



**Report of the Canadian Parliamentary Delegation respecting
its participation in the 10th Gathering of the ParlAmericas
Parliamentary Network for Gender Equality**

Canadian Section of ParlAmericas

**Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago
May 22 to 24, 2018**

Report

DELEGATION MEMBERS AND STAFF

From May 22 to 24, 2018, the Honourable Robert Nault, P.C., M.P., Vice-President of ParlAmericas and Chair of the Canadian Section of ParlAmericas, led an all-party delegation to Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, for the 10th Gathering of ParlAmericas Parliamentary Network for Gender Equality. The event was focused on examining the ways in which experiences relating to climate change and natural disasters vary based on socio-economic inequalities and demographic factors.

The other members of the delegation were the Honourable Anne Cools, Senator, the Honourable Mobina Jaffer, Senator, the Honourable Kelly Leitch, P.C., M.P., Mr. Randy Boissonnault, M.P., and Ms. Sheila Malcolmson, M.P. The delegation was accompanied by David-Andrés Novoa, the Canadian Section's Executive Secretary, and Nadia Faucher, Advisor to the Canadian Section.

PARLAMERICAS AND THE PARLIAMENTARY NETWORK FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Founded in 2001, ParlAmericas is a multilateral forum that brings together parliamentarians from the 35 countries of the Americas and the Caribbean. ParlAmericas' International Secretariat is located in Canada, and the institution is the only interparliamentary forum to have its headquarters located in Ottawa.

ParlAmericas' work is focused on three pillars: gender equality; open parliament; and climate change. In 2003, the 2nd Plenary Assembly of ParlAmericas approved a proposal to create the Group of Women Parliamentarians (GWP), a permanent body to advocate for gender equality. In 2017, ParlAmericas' Board of Directors changed the name of the GWP to ParlAmericas Parliamentary Network for Gender Equality (PNGE). The PNGE's Executive Committee comprises a president and four regional vice-presidents representing North America, Central America, South America and the Caribbean. Senator Jaffer is the PNGE's Vice-President for North America for 2017–2019.

BRIEFING WITH OFFICIALS FROM THE HIGH COMMISSION OF CANADA IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Officials from the High Commission of Canada in Trinidad and Tobago briefed the Canadian delegation about such topics as security, trade and immigration in Trinidad and Tobago.

Regarding security, the Canadian delegation was informed that Trinidad has a high rate of crime, murder and violence against women. The High Commission noted that 15 people were arrested in February 2018 after a terrorist threat was uncovered during the Carnival season, but that most of the suspects were released because Trinidad and Tobago's anti-terrorism legislation did not permit them to be charged with any crime. The High Commission mentioned that Canada is offering technical support to the Government of Trinidad and Tobago to amend its anti-terrorism legislation.

Concerning trade, the High Commission told the Canadian delegation that such companies as Scotiabank, the Royal Bank of Canada and Nutrien have offices in Trinidad and Tobago. According to the High Commission, Canada's trade with Trinidad and Tobago is currently experiencing some difficulties. In particular, the decline in energy prices has led to a shortage of foreign currency, which has resulted in some exporters having challenges in receiving payment for their products.

On the topic of immigration, the High Commission pointed out that the visa office of the Canadian High Commission in Port of Spain processes the permanent and temporary resident applications for 22 countries in the Caribbean. As part of Canada's expansion of its biometric screening program, beginning on 31 December 2018, all visa applicants from the Caribbean will be required to travel to Port of Spain to provide their biometric information. The High Commission indicated that it has been evaluating options to collect biometric information, such as opening a new visa application centre on another island or developing "mobile biometric clinics."

Mr. Nault, Senator Cools, Senator Jaffer, Dr. Leitch, Mr. Boissonnault and Ms. Malcolmson posed questions about temporary foreign workers from Trinidad travelling to Canada, visa issues encountered by Trinidadians wishing to come to Canada, LGBTQ2 rights in Trinidad, the return to Canada of Canadians imprisoned in Trinidad, violence against women in Trinidad, and trade between Canada's small and medium-sized firms and those firms in Trinidad.

