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**REPORT OF THE TWENTY-THIRD MEETING OF SPECIALIZED
AGENCIES AND OTHER BODIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS
SYSTEM ON THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN
IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

Montevideo, 24 October 2016

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A. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Mandate

1. The twenty-third meeting of Specialized Agencies and Other Bodies of the United Nations System on the Advancement of Women in Latin America and the Caribbean was convened by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in accordance with the provisions of the Regional Plan of Action adopted at 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, and with the agreements adopted at the United Nations inter-agency coordination meeting for the Latin America and the Caribbean region, held in Santiago on 6 May 1999.

Place and date of the meeting

2. The twenty-third meeting of Specialized Agencies and Other Bodies of the United Nations System on the Advancement of Women in Latin America and the Caribbean was held in Montevideo on 24 October 2016.

Attendance¹

3. The meeting was attended by representatives of the following United Nations funds and programmes: United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

4. A representative of The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) also attended.

5. Also represented were the following specialized agencies of the United Nations: International Labour Organization (ILO), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), World Health Organization (WHO), Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), and the World Bank.

6. In addition, the meeting was attended by representatives of the following intergovernmental organizations: CAF-Development Bank of Latin America, Ibero-American Secretariat (SEGIB), Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), International Organization for Migration (IOM), Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO) and Organization of American States (OAS).

¹ See annex.

B. AGENDA

7. The following agenda was adopted:
1. Adoption of the agenda.
 2. Organization of work of the thirteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean.
 3. Other matters.

C. SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

8. Alicia Bárcena, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), welcomed participants and summarized the document *Equality and women's autonomy in the sustainable development agenda*,² which addressed the three dimensions of women's autonomy (physical, economic and political) in the regional gender agenda and the interrelations between them. She stressed the importance of the draft Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030, which would be discussed at the thirteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean. She also highlighted the collaboration between ECLAC and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and noted the importance of pursuing coordination efforts among all the institutions of the United Nations system, the inter-American system and other intergovernmental organizations.

Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)

9. Nieves Rico, Chief of the Division for Gender Affairs of ECLAC submitted the provisional agenda for consideration, which was adopted without amendment.

10. She then presented a brief report on the fulfilment of the agreements adopted at the twenty-second meeting of Specialized Agencies and Other Bodies of the United Nations System on the Advancement of Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, which was held in Santo Domingo on 29 July 2015.

Organization of work of the thirteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean (agenda item 2)

11. The Chief of the Division for Gender Affairs of ECLAC informed the delegations about the organization of work of the thirteenth session of the Regional Conference that the governments of the region had agreed to at the three subregional preparatory meetings for the Conference which were held for the countries of Central America and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean (Mexico City, 2 and 3 June 2016),

² LC/G.2686(CRM.13/3).

South America (Santiago, 4 and 5 July 2016) and the English-speaking Caribbean (Port of Spain, 26 and 27 July 2016). She also said that the fifty-fourth meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean would be held prior to the opening of the thirteenth session of the Regional Conference. A high-level panel entitled “Gender equality at the centre of sustainable development”, six thematic panel discussions and a round table on “Equality and sustainable development: the future agenda for women’s rights” would be held as part of the Regional Conference. The objective of the Conference would be to approve the draft Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030, which had been considered by the governments of the region at the preparatory meetings for the Conference.

12. Noting the collaborative efforts between the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system, she also drew attention to the existence of an online tool to coordinate the meetings, seminars, conferences and discussions of different bodies, and invited institutions to continue sharing documents through it.

13. She referred to the conceptual update of the Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean and its design, and called on the organizations present to join that initiative. She also underscored efforts to mainstream the gender perspective into the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC through the work of the Working Group on Gender Statistics, which promoted the production of gender statistics and indicators at the national and regional levels.

14. The Executive Secretary of ECLAC said that in April 2017, the subsidiary bodies of ECLAC, including the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, would report on their progress at the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development, which had been established at the thirty-sixth session of ECLAC, held in Mexico City from 23 to 27 May 2016.

15. A Social Affairs Officer of the Division for Gender Affairs of ECLAC drew attention to the efforts made to coordinate the thematic panels composed of four panellists and a moderator, in order to have a reasonable amount of time for the dialogue and to facilitate the active participation of the mechanisms for the advancement of women, sectoral ministries, other branches of government, and civil society, in recognition of regional progress in mainstreaming the gender perspective. She also said that the composition of the panels sought to reflect the diversity of women in the region.

Other matters (agenda item 3)

16. The representative of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) said that the Entity was committed to inter-agency coordination and highlighted the progress made in the last three years, in particular the United Nations Secretary-General’s campaign "UNiTE to End Violence against Women" and the efforts of the Working Group on Gender Statistics of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC. She also urged the organizations present to use the meetings of Specialized Agencies and Other Bodies of the United Nations System on the Advancement of Women in Latin America and the Caribbean to think collectively about how to address the challenges of promoting gender issues and women’s rights at a time of conservative tendencies, and to discuss how to move towards gender equality and women’s autonomy.

17. The Chief of the Division for Gender Affairs of ECLAC said that it was crucial to focus on the means of implementing the regional gender agenda in an uncertain economic and political context. The Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean would report on progress made in the implementation of the Montevideo Strategy at the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development, to be held in Mexico City in 2017, in which agencies of the United Nations system would also actively participate.

18. She also proposed that the twenty-fourth meeting of Specialized Agencies and Other Bodies of the United Nations System on the Advancement of Women in Latin America and the Caribbean should be substantive and reflect on how agencies could contribute to the implementation of the Montevideo Strategy and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and she underscored the commitment to strengthening inter-agency efforts.

19. The Officer in Charge of the Office of the Secretary of the Commission of ECLAC said that within the institutional framework of the subsidiary bodies of ECLAC, the thirteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean would be innovative thanks to the contributions of the civil society bodies and organizations. Awareness of the different issues, content and approaches must be raised, commitments to advancing policies strengthened and the areas in which contributions could be made identified. He proposed that the organizations present should set a date prior to the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development for holding the next meeting of Specialized Agencies and Other Bodies of the United Nations System on the Advancement of Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, at which an overview of future challenges would be shared and the role of each agency in helping countries to implement the Montevideo Strategy discussed. He also suggested that the meeting should address the national and regional dimensions of the gender agenda and the spaces open to civil society.

20. In her presentation, the representative of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) congratulated ECLAC on the assessment and proposals presented in the position paper. She also noted the importance of strengthening resources in order to maximize the impact of work related to gender issues and invited the organizations present to coordinate and propose topics that could be developed in a more coordinated and sustainable manner.

Annex

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**A. Secretaría de las Naciones Unidas
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