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## Regional Seminar on climate change and disaster risk reduction for Parliaments of the Caribbean

Paramaribo, 5-6 November 2018



DE  
NATIONALE  
ASSEMBLÉE  
VAN DE REPUBLIEK SURINAME

Organized jointly by the National Assembly of Suriname and the Inter-Parliamentary Union

### CONCEPT NOTE

Climate change is one of the major challenges of our time. The increase in the earth's average temperature is now an indisputable fact, and it is certain that climate change is directly related to human activity. Small Caribbean countries, and in particular the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) of the region, face major and specific challenges in this regard. The Parliaments of these countries have a critical role to play and need to collaborate to build more effective and coordinated responses to their common concerns.

Parliaments and parliamentarians can ensure that the provisions of the Paris Agreement are translated into national legislation and that adequate budget allocations are made to support the implementation of relevant laws and policies. Parliamentary oversight is also crucial in holding governments accountable for their actions in response to climate change challenges.

Over the past years the IPU has been mobilizing parliaments and calling for action—including legislative action—on climate change and risk reduction. Since 2009, it has organized Parliamentary Meetings at each Global Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on Climate Change (COPs) to increase the parliamentary contribution to global negotiations. In 2016 it adopted the *Parliamentary action plan on climate change* which highlights four key action areas and offers practical recommendations on how to achieve delivery on reducing global greenhouse emissions and mitigating the worst effects of climate change. As a global convener, the IPU also provides a privileged platform for parliamentary dialogue and cooperation, in particular for the SIDS which, among other, organize themselves during IPU Assemblies to coordinate action and share experiences.

The regional seminar will allow parliamentarians from small countries of the Caribbean to learn more about the important role of legislators in the domestic ratification process of the Paris Agreement. It will also cover approaches parliamentarians could consider in implementing climate change action, improving responses to natural disasters and preventing damage. Concrete examples and good practices will be shared to illustrate relevant opportunities and challenges.

#### Expected outcome

Participants will learn about recent developments in the international climate change regime and gain a better understanding of what is being done in the region, at parliamentary level, to combat climate change and face natural disasters. Participants will also have the opportunity to share national experiences and opportunities/challenges related to embedding climate change action and implementing disaster risk reduction policies at national level. The seminar will also serve to create a regional network of parliamentarians to coordinate efforts in combating climate change.

#### Format

The session will consist of an introductory presentation and follow-up discussion between parliamentarians, governmental agencies, policy makers and experts from the region.

#### Partner organizations

The IPU and the National Assembly of Suriname will reach out to relevant institutions and organizations in the region to secure participation and identify possible resource persons. CARICOM, UNDP and UN ECLAC will be strategic partners.

#### Participation

The seminar is open to parliamentarians from CARICOM Member States.

#### Language

The working language will be English.