First meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean

Santiago, 12-14 November 2014

CONCEPT NOTE ON THE WORKING DOCUMENT FOR THE SECOND SESSION OF THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Population dynamics as an axis of sustainable development: the Montevideo Consensus as a tool for reducing inequality in the framework of human rights
1. Introduction

With a view to expediting progress regarding the dates, agendas and documentation of the first meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, to be held in November 2014, and of the second session of the Conference, to be held in 2015 in Mexico, representatives of three countries which serve as Presiding Officers of the Conference—Ecuador, Mexico and Uruguay1—met in Santiago on 24 July 2014. This meeting was also attended by representatives of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), as technical secretariat of the Conference, and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), as the main United Nations fund and agency on population matters.

As well as setting the place and date of the meeting of the Presiding Officers—Santiago, 12-14 November 2014—and the place and month of the second session of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean—Mexico City, October 2015—it was agreed to move ahead with the formulation of operating guidelines for the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development. Accordingly, the thematic title of the second session of the Conference was chosen: “Population dynamics as an axis of sustainable development: the Montevideo Consensus as a tool for reducing inequality in the framework of human rights”.2

The main outcome expected of the second session was also agreed: an instrument that would offer countries not only clear and specific recommendations for implementing the Montevideo Consensus, but also the means to monitor that process. Although the name of the document remains to be established (action plan, guidelines, guide or other name), it was agreed that it should be “a tool for operationalizing the Consensus”.3 Lastly, it was agreed that this document should have (as an integral part) some kind of technical guide to help ascertain whether gaps were narrowing, what action could be taken, what targets could be reached, and in what timeframe. It was agreed that the document should have human rights and the reduction of inequality as its main axes, and that it would serve as a reference for the round tables to be held in the framework of the second session of the Conference”.4

Accordingly, the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE)-Population Division of ECLAC, as technical secretariat of the Regional Conference on Population and Development, was asked to prepare illustrative drafts with specific, concise examples referring to priority issues to be included in the document for the second session of the Conference. These were to be set out in table format5 and shared with the participants in the 24 July meeting with a view to receiving responses by early October. It was also agreed that CELADE would prepare a technical text to support the operating guide or action plan, which would be submitted to the Presiding Officers at their first meeting as a working document. The Presiding Officers would then make detailed decisions about the scope and characteristics of the working document for the second session of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin

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1 Uruguay participated as Chair of the Presiding Officers and as host of the first session of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (Montevideo, August 2013); Ecuador, as host of the last meeting of the ECLAC Ad Hoc Committee on Population and Development (Quito, July 2012), and Mexico, as the host of the second session of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, to be held in October 2015 in Mexico City.


5 This is a form of presentation that was used at the 24 July meeting, which will be explained in greater detail later.
America and the Caribbean. It was decided that this documentation would be prepared with the participation and support of UNFPA, and in coordination with the three countries mentioned.

Further to this mandate, the technical secretariat of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean prepared the present concept note, which describes the structure of the document and the outline of each of its parts. In particular, it presents the contextual aspects that should be included (section 2), explains the procedure for the preparation of the document (section 3), describes the substantive sections (section 4) and, lastly, discusses some aspects of follow-up (section 5).

2. Context

The Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development was the outcome of the first session of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Montevideo from 12 to 15 August 2013. It is the most significant intergovernmental agreement achieved in the region in the area of population and development, and has become a key piece in the review process of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and its follow-up beyond 2014.

The first session of the Conference was attended by official delegations from 38 member countries and associate members of ECLAC, officials from other countries and international agencies, representatives of non-governmental organizations, academic and technical bodies, and members of civil society. After several days of discussion, the official delegations at the session adopted the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development by acclamation. The Consensus has a preamble, general principles, priority actions and follow-up recommendations.

The preamble sets forth a set of initial considerations relating to past regional and global agreements, especially in the area of population and development. It then affirms some general principles for regional action regarding population and development, and proposes a broad range of priority measures in nine substantive areas, which had been identified in a working document prepared for the session. This part includes a section on frameworks for the implementation of the future regional agenda on population and development which, among other points, agrees to “adopt a regional agenda on population and development for Latin America and the Caribbean fully respecting the Cairo Programme of Action and the key actions for its further implementation beyond 2014” (paragraph 100). The present document is part of the effort to respond to that mandate. The Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development concludes with a section on follow-up recommendations, which refer chiefly to the future work of the Conference.

