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ECLAC
Open-ended Meeting of the Presiding
Officers of the sessional Ad Hoc
Committee on Population and Development

Santiago, Chile, 10 and 11 March 2004

DECLARATION

The countries participating in the open-ended meeting of the Presiding Officers of the sessional Ad Hoc Committee on Population and Development of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, gathered in Santiago, Chile, on 10 and 11 March 2004,

Recalling the Latin American and Caribbean Consensus on Population and Development adopted in Mexico City in 1993, the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Plan of Action on Population and Development of 1994, the Caribbean Plan of Action on Population and Development in follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development adopted in Nassau, Bahamas, in May 1995 and the United Nations Millennium Declaration adopted in 2000,

Taking into account its resolution 536(XXV), by which the Commission established the sessional Ad Hoc Committee on Population and Development of this Economic Commission, and resolution 556(XXVI), in which the Commission requested that the Presiding Officers of the Ad Hoc Committee on Population and Development, while maintaining ongoing contact with the secretariat, take responsibility for the follow-up of the Regional Plan of Action during the periods between sessions,

Recalling also the resolution on priorities for the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development adopted by the Presiding Officers of the Ad Hoc Committee on Population and Development at the open-ended meeting held in Santiago, Chile, in December 1998 and resolution 590(XXIX) of the Commission on priority activities in the field of population and development for the period 2002-2004, adopted in Brasilia, Brazil, in May 2002,

Bearing in mind that 2004 marks the tenth anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo, Egypt, in 1994, and of the adoption of its Programme of Action,

Welcoming the Declaration of the Caribbean Subregional Meeting to Assess the Implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development 10 Years after its Adoption, as adopted by the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, on 12 November 2003,

Welcoming with satisfaction the report entitled “Commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development: actions undertaken to implement the Programme of Action of the Conference in Latin America and the Caribbean”,

1. Reaffirm the commitment of the countries of the region to the principles, objectives and actions contained in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and in the document “Key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development”, which grew out of the process involved in reviewing and appraising the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development five years after its adoption, particularly with respect to the inclusion of population and poverty issues in policies on development, reproductive health and rights, gender equality and equity and the empowerment of women;
2. Recognize that the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference and of the key actions is essential for the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration;
3. Welcome with satisfaction the steps taken by the countries of the region to make progress in fulfilling the objectives and goals of the Programme of Action, particularly in the areas of population and development, reproductive health and rights, the empowerment of women and gender equality; voice their concern about the negative social effects of structural adjustment policies, one of whose dimensions is the fragmentation of social policies, and about heavy debt service obligations, as well as about the persistence of high poverty levels and sharp inequalities in the region associated with gender, race, indigenous origin and ethnicity, which threaten the construction of inclusive and equitable development models; and urge the countries of the region to implement social and economic policies aimed at reducing poverty and inequality so that the poorest groups can benefit from the measures adopted within the framework of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration;
4. Urge the countries of the region to intensify their efforts in the following areas by means of the following actions:
 - (i) **Millennium Development Goals, International Conference on Population and Development and key actions:** to strive to ensure that national and regional development policies and plans for poverty eradication, within the framework of internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, incorporate the objectives, goals and indicators of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the key actions, especially with regard to reproductive health; and to include income, ethnic, racial, indigenous origin, gender and age-based disparities in national and regional indicators used to monitor and follow up on the Goals;
 - (ii) **Gender equity and women’s rights:** to strengthen institutional mechanisms for eliminating the persistent discrimination against women in all sectors and to develop policies and programmes to support gender equity and to promote the exercise of women’s rights;
 - (iii) **Population, development and the environment:** to incorporate demographic considerations into sustainable development strategies, public policy and national and

local environmental management plans while ensuring coordination among the relevant institutions;

