First meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development

Mexico City, 26-28 April 2017

REPORT OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE FORUM OF THE COUNTRIES OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
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A. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Place and date of the meeting

1. The first meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development was held in Mexico City, from 26 to 28 April 2017. The meeting was convened by the Government of Mexico, in its capacity as Chair of the Committee of the Whole of the Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), and under the auspices of the Commission, by virtue of resolution 700(XXXVI) adopted by the member States at the thirty-sixth session.

Organization of work

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<td>Monday, 24 April</td>
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<td>10 a.m. – 1 p.m.</td>
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<td>Registration</td>
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## ROOM 2

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<td>9 a.m. – 12.30 p.m.</td>
<td>Sixth meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Committee on South-South Cooperation of ECLAC</td>
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<td>1 – 2.30 p.m.</td>
<td>Side event - United Nations: Commitments and Road Map to Planet 50-50 by 2030</td>
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<td>Side event - private sector</td>
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<td>Meeting of heads of delegation</td>
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<td>6 – 8 p.m.</td>
<td>Side event - United Nations: Support by the United Nations Country Team for the 2030 Agenda</td>
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### Attendance

2. The following States members of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development were represented at the first meeting: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

3. Attending as observers were the following non-Forum-member States members of the Commission: Canada, France, Germany and Norway.

4. The United Nations Secretariat was represented at the meeting by staff members from the Office of the President of the General Assembly, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Regional Commissions New York Office, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC).


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1 See annex 4 for the full list of participants.
6. The following specialized agencies of the United Nations were also represented: International Labour Organization (ILO), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), World Health Organization (WHO)-Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), World Bank, Universal Postal Union (UPU), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (FIDA), and International Organization for Migration (IOM).

7. Also attending were representatives of the following intergovernmental organizations: Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America-Peoples’ Trade Agreement (ALBA), Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), CAF-Development Bank of Latin America, Andean Community, Inter-American Institute for Co-operation on Agriculture (IICA), Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture, Organization of American States (OAS), Ibero-American Youth Organization, ParlAmericas, Ibero-American Secretariat, Central American Social Integration Secretariat, and Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC).

8. The meeting was also attended by the non-governmental organizations and representatives of the private sector and academia who figure in the list of participants.

9. The first meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development was chaired by Luis Videgaray Caso, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Mexico, the country serving as Chair of the Committee of the Whole of ECLAC.

B. OPENING SESSION

10. At the opening session, statements were made by Luis Videgaray Caso, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Mexico; Alicia Bárcena, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC); and Enrique Peña Nieto, President of the United Mexican States.

11. The Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Mexico welcomed the participants and said that although each country had to undertake the effort to achieve sustainable development, clearly many of the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) could only be achieved through cooperation and team work between all the governments of the region, and with explicit participation by civil society. He remarked that this was an important day for Mexico, because it marked the establishment of the National Council for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, whose aim was precisely to promote and evaluate the fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda. He hoped that the work at the meeting would contribute greatly to pursue together.

12. The Executive Secretary of ECLAC commended Mexico upon the establishment of the National Council for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and recalled that, at the thirty-sixth session of the Commission, held in Mexico City in May 2016, the member State of ECAC had adopted resolution 700(XXXVI) establishing the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development as a regional mechanism to follow up and review the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the Sustainable Development Goals and targets, its means of implementation, and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. Implementation of the 2030 Agenda would require
combining the three dimensions of sustainable development—economic, social and environmental—in an integrated manner. In addition, Latin America and the Caribbean would need to be capacity of reinvigorating rational integration, which was currently weak and fragmented, as a tool for productive diversification and capacity-building. The Executive Secretary underscored the importance of multi-stakeholder participation in the Forum: governments, the private sector and the agencies of the United Nations system. She also emphasized that the Forum provided useful opportunities for peer learning by means of voluntary national reviews, the sharing of best practices and the discussion of shared targets. Lastly, she recalled the universal and indivisible nature of the 2030 Agenda.

13. The President of the United Mexican States emphasized that the Forum was the ideal milieu for sharing successful public policy experiences, strengthening regional cooperation schemes and enriching each country’s strategy for making the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development a reality. The Agenda was a road map for progressing towards the achievement of fairer, more prosperous and inclusive societies with sustainable economic growth. He remarked that the countries needed effective accountability mechanisms and drew attention to the importance of establishing standard indicators for the achievement of the SDGs. The President noted that, at by end of 2017, 14 of the region’s countries—including Mexico—would have presented their voluntary national reviews to the high-level political forum on sustainable development. He also referred to the period of global uncertainty and the drastic changes that were threatening the progress of the countries, and called upon all the governments of the region to strive for unity, cooperation and integration as pillars of regional development, with a privileged place for multilateral consensus-building. He added that inclusive participation offered the strongest armour-plating for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the key to ensuring that it would endure and progress regardless of the political cycles of governments.

14. In a video message, Amina J. Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, remarked that the 2030 Agenda was now into its second year and that it was essential to take regional, subregional and national contexts into accounts in its implementation, review and follow-up. To achieve the SDGs, the United Nations and its Member States would have to rethink the way they worked and adopt a truly integrated approach to development based on holistic policymaking, multi-stakeholder partnerships and collaboration between sectors. Financing was one of the pillars of the entire international political process surrounding the SDGs and climate action. The Forum was an essential bridge between the national and global levels, and between governments and the United Nations system. Under the leadership of the Secretary-General, the United Nations system was committed to making the reforms that would best enable the Organization to support the countries in fulfilling the 2030 Agenda and climate-related commitments.

C. AGENDA

15. The Forum adopted the following agenda:

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Presentation of the annual report on regional progress and challenges in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, by the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).
3. Dialogue on the contribution of the subsidiary bodies of ECLAC and major intergovernmental meetings to the 2030 Agenda.
4. Presentation of other reports:
(i) United Nations Development Group-Latin America and the Caribbean (UNDG-LAC)
(ii) International agencies and financial institutions
(iii) Civil society, private sector and other relevant stakeholders

5. Peer learning on voluntary national reviews of the member countries of the Forum
   (institutional arrangements, national measurements and challenges and priorities).

6. Special session on artificial intelligence.

7. Dialogues on eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world in the
   framework of sustainable development.

8. Special session on the means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable
   Development.

9. Conclusions regarding the regional challenges to implementing the 2030 Agenda for
   Sustainable Development.

10. Other matters.

11. Conclusions and recommendations.

D. SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

16. The Ambassador and Special Adviser to the President of the General Assembly for
Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals emphasized that regional mechanisms such as this
Forum were critical for coordinating the ambitions of global agreements and linking national
implementation and follow-up and review efforts. She noted that ECLAC had historically played a key
role in synthesizing the unique challenges faced by the Latin American and Caribbean region. In
particular, through its equality trilogy, ECLAC had placed tackling inequality at the centre of the policy
debate on sustainable development; a vision that was perfectly aligned with the 2030 Agenda. As both
recipients of development assistance and providers of South-South cooperation, middle-income countries
such as those of the region were well placed to push for change, while this Forum was an ideal space to
discuss how to shape such a push. Lastly, the Ambassador encouraged the Latin American and Caribbean
States to participate actively in the SDG Action Events in New York and assured them that she would
report the concerns expressed at the meeting of the Forum to the President of the General Assembly.

Presentation of the annual report on regional progress and challenges in relation to the 2030 Agenda for
Sustainable Development, by the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the
Caribbean (ECLAC) (agenda item 2)

17. The Executive Secretary presented the Annual report on regional progress and challenges in relation to the 2030 Agenda for
Sustainable Development, prepared by the ECLAC secretariat pursuant to paragraph 8 of resolution 700(XXXVI). The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its
17 SDGs represented the consensus of governments and multi-stakeholders to work towards a
transformative vision of economic, social and environmental sustainability. It was a civilizing, universal,
indivisible and rights-based agenda. It was impossible to address the complexity and variety of challenges

\[\text{LC/L.4268(FDS.1/3) [online] http://repositorio.cepal.org/handle/11362/41189.}\]
raised by the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in a single document, and for that reason, the report covered three areas: an analysis of the progress made thus far and the challenges ahead, a description of national institutional mechanisms existing in the region for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and an analysis of the challenges and opportunities involved in building and measuring SDG indicators.

18. The Executive Secretary said that the recessionary bias resulting from persistent trade imbalances, high levels of instability and uncertainty created by financial globalization, the need to close the gaps between the winners and losers of globalization, migration-related conflict, the need for sustainable peace, and the protection of the planet and of future generations’ right to development, made the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development essential to ensuring that no one was left behind. It was also important to restore international cooperation and multilateralism with a new and revived role for regional integration, to participate fully in the technology revolution, to promote an environmental big push, to eliminate poverty and strengthen equality, to mobilize financial resources with a focus on middle-income countries, small-island developing States, least developed countries and landlocked developing countries, to build new capacity and to broaden the participation of all actors in society.