The broad support which the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development has received in the region was reflected in the discussions surrounding its agreements, in which the participation of civil society representatives conferred legitimacy and strength on the resulting Consensus. The Consensus is also notable for the breadth, detail and interconnectedness of the priority measures it proposes, and for its visionary, inclusive and forward-looking nature, which is highly relevant to the region’s reality and interests. For this reason, the Consensus has enabled the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to adopt shared positions in international forums, particularly in the forty-seventh session of the Commission on Population and Development of the United Nations, held in April 2014 in New York. This ability has become a distinguishing feature of the region’s participation in these forums, has served as a benchmark for other regions and has shown a possible path for compatibilizing the global accord to fulfil the Programme of Action of the

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6 Proposed regional agenda on population and development for Latin America and the Caribbean beyond 2014 (LC/L.3641 (CRPD.1/4).
International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014 with the regional agreement to address specific and emerging issues in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The final document, as well as expanding on the description given above, may consider the outcomes of the special session on the follow-up to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014, held on 22 September 2014. It may also take into account the discussions and consensuses reached up to mid-2015 in the framework of the global process to prepare the new post-2015 development agenda, including the sustainable development goals.

The final document could thus include the updated and detailed implications for action on population and development at the regional and global levels of: (i) the discussions and resolutions of the special session of the General Assembly on the follow-up to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014; (ii) the process of establishing and adopting sustainable development goals; and (iii) the space which resolution 2014/1 of the Commission on Population and Development of the United Nations, adopted at its forty-seventh session, affords to the regional agendas.7

3. Procedure

Detailed review of the Montevideo Consensus shows that, although it covers all the major population and development issues in Latin America and the Caribbean and forms the basis for a comprehensive, modern roadmap for the future of regional action in this area, it requires an additional set of clarifications to make it into an operational agenda.

With a view to making progress in this direction, the document will be prepared on the basis of two closely linked components.

The first is the outcome of an exercise to translate the operative paragraphs of the Montevideo Consensus into specific proposals with objectives, target and progress indicators, along with timebound lines of action. The proposals for action are presented in ad hoc tables prepared to illustrate the operative implications of each item. These tables, which are open to further improvements, were presented and discussed at the working meeting held on 24 July, in a preliminary and introductory format, using a couple of paragraphs from the Consensus as a reference. Annex 1 shows a model table, whose format may vary for ease of reading.

The second component will be the bases and technical and political rationale for the objectives, targets, indicators and lines of action presented in the tables, and a methodical review of the conditions needed to achieve them, including an analysis of threats to the actions proposed and possible responses. The basic inputs for this narrative and analytical part will be the Montevideo Consensus —especially the preambles to the various sections— and the two working documents of the first session of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean.8 Specialized arguments and recent evidence will also be included.

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7 In paragraph 17 of the resolution, the Commission on Population and Development “takes note of the outcome documents from the recent regional conferences on population and development and that each outcome provides region-specific guidance on population and development beyond 2014 for each respective region which adopted that particular outcome document” (Commission on Population and Development, 12 April 2014, Forty-seventh session, p. 6).
8 Implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean: review of the 2009-2013 period and lessons learned. Summary and overview (LC/L.3640(CRPD.1/3)) and Proposed regional agenda on population and development for Latin America and the Caribbean beyond 2014 (LC/L.3641(CRPD.1/4)).
The ad hoc tables described, which in fact constitute the main component of the text, will be included as annexes to the document for reasons of presentation. The main body of the document will be the narrative and analysis which provides the rationale and justification, where necessary, for the objectives, targets, indicators, lines of action and deadlines set forth in the tables, as well as the conditions needed for the achievement of the activities and targets.

4. Substantive sections

As noted earlier, this section will set forth the conceptual rationale for each line of action identified in the table. This could be based politically on the document Proposed regional agenda on population and development for Latin America and the Caribbean beyond 2014, presented at the first session of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, on the reference document on the long-term impact of population dynamics La nueva era demográfica en América Latina y el Caribe: la hora de la igualdad según el reloj demográfico, to be presented at the meeting of the Presiding Officers, on the tools mentioned in the Montevideo Consensus, or on others mentioned in national policies or others sorts of document. Empirically, it will draw on the discussion and theoretical underpinnings for the targets, indicators and oversight procedures, review of sources and trend monitoring, to develop feasible scenarios regarding the achievement of the targets and measurement of the indicators.

