

*Madam Chair
Distinguished ECLAC Executive Secretary
Distinguished Delegates
Civil Society Colleagues*

Feminist and youth organizations and networks from Latin America and the Caribbean present at the **42nd Session of the United Nations Commission on Population and Development** recall that fifteen years ago for the first time, 179 countries agreed on a Programme of Action on Population and Development, within a human rights framework.

We express our profound concern because 15 years after the Cairo Consensus, Latin America continues to be the most inequitable region in the world. The majority of the population in our countries still do not have the necessary conditions to exercise their rights, particularly their sexual and reproductive rights. Although in some countries advances have been made, in many others significant setbacks have been recorded.

Today, 15 years after having succeeded in generating a new paradigm for population and development, governments do not have the necessary political will to translate the ICPD consensus into programs, policies and actions supported by the necessary economic resources in order to fulfill the goals proposed for 2015. This situation is worsened by the current financial crisis that occurring throughout the world, which should not justify the lack of fulfilment of these goals.

In this context, we urge all States, and in particular those in the Latin American and Caribbean region to:

1. Take advantage of the opportunity that convenes us to redouble efforts and advance the commitments made, keeping in mind that the delays and setbacks in these processes impact the daily lives of millions of people.
2. Reach a resolution by the end of this meeting which meets the challenges that are still pending in order to arrive at 2015 with the greatest number of goals achieved, keeping in mind that beyond this date work should continue in order to achieve social wellbeing, economic justice, women's empowerment and equality without discrimination between people.

In order to achieve this we urge States to:

- Guarantee conditions for the exercise of sexual and reproductive rights of all people, without regard to age, gender, sex, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity or economic status.
- Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health services as well as a broad range of contraceptive methods, including emergency contraception.
- Promote comprehensive policies to reduce women's morbidity and mortality due to pregnancy, birth, post-partum and unsafe abortion, within a human rights framework.

- Recognize adolescents' and young people's rights and offer them the opportunities that allow them to make free and informed decisions in all areas of their lives, especially those related to the exercise of their sexuality, guaranteeing them access to all contraceptive methods available.
- Promote universal access to high quality secular education that includes evidence-based comprehensive sexuality education.
- Guarantee access to legal and safe abortion as a necessary condition for reducing maternal mortality and ensuring the full exercise of reproductive rights.
- Implement effective and comprehensive measures to eradicate violence against women and gender-based violence, taking into consideration the linkages between violence and HIV/AIDS. These measures should prioritize cases of sexual violence and ensure access to justice for all affected people.
- Guarantee universal access to the prevention, treatment, care and support for people infected by HIV/AIDS.
- Give political and budgetary priority to people living in situations of social, cultural and economic vulnerability such as indigenous populations, Afro-descendants, migrants, people living with HIV/AIDS, sex workers, domestic workers, gays, lesbians and bisexual, transvestite, transsexual and transgender people, people deprived of their liberty, boys, girls, adolescents and young people living on the street, victims of trafficking and/or sexual exploitation and people with different abilities.
- Guarantee necessary and sufficient resources so that Latin America can establish conditions so that all rights may be exercised, without exceptions, and women's health and lives are not placed at risk.
- Create and strengthen permanent spaces for dialogue and participation by civil society in decision making in order to guarantee the possibility for monitoring public policies and ensuring transparency and accountability in the allocation of resources and the execution of government budgets, particularly those related to sexual and reproductive health.

We also urge international aid agencies to give priority to the Latin American and Caribbean region, designating technical and economic resources in favor of the full enjoyment of people's rights in the productive and reproductive dimensions of their lives. In particular, we urge that priority be given to the most unprotected sectors and those in greatest conditions of vulnerability.

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The demands of Latin American and Caribbean organizations do not differ from that to which Governments subscribed in 1994 and in the subsequent revision processes in Cairo +5 in 1999 and Cairo +10 in 2004.

The resolution of the **42nd Session of the United Nations Commission on Population and Development** is in your hands, and with it the health and lives of millions of people around the world remains in the balance, keeping in mind that the most affected will also be women of all ages and conditions. Without the fulfilment of the Cairo Programme of Action not only will the goals for 2015 not be met, but it will be impossible to fulfil the targets for the Millennium Development Goals.

This is an opportunity to provide a boost and advance in the five years that remain in order to reach the projected goals. Let us not lose this opportunity. We must mark the 15th anniversary of Cairo with actions, resources and political will.

Civil society has fulfilled our part of the commitment and is willing to provide continual support as long as governments fulfill their part of the commitment. The time is now.

Thank you

Signing organizations:

ACTION AID

BEMFAM

Consortio Latinoamericano de Anticoncepción de Emergencia, CLAE

Consortio latinoamericano contra el Aborto Inseguro, CLACAI

COFEMUN – Honduras

CNSmujeres por democracia, equidad y ciudadanía - Uruguay

DECIDIR – coalición de jóvenes por la ciudadanía sexual - México

ELIGE, Red de Jóvenes por los Derechos Sexuales y Reproductivos - México

EQUIDAD DE GÉNERO, TRABAJO, CIUDADANÍA Y FAMILIA - México

GIRE - México

GESTOS - Brasil

Iniciativa Centroamericana de Seguimiento a Beijing-

MEXFAM - México

MYSU Mujer y Salud en Uruguay

Programa Gente Joven – México

PROMSEX - Perú

Red de Salud de las Mujeres Latinoamericanas y del Caribe

Red Latinoamericana de Católicas por el Derecho a Decidir

Red Latinoamericana y Caribeña de Jóvenes por los Derechos Sexuales y Reproductivos, REDLAC

Red lesbica CATTRACHAS – Honduras

Red por los derechos sexuales y reproductivos en México