

International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

# Child, Early and Forced Marriage and Motherhood in the Americas

Hall of the Americas  
OAS Headquarters, 17th St. and Constitution Ave. NW  
November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016  
9:00am to 3:00pm



## Agenda

9:00 Registration and breakfast

9:30 **Welcome and Introductory Panel**

- Nestor Mendez, Assistant Secretary General of the Organization of American States
- Sarah Fountain Smith, Assistant Deputy Minister, Global Affairs Canada
- Susan Markham, Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, US Agency for International Development
- Heather Hamilton, Deputy Executive Director, Girls not Brides

10:15 **Keynote Address**

- Lorena Castillo de Varela, First Lady of Panama

10:30 **Round-table debate "Child, early and forced marriage in the Americas"**

Moderator: Emma Puig de la Bellacasa, Regional Specialist on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion for Latin America and the Caribbean, Regional Office for the Americas, Plan International

- Gabrielle Hosein, Head of Department and Lecturer, Institute for Gender and Development Studies, University of the West Indies
- Daniela Ligiero, CEO, Together for Girls
- Giovanna Lauro, Deputy Director of International Programs, PROMUNDO-US
- Shelly N. Abdool-Zerezeghi, Regional Gender Advisor, UNICEF Latin America and the Caribbean
- Rosalee Gonzales, North America Coordinator, Continental Network of Indigenous Women of the Americas (ECMIA)
- Jeanne Smoot, Senior Counsel for Policy and Strategy, Tahirih Justice Center
- Paula Tavares, Women, Business and the Law, World Bank

11:45 **Q&A**

**12:30 Lunch and Keynote Panel “Girls Speak Out”**

**Keynote Address**

Catherine Russell, United States Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women’s Issues

Moderator: Susan Markham, Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment, US Agency for International Development

- Khadija Sinanan, Co-Director, Womantra (Trinidad and Tobago)
- Wendy Faviola Ibarra Pop (Guatemala)
- Liza Villanueva, Girl Scouts’ National Young Woman of Distinction 2015 and Founder of iDREAM Express (USA)
- Presentation of testimonies from “Stolen Lives” (Planned Parenthood Federation of America)

**1:30 Round-table debate “Child, early and forced motherhood in the Americas”**

Moderator: Andrew Morrison, Chief, Gender and Diversity Unit, Inter-American Development Bank

- Ximena Casas, Senior Advocacy Program Officer, Latin America Program, Planned Parenthood Federation of America
- Marcela Eternod Aramburú, Executive Secretary, National Institute of Women of Mexico (INMUJERES)
- Luz Patricia Mejía, Technical Secretary of the Follow-up Mechanism to the Belem do Pará Convention (MESECVI/OAS)
- Andrés de Francisco, Director, Family, Gender and Life Course, Pan American Health Organization
- Hilda Morales Trujillo, Deputy Ombudsperson for Human Rights and Principal Expert of Guatemala to the Committee of Experts of the MESECVI

2:30 Q&A

**2:50 Wrap-up and closing remarks**

- Carmen Moreno, Executive Secretary, Inter-American Commission of Women (OAS)

## **Nestor Méndez**

Assistant Secretary General of the Organization of American States



Nestor Mendez was elected to be the ninth Assistant Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS) in 2015. He began serving his five-year term on July 13, 2015 with a commitment to work closely with the Secretary General and the member states to reinvigorate and modernize the institution.

The Assistant Secretary General based his platform on five main thematic areas: improving regional inter-connectivity; fostering economic growth, addressing the impacts of climate change and natural disasters; promoting partnerships for development, and working to empower and respond to the needs of the youth across the hemisphere. Upon receiving the mandate from member states, he pledged his “unwavering commitment to seize the opportunity that is before us to work together to transform the OAS into the Organization that we want and that the people of the Americas deserve.”

As Ambassador of Belize to the United States, he travelled throughout the country to engage with the Belizean Diaspora and to meet with prospective investors and companies interested in investing in Belize. During his tenure as Permanent Representative of Belize to the OAS, Ambassador Mendez chaired several Councils and Committees of the Organization including the Permanent Council, the Committee on Hemispheric Security, the Special Committee for Migration Issues, and the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI)

He holds a Master’s Degree in International Policy and Practice from George Washington University in Washington, D.C., a Graduate Level Certificate in Diplomatic Studies from Oxford University in Oxford, United Kingdom, and a Bachelor’s Degree in Business Administration from the University College of Belize in Belize City, Belize.