19. The technology lag posed a challenge for the region’s productivity and hampered diversification and the ability to create good-quality jobs, while the persistent productivity gap put long-term social progress at risk. The improvement of research and development was essential; hence the cooperation of the region’s countries, and of the academic sector in particular, was fundamental. The environmental aspect of sustainable development represented a point of convergence for structural change and the technology revolution, which provided an opportunity to apply the environmental big push. Moreover, inequality was a barrier to growth and discrimination hindered equality and deprived society of talent and creativity. The wide gaps between men and women in the labour market were obstacles to the achievement of the SDGs.

20. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda called for a review of governance at the global, regional and national levels; the incorporation of the SDGs into national development plans, budgets and business models; meeting the challenge of measuring and following up the Sustainable Development Goals by strengthening national statistical systems and data ecosystems designed for that purpose and developing new indicators; the analysis of means of implementation, particularly with respect to financing, technology, fair trade and access to information; and the achievement of intersectoral and interinstitutional coordination and the participation of all stakeholders, including businesses and civil society. Hence, a new policy dialogue was needed amid the rapid transformation of the economy, policy and technology, and a period of uncertainty for the region.

21. In the ensuing discussion, several participants spoke of various issues relating to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, such as tax havens, evasion and avoidance, migratory flows between the region’s countries, land distribution and unemployment in Caribbean countries.

**Dialogue on the contribution of the subsidiary bodies of ECLAC and major intergovernmental meetings to the 2030 Agenda (agenda item 3)**

22. The session was moderated by Alicia Bárcena, Executive Secretary of ECLAC. Other participants included the Chairs of the subsidiary bodies of ECLAC and of other relevant intergovernmental regional mechanisms, who reported to the Forum on the incorporation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development into their respective areas of work and on their contributions to the implementation of the SDGs in the region. The presentation of reports was organized into two discussion groups, in which the Chairs of the subsidiary bodies reported on institutional agreements and commitments, methodologies of
work, and activities and initiatives that had benefited and strengthened the implementation of the SDGs at the regional level.

First round

23. In the first discussion group, Mario Palma, Vice-President of the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) of Mexico, representing the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC, said that at the sixteenth meeting of the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference, held in Santiago from 3 to 6 April 2017, two themes had been addressed: the SDGs as a key axis structuring its activities and the integration of statistical information with geospatial data. The SDGs represented the biggest ever multilateral effort to define development goals, and information was needed to formulate relevant policies, which was a challenge for the region’s countries and national statistical offices. The Statistical Conference of the Americas coordinated statistical efforts across the region’s countries and at the ninth meeting of the Statistical Conference, to be held in November 2017, the aim was to adopt a regional framework of indicators for the regional follow-up of the 2030 Agenda.

24. Alejandra Mora Mora, Minister for the Status of Women and Executive President of the National Women’s Institute (INAMU) of Costa Rica, representing the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, highlighted the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030, adopted by ECLAC member States at the thirteenth Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in 2016 in Montevideo. The Montevideo Strategy created synergies between the regional gender agenda and the 2030 Agenda, and was not just a sum of 10 pillars and a group of measures, but involved equality, rights, freedom, women’s autonomy, a strong State, and the importance of public policies and of the participation of civil society. She remarked that now it was time to make the leap from the “what” to the “how”, from commitments to action. It was time for the countries of the region to demonstrate their capacity to forge agreements and adapt them to their respective realities, priorities and resources.

25. Marcelo Jenkins, Minister of Science, Technology and Telecommunications of Costa Rica, representing the Conference on Science, Innovation and ICTs of ECLAC, described the make-up and functions of the Conference and its Executive Committee, as well as its executed and planned activities. These activities were focused on promoting the training and development of human capital and the innovative capacity of Latin America and the Caribbean; increasing investment in innovation; encouraging the sharing of experiences to design public policies that included ICTs; and facilitating cooperation and coordination between the member countries of the Conference.

26. Mark Brantley, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Aviation of Saint Kitts and Nevis, representing the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee, explained the Committee’s work to foster synergy between the 2030 Agenda and platforms specific to small island developing States (SIDS). A process was under way to identify a core set of tiers I and II SDG indicators for Caribbean SDG follow-up and review. The outcome of this process would serve as an input to the work of the Statistical Coordination Group for the 2030 Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean. Another important area of endeavour for the Committee was the development of strong institutional infrastructure to lead the sustainable development process, regarding which a Caribbean symposium on mainstreaming the SDGs into national development planning had been held in February 2017, as part of a broader project being implemented by the ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean to help build capacity among policymakers for the planning, management and monitoring of SDG implementation at the national level.
27. Javier Abugattás, Chair of the Board of Directors of the Centre for Strategic Planning (CEPLAN) of Peru, represented the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean which, by virtue of a joint declaration signed by ECLAC and UNDP in October 2014, was held together with the Ministerial Forum for Development in Latin America and the Caribbean to take advantage of synergies and complementarities. He highlighted the activities of the Regional Conference and analysis documents that had been prepared to steer discussions at its meetings, and said that analysis should be people-centred, which had not always been the case as it was easier to work at the sectoral level. Territory was a central element to be considered as it showed the countries’ diversity and complexity. Lastly, efforts would be made to further integrate data and geography, and to deepen multifactorial and multidimensional knowledge mechanisms that incorporated aspects such as race, ethnicity, life cycle and territory.

28. Margarita Cedeño, Vice-President of the Dominican Republic, representing the Ministerial Forum for Development of Latin America and the Caribbean, said that the region had to make cross-cutting and simultaneous efforts through a variety of institutional actions and legal reforms. The SDGs, which combined economic, social and environmental pillars, were a common thread for building policies that were compatible with the population’s aspirations. It was essential to make progress in the analysis of multidimensional poverty and the design of better public intervention through a new generation of social protection programmes with a systemic focus, and to recognize the unbreakable link between the reduction of the digital gap and the fight against poverty. She spoke of the ideas presented in the ECLAC document on the social inequality matrix and the common challenge faced by the region’s countries of preserving the ground gained with respect to social policies amid geopolitical tensions and uncertainty.

Second round

29. In the second discussion group, Miguel Ángel Moir, Secretary for Planning and Programming of the Office of the President of Guatemala, representing the Regional Council for Planning of the Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning (ILPES), highlighted the importance of public management and planning for development as a driving instrument of the 2030 Agenda in the region. He also underscored the role of the future regional observatory on planning for development, for which a proposal would be presented for adoption at the sixteenth meeting of the Regional Council for Planning to be held in November 2017, and which aimed to support Latin American and Caribbean countries in the strengthening of their planning and public management processes and to help link those processes to the 2030 Agenda.

30. Patricia Chemor, Secretary-General of the National Council for Population (CONAPO) of Mexico, representing the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, spoke of the contribution of the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. She said that the Montevideo Consensus complemented the 2030 Agenda on themes that were relevant but not sufficiently incorporated into the SDGs, such as indigenous peoples, Afrodescendent populations, ageing and international migration. She also pointed out that 69 of the 98 priority measures included in the Montevideo Consensus explicitly mentioned or established some synergies with the SDGs and she highlighted the relevance of the Operational guide for implementation of the Consensus.

31. Noel González, Coordinator of Multilateral and Regional Forums for International Development of the Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation (AMEXCID), representing the Committee on South-South Cooperation, underscored the three main lines of action for 2016-2018, namely: sharing experiences on supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, promoting multi-stakeholder partnerships and sharing experiences and good practices on methodologies for planning, executing and evaluating South-South cooperation policies. He said that there were more than 1,400 South-South cooperation actions under way in 2016 and the nature of that
cooperation was changing. Although the focus had previously been on institution-building, it had recently incorporated the strengthening of productive activities. He also emphasized the need for better synergies with other bodies in the region that were involved in South-South cooperation.

32. Carlos Alberto Botero, Deputy Minister for the Environment of Colombia, representing the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, spoke of what he termed the global development plan needed to achieve the SDGs. He said that the challenge for the Forum of Ministers had been to formulate a coordinated but country-specific response to social, economic and environmental issues at the regional level. With a view to protecting the region’s natural capital it was essential to reduce deforestation and the loss of biodiversity, to use more efficient and renewable energy sources, and to decrease greenhouse gas emissions. He also spoke of the updated Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development as a tool to address environmental and economic themes in the region.

33. Ricardo Pompa, Coordinator of the National Digital Strategy of Mexico, representing the Ministerial Conference on the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean, spoke of the role of the Digital Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean (eLAC2018) and the five pillars it included for the achievement of the SDGs: access to infrastructure, digital economy, e-government, social inclusion and sustainable development, and governance. He underscored the importance of ICTs for the SDGs, specifying that the former were directly mentioned in 4 of the 17 Goals and, moreover, they played a fundamental role in achieving the other Goals. He added that the aim of the Digital Agenda was to give Latin America and the Caribbean the opportunity to attain sustainable development and improve the living conditions of the region’s citizens.

