

I N T E R - A M E R I C A N  
task**FORCE**  
On Women's Leadership

*UN CSW Side Event – CONCEPT PAPER*  
*March 13 2019*  
*New York, United States of America*

## Overview and Purpose of CSW Side Event to be held March 13 2019

**Title: WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN THE NATIONAL AGENDAS OF THE AMERICAS AND CARIBBEAN**

**Location:**

The United Nations Headquarters in New York on the sidelines of the UN CSW meeting, as well as the Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations.

The side-event will be divided into two distinct moments: a Ministerial Level meeting to set the tone and gain political support, followed by a Technical Meeting of senior officials and advisors to focus on five broad themes.

**Goals for the side event:**

1. Raise awareness among Ministries of Women on the Task Force
2. Open a political dialogue among Ministries of Women on key issues related to women's leadership
3. Develop a work plan for Member States, in dialogue with the Task Force members, on challenges and opportunities in the field of women's leadership that can be advanced through upcoming key regional meetings and in the lead-up to the 2021 Summit of the Americas.

## Purpose of the Ministerial Working Group, 1:00pm-3:00pm

The purpose of the CSW side event will be to provide a deliberate and strategic opportunity for the regions' Ministers of Women to reflect upon barriers, challenges, policy options as well as solutions to strengthening women's leadership in the Hemisphere, in reaction to the technical presentation from Task Force members. In addition, , the CSW side event will create a bridge between the Task Force members (policy development and technical program portfolios) and the national perspectives of the region's Ministers of Women.

Ministers will be provided a briefing on the vision and purpose of the Task Force in order to provide a common understanding of what value the Task Force can provide.

Ministers have been asked to validate the *top systemic barriers* to women's leadership from their own national perspective. In addition to a cross-cutting emphasis on developing better gender disaggregated data and more comprehensive indicators on women across sectors, topics to be discussed could include the following:

1. *Violence against women*
2. *Education and training, with an emphasis on STEM*
3. *Access to services including political, economic, social, juridical required to support women to achieve their goals*

4. *Public sector governance and political leadership*
5. *Private Sector and economic opportunity for women*

In addition, Ministers will have the opportunity to present Ministerial statements that may be of use to the Task Force in further defining its greatest areas of incidence. Topics might include:

- 1) Greatest challenges to women's leadership in their countries
- 2) Current national policy frameworks related to women's leadership

**Purpose of Technical Working Group Meeting, 4:00pm-6:00pm:**

The purpose of the Technical Working Group is to provide an opportunity for senior advisors and subject matter experts to delve deeper into the systemic barriers that women in the hemisphere face through approximately five thematic working groups.

The working groups will each be led by a pre-determined Member State, supported by a technical facilitator from one of the Task Force members, and have a designated Rapporteur from the Task Force. It is expected that an informal Rapporteur's report on the discussion and the agreed path forward for each of the five groups will be shared with all working group participants and the Task Force after the CSW side event.

**Key Task Force Coordination Moments 2019-2022**

Building on the "Goals for the CSW Side Event" noted above, namely Goal #3, to "Develop a work plan for Member States, in dialogue with the Task Force members, on challenges and opportunities in the field of women's leadership that can be advanced through upcoming key regional meetings and in the lead-up to the 2021 Summit of the Americas" the Task Force will reconvene on a quarterly basis, or as needed in order to collaboratively work on designing a work plan that creates a bridge for partnership between the Ministers of the OAS and the Task Force members.

Key dates have been identified and will be added to the timeline (below) as they are identified.



## Task Force Overview

During the VIII Summit of the Americas (Peru, April 2018), leaders of the Americas and Caribbean approved the creation of the Inter-American Task Force on Women's Empowerment and Leadership, charging it with promoting gender equity and equality and women's empowerment through enhanced cooperation and synergies between international and inter-American institutions.

### **PURPOSE OF THE TASK FORCE**

The Inter-American Task Force on Women's Empowerment and Leadership is composed of regional and international institutions that address women's empowerment and leadership across various sectors and at multiple levels throughout the Americas and the Caribbean. Our mission is to strengthen the commitment of key actors and harmonize our efforts to achieve even greater efficacy. This inter-agency initiative will contribute to SDG 5 by reinforcing commitment and progress on women's empowerment and leadership and SDG 17 to set up strategies and specific patterns to harmonization of efforts and efficacy of aid. The Task Force will have a three-year tenure, and will report on its accomplishments to the 2021 Summit.

### **WHO IS INVOLVED**

The Task Force is composed of key inter-American and international institutions, which have recognized expertise and programming in the areas related to women's leadership and include the following organizations: the Economic Commission for Latin American and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), Organization of American States - Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) and Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), ParlAmericas, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UN Women, the Development Bank of Latin America (CAF) the Caribbean Institute for Women in Leadership (CIWiL) and the Latin American and Caribbean Committee for the Defense of Women's Rights (CLADEM).

The Inter-American Commission of Women of the Organization of American States serves as the Task Force's Secretariat,<sup>1</sup> with responsibility for its day-to-day operations.

### **TASK FORCE GOALS**

- Build understanding of women's leadership initiatives, current barriers, and good practices in the region.
- Enhance cooperation to increase the impact and sustainability of our work.
- Amplify existing initiatives and make them more accessible to historically excluded groups, including Indigenous, Afro-descendent, rural, young, and LGBTI women, among others.
- Fill key policy and programmatic gaps through evidence-based collaboration.
- Leverage funding for women's leadership initiatives.

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<sup>1</sup> See the *Inter-American Program on the Promotion of Women's Human Rights and Gender Equity and Equality* (IAP, 2000), and the *Declaration of the Inter-American Year of Women*, which mandates the CIM to both work on women's leadership and to collaborate with other inter-American Institutions in all of their work.