## **Lorena Castillo de Varela**

First Lady of Panama



In her education formation, Lorena Castillo de Varela, studied at the Secondary School Flint Hill Prep Oakton,VA. Obtained a BA degree in Journalism at the Universidad Latinoamericana de Ciencia y Tecnología, ULACIT. (Latin American University of Science and Technology). She speaks English and French. Between 1991 and 2009 was a presenter and co- producer

of news in Telemetro Reporta. Worked as a News Correspondent at the White House, United Nations, the Organization of American States OAS, and the Vatican.

In the exercise of the profession, Mrs. Castillo de Varela toured the country and experienced poverty closely and was able to help hundreds of families who changed their quality of life. In 2007 she was the presenter of “Roofs of Hope”, a television program through which decent homes were build for the Panamanians who were forgotten by progress.

In 1992 the First Lady married President Juan Carlos Varela Rodriguez. The Varela Castillo marriage have three children: Gian Carlo, Adrian y Stefan. Castillo Varela has changed her professional career as a journalist, her role as mother, wife, and her vocation of social service. Devotes part of her life to strengthen social solidarity and to the integral development of families. She assumed her post as First Lady on 5 May, 2015 as Honorary President of the Panamanian Red Cross. She also chairs the National Council for Comprehensive Care for Early Childhood and the National Commission for the Prevention and Control of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (CONAVI).

She has participated in numerous international events, including the High Level Panel: No to child labor, Yes to quality education, as part of the 104 International Labor Conference, the Second Regional Forum of Migrant Children and Adolescents: "After the crisis actions undertaken and new challenges," and the Summit “Alliance for Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention in Central America and the Dominican Republic In 2015 she was designated a UNAIDS Special Ambassador for Latin America

## **Sarah Fountain Smith**

Assistant Deputy Minister, Global Affairs Canada



Sarah Fountain Smith joined the Department of External Affairs in 1989 and has since served abroad at Canada's Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York and the embassies of Canada in Argentina and Brazil. From 2009-2012, Ms. Fountain Smith was Ambassador of Canada to the Republic of Chile and Honorary President of the Chile-Canada Chamber of Commerce. In Ottawa, she has held several management positions, including as Director General for International Organizations, Director responsible for South America and Inter-American Relations, and Director for Canada-US relations and the International Joint Commission. From 2013 to 2015, Ms. Fountain Smith was a Governor on the Board of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). Ms. Fountain Smith was appointed to her current position in March, 2016. She speaks Spanish, Portuguese, French and English and is a graduate of the Executive Excellence/Living Leadership Program of the Canada School of the Public Service. Ms. Fountain Smith graduated from McGill University in 1989 with a BA Honours in Classics.

## **Susan Markham**

Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, US Agency for International Development

Susan Markham is the Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Women



Empowerment of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). In that role, she works with the leadership and mission staff to fully integrate gender equality and empower women into USAID policies, programs and strategies. USAID recognizes that promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women is critical to our mission to end extreme poverty and promote democratic and resilient societies while advancing our security and prosperity. Susan's work has led her to more than 50 countries around the world where she has conducted trainings, facilitated working groups, involved political parties and civil society organizations and led numerous conferences on the importance and best practices for increasing The participation of women in the political process.

## **Heather Hamilton**

Deputy Executive Director, Girls not Brides



As Deputy Executive Director, Heather is responsible for ensuring that Girls Not Brides delivers on its strategy and advances our collective efforts to end child marriage. She leads on ensuring that partner engagement translates to substantive progress toward ending child marriage at the global, regional and national levels, and on the development of staff. Most recently, she worked at the UNICEF Asia-Pacific Regional Office on the

Public Finance for Children Initiative. Previously, she led several coalitions and networks on global issues as Executive Director of the Connect U.S. Fund, a multi-foundation grant making initiative, and as Executive Vice President and Chief of Staff at Citizens for Global Solutions. She has significant experience in organisational leadership, advocacy and strategic communications, and has led numerous multi-organisational messaging initiatives on advocacy goals. She holds a Master of Arts magna cum laude in International Peace and Conflict Resolution, with a concentration on gender in conflict. She speaks English and French.

