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Fifth Regional Conference on the Integration
of Women into the Economic and Social Development
of Latin America and the Caribbean

Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles, 16-19 September 1991

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES OF THE CONFERENCE
PROVISIONAL AGENDA
ANNOTATIONS TO THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA

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A. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES OF THE CONFERENCE

1. Mandate and functions of the Conference

The Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean is convened in compliance with the mandate of the respective Regional Plan of Action (RPA),¹ on a permanent and regular basis, at intervals of no more than three years. The Conference basically fulfils, in accordance with the same RPA, the following functions:

a) To determine regional and subregional needs for technical assistance and give support to all the United Nations bodies operating in the region in order that they can meet such needs;

b) To put forward recommendations to governments and to ECLAC itself based on studies carried out by the secretariat on the most feasible way of implementing the agreements adopted by the United Nations regional conferences;

c) To review and appraise periodically the activities of ECLAC and other United Nations agencies;

d) To periodically evaluate the accomplishment of the Regional Plan of Action;

e) To provide a forum for the exchange of information which will facilitate the mutual coordination and support of the programmes for the integration of women into economic and social development at various levels and permit the countries in the region to share the corresponding experience.

2. Main recommendations adopted by the Fourth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean

The conclusions and recommendations of the Conference were summarized in a document entitled "Women in Latin America and the Caribbean: Evaluation and proposals for action". This text was included in the Conference report and is also included as an appendix in the book entitled Los grandes cambios y la crisis.

Impacto sobre la mujer en América Latina y el Caribe (LC/G.1592-P)
(Transition and the Crisis: Their impact on women in Latin America
and the Caribbean), Santiago, Chile, December 1990.

3. Objectives of this Conference

The Fifth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean, to be held in Curaçao from 16 to 19 September 1991, in addition to its normal tasks, will begin regional preparations for the world conference on women scheduled for 1995; included in these tasks is the organization of the Sixth Regional Conference.

B. PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Election of officers
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Report of the Chairman of the Presiding Officers of the Fourth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean on the work accomplished since the Fourth Regional Conference, including the recommendations of the Presiding Officers
4. Report of the secretariat of ECLAC on activities carried out since the Fourth Regional Conference and presentation of the documents prepared for the Fifth Conference
5. Country reports
6. Evaluation and recommendations of the Fifth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean
7. Changing production patterns with social equity and the integration of women into the economic and social development of Latin America and the Caribbean
8. Preparations for the Sixth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean
9. Other business
10. Consideration and adoption of the report.

C. ANNOTATIONS TO THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Election of officers

The Regional Conference will elect the Presiding Officers, who in accordance with the mandates of the RPA will serve as the link between the governments and the secretariat of ECLAC in the field of women's integration into development.

The current Presiding Officers met the evening before the opening of the Fourth Regional Conference in Guatemala City, Guatemala, on 27 September 1988 and have continued in their functions as mandated by the RPA until the Fifth Regional Conference elects new Presiding Officers. The current officers are: Chairman, Guatemala; First Vice-Chairman, Netherlands Antilles; Second Vice-Chairman, Argentina; Third Vice-Chairman, Cuba; Rapporteur, Venezuela.²

The criteria established for the election of Presiding Officers by the Fifth Meeting of the Presiding Officers elected by the Second Regional Conference (Mexico City, Mexico, 5 August 1983) are as follows:

"a) To put into practice the principle of rotation of duties of the Presiding Officers among the member countries of ECLAC;

b) In order to provide greater facility and effectiveness to their functioning, to reduce the number of members of the Presiding Officers to the offices of a Chairman, three Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur;

c) To seek adequate geographical distribution, including as Presiding Officers representatives of Central America, the Caribbean, the Andean Group and the Southern Cone".³

2. Adoption of the agenda

The Fifth Regional Conference will take up the task of approving or modifying the provisional agenda (as presented in section B of this document) proposed by the Presiding Officers of the Fourth Regional Conference at its twelfth meeting held in Buenos Aires, Argentina on 7 and 8 May 1991.

3. Report of the Chairman of the Presiding Officers of the Fourth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean on the work accomplished since the Fourth Regional Conference, including the recommendations of the Presiding Officers

During the interval between the fourth and the fifth regional conferences, the Presiding Officers met for five working meetings. The Chairman of the Officers will report to the Fifth Conference on the main activities carried out during this period, which are contained in the reports of the five meetings held by the Officers since September 1988.⁴

At the Twelfth Meeting, held in Buenos Aires, Argentina on 7 and 8 May 1991, the Presiding Officers decided to bring to the consideration of the Fifth Regional Conference a list of functions that the Presiding Officers should fulfil, namely:

a) To follow up on the issues treated by the Conference, studying them more deeply and trying to heighten awareness and bring about a consensus with respect to them among government officials and non-governmental women's organizations, as preparation for the following Conference and as orientation for the substantive work in the countries.