34. Jaime Miranda, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of El Salvador, gave a special presentation on the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) which referred to the 2017 Action Plan adopted at the fifth Summit of Heads of State and Government of CELAC, held in January 2017 in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic. He reiterated the need for a renewed global partnership to ensure the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. He also said that official development assistance continued to play a strategic role in creating and strengthening capacities for sustainable development. He recalled the appeal to developed countries to allocate 0.7% of GDP to development assistance and underscored the need for reflection on the issue of graduation. Lastly, he reaffirmed the will of CELAC to continue participating in systematic follow-up and review processes regarding the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

35. Following the presentations, Gabriela Agosto, Executive Secretary of the National Council for Social Policy Coordination of Argentina, representing the Forum of Ministers and High Authorities of Housing and Urban Development of Latin America and the Caribbean (MINURVI), took the floor. She underscored some points relating to the agenda of the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), which included the commitment to implement the New Urban Agenda and the presentation of the new Regional Action Plan aiming to follow up and measure the outcomes of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda. A regional observatory on housing and urban development was being created for that purpose. She also reaffirmed the commitment of MINURVI to maintain the relationship with the Statistical Conference of the Americas and hence advance towards a statistical standard for cities.

36. Lastly, Patricia Madrigal, Vice-Minister for the Environment of Costa Rica, on behalf of the Co-Chairs of the negotiating committee of the regional agreement on access to information, participation and justice in environmental matters in Latin America and the Caribbean, referred to the link between Principle
10 and the 2030 Agenda and said that the environment was a cross-cutting theme for all the SDGs. Next, she spoke of the progress made in the negotiation of the regional agreement and the Presiding Officers’ expectations of finalizing that process in 2017. She also called on the countries that had not yet signed the Declaration on the application of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development to do so, as that instrument would strengthen democracy and justice.

37. The discussion groups drew particular attention to the importance of planning in the adaptation of processes involving the 2030 Agenda and SDGs to national realities by incorporating the Goals of the 2030 Agenda into planning instruments. Several of the region’s countries had medium- and long-term strategies in place and many had analysed the consistency of their national plans with the 2030 Agenda. The integration of the Agenda also affected territorial plans, and ministries and secretariats for planning played a fundamental role in that respect. In Latin America and the Caribbean, several countries had national coordination mechanisms for the follow-up and implementation of the 2030 Agenda and secretariats or ministries for planning faced the challenge of strengthening coordination between multiple levels, leading participatory planning processes, developing strategies for implementing the 2030 Agenda and strengthening the capacities and skills of public servants to plan for sustainable development. Lastly, the participants agreed that it was extremely important to reinforce the synergies between the different subsidiary bodies and intergovernmental meetings to achieve the SDGs in the region.

Presentation of other reports (agenda item 4)

(i) United Nations Development Group-Latin America and the Caribbean (UNDG-LAC)

38. This session was moderated by Esteban Caballero, Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Other participants were George Gray Molina, Chief Economist at the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); Jessica Faieta, Chair of UNDG-LAC and Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); Maria Cristina Perceval, Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF); Carissa Etienne, Director of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO); and Miguel Barreto, Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of the World Food Programme (WFP).

39. In his presentation entitled “Leaving no one behind in Latin America and the Caribbean: overcoming inequality to eradicate poverty”, the Chief Economist at the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), said that the 2030 Agenda called for redefining problems and challenges, as well as solutions, with a multidimensional approach that considered synergies and linkages. It was essential to define objectives clearly, coordinate implementation tools in each country, identify problems and overcome fragmentation at the ministerial, sectoral and territorial levels. The focus on the life cycle, freedom from discrimination and violence, and sustainable production and consumption patterns all contributed to social inclusion. Disaggregated data, either statistical or administrative, were a tool that would provide a holistic view of each household and community. Lastly, structural changes should be made in the social and environmental spheres as well as the economic arena, in order to ensure that the principle of the 2030 Agenda, that no one should be left behind, was respected.

40. The Chair of UNDG-LAC and Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) spoke of the work of UNDG in supporting member States through the United Nations offices in their countries, which had a mandate to provide support to each country to achieve the 2030 Agenda’s Goals and which implemented a coordinated mainstreaming, acceleration and policy support strategy (MAPS) formulated by UNDG to identify immediate and priority
actions, as well as possible partnerships and opportunities for support; to ensure that the knowledge and experience of the United Nations system were available to the countries; and to develop monitoring and measurement frameworks for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the national level. Lastly, she said that work was being done with 31 of the 33 countries in the region within the MAPS framework.

41. The Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) presented an analysis which focused on the life cycle and on the gender perspective. With respect to the life cycle, the region faced the challenge of maintaining and improving per capita income and protecting the income security of older persons who had not made social security contributions and who did not meet the criteria to receive care; the problem affected older women and older persons who lived in poverty, vulnerability and exclusion, in particular. Work was the cog linking social issues and an improvement in working conditions and wages was the best solution for overcoming those problems and building inclusive, prosperous and supportive societies. In the region, themes such as access to higher education, adolescent pregnancy and early unions had to be addressed. There was an ongoing battle between democracy and crime, education and human trafficking, and between a society respectful of human rights and a future of uncertainty.

42. The Director of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) referred to the Organization’s role as technical secretariat for the regional inter-agency movement “A Promise Renewed for the Americas”, which showcased the working-as-one-UN approach required by the SDGs. She also referred a number of initiatives in which PAHO worked jointly with other partners and United Nations agencies, including —with ECLAC— a prospective agreement to strengthen joint work in the identification of equity indicators and the monitoring of SDG 3 and —with the Organization of American States— an agreement on the implementation of the SDGs and a mapping of joint actions for the realization of the 2030 Agenda.

43. The Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of the World Food Programme (WFP) spoke of building resilience, food security and sustainable production systems. With a view to achieving the SDGs, it was essential to invest in social protection networks and to build resilient societies that could face structural vulnerability, climate change, disasters, pandemics and financial crises. He highlighted the importance of women in that process as they played a fundamental role in poor and vulnerable communities. There was a need for investment in the decentralization of social protection networks and in disaster preparedness and emergency response through those networks. The United Nations contributed to food security in the region, a decisive factor for development, through the World Food Programme.

44. In the concluding reflections, it was mentioned that government leadership was needed to ensure that the 2030 Agenda was reflected in budgeting, in order to move from the operational phase to the programmatic phase in working towards achievement of the SDGs.

(ii) International agencies and financial institutions

45. Mila Paspalanova, representative in Mexico of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), shared some input from Mexico’s office of administration of justice on the measurement of Goal 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions. She explained that Mexico had established a system of indicators to measure Goal 16 that had been replicated in other countries of the region such as Ecuador, Paraguay and the Plurinational State of Bolivia, and which was also expected to be adopted in Costa Rica and Panama.
(iii) Civil society, private sector and other relevant stakeholders

46. Danaé Espinoza, representative of civil society, made a statement on behalf of civil society, which is attached as annex 3 hereto.

47. Guillermo Matta, Member of Parliament of El Salvador, speaking on behalf of the Inter-American Parliamentary Group, said that the role of parliamentarians should be strengthened in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Parliamentary Group stood ready to adopt legislation to ensure that national programmes were focused on the SDGs, budgets strengthened and financial resources identified. Lastly, he stressed that parliamentarians should collaborate with civil society.

48. Javier Cortés, representative of the private sector, said that sustainable development challenges included interrelated economic, social and political aspects that required coordinated responses from all stakeholders from wider society. The 2030 Agenda called for collaborative efforts in order to achieve the shared Goals, targets and indicators, and was a perfect opportunity to align business strategies with development goals. The United Nations Global Compact, through its local networks in 14 Latin American and Caribbean countries, had helped to mobilize the private sector in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda by building political momentum and capacity within businesses so that they could align their strategies with the SDGs, ensuring that those companies participated in public-private forums, establishing partnerships with various bodies, and promoting financial resources to fund the SDGs.

49. Graciela Cousinet, Deputy of Argentina’s National Assembly, speaking on behalf of ParlAmericas, said that parliamentarians were receptive to the demands of civil society and to translating them into specific laws. ParlAmericas was working to advance the Sustainable Development Goals through activities focused on the priorities of the hemisphere, such as gender equality, Open Parliament and climate change. In order to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, national legal frameworks, including the subsequent budget allocations and monitoring of policies, must be reformed, to ensure that they were applied in the best interests of all, including minority groups.

50. The member countries of the Forum shared their experiences of and progress and challenges in the preparation of their voluntary national reviews at this session, which took the form of three panel discussions.

51. The three countries—the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Colombia and Mexico— that had presented voluntary national reviews at the 2016 high-level political forum, convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, shared their experiences with the rest of the countries. Meanwhile, the 11 countries that would present their voluntary national reviews in 2017, a process that was considered central to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, reported on the progress made. During the discussions, the participating countries reiterated that the 2030 Agenda was a global, long-term commitment that would require the State, not just the government, to take ownership of the framework. Policies must go beyond government terms of office and include all sectors. Lessons should be learned from the experience of implementing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), but an updated approach should also be applied to the implementation of the SDGs.

