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First meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference  
on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean

Santo Domingo, 1 November 2016

## AGREEMENTS

*At their first meeting, held on 1 November 2016 in Santo Domingo, on the occasion of the eighth Ministerial Forum for Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean agreed to:*

1. *Recognize* the work of the secretariat in achieving progress towards fulfilment of the agreements set forth in resolution 1(I) of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Lima in November 2015, in particular as regards the analysis of poverty and inequality, social protection, labour and production inclusion, and food and nutritional security; the establishment and expansion of databases on social investment, non-contributory social protection programmes, youth and social inclusion, and social development institutions; cooperation and technical assistance for the countries of the region; experience-sharing between countries, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, among others;

2. *Welcome* the document *The social inequality matrix in Latin America*,<sup>1</sup> prepared by the secretariat, and draw attention to the importance of:

- (i) Progressing towards the elimination of poverty in all its forms, as established in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, consolidating recent progress in Latin America and the Caribbean and recalling that those advances are fragile and reversible unless accompanied by stable generation of productive employment and decent work, the universalization of access to good-quality education and health care, and the construction of a rights-based universal system of social protection,
- (ii) Taking firm steps to tackle the high levels of inequality that continue to characterize the region, as an essential condition for achieving the central purpose of the 2030 Agenda to “leave no one behind”,
- (iii) Continuing to deepen research and knowledge related to the social inequality matrix in the region, which is closely related to the highly heterogeneous and undiversified production structure of its economies and which is conveyed, through the structure of the labour market, to the social sphere, where it produces sharp inequality in household income, to which are added gender inequalities, ethnic and racial inequalities, territorial inequalities and age-based inequalities,

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<sup>1</sup> LC/G.2690(MDS.1/2).

- (iv) Acting to tackle the gaps identified in *The social inequality matrix in Latin America*, in order to break down the barriers in access to social services and well-being faced by those living in poverty or vulnerability, women, indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants, children, young people, older persons, those living in underdeveloped areas, persons with disabilities and migrants, which requires incorporating the elements analysed in that document into the design of public policies on social development in order to make effective progress towards universalizing rights and building universal, comprehensive social protection systems,
- (v) Having systematic statistical information on the different dimensions of inequality identified in *The social inequality matrix in Latin America* and on their manifestations in the various spheres of social development and the exercise of rights,
- (vi) Making progress in the construction of agreements, compacts and consensuses around these objectives and consolidating a culture of equality capable of overcoming the culture of privilege that has historically characterized the region.

3. *Recognize* that the greater effort made by the countries of the region during this century to increase public social investment and protect people from the fluctuations of economic cycles has been a key factor in achieving the progress made and that, at the current juncture, it is essential to protect social investment and make the tax burden more progressive to avoid backsliding, which would impose high costs on individuals and on the region's economies;

4. *Adopt* the annotated index of the position paper for the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean to be held in Uruguay in 2017, along with the observations and suggestions included in the report of the first meeting of the Presiding Officers;

5. *Request* the Chair of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean to report at the next meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development on the Conference's most salient conclusions for the regional implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

6. *Thank* the Government of Uruguay for its offer to host the next Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, to be held in November 2017, and for the progress made thus far in preparations for the Conference;

7. *Commend* the Government of Peru for its excellent work as Chair of the Presiding Officers of the Conference;

8. *Thank* the Government and people of the Dominican Republic, represented by the Vice-President of the Dominican Republic, for the excellent organization of the first meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in the framework of the eighth Ministerial Forum for Development in Latin America and the Caribbean;

9. *Commend* the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and the United Nations Development Programme on having jointly convened the first meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, thereby harnessing synergies and complementarities.