

**Regional Seminar on climate change and disaster risk reduction
for Parliaments of the Caribbean**
Organized jointly by the National Assembly of Suriname and the Inter-Parliamentary Union
Paramaribo, 5-6 November 2018

Ballroom, Royal Torarica Hotel

Programme

Sunday, 4 November 2018

Arrival of delegates

Day 1 – Monday, 5 November 2018

08:00 – 08:30

Registration

Ballroom, Royal Torarica Hotel

08:30 – 09:00

Opening session

- Welcome remarks by Hon. J. Simons, Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Suriname
- Video message from Ms. Gabriela Cuevas, IPU President
- Opening remarks by His Excellency, Ashwin Adhin, Vice-President of the Republic of Suriname
- Cultural performance
- Formal opening of the proceedings

09:00 – 10:30

**Session I: Understanding and responding to climate change.
1- Challenges, opportunities and response actions of countries in
the region.**

This session will feature an overview and update on climate change around the globe and its impact on sustainable development in the region, short- and long-term challenges, as well as opportunities for transformation into a more sustainable development model. It will also focus on how the Caribbean region responds to these challenges.

- Mr. Robert Ondhowe, Programme Manager, Division of Environmental Law and Conventions, UN Environment
- Dr. Alina Averchenkova, Principal Research Fellow, Lead, Governance and Legislation, Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change (*video message*)
- Hon. Jomo Sanga Thomas, Speaker of the Assembly, St. Vincent and the Grenadines

Presentations will be followed by a debate.

10:30 – 10:45

Coffee break

10:45 – 12:15

Session I: (cont'd.) Understanding and responding to climate change

2- International commitments and the role of national legislators. Regional specificities.

The international community agreed that national commitments on climate change at the global level should be reflected in the Paris Climate Change Agreement and will be set out in more detail by the nationally determined contributions of each country. In addition, the Escazú Agreement, reached by and for Latin America and the Caribbean, reflects the priorities and particularities of the region. It addresses key aspects of environmental management and protection from a human rights-based perspective. This session will allow participants to learn more about the role of parliamentarians in the domestic ratification process of the Paris and Escazú Agreements, as well as their part in translating international commitments into national laws and policies.

- Ms. Stara Ahmidouch, Chief of Staff, IPU
- Mr. David Barrio Lamarche, Legal Officer, Sustainable Development and Human Settlements Division, UN ECLAC
- Ms. Donna Marie Scott-Mottley, Senator, Jamaica

Presentations will be followed by a debate.

12:15 – 12:30

Group photo

12:30 – 14:00

Lunch break

14:30 – 17:30

Field visit to the Commenwijne coastal area
(Departure point-Lobby of Royal Torarica Hotel)

17:30

Travel back to Paramaribo

Day 2 – Tuesday, 6 November 2018

9:00 – 10:30

Session II: Enhancing resilience and disaster preparedness in the context of climate change.

1- Parliamentarians respond to climate change.

Parliamentarians are at the heart of the response to climate change. They are responsible for transposing international agreements into national legislation, supporting pro-environmental measures through appropriate budget allocation, assuring robust oversight of government performance and adopting climate change-related laws and policies. This session will introduce the IPU Parliamentary Action Plan on Climate Change, which identifies practical recommendations on how parliamentarians can contribute to mitigating the worst effects of climate change. It will also allow participants to take stock of what has been done at the parliamentary level to combat climate change in the region.

- Dr. José Rubiera, MP, Cuba
- Professor Sieuwnath Naipal, Academic, Suriname
- Mr. Guibion Ferdinand, Senator, St. Lucia
- Ms. Stara Ahmidouch, Chief of Staff, IPU

Presentations will be followed by a debate.

Parliamentarians will be invited to present examples of legislative, budgetary and oversight measures relating to climate change adopted by their respective parliaments.

10:30 – 10:45

Coffee break

10:45 – 12:30

Session II: (cont.) Enhancing resilience and disaster preparedness in the context of climate change.

- **Parliamentarians take action to reduce disaster risk.**

This session will allow delegates to gain a better understanding of the action taken at the global level and in the region to reduce the damage caused by natural hazards. Participants will share national experiences and challenges related to implementing disaster risk reduction policies at the national level and take stock of existing tools and good parliamentary practices.

- Ms. Celeste Connors, Executive Director of Hawai'i Green Growth – *video message*
- Hon. Alix Boyd Knights, Speaker of the House of Assembly of Dominica
- Ms. R. Tjien Fooh-Hardjomohamad, President of the Caribbean Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (CARBICA)
- Mr. Jerry Slijngard, Coordinator, National Coordination Center for Disaster Relief, Suriname
- Mr. Omar Bello, Coordinator, Unit of Sustainable Development and Disaster, UN ECLAC

Presentations will be followed by a debate.
Parliamentarians will be invited to present examples of action taken and results achieved at the national level.

12:30 – 14:30

Lunch break

14:30 – 16:00

Closing session: Adoption of the Paramaribo Declaration

- Presentation of the Declaration by the Rapporteur of the seminar, Hon. Dr. Barton. Scotland, Speaker of the National Assembly of Guyana
- Closing Remarks by Mr. Melvin Bouva, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Suriname

19:00 – 21:00

Reception offered by the National Assembly of Suriname
Clubhouse & Marina "de Pier" – Torarica Resort

Wednesday, 7 November 2018

Departure of delegates