52. The participants said that the three main areas for ensuring progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals were institutional structures, planning mechanisms and the means of measurement and the development of indicators. The countries in the region had chosen to create new institutions to
follow up implementation of the 2030 Agenda or to modify the mandates of existing institutions. Most of those follow-up mechanisms, which had a technical component and a political component, were headed by the President and involved a variety of ministries and stakeholders. That demonstrated that the 2030 Agenda was not the sole preserve of one sector, that it required political will and leadership at the highest level, and that, by its inclusive nature, it called for the participation of all sectors of the State. Each country had established its own planning mechanisms, on the basis of its national capacities and priorities. The Goals were aspirational and each country could choose how to implement them. The institutional inertia of viewing the State in a compartmentalized manner was a barrier that must be overcome, in order to develop a rationale of integration instead. National policies and plans must also be updated to align them with the SDGs, ensure sound planning and coordinate tasks among different institutions and levels of government. New proposals for reengineering institutions should be put forward and a new generation of policies should be adopted. Measuring the indicators would be a major challenge, but it would also be an opportunity to identify those countries that had lagged behind in the implementation of the MDGs.

53. Efforts must also be made to develop new information sources, such as tax information systems, and to improve national accounts systems. The greatest challenges referred to the disaggregation of statistical data—the territorial disaggregation of data was critical—, the strengthening of national statistical systems and the incorporation of the SDGs into budgeting and planning processes at the national, local and territorial levels. Parliaments would play an essential role in approving budgets and laws to support efforts aimed at achieving the SDGs. The banking sector must also be engaged in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, in order to achieve synergies between public and private investment. In addition, it was important to optimize public resources and foster public-private partnerships. Multi-stakeholder participation was extremely important for the implementation of the Agenda, especially the participation of academia and the private sector, which tended to be absent, as well as for the dissemination of the 2030 Agenda and for civic activities.

54. It was also noted that while some countries had prioritized selected Goals of the 2030 Agenda, others had favoured a universal approach to the Agenda, although all had recognized its comprehensive and indivisible nature. The Agenda was evolving and it would be necessary to see how it was being implemented in the region over the years. In the area of financing, the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean were exploring how to combine private and public resources and seeking innovative sources of funding for 2030 Agenda. Various challenges lay ahead of the region in that area, such as its low taxation levels and weak tax revenue. Added to that was a high level of tax evasion, estimated by ECLAC to be an amount equivalent to some 6.7% of regional GDP. It was also essential to improve the quality of spending and the measurement of results.

55. Participants welcomed the ECLAC initiative to hold a regional consultation on financing the SDGs in the region, at which those issues could be discussed with the banking sector and regional and international financial institutions, and the 2030 Agenda could be coordinated with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

56. Panel 1 was moderated by Carlos Pérez Verdia, Coordinator of Advisors to Enrique Peña Nieto, President of Mexico. Gabriela Agosto, Executive Secretary of the National Council for Social Policy Coordination of Argentina, Philip Fox-Drummond Gough, Minister-Counsellor of the Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations, Marcos Barraza, Minister of Social Development of Chile, and Javier Abugattás, Executive Director of the Centre for Strategic Planning (CEPLAN) of Peru participated in the panel.
Panel 2 was moderated by Carlos Felipe Prada, Deputy Director of the National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE) of Colombia. Claudia Aguilar, Technical Delegate for the Implementation of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of El Salvador, Miguel Ángel Moir, Secretary for Planning and Programming of the office of the President (SEGEPLAN) of Guatemala, Efrain Corea, Presidential Director of Strategic Planning, the Budget and Public Investment of Honduras, and Cosme Moreno, Vice-Minister responsible for the Ministry of Social Development (MIDES) of Panama participated in the panel.

Panel 3 was moderated by Rubén Darío Molina, Vice-Minister for Multilateral Affairs and Integration at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Víctor Alegría, Director of the Sustainable Development Unit of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry the Environment and Sustainable Development of Belize, Olga Sánchez, Minister of National Planning and Political Economy of Costa Rica, and Álvaro García, Director of the Office of Planning and the Budget of Uruguay participated in the panel.

Special session on artificial intelligence (agenda item 6)

This session was moderated by Miguel Ruiz Cabañas Izquierdo, Undersecretary for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights at the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs of Mexico. The other participants were Margarita Cedeño, Vice-President of the Dominican Republic, Marcelo Jenkins, Minister of Science, Technology and Telecommunications of Costa Rica, José Ramón López Portillo, Professor, Founder and Coordinator of the Centre for Mexican Studies at Oxford University, and Sergio Alcocer Martínez de Castro, Founder and President of México Exponencial.

The Undersecretary for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights at the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs of Mexico said that the Government of Mexico had proposed that ECLAC should analyse exponential technologies and artificial intelligence in order to address the enormous economic, cultural, social and political impact that constant technological innovation would have on the countries of the region. The meeting had two objectives: to raise awareness of the potential impact of that technology on the population of the countries of the region; and to invite regional bodies, such as ECLAC, to integrate into their agendas the issue of exponential technology and using it to achieve the 2030 Agenda.

The Vice-President of the Dominican Republic called for reflection on the best use of exponential technology and big data. Multidimensional poverty measurement mechanisms, as policy-design tools, produced a high volume of big data that should be used to design social protection programmes with the aim of identifying opportunities and spaces for improvement and, thus, combating social inequality and poverty. Public use of big data had promoted a new understanding of public policy and management, which would require new capacities, regulatory proposals and rules on confidentiality and protection. A sustainable information management approach was needed to achieve the SDGs, as were reliable statistics based on big data. Lastly, she called for the work to be undertaken under the guidance of ECLAC so that big data would be the instrument of a fourth industrial revolution that could also be a social revolution, putting an end to poverty, exclusion and inequality.

The Minister of Science, Technology and Telecommunications of Costa Rica said that steps should be taken to predict the effects of exponential technologies, such as quantum computing, the Internet of things, cloud computing and virtualization, robotics, data and big data analysis, self-driving vehicles and artificial intelligence. In turn, those technologies complemented each other and put jobs at risk, especially in sectors such as industry, manufacturing and services. Public policies should provide for sustained investment in research and development, which totalled less than 1% of GDP in the region; for the training
of a new generation of scientists and technologists to understand technological change and its consequences; and for true broadband to facilitate connectivity. Such policies would require public-private partnerships, which had been shown to have played a major role in projects undertaken in other regions.

63. The Founder and Coordinator of the Centre for Mexican Studies at Oxford University said that the countries of the region had not been part of the industrial revolution or the knowledge economy, but must nevertheless now join the digital revolution. The performance and transformative power of information technology, robotics, biotechnology and nanotechnology had followed an exponential trajectory. In order to make progress, the extent of human ignorance and lack of preparedness must be accepted. That was the first step in responding to challenges ranging from mass displacement of labour to the emergence of an artificial superintelligence. That step must also be taken in order to take advantage of the extraordinary technological opportunities, which included an economy of abundance and overcoming the historical scourges of mankind, for which the education system must be overhauled and the relationships between higher education institutions, private business and government strengthened. All countries would be affected by automation and new globalization, leading to profound socioeconomic changes. Unless their impact on the region’s societies, economy, culture and policy was studied and a suitable institutional, regulatory and policy framework was drawn up, promoting digital technologies could accelerate the very consequences of technological change that governments were seeking to avoid. Technology’s exponential trajectory had been, primarily, the result of public investment, but public-private partnerships were essential to achieving the targets in that area. Given that exponential technological change was embedded in the fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda, more high-level forums needed to be held on the subject. Lastly, he said that, despite the negative consequences that such technologies could have, it was possible to pursue a future in which those technologies were positively integrated into the lives of individuals and societies.

64. The Founder and President of México Exponencial said that people were experiencing dramatic changes in a hyperconnected world. México Exponencial sought to improve the quality of life of Mexicans by developing innovation ecosystems, enabled by exponential technologies, in order to build a fair, inclusive, prosperous and sustainable society. It was necessary to equip the population with exponential skills, to develop a responsible, co-creative and adaptable society and government, to establish smart, creative cities, to take advantage of the opportunities provided by Industry 4.0 and to apply those strategies to energy, food and water management. He drew attention to the ethical challenge posed by new technologies, such as labour displacement, inequity, racism, the deteriorating security situation and safeguarding rights. Lastly, he made a number of recommendations, which included establishing a permanent working group at the highest level in each country; inviting the offices responsible for the economy, education, science and technology, innovation and communications to participate in those working groups; inviting academia and the private and social sectors to take part in a consortium to promote exponential technologies; assessing the need for and designing interventions in various areas; integrating road maps and a new paradigm into education and culture; and adopting foresight planning as a basic tool for shaping a future that was desirable and possible, based on exponential technologies.

65. In the question-and-answer session that followed, participants discussed the ethical challenges posed by new technologies; the tools needed to adapt legislation in the light of those technologies; the impact of new technologies on international migration; and public access to information, such as national budgets. The speakers noted that they needed to learn more about the use of new technologies around the world. The moderator proposed the establishment of a task force under the auspices of ECLAC, to draft regional recommendations for SDG-related processes under way within the United Nations, in particular within the high-level political forum on sustainable development, the Economic and Social Council and
the General Assembly, as appropriate. Lastly, ECLAC was asked to prepare a concept note on those issues with specific recommendations, to be considered by the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean at the preparatory meeting of the sixth Ministerial Conference on the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean to be held in Santiago on 8 and 9 August 2017.

**Dialogues on eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world in the framework of sustainable development (agenda item 7)**

66. The session was moderated by Cristián Barros Melet, Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations and Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council.