## **Emma Puig de la Bellacasa**

Regional Specialist on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion for Latin America and the Caribbean, Regional Office for the Americas, Plan International



Emma Puig de la Bellacasa, regional specialist of gender equality and social inclusion programs for the regional office for the Americas of PLAN INTERNATIONAL. Graduated in social anthropology with a pre-doctoral diploma in clinical psychology and psychopathology and a diploma in gender studies. With more than 15 years of experience in the Latin American and Caribbean region, at local and community level; In the work for the defense of the rights of women and girls, gender equality, the promotion of sexual reproductive rights and the fight

against gender violence. In the hands of women's and youth organizations of indigenous and Afro-descendant populations. She has worked at the community level, contributing to the creation of spaces for the empowerment and political participation of girls and women as well as technical advisers for government ministries, positions of responsibility in NGOs and in instances of International Cooperation and the European Union.

## **Gabrielle Hosein**

Head of Department and Lecturer, Institute for Gender and Development Studies, University of the West Indies



Gabrielle Jamela Hosein is Head of the Institute for Gender and Development Studies, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus. Her current research areas are politics and governance, Indo-Caribbean feminisms, and sexualities. She has been involved in Caribbean feminist movement building for two decades and writes a weekly

column, *Diary of a Mothering Worker*, for the Trinidad Guardian newspaper.

## **Daniela Ligiero**

CEO, Together for Girls



Daniela Ligiero is the Chief Executive Officer of Together for Girls, a global, public-private partnership dedicated to ending violence against children, especially sexual violence against girls. The partnership includes five UN agencies, the governments of the United States and Canada, several private sector organizations and more than 20 country governments in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean, working together to generate comprehensive data and solutions of this public

health and human rights issue. Before she joined Together for Girls, she served as the Vice President of Girls and Women's Strategy at the UN Foundation and developed the foundation's gender integration strategy. In addition, she worked at the U.S. Department of State where she led the integration of gender issues across all of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Dr. Ligiero also served in two leadership roles at UNICEF in Brazil, first as Chief of HIV and then as Deputy Representative. She has worked on gender issues at the World Bank and US Senate. She earned her doctorate in counseling and community psychology from the University of Maryland where she also held the honor of a distinguished lecturer in the Department of Psychology. She is fluent in Spanish, Portuguese, and French.



## **Giovanna Lauro**

Deputy Director of International Programs, PROMUNDO-US



Giovanna Lauro, DPhil - Giovanna Lauro is the Deputy Director of International Programs at Promundo. She has worked for more than a decade on the promotion of adolescents' sexual reproductive health and rights through gender-transformative approaches. Her areas of focus include research and programs targeting the prevention of harmful traditional practices and the engagement of men and boys in the prevention of gender-based violence. Prior to joining Promundo, Giovanna worked as SRHR Advocacy Advisor at Evidence for Action, a DfID-funded multi-country programme aimed at promoting maternal and newborn survival in six African countries. Previously, she worked at the United Nations Foundation as Associate Director of the Women and Population Programme. She also worked on issues of diversity, race, and ethnicity at the London School of Economics, and researched harmful traditional practices among minority communities in several European countries at the University of Oxford, where she attained her DPhil in Political Science. Her previous degrees include a Master's degree from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies with a focus on Public Health, and a BA from the University of Bologna.

## **Shelly N. Abdool-Zerezeghi**

Regional Gender Advisor, UNICEF Latin America and the Caribbean



Shelly N. Abdool has a Master in International Relations, Gender and Development from the University of Western Ontario and 18 years of experience at the national, regional and global levels in identifying, addressing and reducing gender inequalities. She has worked as a researcher in gender and health issues at various universities and has dedicated her career to strengthening capacities to respond to gender inequalities in health in the Member States of the World Health Organization and the Pan American Health Organization. She currently serves as Regional Gender Advisor for UNICEF Latin America and the Caribbean.

## **Rosalee Gonzales**

North America Coordinator, Continental Network of Indigenous Women of the Americas (ECMIA)



Dr. Rosalee Gonzalez is Co-Coordinator for the Continental Network of Indigenous Women of the Americas, North American Region (2011-2015; 2015-2018) and serves on the Academic Advisory Board for the Global School of Indigenous Women's Leadership, a FIMI Project (International Forum of Indigenous Women). She is a Senior Researcher and Advisor for Native Americans in Philanthropy and is currently faculty at Arizona State University. She holds a PhD in Justice and Social Inquiry. Her scholar-activism focuses on participating,

documenting and studying the Globalization of Indigenous Women's Movements (GIWM), with an emphasis on networks and the legal advocacy of indigenous women in international spheres. She is an active participant within the international indigenous women's movement and through La Red Xicana Indigena, and has contributed as a founding-member of the Continental Network of Indigenous Women of the Americas (ECMIA).