These sections will form part of the narrative part of the document and will be prepared using the tables constructed previously. Given that at the time of writing the tables are just beginning to be prepared and remain to be discussed before the meeting of the Presiding Officers, then discussed and endorsed at that meeting, little can be said about this component of the document at this point, beyond the general ideas described in the previous paragraph.

For illustrative purposes, annex 3 contains an example of how the table described (see annex 1) may be used to elaborate on a paragraph of the Montevideo Consensus, specifically paragraph 12 of section B, referring to sexual and reproductive health services for adolescents.

The supporting narrative will be a text such as the example given in annex 2, for illustrative purposes only, since this will likely be further developed in the final document. Since the Montevideo Consensus establishes no priorities among the measures, it is important to mention that: (i) the supporting arguments for the various operative lines of action will tend to be similar in structure and logic; and (ii) given the specific nature of each measure, the supporting texts for the lines of action may address different areas (for example, there may be targets referring to institutional or legislative matters, or the availability of physical or human resources).

5. Follow-up

This section will aim to operationalize the contents of the sections “Frameworks for the implementation of the future regional agenda on population and development” and “Follow-up recommendations” in the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development, which refer to oversight of the measures.

The main purpose of this section is to make progress regarding the agreements set forth in paragraphs 99 and 101 of the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development. The first refers to the need to establish or strengthen a national coordinating mechanism, with the participation of civil society organizations, to facilitate the implementation and follow-up of the Cairo Programme of Action
beyond 2014 and to act as a permanent liaison with the Regional Conference—because an active national counterpart is crucial for any implementation follow-up, oversight or evaluation. The second refers to the agreement to generate regional and national machineries to oversee the fulfilment of the regional agenda on population and development for Latin America and the Caribbean beyond 2014 and ensure its accountability—because formal machineries are essential for effective implementation.

The first component of this section will address existing regional mechanisms, in particular successful experiences, since oversight and follow-up must be built on the basis of what is available and duly tested. In this regard, the experience of the subsidiary bodies of ECLAC will be carefully considered.

A second component is the role of governments as members of regional machineries, and as agents and sources of oversight and follow-up at the national level. The countries in the region have played an increasingly prominent role in recent discussions on the post-2015 development agenda, and this should be extended to oversight and follow-up of the commitments contained in internationally agreed agendas.

The experience with oversight and follow-up of international agreements in the past few decades has shown that regional oversight machineries—usually with independent secretariats, using sources that prioritize comparability between countries—cannot be assumed to be compatible with national mechanisms, which generally report to governments and prioritize comparability within individual countries over time. Accordingly, particular attention will be afforded to coordination and harmonization between the two levels.

A third component will refer to the role of civil society, both at the regional or subregional level and at the national level. There is no doubt that civil society must have a place in oversight and follow-up processes. Civil society and its organizations have found ways to get their voice heard at the discussion and decision stages of international agreements, notwithstanding that ultimately governments are solely responsible for such agreements. The next challenge is to institutionalize civil society’s role in follow-up, oversight and compliance in relation to international agreements, all the more so in the case of the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development, in whose creation civil society played such an active and prominent role.

A fourth component of this section refers to data. Insofar as possible, it is important to prioritize the use of official national statistics, which must meet quality and comparability standards and be able to portray, at least, social and gender gaps. It is therefore necessary to strengthen national data sources and facilitate access to them by all types of users, so that such data can be used effectively in processes of follow-up and oversight of compliance with international agreements and commitments.

Lastly, scheduling options and opportunities for evaluating the implementation of the Consensus will be discussed, since the biennial meetings of the Conference may be too close together for this purpose, especially given that the Plan of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development will continue to be monitored every five years.
## Annex 1

**MODEL TABLE USED TO TRANSLATE THE MONTEVIDEO CONSENSUS ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT INTO AN OPERATIONAL FORMAT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Montevideo Consensus</th>
<th>Plan of action</th>
<th>Relevant and binding agreements and resolutions, and other plans</th>
<th>Observations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>Priority measures</td>
<td>General objective</td>
<td>Specific objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme Paragraphs associated with the theme</td>
<td>General objective relating to the corresponding theme in the Consensus</td>
<td>Specific objectives relating to the corresponding paragraph in the Consensus</td>
<td>Lines of action proposed to achieve the specific objectives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Background and general rationale

In the region today there are around 110 million young people between the ages of 10 and 19, who are recognized in various international instruments and in national legislation as bearers of rights. Government action must guarantee these rights and attend to the needs of this group to ensure that this stage of their lives is satisfactory and fulfilling. Social investment in this age group is essential for the three pillars — social, economic and environmental — of sustainable development, since the key landmarks of adulthood begin to take shape at this stage of the life cycle.