67. Ambassador Juan Somavía, Director of the Andrés Bello Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Chile and former President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council, gave a presentation on the challenges of integrating the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. He described the integration of policies covering those three dimensions as central to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. He listed four challenges to that integration: the conceptual challenge, overcoming the region’s established practice of working by sector; the technical challenge, identifying the priorities that defined the three dimensions and their points of interaction; the institutional challenge, addressing the fragmented nature and inertia of the institutions that should be focused on sustainable development; and the challenge of evaluating the level of integration between economic, social and environmental policies. To that end, he called for efforts to be made at the national and regional levels and in the framework of the United Nations. Lastly, he suggested that the next meeting of the Forum should include an initial exchange of conclusions drawn and progress made by the countries and the region with regard to that integration.

68. Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2, 3, 5, 9 and 14 were then addressed at three round tables devoted to the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic dimension, the social dimension and the environmental dimension.

69. Round table 1, on the economic dimension, was introduced by Hugo Beteta, Chief of the ECLAC subregional headquarters in Mexico. Rebeca Grynspan, Secretary General of the Ibero-American Secretariat (SEGIB), Ileana Núñez Mordoche, Vice-Minister of Minister of Foreign Trade and Foreign Investment of Cuba, and Pablo Sanguinetti, Chief Economist of the Development Bank of Latin America-CAF, participated in the round table.

70. The Chief of the ECLAC subregional headquarters in Mexico analysed the economic and political situation and the geopolitical uncertainty that the world was facing and noted that, after the 2009 crisis, recovery had been modest. He drew attention to the demographic, economic and political changes that the region had undergone and said that development must be accelerated in the face of increasing population ageing. He suggested that the answer did not lie in exports, a route that had been the primary driver of Latin American and Caribbean economies but was becoming less effective every day, but rather in domestic markets. A new focus on investment policies and better management of the investment cycle was needed. Lastly, he urged the countries of the region to remember their common origins and to aspire to a common destiny.

71. The Secretary General of the Ibero-American Secretariat (SEGIB) reflected on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and on how to move forward in the integration of its three dimensions. She noted that integration at the public policy level would represent a challenge for the institutional architecture, which was organized by sector, and she stressed that countries should have a development
plan, as well as a long-term vision, for overcoming that obstacle. Turning to the economic dimension, she noted the importance of analysing multidimensional poverty; seeking inclusive growth; diversifying the productive matrix; fitting the labour market around the family; making social security systems part of the economy; integrating knowledge; and developing redistributive taxes that did not impoverish taxpayers and that raised sufficient revenues to undertake the tasks required by the 2030 Agenda.

72. The Vice-Minister of Minister of Foreign Trade and Foreign Investment of Cuba highlighted the universal nature of the 2030 Agenda, as it was aimed at both developing and developed countries. Developed countries would have to exercise political will and fulfil their financial commitments, and international financial institutions would have to be restructured. She said that peace in the region must be maintained and that national governments must continue to play a fundamental role in promoting economic, social and environmental development with a comprehensive vision for the medium and long terms. In the light of the prevailing protectionist trends, the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean should cooperate, share experiences and face that challenge together, with input from all social actors.

73. The Chief Economist of the Development Bank of Latin America-CAF focused on four main points: he referred to the importance of having multidimensional indicators for more accurate and realistic measurement of goals such as reducing poverty; he explained that not all growth was beneficial and pointed out the problems of informality and the importance of promoting formal, good quality employment; he analysed the role of the State in terms of social and redistributive policies and disseminating them throughout the region; and, lastly, he noted the importance of infrastructure and its contribution to productivity and high-quality growth.

74. The floor was then opened for comments. The representative of Uruguay expressed concern over the accounting treatment of infrastructure by States. Although infrastructure was important to the countries, public accounts managed on a cash basis treated infrastructure investment as current spending. This differed from companies’ treatment of infrastructure investment as part of assets, which enabled them to amortize it throughout the lifetime of the investment. This practice had implications for the countries’ fiscal balances and often amounted to a severe disincentive to invest in infrastructure in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Chief Economist of the Development Bank of Latin America-CAF expressed the opinion that the region’s institutional framework had improved and would continue to improve, and that governments’ transparency and good behaviour could generate confidence.

75. Round table 2 on the social dimension was introduced by Laís Abramo, Chief of the Social Development Division of ECLAC. The other participants were Marcos Barraza, Minister of Social Development of Chile; Esteban Caballero, Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); José Olvera, Vice-President of the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (CSA); María Antonieta Alcalde Castro, Advocacy Director of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF); and Max Trejo Cervantes, Secretary-General of the International Youth Organization for Ibero-America (OIJ).

76. The Chief of the Social Development Division of ECLAC said that the challenge of the round table was to analyse the way in which the three dimensions of the 2030 Agenda could come together. She indicated that at least 10 Sustainable Development Goals were related to the social dimension and that it was also necessary to review the economic and environmental targets from a social welfare and enjoyment of rights perspective. Economic and environmental development would be unsustainable in the absence of social development, and a lack of investment in this area would limit the possibility of productive investments. Therefore, the social footprint of development needed to be resolved, which required the transformation of production, consumption and distribution models, as well as the
establishment of labour protection institutions aligned with technological changes and progress towards
gender equality. Finally, she remarked on the need to assess how to integrate the three dimensions of
development without prioritizing the economic dimension, how to defend the rights of women, and
how to balance technological changes with a form of universal social protection that would also be
sensitive to differences.

77. The Minister of Social Development of Chile said that social protection had to be considered as a
unit in its broadest sense, consistent with each country’s reality. He asserted that compartmentalization of
public policies hindered efforts to generate well-being, and that greater coordination between sectors was
necessary. Social awareness of economic, social, cultural and political rights was growing, and social
protection had undergone a shift from clientelist notions to a rights-based approach. Social protection
would fail unless unaccompanied by employability and productivity. Moving towards well-being required
the coordinated action of the private and public spheres, as well as an alignment of social and economic
objectives. He asserted that fighting inequality was a priority, as poverty became more resistant in
unequal societies.

78. The Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Population
Fund (UNFPA) underlined the importance of looking at population issues with an eye to cultural
diversity, gender, age and the cycle of life. He urged that not only the productive aspects of human
activities be considered, but also the reproductive. This concern had been reflected in the Montevideo
Consensus on Population and Development, together with the concept of inclusion. Lastly, he called for
channelling investments towards children, adolescents and young people in order to make the most of the
demographic dividend.

79. Next, the Vice-President of the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (CSA) emphasized
the demands for decent work, participatory democracy, equitable distribution of wealth, and social
protection and inclusion. He recalled the creation in 2014 of the Platform for the Development of the
Americas (PLADA), which had fostered a dialogue between different sectors. PLADA was aligned with
the SDGs in terms of searching for a solution to the crisis of civilization of the time, although it differed
insofar as its focal point was the political dimension of sustainable development. He remarked that the
State needed to be a protagonist in the promotion of development and regulatory capacity, and that it was
necessary to reclaim the public sphere through citizen representation mechanisms and greater
participation of trade unions. Labour had to be the cog of society, and in that sense it was necessary to
fight against precarious working conditions, mainstream gender equality in collective bargaining and
promote democracy within trade unions with a focus on accountability. Child labour must also be
eradicated, and labour-related barriers and obstacles for migrants needed to be brought down. He also
proposed basic universal income to be funded through progressive taxes.

80. The Advocacy Director of the International Planned Parenthood Federation said that it was
essential to put equity —particularly gender equality—at the centre of the agenda, and that sustainable
development could be achieved only with the support of social policy mechanisms. She remarked that the
SDGs marked a point of arrival, but that the region already had road maps for achieving these Goals, in
particular the Montevideo Consensus, which focused on vulnerable populations. In addition, the
Operational guide for the implementation of the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development3
contained elements for transforming these commitments into public policy. Lastly, she advocated gender
equity, the full exercise of human rights, especially reproductive rights, and community participation in
policy decisions.

3 LC/L.4061(CRPD.2/3)/Rev.1.
81. The Secretary-General of the International Youth Organization for Ibero-America referred to the Ibero-American Youth Pact, which established steps for ensuring the welfare of youth in the region, including a system of regional youth targets and indicators for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. He said that the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development was an essential sphere for embarking on this path, ensuring that no one would be left behind. It was crucial to engage young people in the follow-up and implementation of the 2030 Agenda and good-quality public policies on youth must be linked to national development policies. He also referred to a proposal, supported by 15 countries of the region, to create a working group on youth in the framework of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC, with a view to promoting the establishment of spaces for youth. Lastly, he recalled that the demographic dividend should not be transformed later into a demographic tax.

82. In the following questions and comments, a number of participants enquired about the public policies needed to ensure pension coverage, in particular in a context of technological changes, and about mechanisms for financing sustainable development. A representative of Mexico indicated that his country’s social policy was based on a rights approach, resource targeting and a move away from welfarism, with systematic increases in social spending. Appropriate budgets were allocated for fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda and an amendment was to be proposed to the planning law to incorporate the SDGs. The representative of Uruguay recalled that the SDGs were not a ceiling and that progress beyond them was perfectly possible. The representative of the Dominican Republic emphasized the concern of the region’s countries over financing for the SDGs, which was increasingly less multilateral. Lastly, the representative of IFAD underscored the importance of linking productive inclusion to cash transfer and social protection programmes.

