



## **Laura Chinchilla**

Co-Chair, Inter-American Dialogue

Former President of Costa Rica

Laura Chinchilla Miranda was elected the first female president of the Republic of Costa Rica on February 7, 2010, for a constitutional term of four years.

Her election as President of the Republic of Costa Rica was preceded by a successful political career which began with her appointment as Minister of Public Security between 1996 and 1998, thus making her the first woman to hold that position. While in that role, she also served as President of the National Immigration Board and the National Drug Council. Between 2002 and 2006 she was elected member of the National Congress where she chaired the Committee on Legal Affairs and the Committee on Narcotics. In 2006 she was elected Vice President of Costa Rica, assuming office as the Ministry of Justice at the same time. Finally, in 2010 she became president.

Her efforts in the promotion of the rights of women, on the protection of children and on environmental sustainability, especially in the protection of the seas, earned her two important international awards: the “Excellence in National Management of the Ocean” Peter Benchley of 2011, and the “Award of the Shark Guardian of the year “in 2013.

Along with her public career, Chinchilla dedicated part of her professional career to the international sector. She has worked as a consultant in Latin America and Africa with various international organizations in the area of institutional reform, with particular emphasis on judicial and public security reform. Relevant tasks performed include diagnostics on the justice sector for the Agency for International Development (USAID); coordination of studies and projects on judicial reform for the United Nations Program for Development (UNDP) and assessments and advice on police reform to the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). She has been part of a number of initiatives to promote reforms in citizen security and human rights throughout Latin America.

She has lectured at various forums and has several publications in both Spanish and English on topics related to the administration of justice, public security and police reform. She holds Honorary Doctorates from the University for Peace of the United Nations, Georgetown University, and Kyoto University of Foreign Studies. She also headed the Organization of American State’s Observation Electoral Mission during the 2015 electoral process in México. Also she is inviting professor at the Government School at the Instituto Tecnológico de Monterrey, were she is leading the Latin America Class on Democracy and Citizenship. She is a political scientist and graduated from college at the Universidad de Costa Rica. She also holds a Master in Public Policy from Georgetown University.