ACTIVITIES DURING THE 10TH GATHERING OF THE PARLIAMENTARY NETWORK FOR GENDER EQUALITY

During the 10th Gathering of the PNGE, the Canadian delegation joined parliamentarians from 25 countries across the Americas and the Caribbean to discuss ways in which parliamentarians can implement gender-responsive climate actions. During the meeting, members of the Canadian delegation participated in the following sessions:

- Training session on gender-responsive budgeting
- Inauguration
- Keynote Address by Ms. Bridget Burns
- Session 1 – Approaching climate action risks from a gender perspective: Entry points for parliamentary action
- Session 2 – Centring women in climate adaptation
- Session 3 – Gender, health and climate change: Promoting responsive and sustainable planning
- Closing.

TRAINING SESSION ON GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGETING

Members of the Canadian delegation attended a workshop on gender-responsive budgeting.

At the workshop offered in English with simultaneous translation to French, Ms. Bridgid Annisette-George, M.P., Speaker of the House of Representatives of Trinidad and Tobago, emphasized that ParlAmericas' training sessions are always a highlight of the institution's gatherings. Senator Jaffer, who welcomed participants on behalf of the PNGE's Executive Committee, highlighted that Canada has experience with gender budgeting but still has work to do in implementing this approach systematically. She encouraged parliamentarians to examine the actions and decisions of their executive branches in relation to gender budgeting.

Ms. Isiuwa Iyehen, Programme Specialist, Economic Empowerment and Statistics at UN Women, facilitated the workshop and described gender-responsive budgeting as a tool that can be used to allocate spending in an effort to address gender inequalities. Ms. Iyehen explained that gender-responsive budgeting does not imply a budgetary increase or a separate budget; rather, it requires an examination of the measures that the government plans to fund and the ways in which that funding could affect such groups as men, women, youth, elderly people and Indigenous peoples differently.

Ms. Iyehen then explained a fictional post-disaster needs assessment (PDNA) exercise designed to enable participants to apply gender-budgeting principles. In particular, participants were asked to develop a gender-responsive PDNA and to estimate its cost. She encouraged participants to assess the impact of a natural disaster on various groups, including those identified earlier, and to develop a recovery plan that would address gender inequalities. During the discussion that followed, Senator Cools referred to her experience as a child in Barbados where she witnessed her community's efforts to address health hazards following hurricanes by organizing inoculation campaigns to prevent diseases.

Participants then broke into small groups to analyze a case study: sector-specific budgeting in tourism, housing, agriculture and health. In reporting on their analysis, each group said that a lack of baseline gender-disaggregated data impeded their ability to analyze the impacts of the natural disaster. They recommended various gender-budgeting measures aimed at helping to address the differential impacts of a natural disaster, including dedicated financial resources for elderly women who tend to provide the majority of child care following a natural disaster and the development of measures for undocumented workers in the tourism sector.

In reporting for her group, which was focused on the health sector, Dr. Leitch mentioned that the case study analysis did not address mental health issues, such as stress, that may cause substance addiction in men to increase. The group suggested that counselling measures should be included in the PDNA budget for the health sector.

Ms. Armine Yalnizyan, an economist and Atkinson Fellow on the Future of Workers, ended the training session by outlining the social and economic benefits of gender budgeting that Canada has experienced.

The workshop offered in Spanish was facilitated by Ms. Lorena Barba, Analyst for Planning and Gender Budgeting at UN Women. Mr. Boissonnault attended this workshop, and explained that the Government of Canada used gender-based analysis in preparing the 2018 federal budget. He also spoke about Canadian federal budgetary initiatives designed to address gender inequalities, such as funding for women entrepreneurs and paid parental leave. He noted his role as Special Advisor to the Prime Minister on LGBTQ2 issues to illustrate Canada's commitment to gender equality discussions within Canada and abroad.

INAUGURATION

A number of speakers made a presentation during the inauguration of the 10th Gathering of the PNGE.

