

40 Women from 7 Caribbean Countries Participated in Electoral Training in Trinidad and Tobago

- *Participants gained critical skills in electoral strategy and campaign financing, political communication, and strategies to combat political violence, fostering women's stronger leadership presence.*
- *During the opening ceremony, distinguished leaders, including Hon. Ayanna Webster-Roy, Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister with Responsibility for Gender and Child Affairs; Hon. Bridgid Annisette-George, Speaker of the House of Representatives; and Alejandra Mora Mora, Executive Secretary of CIM/OAS, emphasized the importance of equipping women with tools to navigate gender discrimination and political challenges.*

Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, November 19, 2024. Forty women from seven Caribbean countries gathered in Port of Spain for the “Course for Women Electoral Candidates” held November 18-19, 2024. The program, organized by the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM/OAS) and the School of Government of the Organization of American States (OAS), in partnership with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, ParlAmericas, and Caribbean Women in Leadership (CIWiL), with the support from the United States Mission to the OAS, provided a vital platform to advance women’s political participation and leadership. Participants represented The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

The opening ceremony was attended by the Honourable Ayanna Webster-Roy, Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister for Gender and Child Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago, who offered a message of support, emphasizing the government’s commitment to gender equality in leadership, and the Honourable Bridgid Annisette-George, Speaker of the House of Representatives. The event also included government officials, distinguished members of the diplomatic corps, representatives from ParlAmericas, and civil society leaders.

Alejandra Mora Mora, Executive Secretary of CIM/OAS, stressed the significance of equipping women with tools to confront political challenges and contribute to democratic processes. “We are incredibly proud to bring this program to Trinidad and Tobago and the Caribbean for the first time. This initiative represents the Inter-American Commission of Women’s commitment to making visible the leadership of Caribbean women and providing them with the tools to face the challenges of new political dynamics and the evolving language of electoral campaigns”, emphasized Secretary Mora Mora.

Nana Oye Hesse Bayne, President of the Regional Board of Directors of Caribbean Women in Leadership (CIWiL), delivered additional remarks. The ceremony also featured a tribute video honoring trailblazing women politicians from the region, followed by a cultural presentation reflecting Trinidad and Tobago’s diversity and vibrancy.

Over the two-day course, participants engaged in expert-led sessions addressing core issues in electoral politics. Topics included campaign financing, combating political violence against women, strategies for



organizing electoral campaigns, and leveraging communication tools for impactful political messaging. The program highlighted pressing challenges such as technological violence against women and women's leadership roles in addressing climate change and crisis management.

The course fostered a collaborative learning environment where participants shared their experiences and strategies for overcoming barriers. Several attendees highlighted the unique challenges in their respective countries and emphasized the importance of regional solidarity in advancing women's leadership.

Ambassador Francisco Mora, Permanent Representative of the United States to the OAS, attended the closing ceremony, which included reflections on the program's impact and participants' feedback on the knowledge and tools gained. Representatives from OAS/CIM, CIWiL, and the Government of Trinidad and Tobago joined Ambassador Mora in expressing hopes for the continued growth of women's political leadership in the Caribbean.

Since 2018, CIM's highly successful "Course for Electoral Candidates" has empowered over 2000 women leaders across 13 countries of Latin America. This first Caribbean edition, organized with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, ParlAmericas, and Caribbean Women in Leadership (CIWiL), and supported by the United States Mission to the OAS, extended that impact, providing essential training to women candidates in the region.

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About CIM/OAS

The Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) of the Organization of American States (OAS) is the principal hemispheric forum dedicated to promoting and protecting women's human rights and gender equality. Founded in 1928, the CIM has been a pioneer in identifying the barriers faced by women in the social, economic, and political spheres and formulating policies and programs to overcome those barriers. CIM works in collaboration with OAS Member States, civil society organizations, and other key actors to advance the gender equality agenda in the Americas.

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