

## XLVIII OAS Policy Roundtable

### “Milestones and Challenges in the Advancement of the Rights of Afro-Descendants in the Americas”

#### PANELISTS' BIOS

##### **Congressman Gregory W. Meeks (D-NY)**

**Representative of the Fifth Congressional District of New York, United States House of Representatives**



Congressman Meeks has served for fifteen years in the U.S. House of Representatives. He sits in the Financial Services Committee and the Foreign Affairs Committee. He is a supporter of diplomacy and Co-chair of the OAS Caucus to facilitate a stronger, more cooperative hemisphere. Congressman Meeks earned his bachelor's degree at Adelphi University and received his law degree from Howard University.

##### **Ambassador Deborah Mae Lovell**

**Permanent Representative of Antigua & Barbuda to the Organization of American States (OAS)**



Ambassador Lovell is a career Antiguan and Barbudan diplomat with twenty-five years of experience, having joined the Foreign Service in 1983 as a Third Secretary in the High Commission for Eastern Caribbean States in London. She held several positions including Acting High Commissioner in the Antigua and Barbuda office in Ottawa, Canada for three years, Minister Counselor in the Embassy of Antigua and Barbuda in Washington, D.C., and in the Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York. Ambassador Lovell is accredited as Ambassador to the United States and to the OAS since September 17, 2004.

##### **Zakiya Carr Johnson**

**Director of the Race, Ethnicity, and Social Inclusion Unit, Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, U.S. State Department**



Ms. Carr Johnson coordinates with U.S. embassies in the region and interagency partners to support efforts to address race, ethnicity, and gender issues as part of Department of State's social inclusion policy. For 17 years, Ms. Carr Johnson has worked with marginalized communities in Latin America and the Caribbean and has also written articles and coordinated dialogues on the inclusion of ethnic and minority groups, economic, social and cultural rights-based development and diversity. She earned her B.A. in Communications and Spanish at Howard University and a M.A. in International Relations at Syracuse University.

##### **Robert J. Cottrol**

**Professor of Law, History, and Sociology, and Harold Paul Green Research Professor of Law, George Washington University**



Professor Cottrol joined the Law School faculty in 1995 as a visiting professor of law of legal history. He taught at Rutgers University and Boston College, and has been a visiting professor at the University of Virginia. His writings on law and history have appeared in academic journals, and he is the author of various books on race related topics. He is currently doing research contrasting the role of law in the development of systems of slavery and racial hierarchy in the United States and Latin America. He has lectured in Latin American universities. Professor Cottrol has a B.A. and Ph.D. from Yale University, and a Juris Doctor from Georgetown University.

**Francisco Lopez**  
**President and CEO of Bert Corona Leadership Institute**



Mr. Lopez is a senior management and policy executive. He has experience working with governments, private sector, and community development organizations. He served as a presidential appointed advisor at the US Department of Labor. For more than 20 years, he has led and executed civic, workforce, and economic development strategies and coordinated national and international policy development. Mr. Lopez attended the School of Industrial and Labor Relations and the Institute for Public Affairs at Cornell University. He received a Juris Doctor from Howard University and completed the Executive Program at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government.