Trinidad and Tobago's Speaker of the House of Representatives, Ms. Annisette-George, M.P., provided a detailed overview of the impact of climate change in the Americas and the Caribbean, including the 2017 hurricane season, and other recent natural disasters and extreme weather events in the Americas. She stressed the need for governments to adopt people-centred policies to ensure that "no one is left behind," and said that – in her view – gender-neutral responses are usually ineffective and inefficient.

Ms. Ayanna Webster-Roy, M.P., Minister of State in the Office of the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, described the socio-economic cost of climate change in Trinidad and Tobago, and illustrated her point by providing the example of Trinidadian families losing their housing due to massive coastal landslides. She also explained that higher temperatures are affecting agricultural production in Trinidad and Tobago. She confirmed that the Government of Trinidad and Tobago is committed to mainstreaming gender analysis in its policies and programs.

Trinidad and Tobago's Minister of Planning and Development, Ms. Camille Robinson-Regis, M.P., spoke about the measures being taken to improve waste management and environmental policies in Trinidad and Tobago. She said that Trinidad and Tobago is "on its way" to reducing its carbon footprint with the introduction of 30 buses powered by compressed natural gas.

In his remarks, Mr. Nault offered regrets on behalf of Ms. Marcela Guerra, Senator from Mexico and President of ParlAmericas. He then reflected on the ways in which people across the Americas and the Caribbean, including Canada, are being affected by more severe and frequent natural disasters. As well, he emphasized that such groups as women and Indigenous peoples are less likely to participate in international and national discussions aimed at designing mitigation and adaptation strategies, and stressed that gender-based stereotypes and behaviour influence the ways in which men and women are differently affected by climate change.

Mr. Nault noted Canada's financial contributions to numerous projects in the Americas and the Caribbean that are designed to develop gender-sensitive adaptation and mitigation measures, and underscored that gender-responsive climate action is one of the four themes selected by Canada during its G7 presidency in 2018. He ended his remarks by indicating that parliamentarians have a responsibility to demonstrate leadership on gender-responsive climate action, and by suggesting that consistent

participation by groups that are traditionally marginalized is essential for achieving common goals.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

In her keynote address, Ms. Bridget Burns, Co-Director of Women's Environmental & Development Organization (WEDO), highlighted the timeliness of the 10th Gathering of the PNGE in light of the November 2017 adoption of the Gender Action Plan of the Paris Agreement at the 23rd Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. She noted that this ParlAmericas' meeting was following a recommendation by the Gender Action Plan that parliamentarians should be trained on gender and climate change issues. She commented that ParlAmericas uses a definition of "gender" that integrates many levels and types of inequalities.

Ms. Burns encouraged the development of gender-responsive climate change policies to help reduce gender inequalities overall, and suggested that gender-responsive climate action enhances the overall effectiveness of actions on sustainable development. She concluded by urging parliamentarians to allocate funding for gender-responsive climate action, to ensure that the Paris Agreement's Nationally Determined Contributions include a gender analysis, and to encourage the gathering of gender-disaggregated data.

SESSION 1 – APPROACHING CLIMATE RISKS FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE: ENTRY POINTS FOR PARLIAMENTARY ACTION

During the first session of the 10th Gathering of the PNGE, three speakers made comments about assessing climate risks with a gender lens, and focused on actions that parliamentarians can take to promote gender-responsive climate action.

In presenting Jamaica's strategy to integrate both gender and climate change as cross-cutting national priorities, Ms. UnaMay Gordon, Principal Director in the Climate Change Division of Jamaica's Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, indicated that the Government of Jamaica has two "focal point networks" – one on gender and one on climate change – in each ministry, and has conducted joint capacity building in an effort to strengthen ties and encourage synergies. She also noted that "entry points for parliamentarians" include adopting national climate change legislation, and sending gender-balanced delegations to COP negotiations.