83. Round table 3, on the environmental dimension, was introduced by Joseluis Samaniego, Chief of the Sustainable Development and Human Settlements Division of ECLAC. The participants were Boris Graizbord, Coordinator of the Advanced Studies Programme in Sustainable Development and Environment of Colegio de México; Leo Heileman, Regional Director of the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); Mónica Borba, Project Coordinator of the ALANA Institute; and Robert Glasser, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction.

84. The Chief of the Sustainable Development and Human Settlements Division of ECLAC reflected on the relationship between the environmental dimension and the SDGs. He remarked that the region’s growth rates were not sufficient to absorb the demand for employment and that the challenges of climate change called for analysis of which sectors and technologies needed to be promoted and how fast sustainable productive spaces needed to be opened up. He added that environmental degradation was the result of economic inefficient and externalities, and affected the most disadvantaged sectors of the population most. It was necessary to strengthen the normative apparatus and internalize it in investment processes and in tax incentives, in order to align economic production with the SDGs.

85. The Coordinator of the Advanced Studies Programme in Sustainable Development and Environment of Colegio de México remarked that territorial interdependencies between urban and rural areas must be analysed in order to ascertain the needs of the population. Any urban policy was an environmental policy, since the demographic trend in developing countries was towards urban concentration. An innovation that affected production and consumption in large cities would send signals to those sectors that would suffer the impact and would be forced to change their survival strategies. Lastly, he underscored that it was necessary to take advantage of interdependencies to design policies that would help to achieve the SDGs.
86. The Regional Director of the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) said that the environmental dimension was present in all 17 SDGs and that 86 targets were directly related to environmental issues. He referred to four messages that must be borne in mind for policymaking: (i) develop comprehensive programmes; (ii) break the link between production and pollution (decoupling); (iii) progress towards low-carbon economies (decarbonization); and (iv) detoxification of the air, soil and water.

87. The Project Coordinator of the ALANA Institute said that it had been three decades since the publication of the Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future, and that concrete action for the environment could no longer be postponed. A rapid transformation was needed, including an integrated approach and more thoroughgoing preparation of social indicators, as well as fair structural change. Better transparency and governance was needed, which called, among other things, for the application of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean. In this regard, it was essential that the agreement on Principle 10, currently being negotiated in the region, be legally binding. Lastly, she emphasized that perseverance in ensuring fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda was essential to secure dignity for present and future generations.

88. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction offered a reflection on disasters, climate change and the SDGs. Disasters hit the most vulnerable population the hardest and climate change caused domino effects, such as the loss of food security, which were influenced by the compartmentalization of the responsible departments. Statistics provided information for the necessary measures. Lastly, the private sector had a key role to play in the prevention of disasters and recovery from their impacts.

89. During the discussion that followed, a representative of Paraguay emphasized the importance of citizen participation in environmental decision-making and of environmental education measures. In response to a question from the representative of Suriname, the Chief of the Sustainable Development and Human Settlements Division of ECLAC referred to the Commission’s work on the effects of climate change on coastal areas. A representative of Guatemala mentioned the need to protect natural resources in the rural areas where equality gaps are largest. Lastly, a representative of Mexico underscored the shared benefits of environmental and social actions and requested that ECLAC offer an analysis of the positive and negative interactions of the two at the next meeting of the Forum.

Special session on the means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (agenda item 8)

90. The session on the means of implementation was moderated by Daniel Titelman, Chief of the Economic Development Division of ECLAC. The participants were Carlos G. Ruiz Massieu, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions of the United Nations; Marisol Argueta de Barillas, Head of the Latin America Section of the World Economic Forum (WEF); Ulises Canchola Gutiérrez, Director-General for Cooperation and Bilateral Economic Relations of the Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation (AMEXCID); Rodolfo Bejarano, Research Coordinator of the Latin American Network on Debt, Development and Rights (LATINDADD); Philipp Schönrock, Director of the Centre for International Strategic Thinking (CEPEI); and Jessica Faieta, Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

91. The Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions of the United Nations referred to the role of the United Nations as a pillar of multilateralism in the 2030 Agenda for

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Sustainable Development. In this regard, he said that a comprehensive study should be conducted of the capacities of the United Nations system to support the countries in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, in order to define the responsibilities of the different entities. He also pointed out that the fragmentation of the United Nations’ organizational structure did not reflect the comprehensive nature of the three pillars of development. He added that it was necessary to review the budget allocation for development and that the Organization needed to have the resources and capacities to support the countries in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

92. The Head of the Latin America Section of the World Economic Forum (WEF) remarked that, although gradual progress had been made in the past few years towards implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, innovative resources would be needed to achieve exponential progress. In this regard, blended finance was an interesting alternative that allowed the use of public and charitable funds, including official development assistance, to leverage private financing. She also referred to the need to build a partnership for financing sustainable development, to steer blended financing instruments towards infrastructure projects so that public resources could be freed up for investment in areas such as education and health, where it was more difficult to attract private investment.

93. The Director-General for Cooperation and Bilateral Economic Relations of the Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation (AMEXCID) said that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development called for collaboration between national and international entities and policy coherence in order to leave no one behind. It was important to make sure that the Latin American vision and perspective was reflected in the discussions of ECOSOC, in order to improve coordination between multilateral bodies. He also mentioned that the regional position placed emphasis on domestic resource mobilization and tax cooperation, the role of international trade as an engine of development, the importance of international development cooperation— including North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation— and the need to establish institutional arrangements for debt restructuring. With regard to international cooperation for development, he underscored that official development assistance continued to decline in Latin America and the Caribbean, and that revision of the graduation criteria based on per capita income could benefit middle-income countries.

94. The Research Coordinator of the Latin American Network on Debt, Development and Rights (LATINDADD) said that it was time to move from an economy of privilege to an economy at the service of everyone, based on cooperation and solidarity. He also said that financing for development required fiscal reforms to mobilize domestic resources, including the reduction of certain tax incentives that were producing perverse effects. It was also necessary to adapt the international financial architecture to avoid resource flight. In this regard, he proposed creating a group within the United Nations to follow up on fiscal matters. Lastly, he referred to the need to develop and strengthen regional instruments, such as regional development banks.

95. The Director of the Centre for International Strategic Thinking (CEPEI) emphasized that it was necessary to build trust between the various development actors— governments, parliaments, the private sector, civil society and academia— and establish dialogues on enabling environments. He added that civil society must participate in all phases of national reviews, as well as information-sharing, peer learning and capacity-building on governance matters, development information and financing. He then referred to other key aspects such as policy coherence and vertical and horizontal planning, the need for stronger strategies and channels of communication on follow-up to the 2030 Agenda and the importance of good-quality data for monitoring and evaluation.
The Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) said that one of the main development challenges was to safeguard existing achievements and expedite the fulfilment of those still pending. Although the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was an integrated agenda, not all the Sustainable Development Goals were linked to all the others, for which reason UNDP had adopted a clusters approach. Each country would need to establish its national priorities and take measures to achieve the rest of the Goals. The countries would also have to strengthen their institutional arrangements for policy coordination and align financing options with demand.

During the discussion that followed, the participants acknowledged the importance of looking beyond income for defining criteria for graduation from access to financing on concessional terms, and welcomed the proposal to hold a regional consultation on financing for development. The 2030 Agenda called for a coherent, coordinated United Nations system with the capacity to support the development agenda in each of the countries. It was also emphasized that some Caribbean countries’ external public debt service burden limited the resources available for their development. Recognizing that that debt was in great measure the result of recurrent natural disasters, not macroeconomic mismanagement, ECLAC had proposed a mechanism by which debt could be swapped for payment of resources into a climate resilience fund.

Conclusions regarding the regional challenges to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (agenda item 9)

The international context in which Latin America and the Caribbean was undertaking to meet the Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was marked by trade imbalances, rising poverty and environmental degradation caused by hyperglobalization. This was compounded by the weakening of multilateralism and international solidarity amid the resurgence of unilateralist worldviews, protectionist trends and the rise of xenophobic political forces. Inequality conspired against economic growth in the countries of the region. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals offered a way to correct those imbalances, asymmetries and polarization, and to achieve inclusive and sustainable development that left no one behind and protected the environment.

As well as adverse international conditions, the challenges facing the region in terms of developing the global development framework were: (i) overcoming policy fragmentation; (ii) achieving robust indicators and timely, accurate and open information; (iii) dealing with the implications of exponential technological change; (iv) directing financial and non-financial resources towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, and (v) ending inequality. Regional cooperation was the ideal way to achieve the SDGs. It was reiterated that each country had different approaches, views of the future, models and instruments for achieving sustainable development, depending on their circumstances and national priorities, and it was reaffirmed that planet Earth and its ecosystems were our common home and that “Mother Earth” was an expression used in many countries and regions that acknowledged the rights of nature and recognized that the most vulnerable, including indigenous populations, must be empowered.

