

**CSW61**

Comisión de la Condición  
Jurídica y Social de la Mujer



**EMPODERAMIENTO ECONÓMICO  
DE LA MUJER EN EL CAMBIANTE  
MUNDO DEL TRABAJO**

13—24 de marzo de 2017

## DECLARATION OF PANAMA

**OF THE MINISTERS AND HIGH AUTHORITIES OF THE NATIONAL MECHANISMS FOR  
THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN TOWARDS THE 61<sup>ST</sup> PERIOD OF SESSIONS OF THE  
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN (CSW61)**

**Panama City, Panama, February 8<sup>th</sup> 2017**



*Opening Ceremony of the Regional Consultations in Latin America and the Caribbean prior to CSW61 with the participation of 25 ministers from the region, the Vice President of Panama, Isabel de Saint Malo de Alvarado, UN Assistant-Secretary-General and UN-Women Deputy Executive Director Lakshmi Puri and the Regional Director of UN Women Luiza Carvalho. Panama, February 6, 2017.*

The Ministers and High Authorities of the National Mechanisms for the advancement of Women in Latin America and the Caribbean met in Panama on February 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> 2017 on the occasion of the **Regional Consultation** prior to the 61<sup>st</sup> period of sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW61) on "**The Economic Empowerment of Women in the Changing World of Work**", to be held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from March 13<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> 2017.

**We reaffirm** the commitments previously adopted by their States in international and regional conventions, pacts and agreements on the human rights of women, gender equality, sustainable development for the physical autonomy and with regard to the decision making and economic empowerment of all women and girls, especially young women, indigenous, Afro-descendant, migrant, rural, the elderly, women in all their diversity of sexual orientation and gender identity, women with disabilities and women living with HIV/AIDS. The Ministers and High Authorities for gender equality reiterate their commitment to make civil, political, economic, labor, social, cultural, sexual, reproductive and environmental rights a reality for all women.

In a **context** where Latin America and the Caribbean is a heterogeneous region, with an enormous richness and diversity, with enormous differences, both between countries and within countries, and at the same time faces a series of difficulties and challenges, such as the a phase of economic stagnation and recession, unequal income distribution, the insufficient tax collection, tax evasion, the outflow of financial resources, the high levels of indebtedness, impunity and lack of access to justice, corruption, the situations of armed conflict and post-conflict, organized crime, human trafficking, violence against women, environmental vulnerability, as well as the emergence of threats from outside the region and in the region such as the persistence of cultural, patriarchal and violent norms, and the culture of privilege. But it also shares common features and the determination of broad democratic sectors, which allow it to face problems together and foresee overcoming its serious difficulties.

The governments of our region have approved the Montevideo Strategy (2016), which identifies structural challenges which constitute the unequal relations of power in the region, namely: socioeconomic inequality and the persistence of poverty; discriminatory and violent patriarchal cultural patterns and the predominance of the culture of privilege; the sexual division of labor and the unjust social distribution of care, and the concentration of power and hierarchical relations in the public domain. At the same time, the Montevideo Strategy, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the call to action of the High Level Panel for Women's Economic Empowerment of the Secretary General of the United Nations, and the Special Declaration on the Promotion of Gender Equality and Eradication of Violence against Women of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) (January 25<sup>th</sup> 2017), which has been subscribed by governments, constitute a program that guides the overcoming of the inequality challenges of our region.

**We reaffirm** that our region is committed to substantive equality and the full exercise of women's rights and autonomy, having built instruments, mechanisms and agreements that allow us to move towards inclusive and sustainable development with equality and non-discrimination, with approaches of intersectionality and interculturality, which guarantee human rights for all women in their diversity and throughout their life cycle.

**We thank** the contributions of the feminist and broad women's movement, of the social movements, which contributed both to the enrichment of the debates and to the proposals of the Regional Consultation. The joint work between national women's machineries and organizations that defend and build women's rights has been fundamental to advance and is a guarantee of the sustainability of the conquests and the achievement of the economic empowerment of women.

