



## **STATEMENT**

### **Women and Feminist NGO Forum in preparation for CSW66**

We, the representatives of over 80 networks and organizations of women and feminists in all their diversity and gender identities: indigenous, Afro-descendant, rural and peasant, grassroots, migrant and refugee women, Sex workers , women in prostitution, disables , women living with HIV, trans-gender, non-binaries and gender non-conforming, senior adults and widows, from Latin America and the Caribbean, gathered in this virtual meeting, send our greetings to the country delegations attending the special regional consultation session prior to the sixty-sixth Session of the Commission on the Status of Women - CSW 66; we suffer the same discriminations and the vulnerability of our rights, as well as the same concerns, that our organizations consider that need to be faced and eliminated in order to achieve the gender equality and empowerment of women and girls without further delays.

These concerns are expressed by the voices of thousands of women and girls in the Region, particularly those that are seriously ignored, marginalized and every day suffer multiple and varied situations and forms of discrimination, violence and infringements of their rights.

The climate crisis and the resulting losses and damages disproportionately affect marginalized groups, particularly women in all their diversity and gender identities, and exacerbate structural inequalities. Rights holders from ethnic and racial minorities - including the Afro-descendant population; sexual and gender minorities – including non-binary and gender non-conforming persons, as well as women and girls; from the indigenous peoples; migrants; persons with disabilities; persons living in conflict-affected areas – including situations of occupation and apartheid; and people and communities facing poverty and dispossession by the dominant development model –for instance, small food producers, often experience interrelated forms of marginalization, even in the context of the impacts of climate change, that deserve specific attention and adapted political responses.

Following the principles of the Montevideo Regional Strategy, the exhaustion of the current development style calls for a transition towards sustainable production and consumption

patterns that incorporate policies for the redistribution of wealth, income and time (ECLAC, 2017) putting women and girls in all their diversity at the center of our concerns.

We call for an effective and urgent attention to the losses and damages, considered the third pillar of international climate policy and law, included in the Paris Agreement, as an imperative for human rights and climate justice. The multiple forms of discrimination experienced by the diversity of groups affected, particularly women and girls in all their diversity and gender identities, must be considered and systematically redressed by approaching losses and damages. In the case of women and girls with disabilities, special consideration must be given in order to avoid their exclusion, a usual issue that must be corrected. Also they neglect and even attack the life and health of grassroots vulnerable women and girls in all their diversity in our countries .

We claim the inclusion of a human rights approach to environmental protection without neglecting the rights of our societies. Based on the new insights, the impacts of climate change are causing losses and damages that affect human societies and infrastructures, as well as the natural environment, and severely undermine the rights to life, safety, food, water, housing, health, education, livelihoods, the environment and other rights. This should not be an excuse to neglect and even attack the life and health of women and girls in all their diversity in our countries and let alone to privatize the provision of essential services like health care, education, social protection and others. We denounce discriminations and repeated rights violations that, although already existing, became more clearly evident since 2020 with the COVID-19 pandemic. Now it is mandatory to face these inequalities and eliminate the structural causes that sustain them.

We urge to put an end to the development modalities based on extractivism for the exploitation of resources, that evict the populations from their territories and destroy the environment. The governments should ensure the redistribution of the benefits from extractive activities and move towards resilient economies.

The year 2021 was marked by criminalization, persecution and violence, including the killing of many women that defended human rights and the environment. Our region is the most unsafe region in the world for the diversity of women defending their rights: 3 out of 4 attacks occurred in countries in Latin America and the Caribbean; and 7 countries in the Region concentrate the highest number of attacks occurring globally.

Based in all those consideration we request the governments to:

**We claim to put an end to these persecutions, attacks and deaths,** to report these actions, to demand their redress, including a financial compensation for those deaths and to reestablish

the occupation of the territories by their original owners. We claim for the development of comprehensive programs for the protection of the feminist defenders of the environment, community and indigenous leaders, particularly those that by their location, identity and social condition are more vulnerable, and we reiterate our demand for the elimination and punishment of all forms of harassment, persecution and/or criminalization against them.

**We urge governments to ratify and enforce the Paris Agreement on Climate Change** and respect the commitments adopted at COP 26 on the control of carbon emissions; pass internal standards and approve policies that integrate human rights, gender and a cross-sectional approach for the impact of climate change and to avoid, minimize and deal with the losses and damages; and reinforce and update the human rights frameworks and corporate accountability in the climate crisis.