Side events

Several side events were held during the first meeting of the Forum: one organized by the United Nations, entitled “United Nations: Commitments and a roadmap towards a planet 50:50 by 2030”, organized by UN-Women; a private sector side event on the topic “The role of the business sector in the 2030 Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean”, organized by ECLAC and the United Nations Global
Compact; and a side event organized by civil society, entitled “Civil society focal group on business and human rights in Mexico”.

Conclusions and recommendations (agenda item 11)

101. In accordance with resolution 700(XXXVI), paragraph 10, the Forum adopted intergovernmentally agreed conclusions and recommendations, which are attached hereto as annex 1. In addition, a Summary of the Chair of the Forum was prepared, which is attached as annex 2.

Closing session

102. During the closing session, statements were made by Dessima Williams, Ambassador and Special Adviser to the President of the General Assembly for Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goal; Alicia Bárcena, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC); and Luis Videgaray Caso, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Mexico.

103. In her closing remarks, the Ambassador and Special Adviser to the President of the General Assembly for Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals thanked and congratulated the Government of Mexico and ECLAC, and commended the Commission on its intellectual rigour, organizational stewardship, and ability to maintain excellent dialogue on critical issues at a critical moment. The SDGs represented nothing short of a paradigm shift, and nothing short of a paradigm shift was called for to usher them in. This required raising our expectations of what we could be achieved in the time left, and increasing our capacity to change, and to use and embrace change. With regard to the special session on artificial intelligence, the Ambassador remarked that STi Forum to be held in May under the auspices of ECOSOC and the immediately following innovation session to be hosted by the President of the General Assembly represented excellent opportunities to elevate these discussions and recommendations to New York. Similarly, the Ocean Conference, to be held on 5-9 June, would be a good opportunity address many of the concerns raised in relation to Goal 14. Lastly, the dialogues heard at the Forum gave her hope that the robustness of the architecture would be maintained and would support implementation in the coming years.

104. The Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) expressed thanks for the work carried out, which had been a key part of the success of the first meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development. She said that the region aspired to a new model of development, one that was fair, egalitarian, prosperous and solidarity-based, in keeping with the civilizing nature of the 2030 Agenda. But such a model had to be built from within the region, taking into account its own urgencies, history and tradition. The 2030 Agenda was one agenda, but there were many ways to implement it. For that reason, it was essential to adopt the Agenda as a policy of State and align the Sustainable Development Goals with national plans and, above all, with budgets. Latin America and the Caribbean had understood that the prevailing development pattern had to change to ensure economic, social and environmental sustainability. It was necessary to grasp the implications of corresponsibility and to engage civil society and the private sector in technical and political discussions on the SDGs. Financing this change would take a great public investment effort, but also input from the private sector. It was time to shift, as well, from SDG measurement to enforcement of rights, and the only way to achieve this was by closely monitoring progress towards the Goals. Measurement offered the great opportunity to identify those who had been
left behind by the Millennium Development Goals, target public policies accordingly and seek greater coordination of national statistical systems.

105. South-South cooperation, despite the prevailing conditions of slowdown and uncertainty, was a catalyst for strengthening regional integration and could be a key to achieving the SDGs, for which resources needed to be mobilized and allocated better. With respect to gender, Latin America and the Caribbean was the only region in the world where, for four solid decades, the States had convened to discuss and commit politically to eliminating gender discrimination and inequality and to progressing towards the guarantee of women’s full exercise of autonomy and human rights.

106. The Forum agenda had included a special session on artificial intelligence, a central theme in these new times. Part of the technology revolution, artificial intelligence offered enormous opportunities, although it could also produce negative impacts in the production structure, mainly in the areas of services and tourism. The Executive Secretary suggested that, from now on, each meeting of the Forum should include at least one discussion panel on this topic. Lastly, she remarked that this meeting represented a first step, filled with legitimate hope, towards the firm establishment of the new Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development.

107. The Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Mexico thanked the member countries for the Forum for the work carried out at the meeting and remarked that the Forum was a road map towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. He agreed that measurement tools were part of the institutional design and that peer review could improve the collective performance in pursuing the SDGs. The National Council for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recently established in Mexico was an example of his country’s efforts to put in place the institutional tools to meet the SDGs. The President of Mexico had made a commitment to present a reform to the planning law that would provide the resources for 2030 Agenda implementation in future national budgets. He also emphasized that budgeting and results measurement up to 2030 must be guided by the SDGs. Making these measurements a policy of State would ensure their continuity and consistency, as a formal, compulsory requirement. The document that ECLAC had presented was timely and relevant, since it recognized the challenges involved in combating poverty, achieving gender equality and raising resources, among other things. The success of the first meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development testified to the importance of multilateralism amid voices that questioned that principle of global coexistence. Lastly, he stated that Latin America and the Caribbean had shown that it was a region capable of exercising leadership of a common agenda towards achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda.
Annex 1


We, the Ministers and high representatives gathered at the first meeting of the Forum of Latin American and Caribbean Countries on Sustainable Development convened under the auspices of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in Mexico City,

1. Reaffirm the commitment of our countries and of our region with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, stressing that it is people-centred, universal and transformative, that its 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets are integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development —economic, social and environmental— and that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development,

2. Reaffirm also the commitment to leave no one behind and acknowledge that empowering those who are vulnerable is crucial to sustainable development,

3. Recall that the Addis Ababa Action Agenda provides a global framework for financing sustainable development, is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, supports and complements it and helps to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies and actions, recognize the synergies of the Paris Agreement, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the New Urban Agenda adopted in Quito, Ecuador, and the SAMOA Pathway with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries, recommend further strengthening of multilateral cooperation at the regional and global levels for their effective implementation, and acknowledge the importance of the regional conferences and processes for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals,

4. Highlight that with the first meeting of this new forum, the Latin American and Caribbean Countries have advanced in implementing the 2030 Agenda by engaging in a systematic process of follow-up and review at the regional level, building on existing mechanisms, which provides useful opportunities for regional cooperation and peer learning, including through voluntary reviews, sharing of best practices and discussion on agreed targets and identified challenges, as well as for convening regional contributions to the High-level Political Forum and the ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development, and in this regard recommend further engagement in coming years,

5. Commend the three countries of the region that presented voluntary national reviews at the High-level Political Forum under the auspices of ECOSOC in 2016, and the eleven countries preparing for doing the same in 2017, and highlight the commitment and leadership shown by these fourteen countries in their early steps to implement the 2030 Agenda, including by integrating it into their national development and sustainable development strategies, recommend further volunteering, and look forward to appropriate allocation of time and feedback at the ministerial segment of the High-level Political Forum under the auspices of ECOSOC,

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1 In 2016: Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela. In 2017: Argentina, Belize, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, Peru and Uruguay.
6. Recognize the importance to continue to address the diverse needs and challenges faced by countries in special situations, in particular least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, as well as the specific challenges facing middle-income countries and countries in situation of conflict and post conflict,

7. Reiterate the call on the United Nations system, in consultation with the international financial institutions, to develop transparent measurements of progress on sustainable development that go beyond per capita income and recognize poverty in all of its forms and dimensions, as well as the social, economic and environmental dimensions of domestic output and structural gaps at all levels, for effectively eradicating poverty and reducing inequalities within and among countries, and further recommend to continue building institutional capacities for reaching the Sustainable Development Goals and targets, including for data collection and monitoring,

8. Recommend ECLAC, through the Statistical Coordination Group for the 2030 Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean, to advance the production of indicators that are relevant to the region in the framework proposed by the Sustainable Development Goals and strengthen the particular national statistical capacities,

9. Underscore that realizing gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls will make a crucial contribution to progress across all the Sustainable Development Goals and targets, and that the protection and full realization of their human rights are essential to achieving sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and sustainable development, and in this regard recommend further streamlining a gender approach into national sustainable development policies and strategies,

10. Emphasize the importance for countries of the region of official development assistance and climate financing, which is additional to the latter, particularly, to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions and bridge its structural gaps, as well as the importance of South-South cooperation and the potential for it between Latin American and Caribbean countries in implementing the 2030 Agenda,

11. Recall that South-South cooperation is an important element of international cooperation for development as a complement, not a substitute, to North-South cooperation, and reaffirm the importance of fully complying with international commitments made in this regard, including the mobilization of financial and non-financial resources and the promotion of the development, transfer, dissemination of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries on favorable terms, and further recommend to increase regional cooperation, inter alia, on the development of endogenous science and technology,

12. Recognize the potential impacts of exponential technological change and automation in our countries and in this regard, recommends the Secretariat of ECLAC to issue a concept note on the matters, with concrete recommendations for the consideration of the Latin American and Caribbean countries at the Ministerial Conference on Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean, to be held in Santiago de Chile in August 8 and 9, with a view to initiate a discussion on the matters, including by establishing a task group to further elaborate regional recommendations for ongoing UN processes related to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular the HLPF, ECOSOC and the General Assembly, as appropriate,

13. Stress the importance and transformative potential of entrepreneurship and the private sector, and incentivizing changes in financing as well as consumption and production patterns to support sustainable development, and recommend to develop policies and, where appropriate, strengthening
regulatory frameworks to better align private sector incentives with public goals, including incentivizing the private sector to adopt sustainable practices and foster long-term quality investment,