- (iv) **International migration:** to increase knowledge about factors involved in migration and its implications, especially as they relate to poverty, family break-up and the brain drain; to promote cooperation among countries of origin, transit and destination for international migratory movements in order to enhance their positive effects and promote respect for the human rights of migrants and their families through compliance with the international instruments now in force; and to adopt measures to prevent all forms of trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants for purposes of sexual exploitation, especially women, girls and boys;
- (v) **Adolescents and youth:** to reiterate the strategic importance of fostering quality public education as a vehicle for upward social mobility in promoting productive employment and heightening its contribution to the reduction of poverty; and to recognize, promote and protect the right of adolescents and young people to access information, education and user-friendly sexual and reproductive health services, safeguarding the right of adolescents and youth to privacy, confidentiality and informed consent, and involving them in the design, execution and evaluation of these programmes;
- (vi) **Ageing:** to ensure that all levels of government take into account, in their medium- and long-term socio-economic planning, the increasing number and proportion of elderly people by designing and implementing policies and actions to improve their economic security and access to comprehensive health services that are suited to their needs while fostering the creation of enabling physical and social environments within a framework of equal rights and gender equity;
- (vii) **Families:** to recognize the equality of women and men and to respect human rights and the fundamental freedoms of all family members; to continue to formulate policies and programmes to support families in their various forms, including single-parent families; and to facilitate the fulfilment by mothers and fathers of their responsibilities in the care and upbringing of their sons and daughters;
- (viii) **Reproductive rights:** to review and implement legislation guaranteeing the responsible exercise of reproductive rights and non-discriminatory access to health services, including sexual and reproductive health, and to incorporate information on the promotion of reproductive rights and respect for such rights in national reports, including the report submitted to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women;
- (ix) **Sexual and reproductive health:** to incorporate public policies in health-sector reforms that promote the exercise of reproductive rights and ensure the provision of comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services that strive to ensure universal access to the widest possible range of family planning methods, and to strive to ensure the expansion of comprehensive, quality sexual and reproductive health care, particularly for the poorest sectors, indigenous peoples and social groups excluded on the basis of their ethnicity, age or social condition;
- (x) **HIV/AIDS:** to intensify efforts to prevent, diagnose and treat sexually transmitted infections, particularly HIV/AIDS, within the context of sexual and reproductive health;

to ensure access to effective treatment, including for pregnant women living with HIV and their children to reduce vertical transmission of the virus; to guarantee access for young and adult men and women to information, education and the services required to develop the skills to prevent HIV infection; and to provide, insofar as possible, access to diagnostic services and treatment free of charge to persons living with HIV/AIDS while ensuring their privacy, confidentiality and freedom from discrimination;

- (xi) **Maternal and neonatal mortality:** to redouble efforts to reduce maternal and neonatal mortality and morbidity through basic services and comprehensive reproductive health care, taking into consideration the multiple factors contributing to maternal morbidity and mortality, including lack of access to family planning and proper essential obstetric care, and the factors referred to in paragraph 63 of “Key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development”;
- (xii) **Infant mortality:** to increase actions to reduce high rates of infant mortality in the framework of primary health care, facilitating access to comprehensive reproductive health, child health and nutrition programmes;
- (xiii) **Violence against women:** to intensify efforts to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls, including sexual violence and abuse and violence within the family;
- (xiv) **Reporting and research:** to assign priority to the collection and dissemination of statistical data, particularly continuous data disaggregated by age, sex, race, ethnicity and other variables of national interest, and to foster applied research to ensure the implementation and follow-up of the progress made in the Programme of Action by strengthening the relevant institutions and allocating sufficient financial resources;

5. Recognize the crucial role that non-governmental organizations have played in the implementation of the Programme of Action and the key actions, and urge the countries to build and maintain partnerships with non-governmental organizations while respecting their autonomy;

6. Reiterate the importance of promoting and institutionalizing a national mechanism and a system of indicators in each country to strive to ensure follow-up to the Programme of Action and the key actions at the national and regional level within the framework for the follow-up to internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration;

7. Request that the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and the United Nations Population Fund prepare a proposal for a regional strategy for meeting the need for trained human resources in the area of population and development and that this proposal be submitted to the Ad Hoc Committee at its next meeting, to be held in June 2004 in San Juan, Puerto Rico;

8. Recognize the efforts of the countries of the region and the strategic support provided by international cooperation in support of the implementation of the Programme of Action and the key actions; call for the intensification of the allocation of national resources to accelerate the achievement of the objectives and goals of the Programme of Action and key actions; observe with concern the decrease in financial support for the region; and request the international community to implement the consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Monterrey in 2002, to promote the growth of financial flows to the region and adequate funding to accelerate the implementation of the

Programme of Action and the key actions within the framework of efforts to combat poverty and inequality;

9. Express gratitude to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and the United Nations Population Fund for the support they provide to the countries of the region in the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the key actions, and invite the United Nations system to continue supporting the countries in the implementation of the Programme of Action and the key actions;

10. Adopt this declaration in commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the International Conference and request that the Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee present the results of this meeting to the Commission on Population and Development at its thirty-seventh session, to be held at United Nations Headquarters from 22 to 26 March 2004, and to the Ad Hoc Committee, which is to meet in San Juan, Puerto Rico, on 29 and 30 June 2004.