



# WHAT IS THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON WOMEN IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN?



UNITED NATIONS

ECLAC





## What is the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean?

The Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, one of the subsidiary bodies of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), is the region's foremost intergovernmental forum on women's rights and gender equality. It is convened every three years to identify the status of women's autonomy and rights at the regional and subregional levels, present recommendations regarding public policies on gender equality, and undertake periodic assessments of the activities carried out in fulfilment of regional and international agreements on the subject.

The first session of the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America, held in Havana in 1977, was convened by the secretariat of ECLAC, as decided at the seventeenth session of the Commission, two years after the World Conference of the International Women's Year (Mexico, 1975) and in the framework of the United Nations Decade for Women.

Thus far, the member States of ECLAC have held 13 sessions of the Regional Conference, at which they have examined the progress and challenges in relation to women's autonomy and equality and have agreed upon an ambitious, deep-reaching and comprehensive Regional Gender Agenda. The Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030 was adopted by the Governments at the thirteenth session of the Regional Conference. It represents a tool for putting into practice the commitments undertaken and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in line with the priorities of the Latin American and Caribbean region.

## Who convenes the sessions of the Regional Conference?

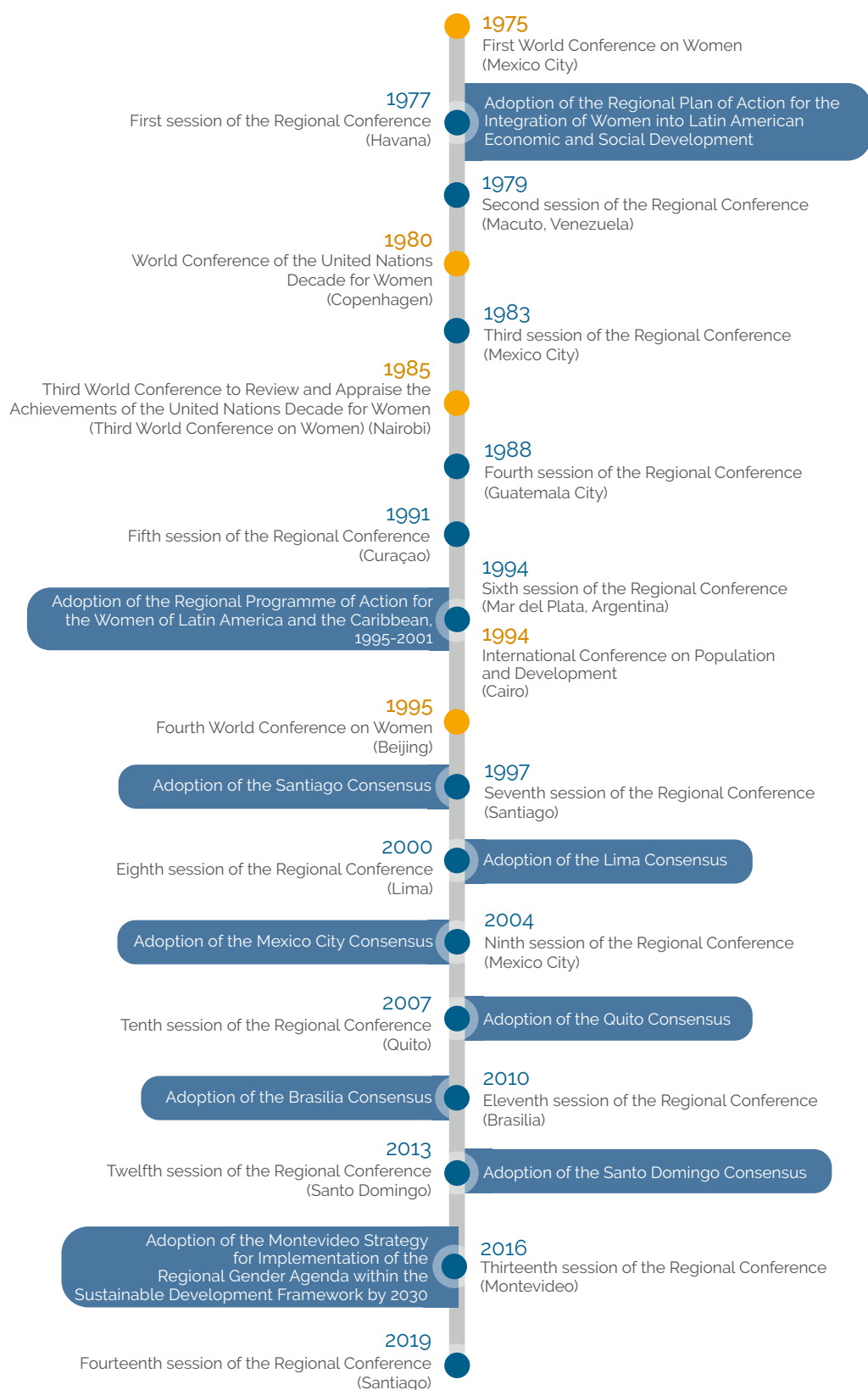
ECLAC has been given the mandate to convene the member States and associate members to sessions of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean.

