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United Nations Entity for Gender Equality  
and the Empowerment of Women

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Fifty-third meeting of the Presiding Officers of  
the Regional Conference on Women in Latin  
America and the Caribbean

Santiago, 26-28 January 2016

**DECLARATION OF THE MACHINERIES FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN  
OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN TO THE SIXTIETH SESSION  
OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN**



## **THE EMPOWERMENT, RIGHTS AND AUTONOMY OF WOMEN IN RELATION TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

*The ministers and high-level authorities of the national machineries for the advancement of women, gathered in representation of the Governments of Latin America and the Caribbean at the fifty-third meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, held at the headquarters of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean in Santiago, for the purpose of holding a special regional consultation with the theme of “Women’s empowerment and its link to sustainable development” in preparation for the sixtieth session of the Commission on the Status of Women,*

*Strenuously reaffirming* all international commitments, in particular the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (Convention of Belém do Pará), and regional commitments, including the Quito Consensus (2007), the Brasilia Consensus (2010), the Santo Domingo Consensus (2013) and the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development (2013), which represent the most up-to-date position of Latin America and the Caribbean,

*Reaffirming* the need to accelerate the full implementation of the Declaration and Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995), of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994) and the work of other conferences, whose main focus is to guarantee human rights, especially those of women and girls,

*Acknowledging* the efforts by States, the women’s and feminist movement, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and other key stakeholders to align the 2030 Agenda and its goals and targets with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Beijing Platform for Action,

*Abiding by* the recently drafted commitments: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, the climate change agreements reached at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the outcomes of the fifteen-year review of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security, and in the framework of the International Decade for People of African Descent,

1. *We reaffirm* that the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development should help accelerate the comprehensive and effective fulfilment of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Beijing Platform for Action, thereby delivering substantive equality for women and girls; and that gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls are prerequisites for achieving sustainable development in its economic, social and environmental dimensions;

2. *We note* that determined efforts to ensure that nobody is left behind, a firm political will, gender-sensitive institutions, good governance, and inclusive economic and social policies that address inequalities, are required to achieve the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to implement its gender dimensions for transformative change in the lives of all women and girls;

3. *We recognize* the importance of information and communications technologies (ICTs) for women's empowerment, and the consequent need to close the gap between men and women in the access and use of these technologies;

4. *We highlight* that Latin America and the Caribbean is a leading region in terms of its progress towards substantive equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and that responsibility for achieving these goals resides with an articulated set of State actors and sectors. Accordingly, there is a need for steps to be taken and institutional and financial mechanisms established at the national and subnational levels, as well as new and innovative forms of partnership, coordination and collaboration between government agencies, civil society, the private sector and other development stakeholders;

5. *We recognize* the need to integrate —as a priority— the gender dimensions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development into national sustainable development policies and programmes, and for that purpose we commit to strengthening regulatory, legal and political frameworks; increasing support for national machineries for the advancement of women; creating environments conducive to the financing of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls; strengthening women's leadership and support for feminist and women's organizations and other civil society organizations; and bolstering the follow-up and accountability of statistical systems;

6. *We welcome* the annual Economic and Social Council forum on financing for development, established under the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, and call for dialogue between that forum and the Commission on the Status of Women to enhance the links between the commitments to women's empowerment, rights and gender equality and financing for development, including the mobilization of financial and non-financial resources for the fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in relation to gender affairs;

7. *We reiterate* the need to ensure the sustainability of existing accomplishments, and to quicken the pace of efforts to make gender equality a reality;

8. *We promote* parity democracy, understood as the equal participation of women at all levels of decision-making in their societies, including in national and international entities and agencies, as well as peace-building and sustainable development with a gender perspective and in keeping with the historical context, and we recognize the full participation and leadership of women in the peace process of Colombia;

9. *We reiterate* the commitment set forth in the Brasilia Consensus, which stresses the need for differential measures to address the impacts that climate change has on vulnerable women, particularly rural and indigenous women and women farmers, as well as the mitigation and adaptation efforts and the effects on the sustainability of their livelihoods and resilience;<sup>1</sup>

10. *We broadly support* the full achievement in Latin America and the Caribbean of Sustainable Development Goal 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls) and related targets under the other SDGs, and restate our commitment to specifically meet the diverse needs of women and girls in our region, particularly those in vulnerable or marginalized situations, such as the victims of conflicts, those living in poverty, those who are deprived of their freedom, young women, older adult women, women with disabilities, indigenous, Afro-descendant, rural, displaced and migrant women, women living with HIV/AIDS, and members of the LGBTTI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, transgender and intersexual) community, so that sustainable development leaves no woman behind in the region, and so that the talents and capabilities of half of the population are put to good use;

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<sup>1</sup> See the preamble and paragraphs 2. (o) and 4. (j) of the Brasilia Consensus (2010).