## **Jeanne Smoot**

Senior Counsel for Policy and Strategy, Tahirih Justice Center



Jeanne L. Smoot is the Senior Counsel for Policy and Strategy at the Tahirih Justice Center ("Tahirih"), a Virginia-headquartered national legal advocacy organization that protects survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, female genital mutilation/cutting, "honor" violence, forced marriage, and other abuses. Previously, Ms. Smoot led Tahirih's public policy team for over a decade. Ms. Smoot is currently focused on leading efforts at the national and state levels to

enact legal and policy changes to address forced and child marriage in the United States. Ms. Smoot is a graduate of Harvard Law School and Harvard-Radcliffe College, and holds a master's degree from Tufts University.

## **Paula Tavares**

Women, Business and the Law, World Bank



Paula Tavares is an attorney with over 10 years of experience working with international development issues, with expertise in comparative legal analysis and the legal and regulatory framework affecting women's economic inclusion. Paula joined the World Bank Group's Women, Business and the Law in 2010 and currently leads the Protecting Women from Violence indicator, focusing on the violence against women legislation. Her prior legal experience includes working with government multilateral trade agreements, private sector initiatives and non-governmental organizations. Paula is a Brazilian lawyer and holds an LL.M. from Georgetown University Law Center and a specialization in International Relations from the University of Brasilia, Brazil.

## **Catherine Russell**

United States Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues



Cathy Russell leads the State Department's efforts to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls around the world. She focuses on addressing gender-based violence, promoting women's full participation in society, investing in adolescent girls, and integrating women's issues into U.S. foreign policy. She also serves as co-chair of the U.S.-Afghan Women's Council and the U.S.-Pakistan Women's Council, and as a board member for the Thomson Reuters Foundation's Trust Women initiative, the Wilson Center's Women in Public Service Initiative, and the Alliance for Artisan Enterprise. Prior to assuming this position in August 2013, she served as Deputy Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff to Second Lady Dr. Jill Biden focusing on military families and higher education. During her tenure at the White House, Ambassador Russell coordinated the development of the Administration's strategy to prevent and respond to gender-based violence globally. She received a B.A. in Philosophy from Boston College and a J.D. from George Washington University.

## **Khadija Sinanan**

Co-Director, Womantra (Trinidad and Tobago)



Khadija Sinanan is an Attorney-at-Law and Co-Director of feminist non-profit organisation, WOMANTRA. WOMANTRA is a youth-led non-profit organization dedicated to feminist activism and scholarship and improving the lives of women and girls in the Caribbean region. During law school, Khadija volunteered with non-governmental organisation ASPIRE (Advocates for Safe Parenthood, Improving Reproductive Equity)

where she gained invaluable insight into the gender and SRHR advocacy landscape of Trinidad and Tobago. She continues to advocate for the improvement of the women and girls' rights through her work with WOMANTRA. In 2013 Khadija was selected as one of Women Deliver's 100 Global Young Leaders and in 2015 was selected by Women Deliver as the 2015 World Contraception Day Ambassador for Latin American and the Caribbean."

## **Liza Villanueva**

Girl Scouts' National Young Woman of Distinction 2015 and Founder of iDREAM Express (USA)



Liza Villanueva is currently a student at American University, who visited the Philippines for the first time at seven years old, and saw that many children do not attend school because of their lack of resources, money, or their distance. Nine years later, Liza decided to take action through a Girl Scout Gold Award and established a mobile learning center (a van equipped with tables, chairs, eating

utensils, tablets, books, school/art/hygienic supplies, and miscellaneous educational tools). The center currently travels to two locations weekly: Bacolod and Silay. At the centers, children (of all ages—infant to young adult) are bathed, have their wounds and eye/skin infections treated, receive slippers, and are taught reading, writing, and math.

## **Andrew Morrison**

Gender and Diversity Unit, Inter-American Development Bank



Andrew Morrison is Chief of the Gender and Diversity Division at the Inter-American Development Bank. Prior to joining the IDB, he worked at the World Bank as a Lead Economist in the Gender and Development Group and as the Regional Gender Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean. He also has worked as an associate professor of economics at Tulane University and the University of New Mexico. He

has written books and articles in the area of gender equality, international migration, labor markets and violence prevention. His Ph.D. in economics is from Vanderbilt University.