b) To promote a broader and more valuable participation in the following Regional Conference, through permanent contact with specific focal points and with government and key non-governmental agencies. Individual Presiding Officers could divide up the countries of the region among themselves, determining where the action of each one could be the most effective in this promotional task.

c) To function as a counterpart of the secretariat of ECLAC in identifying issues to be treated and projects of interest to the countries, as well as in systematizing the information concerning these issues found in the countries. To dedicate part of their meetings to a previously selected substantive issue, in order to help further the discussion of that issue from a regional perspective.

d) To improve the coordination of tasks with the other agencies working on women's issues. Each member country of the Presiding Officers can do so within its area of regional action.

e) To contribute to a better preparation of regional participation within the world-level international agencies concerned with women's issues.

f) To make recommendations, by means of a communication from the Presiding Officers to the following Regional Conference, concerning the issues that the Presiding Officers think should be treated in that Conference.

During this same meeting, the Presiding Officers agreed to send a communication with recommendations to the Fifth Regional Conference, in the following terms:

The Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean recommend that the Fifth Conference:

a) Initiate the necessary preparatory tasks for the elaboration of a new regional plan of action, within the framework of the new situation currently existing in the region and the proposal for changing production patterns with social equity. It might be desirable to bring together a group of experts in order to begin these tasks;

b) Promote institutional continuity among government agencies created to treat women's issues, proposing that such agencies be created by law and not by decrees;

c) Advocate greater coordination of regional positions within the world-level international agencies concerned with women's issues.

4. Report of the secretariat of ECLAC on activities carried out since the Fourth Regional Conference and presentation of the documents prepared for the Fifth Conference

The secretariat of ECLAC will inform the member countries of the Fifth Regional Conference about the activities carried out between 1 July 1988 and 31 May 1991, which are contained in working document LC/L.626(CRM.5/3).

The secretariat of ECLAC directed its activities during this period towards promoting women's issues in the countries through projects, studies or providing direct technical assistance; towards improving coordination in this area with the rest of the United Nations system; towards deepening relevant substantive issues and undertaking studies to link women's issues to ECLAC's new proposal concerning changing production patterns with social equity.

The secretariat will present the following working documents to the Conference:

1. Provisional agenda (LC/L.621(CRM.5/1)).
2. Background and objectives of the Conference; Provisional agenda; Annotations to the provisional agenda (LC/L.623(CRM.5/2)).
3. Activities of the Secretariat of ECLAC with respect to the integration of women in the economic and social development of Latin America and the Caribbean between 1 July 1988 and 31 May 1991 (LC/L.626(CRM.5/3)).
4. Women in Latin America and the Caribbean: the challenge of changing production patterns with social equity (LC/L.624(CRM.5/4)).
5. Women in Caribbean development: gender equity in changing production patterns (LC/L.628(CRM.5/5)).

The secretariat will present the following reference documents to the Conference:

1. Report of the Fourth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean (LC/G.1539(CRM.4/13)), Santiago, Chile, February 1989.
2. Report of the Ninth Meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean (LC/L.521(MDM.9/4)), Santiago, Chile, January 1990.
3. Report of the Tenth Meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean (LC/L.565(MDM.10/8)), Santiago, Chile, October 1990.
4. Report of the Eleventh Meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean (LC/L.605(MDM.11/9)), Santiago, Chile, April 1991.
5. Export Processing Zones and Women in the Caribbean (LC/L.586(MDM.11/5)), Santiago, Chile, August 1990.
6. The Suitcase Traders in the Free Zone of Curaçao (LC/L.587(MDM.11/6)), Santiago, Chile, August 1990.

7. The Hucksters of Dominica (LC/L.588(MDM.11/7)), Santiago, Chile, October 1990.
8. The Agricultural Traders of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada, Dominica and Saint Lucia (LC/L.589(MDM.11/8)), Santiago, Chile, November 1990.
9. Report of the Twelfth Meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean (LC/L.620(MDM.12/4)), Santiago, Chile, May 1991.
10. Informe de la Reunión sobre transformación productiva e integración de la mujer en el desarrollo (LC/L.614), Santiago, Chile, March 1991.
11. Comparative Status of Women in Selected Caribbean Countries as indicated by Selected Social, Economic, Demographic and Legal Parameters (LC/G.1659; LC/CAR/G.273/Rev.1), May 1991.
12. Rural Women in Latin America and the Caribbean: Results of Projects and Programmes, Mujer y desarrollo Series, No. 1 (LC/L.513), Santiago, Chile, September 1989.
13. Latin America: The Challenge of Socializing the Home Environment, Mujer y desarrollo Series, No. 2 (LC/L.514), Santiago, Chile, October 1989.
14. Women and Politics in Latin America and the Caribbean, Mujer y desarrollo Series, No. 3 (LC/L.515), Santiago, Chile, September 1989.
15. Refugee and Displaced Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, Mujer y desarrollo Series, No. 4 (LC/L.591), Santiago, Chile, December 1990.
16. Women, Cultures and Development: Views from Latin America, Mujer y desarrollo Series, No. 5 (LC/L.596), Santiago, Chile, May 1991.
17. Women and New Technologies, Mujer y desarrollo Series, No. 6 (LC/L.597), Santiago, Chile, November 1990.
18. New Participatory Methodologies for Working with Women, Mujer y desarrollo Series, No. 7 (LC/L.592), Santiago, Chile, October 1990.
19. The Vulnerability of Households Headed by Women: Policy Questions and Options for Latin America and the Caribbean, Mujer y desarrollo Series, No. 8 (LC/L.611), Santiago, Chile, April 1991.