Ms. Itzá Casteñeda, Gender and Sustainable Development Advisor at the Global Gender Office of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, focused on the need for international and national gender-responsive climate change policies to "trickle down" to subnational levels of government. Using the example of Mexico, she mentioned that women from rural and urban settings, and from the North and the South of the country, do not experience climate change in the same ways. She also stressed that climate change commitments must be mainstreamed in all relevant national policies and again used the example of Mexico when explaining that laws addressing forestry, biodiversity and energy do not have a gender focus. As well, Ms. Casteñeda suggested that, in some cases, sectoral policies might contradict Mexico's national action plan on climate change.

Finally, Ms. Jennifer Guralnick, Programme Management Officer, Sendai Framework Monitoring, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR)-Americas, provided an overview of the *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction*. The framework, which is gender-sensitive, establishes benchmarks to engage such diverse groups as migrants, people living in poverty, Indigenous peoples, people living with a disability and youth into disaster risk reduction. Ms. Guralnick underscored that thematic silos must be overcome to achieve the framework's goals, and explained the ways in which the UNISDR is helping to reduce the burden of reporting through creating regional groups on national statistics to develop indicators that can be used in various international forums.

During the discussion that followed, Ms. Malcolmson shared examples of the ways in which Canadian women living in poverty are affected by climate change and asked Ms. Gordon, Ms. Casteñeda and Ms. Guralnick about the inclusion of low-income women into climate change discussions. In response, they provided information about the United Nations campaign to develop resilient cities and highlighted that poverty and climate change must be addressed concurrently.

SESSION 2 – CENTRING WOMEN IN CLIMATE ADAPTATION

During the second session of the 10th Gathering of the PNGE, parliamentarians from Trinidad and Tobago, Peru and Haiti spoke about their countries' priorities regarding climate adaptation, and about the ways in which women's knowledge is being considered and integrated into these priorities.

Mr. Esmond Forde, M.P., Deputy Speaker of Trinidad and Tobago's House of Representatives, explained that his country would like to create an enabling environment for women, youth and marginalized communities to participate in climate development and adaptation projects. He highlighted that several women hold ministry and high-level parliamentary positions in his country, and noted that the Government of Trinidad and Tobago intends to adopt a national policy on gender and development, which will augment the efforts that have led many of Trinidad and Tobago's existing policies to be gender-neutral.

In providing comments about Peru's gender-sensitive law on climate change, Ms. Ana María Choquehuanca, Member of the Congress of the Republic of Peru, characterized this statute as being at the core of the country's action to address climate change. According to her, because Indigenous women's traditional knowledge is usually undervalued and overlooked in Peru, the law provides for multilingual educational campaigns to ensure their participation in climate change campaigns.

Ms. Dieudonné Luma Étienne, Haiti's only female Senator, explained that there is still work to do in her country concerning gender equality. She mentioned that the many vulnerabilities experienced by Haitian women are obstacles to developing gender-responsive climate action. She also indicated that, while there is no legal framework to address violence against women in her country, she recently submitted a bill to address violence against women. Her political actions are mostly focused on removing barriers to women's political participation.

During the discussion that followed, Senator Jaffer asked Mr. Forde, Ms. Choquehuanca and Ms. Étienne a question about the priority between two actions: having women in Cabinet; and continuing to provide education about gender equality. They replied that both actions must be pursued simultaneously.

SESSION 3 – GENDER, HEALTH AND CLIMATE CHANGE: PROMOTING RESPONSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE PLANNING

During the third session of the 10th Gathering of the PNGE, Ms. Farmala Jacobs, Executive Director, Directorate of Gender Affairs of Antigua and Barbuda, spoke about Antigua and Barbuda's gender-responsive preparation and response to Hurricane Irma, which destroyed 90% of Barbuda's infrastructure in September 2017. She explained that the directorate conducted a gender-sensitive assessment of the shelters in Antigua that would receive the evacuees from Barbuda, and recommended the creation of child-friendly spaces in each shelter where displaced children could play and feel comfortable. According to her, following the assessment, the directorate also developed guidelines for the prevention of violence against women in the shelters, and provided training to shelter managers.