As **governing bodies and managers of public policy to promote gender equality**, we orient our efforts towards the following:

**1. Contribute so that macroeconomic policies promote the economic empowerment of women and redistribute resources for gender equality. In this respect, we recommend to:**

Promote macroeconomic policies with a gender perspective aimed at stimulating economic activity, protecting and expanding decent productive employment, and promoting investment in social care infrastructure and recognizing women's economic contribution as part of unpaid care work, preventing and mitigating the negative effects of cycles of economic recession on female employment.

Promote redistributive fiscal policies that mobilize resources to finance policies that contribute to the economic empowerment of all women, their autonomy and gender equality, which broaden the fiscal contributions and tax collection, to prioritize investment in the social infrastructure of care, financing of social services and benefits, and the generation of decent jobs. Likewise, to promote the initiation or strengthening of budget initiatives with a gender perspective at all levels of government.

Increasingly and substantially allocate sufficient budget resources to fund national mechanisms for the advancement of women, with the objective of strengthening them institutionally, so that they can comply with their mandates, functions and programmatic commitments, as well as resources so that all State and governmental organisms at all levels promote gender equality policies as part of their sectoral and local policies.

Locate national women's mechanisms at the highest level in the government structure and advance together towards a renewed institutional architecture of at all levels of government and State powers so that they can effectively mainstream gender equality and non-discrimination policies, as well as to ensure the sustainability of policies.

Promote economic policies that enable the creation of decent jobs, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and stimulate the expansion of economic activity to promote the full employment of women, without segregation or discrimination based on sex, gender, age, ethnicity and race, and that trade and investment policies meet international human rights standards.

Foster the harmonization of the legal framework with international law and norms on labor and women's rights, including CEDAW, Belem do Pará and ratified ILO Conventions, among others, and to promote the ratification of pending ILO Conventions.

Implement ILO Convention 189 in the countries that have ratified it, and to promote its ratification in those countries that have yet not done so, so as to ensure the recognition of the rights of women domestic workers, and monitor the progress towards the adaptation of national legislative

frameworks to ensure their labor rights, and the formulation and implementation of measures to facilitate its application.

Strengthen statistical information systems to ensure the generation of gender statistics and the adaptation of mechanisms, tools and indicators to enable the production of data disaggregated at least by sex, age, ethnicity, race, nationality at birth, migratory status, disability, income groups, sector, occupation, geographical location, and other characteristics relevant to the national contexts, and incorporate information on formal and informal work.

**2. Collaborate to overcome the structural barriers to women's access to decent work and the persistence of discrimination in the labor market. In this respect, we recommend to:**

Promote, in the education system, egalitarian education and the elimination of gender stereotypes, promote the formulation and implementation of strategies and programs to ensure women's universal access to integral education with a gender perspective, with emphasis in the information sciences and technologies, to enhance their economic empowerment and eliminate the sexual segregation of work.

Implement, with the responsible entities, measures and campaigns to dismantle patriarchal cultural stereotypes that determine the traditional sexual division of labor, and other discriminatory social and economic norms that hinder, devalue or make invisible the work of women, as well as the implementation of policies and programs oriented to decent employment for women living multiple and inter-related forms of inequality, discrimination and marginalization, with special attention to young women, indigenous, Afro-descendant, rural, migrant, women with disabilities and women living with HIV.

Include, in development and poverty eradication policies, strategies and programs, the strengthening of the economic activities of rural and indigenous women and their organizations, with participatory consultation and negotiation mechanisms, that enable free and informed consent, that respect and protect their traditional and ancestral knowledge, in order to enhance their empowerment, autonomy and development so that they have better mechanisms that ensure the reproduction of life and conservation of the land, the territory and the environment.

Promote women's access to economic entrepreneurship at macro, medium and micro levels and in all enterprises, access to credit and financing, access to markets and supply chains, property inheritance and ownership, use and ownership of land, natural resources, assets and financial literacy.