In accordance with the rules of procedure of the Commission, no later than six weeks prior to each session of the Regional Conference, the Executive Secretary of ECLAC sends out invitations to the member countries and associate members of the Commission to participate in the deliberations. Other States Members of the United Nations and representatives of other bodies and programmes forming part of the United Nations system are invited to attend as observers, as are representatives of intergovernmental organizations and of non-governmental organizations enjoying consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, and special guests

## Where are the sessions held?

Generally, a member State of ECLAC offers to host the Conference. The fourteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean will be hosted by the Government of Chile, in Santiago from 4 to 8 November 2019.

## Milestones of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean



## What is the theme of the fourteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean?

The countries represented at the fifty-sixth meeting of Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Havana in October 2017, adopted as the theme for discussion at the fourteenth session of the Conference "women's autonomy in changing economic scenarios".

## Who attends the sessions?

The sessions of the Regional Conference are attended by representatives of the member States and associate members of the Commission. Representatives of States enjoying consultative status<sup>1</sup> attend as observers.

In addition, the sessions are attended by observers from United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies, and other autonomous organizations, intergovernmental agencies and non-governmental organizations.

## Who are the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference?

The member States of the Commission elect Presiding Officers at the beginning of each session of the Regional Conference. The secretariat convenes a meeting of the heads of delegation prior to the opening of the regular session for this purpose. The Presiding Officers usually include a Chair (this office is customarily held by the host country) and several Vice-Chairs. The member States elect the Presiding Officers for each session of the Conference based on the principles of rotation of duties and of adequate representation of the various subregions.

The Presiding Officers of the Conference serve as a liaison between the Governments and the secretariat of ECLAC and meet between sessions of the Regional Conference in order to maintain a permanent mechanism for action. Accordingly, the Presiding Officers meet twice a year and have held 57 such meetings since 1978.

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<sup>1</sup> Members of the United Nations which do not belong to the Commission and States which are not members of the United Nations hold consultative status.

## Which countries serve as Presiding Officers?

The Presiding Officers who will serve until November 2019 were elected at the thirteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Montevideo in October 2016. They are as follows:

<b>Chair</b>	Uruguay
<b>Vice-Chairs</b>	Antigua and Barbuda
	Argentina
	Brazil
	Chile
	Costa Rica
	Cuba
	Dominican Republic
	Ecuador
	El Salvador
	Honduras
	Jamaica
	Mexico
	Panama
	Puerto Rico
	Saint Kitts and Nevis
	Saint Lucia
	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
	Suriname

At the fourteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, which will take place from 4 to 8 November 2019, the member States will have the opportunity to nominate and elect the new Presiding Officers.

## Who prepares the documents?

The position paper for the Conference is prepared by the secretariat of ECLAC. Preliminary versions of the document are submitted to the member countries for their consideration at subregional preparatory meetings. The inputs from these meetings are included in the final version of the document, which serves as a basis for the deliberations of the Conference.

The secretariat also prepares supporting documentation, either alone or in collaboration with other agencies in the United Nations system or academic bodies from the region.

## Activities of non-governmental organizations related to the fourteenth session of the Regional Conference

Non-governmental organizations may participate in the sessions of the Regional Conference as follows:

- As part of their national delegations, as arranged at the country level and approved by the respective Government.
- As organizations holding consultative status with the United Nations, in accordance with the rules of the Economic and Social Council.
- As observers, in the case of regional or subregional networks that are recognized for their work in implementing the Regional Gender Agenda.

For more information about the fourteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean see [online]

<https://www.cepal.org/en/subsidiary-bodies/regional-conference-women-latin-america-and-caribbean>

<https://www.cepal.org/en/work-areas/gender-affairs>

<https://oig.cepal.org/en>

<https://biblioguias.cepal.org/RegionalGenderAgenda>



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