Ms. Aurora Noguera-Ramkissoon, Liaison Officer for the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Caribbean Subregional Office for Trinidad and Tobago, presented the UNFPA's work in addressing natural disasters and humanitarian crises. She mentioned that the UNFPA is helping countries to improve the availability of data so that they are better able to develop recovery plans. She stressed that basic service packages delivered within 48 hours of a natural disaster help to prevent or manage negative consequences for women, such as sexual violence, the transmission of HIV, and maternal and newborn mortality.

With a focus on the health risks experienced by women in the informal economy, Ms. Ana Carolina Ogando, Research Associate, Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO), presented the results of a research project on waste pickers that had been conducted by WIEGO in Brazil. According to her, the results revealed that women in the informal economy are concerned about a lack of ventilation, exposure to extreme temperatures and toxic substances, sexual violence perpetrated by authorities, and stress relating to such climate impacts as flooding.

Ms. Catharina Cuellar, Advisor on Gender and Health, Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), focused on the progress made toward gender equality in the Americas and the Caribbean, describing it as slow and uneven. She explained that PAHO is using two frameworks – the Gender Equality Policy and the Plan of Action for Disaster Risk Reduction – to guide its actions aimed at improving health and gender equality across the Americas and the Caribbean.

Following the presentations, participants worked in small groups to consider the differential impacts on human health and well-being of phenomena relating to climate change, with a focus on: more frequent and severe hurricanes; more severe and long-lasting heatwaves; heavy precipitation and flooding; drought; earthquakes; a rise in sea levels; wildfires; deforestation; air pollution; and water contamination. They considered the gender and health consequences of these phenomena, as well as potential legislative responses.

CLOSING

Senator Jaffer read the final declaration of the 10th Gathering of the PNGE, and Senator Jaffer, Dr. Leitch and Ms. Malcomson proposed amendments; their suggestions were included in the declaration that was adopted by the participants.

Mr. Nault and Ms. Annisette-George made closing remarks. In his remarks, Mr. Nault presented a video featuring the upcoming 15th ParlAmericas Plenary Assembly in Victoria, Canada.

ADDITIONAL MEETING

Meeting with Professor Brian Copeland, Principal of the St. Augustine Campus of the University of the West Indies

Members of the Canadian delegation were accompanied by Ms. Debra Boyce, Trade Commissioner with the Canadian High Commission in Trinidad and Tobago, to a meeting with Professor Brian Copeland, Principal of the St. Augustine Campus of the University of the West Indies (UWI), and Dr. Marlene Attzs, Advisor to Professor Copeland. Professor Copeland, who is a graduate of the University of Toronto, explained the efforts underway to attract more international students to the UWI's St. Augustine Campus. In the social sciences and humanities, the campus offers several programs that have a cultural component. He noted that UWI's St. Augustine Campus is interested in becoming an incubator of knowledge in tropical agriculture. Members of the Canadian delegation informed Professor Copeland that Canada's universities are promoting exchange programs abroad.

Respectfully submitted,

Hon. Robert Nault, P.C., M.P.
Chair
Canadian Section of ParlAmericas

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canadian Section of ParlAmericas	
ACTIVITY	10 th Gathering of the ParlAmericas Parliamentary Network for Gender Equality	
DESTINATION	Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago	
DATES	May 22 to 24, 2018	
DELEGATION		
	SENATE	Hon. Anne Cools, Senator Hon. Mobina Jaffer, Senator
	HOUSE OF COMMONS	Hon. Robert D. Nault, P.C., M.P. Hon. Kellie Leitch, P.C., M.P. Mr. Randy Boissonnault, M.P. Ms. Sheila Malcolmson, M.P.
	STAFF	Mr. David-Andrés Novoa, Association Secretary Ms. Nadia Faucher, Advisor to the Canadian Section
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 32,026.90	
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 6,940.49	
HOSPITALITY	\$ 1,479.02	
PER DIEMS	\$ 3,173.31	
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$ 0.00	
MISCELLANEOUS	\$ 126.83	
TOTAL	\$ 43,746.55	