthening Democracy** *This session will feature a concise institutional briefing on the mandate and priority initiatives of the Secretariat for Strengthening Democracy, followed by an interactive format designed to deepen engagement between parliamentarians and the leadership of its four programmatic pillars. After introductory remarks from the Secretary for Strengthening Democracy and short presentations from each departmental director, participants will rotate through small-group dialogue sessions, enabling direct discussion on current challenges, strategic priorities, and opportunities for collaboration across the hemisphere.*
12:30 - 13:15	**Lunch**
13:15 - 13:45	**Transfer to and arrival at the Main Building of the Organization of American States** *OAS Main Building (17th St. and Constitution Ave. NW)*

13:45 - 14:30	**Protocolary meeting with His Excellency Ambassador Luis Ernesto Vargas, Chair of the Permanent Council of the OAS, Permanent Representative of Colombia to the OAS** *Guerrero Room – OAS Main Building (17th St. and Constitution Ave. NW)*
14:30 - 16:30	**The Inter-American Democratic Charter at 25: Reaffirming a Hemispheric Commitment to Democracy and Human Rights** *Hall of the Americas, OAS Main Building (17th St. and Constitution Ave. NW)* **High-Level Dialogue with Representatives of Permanent Missions to the OAS** *Marking the 25th anniversary of the Inter-American Democratic Charter, this high-level dialogue will convene parliamentarians and representatives of Permanent Missions to the OAS to reflect on the Charter's enduring relevance and the collective responsibility to advance its principles amid today's complex regional landscape. The session will provide space to examine contemporary governance pressures and evolving expectations of hemispheric cooperation, considering how a strengthened inter-American system, rooted in collaborative and resilient democracies, can foster regional security, inclusive and mutually beneficial development, and the well-being of all people.*
16:30	**Reception**

Wednesday, March 18

08:30	**Meet in the hotel lobby**
08:45 - 09:00	**Transfer to and arrival at the Organization of American States** *Rubén Darío Room – OAS General Services Building, 8th floor (1889 F Street NW, 20006)*
09:00 - 10:00	**Women, Peace and Security: Parliamentary Action for Inclusive and Sustainable Peace** *This session will examine the Women, Peace and Security agenda as a critical dimension of democratic governance, sustainable peace, and inclusive development in the Americas and the Caribbean. Drawing on the expertise of the Inter-American Commission of Women, the discussion will engage parliamentarians in reflecting on how integrating a gender perspective into peace, security, and institutional responses strengthens democratic legitimacy, addresses multidimensional security challenges, and supports more equitable development outcomes. The dialogue will further explore the role of parliaments in advancing women's leadership and meaningful participation in security governance, and in aligning national legislative frameworks with hemispheric commitments.*
10:00 - 10:15	**Health break**
10:15 - 12:00	**Security and Institutional Cooperation: Insights from the Inter-American System** *This session will offer parliamentarians an opportunity to engage in a dialogue with the Secretariat for Multidimensional Security (SMS) to examine the growing convergence of criminal threats in the hemisphere, as transnational organized crime networks increasingly operate across overlapping illicit markets, including drug trafficking, illicit firearms flows, illegal mining, human trafficking, and financial crimes. The discussion will focus on how the intersection of organized crime, illicit arms flows, and drug markets shapes these dynamics, and why integrated responses across the inter-American system are essential. Participants will also consider how OAS security bodies and inter-American instruments address these interconnected challenges, and how parliaments can strengthen their implementation at the national level.*

12:00 - 12:15	**Information Session ahead of the U.S. Congress Dialogue**
12:15 - 13:15	**Lunch**
13:15 - 14:00	**Transfer to the U.S. Congress**
14:00 - 14:30	**Arrival and registration at the U.S. Congress** *U.S. Congress (Washington, DC 20004, USA)*
14:30 - 16:00	**Legislative Dialogue on Delivering Shared Prosperity in the Western Hemisphere** *Organized in collaboration with the U.S. Congress House Democracy Partnership, this session will provide delegates with an opportunity to engage with Members of the United States House of Representatives to exchange perspectives on regional priorities for economic growth and resilience, and to discuss ways to reinforce democracy and good governance while promoting shared prosperity, security, and social well-being across the region.*
16:00 - 16:30	**Group photo at the U.S. Congress**
16:30	**U.S. Congress guided tour**

Thursday, March 19	
08:30	**Meet in the hotel lobby**
08:40 - 09:10	**Transfer and arrival at the Organization of American States** *Guerrero Room – OAS Main Building (17th St. and Constitution Ave. NW)*
09:10 - 10:00	**Technical Briefing: Haitian-led Roadmap for Stability and Peace with Regional and International Support** *This session will provide an opportunity for parliamentarians to learn about the Haitian-led Roadmap for Stability and Peace with Regional and International Support, including the conditions necessary for its effective implementation. It will also provide a space to exchange perspectives on how parliamentary diplomacy can complement this coordinated multilateral effort within the Inter-American system to support stability and peace in Haiti.*
10:00 - 11:00	**Inter-Parliamentary Exchange with His Excellency Albert Ramdin, Secretary General of the Organization of American States** *This meeting will provide an opportunity to dialogue with the Secretary General on his priorities for the OAS and to articulate parliamentary views on regional issues where strengthened OAS engagement would be beneficial.*
11:00 - 11:30	**Transfer and arrival at the F-Street Building** *Rubén Darío Room – OAS General Services Building, 8th floor (1889 F Street NW, 20006)*

11:30 - 13:00	**Transforming Mental Health in the Americas through Inter-American Cooperation** *Furthering the goals of the 2025 OAS Resolution "Addressing the Critical Mental Health Crises in the Americas," this session will update parliamentarians on the Inter-American working group supporting its implementation and facilitate a discussion on the social determinants shaping mental health outcomes, the intersections between mental health and other priority social development agendas, and how integrated, rights-based approaches can strengthen access, resilience, and wellbeing.*
13:00 - 14:00	**Lunch**
14:00 - 16:00	**Economic Development and Labour in the Americas and the Caribbean** *The Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI) celebrates its 30th anniversary in 2026. CIDI is the main OAS body that advances hemispheric cooperation on economic, human, and sustainable development. This session will provide an overview on the main policy and regional development imperatives in the context of CIDI where collaboration with parliaments can foster prosperity in the Americas. Special emphasis will be placed on economic development areas such as trade, SMEs and innovation, as well as on labour issues, including structural and emerging employment challenges in the region.*
16:00 - 17:00	**Closing session: Reflections and takeaways**

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