Specific rationale

Sexual and reproductive health care is urgently needed for adolescents, given the high, rising and unequal rates of pregnancy in this age group. It is well documented that sexual and reproductive health care for adolescents needs a specialized approach, different from that provided to young people over the age of 18 and mature adults. Accordingly, special services are needed, or, as some countries have termed them, “youth-friendly” services. The great challenge is, then, to guarantee access to good-quality, timely sexual and reproductive health services that are relevant to all adolescents, respecting the principles of confidentiality, privacy and societal participation, as set forth resolutely in the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development.

Rationale for the lines of action

Sexual and reproductive health care for adolescents requires special infrastructure to facilitate and encourage their use of such services. The basic idea is that they should be adolescent-friendly services, although the way in which this is construed and implemented varies from one country to another, and depends on public health approaches and political stances. Be this as it may, such services require specific budget allocations and specialized, properly trained human resources to operate. They also need an institutional framework and health and other personnel to facilitate and promote attendance by adolescents at health services. A main component of this should be the provision of different forms of contraceptives, including emergency contraceptives. Punitive provisions and those that limit the

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9 By 2015 this population segment is projected to number 112 million. See [online] http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/Excel-Data/population.htm.
12 Paz Robledo, “Lección 2: gestión de programas y servicios de salud de calidad para adolescentes, experiencias exitosas y lecciones aprendidas en atención de adolescentes”, classnotes for postgraduate diploma in sexual and reproductive health in adolescents, with an emphasis on counseling, Santiago, Chile, Faculty of Medical Sciences, University of Santiago, 2014.
preferential rights of adolescents should be identified and changed. In this regard, actions to achieve the Objective need to consider various dimensions: budgets, infrastructure, equipment, health personnel, institutional structure and legislation.

Rationale for the targets and their deadlines

Legislation can be put in place during this decade to facilitate and promote the attendance of adolescents at health services, if the necessary political will exists. This is demonstrated by the experience of countries which have made more resolute progress in this area by passing laws, degrees and regulations that guarantee this population group access to sexual and reproductive health care.13

However, more time is needed to achieve targets on infrastructure and specialized personnel, because of the costs and the construction and preparation periods involved. The same is true of targets for reducing —and ideally eradicating— the occurrence of unwanted pregnancies. International experience, especially in the region, shows that this requires policies and programmes to be in place for a not inconsiderable amount of time.14

Monitoring the indicators on these last targets also requires specific measurement devices, particularly specialized surveys, which need to properly represent adolescents in the statistics. This will require a regional survey programme, or the inclusion of standardized modules in regular surveys in all the countries in the region. Vital statistics can also be useful for assessing changes in adolescent maternity or fertility rates, but do not serve to capture rates of unwanted pregnancy or fertility.

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13 Some examples are the Programme to prevent adolescent pregnancy 2009-2013 of the Plurinational State of Bolivia; document 147 of the National Economic and Social Policy Council (CONPES) of Colombia, “Guidelines for developing a strategy to prevent adolescent pregnancy and to help children and youth ages 6 to 19 to plan for their future”; and the 2011 National inter-sector strategy for family planning and prevention of adolescent pregnancy of Ecuador. With regard to access to emergency contraceptives, Chile and Ecuador provide two examples. In Chile, article 6 of the regulations on Law 20,418 provides that “where an emergency contraceptive method is requested by a person under 14 years, the responsible service provider, in either the public or private sector, shall deliver such medication, and shall subsequently inform the father, mother or responsible adult indicated by the minor, for which purpose the data needed to fulfil this obligation shall be provided”. In March 2013 Ecuador issued regulations governing access to and availability of contraceptive methods in the national health system: article 2 provides that “establishments of the national health system shall provide information and counselling on the use of contraceptive methods, and shall deliver them in accordance with the level of care, including emergency oral contraception, to the population in general, and especially to adolescents, youth, men and women who so request” (ECLAC, Implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean: review of the 2009-2013 period and lessons learned. Summary and overview (LC/L.3640(CRPD.1/3)), Santiago, Chile, 2012, p. 58.). The national plan for sexual and reproductive health in Paraguay “strengthens the new paradigm for adolescent care as rights-bearers, and thus establishes that a strategy for prevention of pregnancy at early ages shall be developed and implemented, taking an age-appropriate and rights-based approach” (UNFPA Paraguay, Boletín Informativo, No. 15, 26 September 2014).