## **Ximena Casas,**

Senior Advocacy Program Officer, Latin America Program, Planned Parenthood Federation of America



Ximena is the Senior Officer for Policy Advocacy Programs in Latin America and the Caribbean of Planned Parenthood Global, the international arm of PPFA. Ximena coordinates advocacy programs in the region to promote and defend sexual and reproductive rights. Ximena arrived at PP Global after working at the Center for Reproductive Rights, at Human Rights Watch and having completed an internship at the

Center for Justice and International Law (CEJIL). Ximena graduated as a lawyer at the Universidad del Rosario in Bogotá, Colombia and obtained her LL.M (MA in law) with a focus on human rights and gender from Columbia University in New York, where she graduated with honors (Harlan Fiske Stone ) And received the human rights fellowship.

## **Marcela Eternod Aramburú**

Executive Secretary, Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres (INMUJERES),  
México



Marcela Eternod Aramburú, studied mathematics and philosophy at the UNAM, has a specialty in mathematical logic, demography and one more in gender statistics. She worked in the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI), where she was director general of statistics and responsible for introducing the gender perspective as a continuous task in the statistical projects of its competence, and to carry out jointly with INMUJERES and UN Women the first surveys of gender violence that were carried out in Mexico. She is co-author of several books, has published articles and essays, and has taught courses, conferences and workshops on sociodemographic topics; With particular attention to labor markets, reconciliation of work and family life, use of time, care and family, aging, and gender statistics. She is currently Executive Secretary of the National Institute of Women in Mexico.

## **Luz Patricia Mejía**

Technical Secretary of the Follow-up Mechanism to the Belem do Pará Convention (MESECVI/OAS)



Luz Patricia Mejía is the Technical Secretary of the MESECVI. Previously, she has served Rapporteur for Women's Rights, Commissioner and President of the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights (IACHR). A graduate of the Faculty of Juridical and Political Sciences of the Central University of Venezuela, she previously worked as Director of the Legal Office of the Public Ministry, and with the Office of the Ombudsperson in Venezuela.

## **Andrés de Francisco**

Gender and Life Course, Pan American Health Organization



Dr. Luis Andrés de Francisco Serpa is the Director of the Family, Gender and Life Course Department at the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO). He is a medical doctor from Colombia, with a master's degree in Clinical Tropical Medicine and a

second one in Community Health in Developing Countries, both from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. He obtained a Ph.D. in Medicine from the same university in 1991. Dr. de Francisco has over 30 years of career dedicated to public health in the area of maternal, child, family planning, and reproductive health in Colombia, West Africa countries, Bangladesh and Switzerland. Dr. de Francisco joined WHO in 2008 and four years later he was appointed Deputy Executive Director, Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health. He has authored numerous publications on topics such as maternal, neonatal and child survival, nutrition and primary health care.

## **Hilda Morales Trujillo**

Procuradora Adjunta II del Procurador de los Derechos Humano y Experta Titular de Guatemala ante el Comité de Expertas del MESECVI



Abogada y Notaria, Licenciada en Ciencias Jurídicas y Sociales, Magister en Derechos Humanos y con un post grado en Derecho Sindical y del Trabajo de la Universidad de los Estudios de Roma, Italia. Ha sido activista de derechos humanos de la niñez, de las mujeres y de las personas con discapacidad. Ocupó los cargos de Viceministra de Trabajo, Magistrada Suplente de la Corte de Apelaciones y Gerenta del Organismo Judicial. En su paso por este

último y por el Ministerio Público, impulsó la formación del personal en procesos educativos relacionados con los derechos humanos, los delitos sexuales y los delitos que se cometen contra las mujeres. Desde 2005 es Experta independiente, por Guatemala, ante el MESECVI. Actualmente se desempeña como Procuradora Adjunta II del Procurador de los Derechos Humanos.

## **Carmen Moreno Toscano**

Executive Secretary, Inter-American Commission of Women (OAS)



Carmen Moreno, an internationalist and diplomat, began her work on women's rights and gender equality as a member of the Mexican Delegation to the first UN Conference on Women (1975). She has since served as the Mexican Ambassador to Costa Rica and Guatemala, as well as the Permanent Representative of Mexico to the Organization of American States (OAS). In 2003, Carmen Moreno was appointed by the

Secretary-General of the UN as Director of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW). In July 2009, she was appointed as Executive Secretary of the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) of the Organization of American States (OAS), and continues to serve in that position.