**We urge all governments in the region to sign and ratify the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters (ESCAZÚ).**

**We urge the governments in the Region to ensure the rights of self-determination and participation of indigenous people;** ratify Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples; and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas, adopted by the Human Rights Council, and the Declaration of the Afro descendants Decade .

**We urge the governments to prioritize knowledge management and the strategies for mitigation, adaptation, prevention and reduction of disasters** and resilience focused on the care, protection and support of women and girls that depend on human resources for their wellbeing and livelihood, particularly in countries with the highest risk, like countries in the Caribbean. We furthermore urge them to develop and fund the training and education of women in climate-resilient jobs, including food and water safety, for a transition to a carbon-free environment; to incorporate education on the mitigation of the climate crisis and adaptation for a sustainable development into the school curricula, recovering a democratic dialogue of skills and practices for all women in their diversity leaving no one behind;

**Develop and facilitate the access to information on** climate change and disasters, information that is disaggregated by gender and age groups as well as other variables that characterize all the diversity of women and girls including various gender identities, in order to have the data to plan, implement and evaluate prevention, mitigation, conservation and repair programs that are adequate and shared with the population that is most affected;

**Acknowledge the contribution of indigenous peoples and women,** rural , peasant and grassroots women to fight climate change; provide financial and technical support to their initiatives including spaces for the recording and transmission of traditional knowledge across

the generations; train and include indigenous women in the funds for action against climate change, like the Green Climate Fund; eliminate language, economic and political barriers that prevent their participation in these spaces;

**Implement disaster risk reduction programs** that approach the needs and work for their prevention; train women and girls for prevention, considering the special needs of the various groups, for instance, in the case of women with disabilities, the difficulties faced in terms of communication if no special forms are considered; increase these training opportunities before the hurricane season. In the event of disasters, ensure the provision of essential social services for women and children in these emergency situations, facilitate safety through shelters that are well equipped to ensure their wellbeing, including menstrual hygiene supplies. Treat waste to manage their effect on the health of the population. Pay particular attention and promote the prevention of all forms of gender violence, particularly sexual violence, frequently observed in these situations.

**We urge the States to promote employ polices and social protection for women** to prevent them of climate changes consequences on future generations knowing women are the most vulnerable to enter precarious works . Also we request governments to design social protection and employment policies for women to be able to pass from extractivists activities to more sustainable economy. We request specifically training , guard and employability .

**Instamos a los Estados a que promuevan políticas de empleo y de contención social** para las mujeres que las resguarden de las consecuencias del cambio climático sobre las próximas generaciones a sabiendas que las mujeres son más vulnerables a la precarización. Y al mismo tiempo solicitamos que los Estados diseñen políticas de contención social y empleo para las mujeres que transiten de la economía extractiva a formas económicas más sustentables. Nos referimos a políticas específicas de capacitación, resguardo y empleabilidad

**Consider and adopt effective measures based on human rights for the prevention of gender violence** that is associated to the climate crisis and disasters and affects the life and the right to live violence-free lives, and limits the autonomy of women and girls. Child forced marriage, as well as infant abuses and forced pregnancy among girls, is driven by the increase in poverty and migrations forced by social and economic reasons. The governments should prioritize actions to prevent and eliminate this form of torture.

**Prioritize women in their diversity, including ethnic/racial and territorial diversity, among others,** in the planning, design and implementation of reconstruction measures after disasters, putting an emphasis on food safety and collective resilience, recognizing the disproportionate impacts suffered by women. Include the perspective of the youth, frequently ignored actors, in every program and activity.

**We claim for governments to provide sufficient funding for climate change mitigation and adaptation** to women through new additional and long-term funds dedicated to losses and damages, and privilege local ecosystems, the indigenous knowledge and youth leadership. Account for the use of the resources received to mitigate the effects and climate change and disasters; overcome the digital barriers experienced by women and girls; promote the cancellation of the foreign debt, require subsidies instead of loans and demand that the Global North repairs its debts with the Global South, including debt and tax justice.

**Work to eliminate the legal barriers that prevent women**, including widows and others, from having a title to land, resources and inheritances, and reduce the economic impact of climate change on the women and girls that suffer the most from food and water safety. Women's access to, use and control of land, water and production resources are essential to ensure their right to equality and a proper standard of living. These resources contribute to ensuring that women can meet their daily needs and those of their families and communities.

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