11. *We pledge* to seek paths to increase the authority, the funding and the capacities of national machineries for the advancement of women and of gender equality systems within different branches and levels of government, to promote the exercise of their competencies and to provide guidance in mainstreaming the gender perspective in public administration, in keeping with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, revitalizing partnerships and extending collaborations with a view to achieving substantive equality;

12. *We endorse* the commitment to reinforce the strategic alliances of national machineries for the advancement of women in Latin America and the Caribbean to accelerate gender equality in the region;

13. *We pledge* to promote a resource mobilization strategy that guarantees sustainable macroeconomic and fiscal policies for the achievement of gender equality, financial and investment mechanisms, and gender-sensitive budgets, convinced that financing for the gender dimensions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will facilitate the achievement of all the Goals, and that an array of public, private and international resources should be earmarked for this purpose;

14. *We appeal* to international cooperation agencies, the United Nations system, providers of official development assistance, the private sector, regional multilateral banks and financial centres so that the dimensions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development relating to gender and women's empowerment are prioritized in the allocation of resources and cooperation funding;

15. *We will promote* the adoption of economic and social policy measures needed for full employment with equal pay for equal work, entrepreneurship and the creation of decent jobs for women, social protection, the universal right to care and the building of national care services to advance towards the attribution of social value to the unpaid care work carried out by women and the reduction of this burden, with social responsibility shared by the State, the private sector and society, and between men and women;

16. *We recognize* the progress and the high standards that Latin America and the Caribbean has achieved in developing gender statistics, and the need to ensure solid and sustainable mechanisms for the production of gender-sensitive information and for monitoring and accountability, as well as the urgency of strengthening of national statistical offices' capacities to design and apply instruments and methodologies whereby they can produce, compile and analyse data disaggregated by sex, race, ethnicity or other variables, aligned with regional and global processes, in order to effectively contribute to the processes of follow-up, reporting and accountability for the achievement of gender equality by 2030;

17. *We reiterate* the need to “define and establish instruments for the periodic measurement of unpaid work done by women and ensure that public budgets allocate the funds required by the machineries responsible for compiling and systematizing the information for conducting national time-use surveys in order to facilitate the design of appropriate and fair public policies”;<sup>2</sup>

18. *We reaffirm* our commitment to implementing the agreed measures for the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls and for the eradication of impunity, ensuring timely access to justice and health care services for women and girls, and to preventing and punishing all types of violence, including femicide or feminicide and trafficking in persons, especially in women and girls for the purposes of labour exploitation or sexual exploitation, in accordance with national legislation;

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<sup>2</sup> Santo Domingo Consensus, paragraph 55 (2013).

19. *We decisively commit*, and appeal to all stakeholders in each country to take urgent steps to eliminate discriminatory and anti-democratic practices and to eradicate child marriage in Latin America and the Caribbean;

20. *We reaffirm* our agreement to “promote, protect and guarantee the complete fulfilment of the sexual rights and reproductive rights of women of all population groups throughout the life cycle by implementing laws, policies, rules, regulations and programmes incorporated into national and subnational budgets, insofar as physical autonomy is a fundamental dimension of women’s empowerment and their participation in the information and knowledge society on an equal basis;”<sup>3</sup>

21. *We reiterate* the need for a cultural change, and to that end we call for an end to the media use of images and messages that are sexist and discriminatory to women, and that efforts are invested in the transformation of education models;

22. *We emphasize* the crucial importance of civil society in the region, particularly the contributions of feminist and women’s organizations, women’s networks and human rights defenders in the construction of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and we pledge to support their full participation in the follow-up, monitoring and accountability processes and mechanisms that will oversee the implementation of the Agenda;

23. *We pledge* to participate in the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) and in the preparatory processes and activities, to ensure the inclusion of gender equality and women’s empowerment and strategic support for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the new urban agenda and in the final declaration of the Conference;

24. *We acknowledge* the efforts by States, by the feminist and women’s movement, and by the agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system with a mandate to address the issue of gender equality, notably the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, and recognize the importance of these stakeholders having sufficient human and financial resources to fulfil their commitments on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals;

25. *We also recognize* that, under the guidance of the United Nations regional commissions, the Regional Forums on Sustainable Development are central mechanisms for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, stressing the importance that human rights and gender equality be integrated as cross-cutting principles, and we undertake to consider their conclusions and reports as key elements for monitoring, evaluating and submitting reports to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development;

26. *We commend* the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, especially the Division for Gender Affairs, for the organization of this special regional consultation in preparation for the sixtieth session of the Commission on the Status of Women in the framework of the fifty-third meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean; and we request that the outcomes of this special consultation be presented at the aforementioned session.

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<sup>3</sup> Santo Domingo Consensus, paragraph 69 (2013).