



## **95 years of the Inter-American Commission of Women: Forging Paths, Building Equality**

Washington February 16, 2023, [The Inter-American Commission of Women \(CIM\)](#) of the Organization of American States (OAS) began the celebration of its 95 years of history through a Special Session of the OAS Permanent Council.

Under the slogan "Forging Paths, Building Equality," this commemoration was intended to recognize the work of the women suffragettes of 1928, who through their tireless struggle, managed to incorporate equality into the Pan-American agenda that was being discussed at that time, and that today constitutes the OAS. The purpose of the event was to take a historical journey to the present in order to understand the past, recognize where we are, and envision the future.

The Council was opened by Ambassador Anthony Phillips-Spencer, Chair of the Permanent Council and Permanent Representative of Trinidad & Tobago to the OAS; and Ambassador María Roquebert, Vice Chair of the Permanent Council and Permanent Representative of Panama to the OAS. In their remarks they highlighted the work of the CIM as a pioneer organization in promoting women's rights in the region.

The guiding themes of the panel were the historical milestones in which the CIM has had an impact. The President of the CIM, the Minister of Social Development of Panama, María Inés Castillo, presented the new lines of work and the Strategic Plan 2022-2026, which, under the name of "building bridges," highlights the importance of multi-stakeholder coordination and alliances among women in the region.

The three Vice Presidents of the CIM; Antonia Orella, Minister of Women and Gender Equity of Chile; Yanci Salmerón, Executive Director of the Salvadoran Institute for the Development of Women (ISDEMU); and Virginia Albert-Poyotte, Minister of Public Service, Home Affairs, Labor and Gender Affairs of Saint Lucia, extended their greetings virtually and emphasized their commitments to the work of the CIM.

For her part, Executive Secretary Alejandra Mora Mora presented the Commission's most recent publication, which condenses the CIM's 95 years of struggle, and the women's movement that gave rise to it. She explained the peaks and valleys that feminist women had to go through, the importance of their actions for the present, and called to keep the flame of transformation alive.

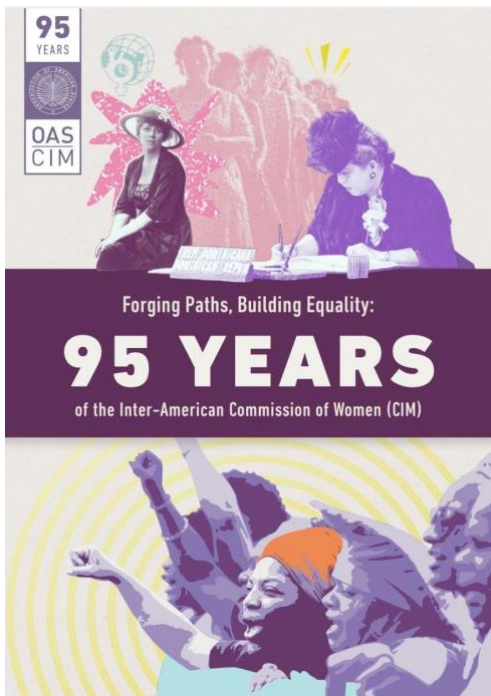
This historical summary was accompanied by reflections on the protagonists of the CIM's history by Jacqui Quinn-Leandro, President of the CIM from 2006 to 2008.



The panel included interventions that delved into the most relevant axes of the CIM agenda: violence, advancement of parity democracy and economic empowerment, with the participation of Rita Segato, feminist activist; Martha Lucía Micher, President of the Commission for Gender Equality of the Mexican Congress; and Katrina Fotovat, Senior Officer of the Office for Global Women's Issues of the U.S. Department of State of the United States.

The event concluded with the inauguration of a photo exhibit on the CIM's women ancestors, entitled "Ellas: las que abrieron el camino" ("They: those who paved the way"). Néstor Méndez, Assistant Secretary General of the OAS, highlighted the need to make women in history, and their great contributions to the equality agenda, visible.

Download the historical document: "95 years CIM: Forging Paths, Building Equality".



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