20. Los grandes cambios y la crisis. Impacto sobre la mujer en América Latina y el Caribe, Libros de la CEPAL Series, No. 27 (LC/G.1592-P), Santiago, Chile, December 1990. United Nations Publication, Sales No.: S.90.II.G.13.
21. Selected ECLAC Documents and Publications on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean (LC/L.460/Rev.1), Santiago, Chile, August 1989.

Documents submitted by consultants

- In search of social equity: women as social partners in Caribbean development.

5. Country reports

The representatives from the member countries of ECLAC from Latin America and the Caribbean will report on the changing status of women in their countries and the obstacles to their full integration into economic and social development. The specialized agencies of the United Nations system are also expected to contribute to this discussion.

6. Evaluation and recommendations of the Fifth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean

In fulfilment of its mandate, the Fifth Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean will evaluate the status of women in Latin America and the Caribbean and formulate pertinent recommendations. For this purpose, the context of Latin America in the 1990s will be considered, as well as ECLAC's new proposal, entitled Changing Production Patterns with Social Equity,⁵ together with working documents 4, 5 and 6, in order to relate the analysis of the situation of women to the current regional context and elaborate guidelines that allow for a better incorporation of such issues into the general policies of each country.

The evaluation and recommendations will also make it possible to begin to lay the bases for drafting a new plan for regional Action designed to improve the status of women—a plan that dovetails with the development concerns of Latin America and the Caribbean on the threshold of the twenty-first century.

7. Changing production patterns with social equity and the integration of women into the economic and social development of Latin America and the Caribbean

At their Twelfth Meeting, the Presiding Officers decided to present to the member countries for their consideration the regional position paper prepared by the secretariat with the help of the Presiding Officers, entitled "La mujer en América Latina y el Caribe: el desafío de la transformación productiva con equidad" (Women in Latin America and the Caribbean: the challenge of changing production patterns with social equity) (LC/L.627(CRM.5/4)).

This document is the secretariat's first effort to update the concern for the living conditions of women in the region in the new context in which the reflection on the overall situation of Latin America and the Caribbean is taking place. Just as in 1977 the First Regional Conference launched the analysis of the status of women in the context of the main development concerns during the 1970s, it is hoped that this Conference will provoke discussion about the new conditions in which policies directed towards women are being carried out, in order to ensure that this issue is reflected in the region's new development programmes.

8. Preparations for the Sixth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean

In preparing for the Sixth Conference, consideration must be given to the fact that a regional position needs to be developed on this question, since a world conference will be held in 1995. For that purpose, it would be advisable to elaborate a provisional agenda for the Sixth Conference, and to submit to the secretariat and the Presiding Officers of the Conference guidelines for the activities planned for the period 1992-1994, including suggestions concerning the organization of possible meetings of experts to elaborate a regional plan of action to the year 2000, which would contain the issues of highest priority for the region.

Notes

¹ See the Regional Plan of Action for the Integration of Women into Latin American Economic and Social Development (E/CEPAL/1042/Rev.1), November 1977, paragraphs 87 and 88.

² See the Report of the Fourth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean (LC/G.1539(CRM.4/13)), 31 October 1988.

³ See ECLAC, Draft Report. Fifth Meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean (E/CEPAL/MDM.5/L.2), Mexico City, Mexico, 5 August 1983.

⁴ See ECLAC, reports on the Eighth, Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh and Twelfth Meetings of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean (LC/L.483(MDM.8/2)), (LC/L.521(MDM.9/4)), (LC/L.565(MDM.10/8)), (LC/L.605(MDM.11/9)/Rev.1), (LC/L.620(MDM.12/4)).

⁵ ECLAC, Changing production patterns with social equity. The prime task of Latin American and Caribbean development in the 1990s (LC/G.1601-P), Santiago, Chile, March 1990. United Nations publication, Sales No. E.90.II.G.6.