Progress in the operating mechanisms and methodologies that allow to ensure equal pay (the right to equal pay for work of equal value) and ensure mechanisms to monitor its compliance. Promote the advancement of purchasing power of wages and increment minimum wages regulating their application.

Strengthen efforts between the State, the private sector and civil society, to promote comprehensive measures to prevent, address, punish and eradicate violence in the workplace, and promote the establishment of an ILO international norm for the eradication of sexual and labor harassment and violence against women in the workplace.

Combat all forms of violence against women in all areas, including femicide/feminicide and other harmful practices, eradicate child marriage and combat effectively child labor and human trafficking, especially of women, girls and boys.

Promote women's access to information, training and advisory on the defense of their labor rights and the demand of their effective application with the relevant authorities and entities.

Promote efforts to train State and governmental civil servants on gender and human rights.

**3. Expand women's access to social protection. In this respect, we recommend to:**

Advise the institutions of the Executive Branch responsible for finances, economics and social policy so that they ensure access of all women and girls to basic social services such as education and health, including sexual and reproductive health, with age and ethnic pertinence, which are affordable and high quality.

Contribute to ensuring access to social protection systems and policies for all women, without discrimination based on sex, gender, age, nationality, race, ethnicity, employment status, migratory status, disability status, or any other condition, and also incorporate care services and measures to ensure compliance that guarantees access to basic social protection floors.

Promote the creation of legal, administrative and policy measures necessary for the development and establishment of systems to ensure universal access to non-contributory retirement and disability pensions, and special schemes for self-employed women that allow their formalization.

Promote access to social safety nets, economic opportunities, the establishment of reparation, employment protection and labor leave measures, for victims and survivors of gender based violence.

Support the formalization of productive units with the purpose of guaranteeing access to social protection for all female workers, in particular indigenous, Afro-descendent and rural women.

Support the establishment and extension of paid maternity, paternity and parental leave, in collaboration with the private sector.

**4. Recognize, reduce and redistribute unpaid care work and regulate paid care work. In this respect, we recommend to:**

Promote and encourage the construction of national systems of care with a gender perspective that include adequate means of distribution and co-responsibility of reproductive work by men, women, the State and the private sector, the tripartite participation of trade unions, public and private entities, to generate a regulatory framework that allows the social co-responsibility in the field of care, the adjustment of the working day of men and women, so as to facilitate the equitable and balanced redistribution of unpaid domestic and care work.

Promote the increase of wages and benefits for male and female workers in the care industry, improve their working conditions and guarantee their access to specialized training.

Promote the necessary additional measures to foster a democratic and equal distribution of unpaid care work among men and women within households.

### **IN CONCLUSION**

**The Ministers and High Authorities of the National Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women of the region are positive that there is a real possibility of taking decisive steps towards the economic empowerment of women in Latin America and the Caribbean, despite the current serious problems and difficulties, given that, for the first time, they can present a joint position and proposals, as a region, to the international community that will gather during the 61<sup>st</sup> period of sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC); with the spirit that this declaration is reflected in the agreed conclusions that will be adopted during the aforementioned period of sessions. Likewise, we express our gratitude to the Government of Panama, in particular to its National Women's Institute (INAMU), to the Women's Institute of Uruguay (INMUJERES) and to UN WOMEN for the organization and realization of this Regional Consultation.**



*Closure of the Regional Consultations of Latin America and the Caribbean prior to CSW61. From left to right: Luiza Carvalho, Regional Director of UN Women; Maria Noel Vaeza, Director of Programme Division, UN-Women; Liriola Leoteau, Director General of the National Institute of Women of Panama (INAMU), Lic. Maria Luisa Romero, Minister of Government of the Republic of Panama; Ambassador Mauro Vieira, Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations; Mariella Mazzotti, Director General of the National Institute of Women of Uruguay (INMUJERES) and Nieves Rico, Director of the Gender Affairs Division of ECLAC.*



*Closure of the Regional Consultations of Latin America and the Caribbean prior to CSW61. Closing session with ministers and top gender authorities from 25 countries in the region and representatives of networks and organizations of women and feminists in Latin America and the Caribbean.*