Annex 3

EXAMPLE OF A TABLE FOR OPERATIONALIZING PARAGRAPH 12 OF SECTION B, OF THE MONTEVIDEO
CONSENSUS ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>B. Rights, needs, responsibilities and demands of children, adolescents and young people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Priority measure (paragraph)</td>
<td>12. Implement comprehensive, timely, good-quality sexual health and reproductive health programmes for adolescents and young people, including youth-friendly sexual health and reproductive health services with a gender, human rights, intergenerational and intercultural perspective, which guarantee access to safe and effective modern contraceptive methods, respecting the principles of confidentiality and privacy, to enable adolescents and young people to exercise their sexual rights and reproductive rights, to have a responsible, pleasurable and healthy sex life, avoid early and unwanted pregnancies, the transmission of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, and to take free, informed and responsible decisions regarding their sexual and reproductive life and the exercise of their sexual orientation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General objective</th>
<th>Guarantee the exercise of human rights and the satisfaction of needs, and promote equality between children, adolescents and young people.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specific objectives</td>
<td>Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health services, in keeping with the principles of the Montevideo Consensus.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Lines of action   | - Pass specific national legislation on the sexual and reproductive health rights and care of adolescents, and develop the care regulations, standards and protocols necessary to implement it.  
- Devote the necessary resources to the operation of sexual and reproductive health programmes and services for adolescents, in keeping with the principles of the Montevideo Consensus, and include them as an item of the country’s regular budget.  
- Build up—physically, institutionally and functionally—sexual and reproductive health services specifically for adolescents, in keeping with the principles of the Montevideo Consensus.  
- Establish mechanisms for consultation and participation of adolescents regarding the sexual and reproductive health policies and programmes that affect them.  
- Establish mechanisms for monitoring the targets established and checking progress towards them at the national and regional level. |
| Targets           | - By 2020, all the countries have a legal framework on adolescent sexual and reproductive health, a national adolescent sexual and reproductive health programme and special sexual and reproductive health services for adolescents in operation, in keeping with the principles of the Montevideo Consensus.  
- By 2030, all the countries have adolescent sexual and reproductive health programmes and special sexual and reproductive health services for adolescents at the local level (in all municipalities).  
- By 2030 all adolescent demand for sexual and reproductive health care is covered in a proper and timely fashion by youth-friendly health services operating in keeping with the criteria set forth in the Montevideo Consensus.  
- By 2030, unmet demand for contraceptives among adolescents is equal to zero.  
- By 2030, unwanted adolescent fertility is equal to zero. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>B. Rights, needs, responsibilities and demands of children, adolescents and young people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Indicators (quantitative, achievement and impact) | - Percentage of adolescents who have received proper and timely sexual and reproductive health care, including for their contraceptive requirements.  
- Percentage of adolescents whose requirements for contraceptive methods have been met in an adequate and timely fashion.  
- Percentage of unwanted pregnancies among adolescents. |
| Process indicators | - Number of countries with sexual and reproductive health legislation, programmes and services for adolescents functioning at the national level, in keeping with the principles of the Montevideo Consensus.  
- Number of countries with sexual and reproductive health legislation, programmes and services for adolescents functioning at the local level, in keeping with the principles of the Montevideo Consensus. |
| Timeframe | 2020 and 2030. |
| Relevant and binding agreements and resolutions, and other plans | Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (PA-ICPD); Millennium Declaration; resolution 2012/1 of the forty-fifth session of the Commission on Population and Development in April 2012.  
Bali Global Youth Forum Declaration, adopted in December 2012; Declaration of the International Forum on Afro-descendent Youth;  
Ministerial Declaration on Educating to Prevent, signed by ministers of education and health from 30 Latin American and Caribbean countries in Mexico City, in August 2008, which has non-binding national and regional follow-up mechanisms (see [online] www.prevenirconeducacion.org/index.php/declaracion-ministerial). |

**Observations**

**Source**: Preapred by the authors.

’a’ The contents of the table coincide with those set forth in the table in annex 1. Here the rows are presented as columns for ease of reading.