14. **Recommend** redoubling efforts to substantially reduce illicit financial flows by 2030, including by combating tax evasion and corruption through strengthened national regulation and increased international cooperation and reducing opportunities for tax avoidance to make sure that all companies, including multinationals, pay taxes to the Governments of countries where economic activity occurs and value is created, and further recall that every State has, and shall freely exercise, full permanent sovereignty over all its wealth, natural resources and economic activity,

15. **Acknowledge** the primary responsibility of Governments in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which takes into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respects national policies and priorities, welcome the numerous contributions and the support provided by the United Nations System and the international organizations and programs with a presence in the region, and reiterate the need to ensure that their activities are carried out in a coherent and coordinated manner and in line with national policies and priorities,

16. **Recall** the participatory and inclusive character of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which encourages the participation of all relevant stakeholders, and in this regard recommend to ensure, as appropriate, an effective and significant participation of civil society organizations, academia and private sector at the upcoming meetings of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development, welcome their contributions to its first meeting, and recommend their continuous engagement in implementing the 2030 Agenda in the region,

17. **Reaffirm** that States are strongly urged to refrain from promulgating and applying any unilateral economic, financial or trade measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations, that impede the full achievement of economic and social development, particularly in developing countries,

18. **Take note** with appreciation of ECLAC annual report on regional progress and challenges in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its annex on financing, request the Secretariat to prepare an updated version, and recommend the Presidency of the 36th Session of ECLAC to submit it, along with the present conclusions and recommendations and a Summary of the Chair, as regional contributions to the upcoming High-Level Political Forum and ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development, as well as to the United Nations Regional Coordination Mechanism, for their due consideration,

19. **Express** our appreciation to ECLAC for the support provided to the region in its efforts to implement 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and urge the Commission to continue to support regional initiatives to leave no one behind,

20. **Value** the format and organization of the first forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development, as well as the modalities for the participation of multiple actors, and invite the Chair of the Thirty-sixth session of ECLAC, with the support of the Secretariat, to maintain a constant dialogue with all the member countries of the Forum and the relevant actors to follow-up the activities that result from the regional follow-up of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and

21. **Express** our deepest appreciation to the Government of Mexico for organizing and hosting the first meeting of the Forum of the Latin American and Caribbean Countries.
SUMMARY OF THE CHAIR OF THE FORUM OF THE COUNTRIES OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

1. Introduction

At the thirty-sixth session of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), held in Mexico City from 23 to 27 May 2016, the member States adopted resolution 700(XXXVI), brokered by Mexico, establishing the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development as a regional mechanism to follow up and review the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the Sustainable Development Goals and targets, and its means of implementation, including the Addis Ababa Action Agenda adopted at the Third International Conference on Financing for Development.

The first meeting of the Forum was held in Mexico City, from 26 to 28 April 2017. The meeting was chaired by Mexico, in its capacity as Chair of the Committee of the Whole of ECLAC, and convened under the auspices of the Commission.

The meeting of the Forum was open to States, the United Nations system, regional and subregional bodies, international financial institutions, the private sector and civil society.

The purpose of the first meeting of the Forum was for Latin American and Caribbean countries was to share experiences and best practices. It was divided into three segments: (1) the presentation of reports by ECLAC and its subsidiary bodies, (2) peer reviews moderated by the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Colombia, and Mexico, and (3) an analysis of the three dimensions of development, namely economic, social and environmental. In addition, two special sessions were held on artificial intelligence and means of implementation.

2. Annual report on regional progress and challenges in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The report prepared by the ECLAC secretariat as a contribution to the discussions at the first meeting of the Forum underscored that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals represented the consensus of governments and different stakeholders to work towards a transformative vision of economic, social and environmental sustainability. It was a civilizing, universal, indivisible and rights-based agenda. The report covered three areas: an analysis of the progress made thus far and the challenges ahead, a description of national institutional mechanisms existing in the region for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and an analysis of the challenges and opportunities involved in building and measuring Sustainable Development Goal indicators. The complexity of the 2030 Agenda meant that the goals had to be integrated and that the inertia of fragmentation and compartmentalization must be set aside.

1 ECLAC, Annual report on regional progress and challenges in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (LC/L.4268(FDS.1/3), April 2017.)
The five tensions that the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development could help to solve were: the recessionary bias resulting from persistent trade imbalances, the high levels of instability and uncertainty created by financial globalization, the need to close the gaps between the winners and losers of globalization, migration-related conflicts and the need for sustainable peace, and the need to protect the planet and future generations’ right to development. In light of those tensions, the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals had to be reaffirmed so that no one was left behind.

The report warned that inequality and hyperglobalization, or globalization in the hands of a few, posed one of the world’s greatest challenges. It was imperative that everyone could benefit from development and that no one was left behind.

In sum, the ECLAC report underscored the need to restore international cooperation, going beyond trade and multilateralism to include a new and invigorated role for regional integration; to participate fully in the technology revolution; to promote an environmental big push; to eliminate poverty and strengthen equality; to mobilize financial resources with a focus on middle-income countries, small island developing States, least developed countries and landlocked developing countries; to build new capacity and to broaden the participation of all actors in society. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda calls for a review of governance at the global, regional and national levels; the incorporation of the Sustainable Development Goals into national development plans, budgets and business models; meeting the challenge of measuring and following up the Sustainable Development Goals by strengthening national statistical systems and data systems designed for this purpose and developing new indicators; the analysis of means of implementation, particularly with respect to financing, technology, fair trade and access to information; and the achievement of intersectoral and interinstitutional coordination and the participation of all stakeholders, including businesses and civil society. Hence, a new policy dialogue is needed amid the rapid transformation of the economy, policy and technology, and a period of uncertainty for the region.

3. Dialogue on the contribution of the subsidiary bodies of ECLAC and major intergovernmental meetings to the 2030 Agenda\(^2\)

The Chairs of the subsidiary bodies of ECLAC participated in a panel discussion, in which it was confirmed that those bodies represented important forums in which to advance discussions on the regional vision with respect to implementing the 2030 Agenda, and that existing synergies should be further strengthened. Coordination must be achieved in order to avoid duplication of efforts and to harmonize policies and actions.

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\(^2\) The dialogue was held in two rounds. In the first round, statements were made by the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC, the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Conference on Science, Innovation and Information and Communications Technologies of ECLAC, the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee, the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Ministerial Forum for Development in Latin America and the Caribbean. The second round included the Regional Council for Planning of the Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning (ILPES), the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Committee on South-South Cooperation, the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean and the Ministerial Conference on the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean.
The importance of the joint work carried out between these bodies was also acknowledged. The joint efforts of the Statistical Conference of the Americas and the Regional Conference on Women and the contributions made by the Working Group on Gender Statistics in the context of the Statistical Conference, as well as the incorporation of the issue of georeferencing at the Conference, were all commended.

The panel insisted on the need to continue promoting cooperation between the different agencies, funds and specialized programmes. The joint work carried out by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and ECLAC in the framework of the Regional Conference on Social Development and the Ministerial Forum on Development is a relevant example. South-South cooperation is an essential component of progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. In this regard, over 1,400 actions are under way in the region on education and health, multidimensional poverty measurement and institutional capacity-building. Moving forward, the challenge will be to improve the coordination of the regional actions of all participants in South-South cooperation.

The importance of developing indicators tailored to regional needs was also reiterated. The Regional Conference on Population and Development has taken great steps forward in this area, with the lines of action, targets and indicators established in the Operational guide for the implementation and follow-up of the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development. The Montevideo Consensus and its priority measures provide a set of precise, comparable, measurable and clearly defined indicators that are aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The importance of planning is reflected in the 2030 Agenda, and various countries in the region have consequently incorporated aspects of the Agenda into their national development plans and budgets, and 20 countries have already put in place coordination mechanisms for the 2030 Agenda.

4. United Nations Development Group-Latin America and the Caribbean (UNDG-LAC)

The United Nations Development Group - Latin America and the Caribbean (UNDG-LAC) presented a document at the Regional Forum entitled “Leaving no one behind in Latin America and the Caribbean: overcoming inequality to eradicate poverty”. The document indicated that the 2030 Agenda demanded a redefinition of problems and challenges, as well as solutions, using a multidimensional approach that took synergies and interconnections into account. In addition, implementation tools must be coordinated within countries to avoid fragmentation between ministries, sectors and territories, and disaggregated statistical or administrative data are a key important tool. Structural changes are needed, not just in the economic sphere, but also in the social and environmental spheres, to ensure fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda principle of leaving no one behind.

Through its country teams, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) supports efforts made at the national level to achieve the 2030 Agenda Goals and promotes a coordinated strategy of mainstreaming, acceleration and policy support (MAPS). MAPS was formulated by UNDP to identify immediate and priority action areas, as well as possible alliances and opportunities for support, to ensure that the knowledge and experience of the United Nations system is available to the countries and to design frameworks for monitoring and measuring implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the national level. UNDP is working on this strategy with 31 of the 33 countries in the region.

From a life cycle perspective, the joint document warns that, given the lack of social security contributions and the enormous needs of the care system, the region is faced with a challenge to maintain and improve per capita income and to preserve the income security of older persons.
The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) views work as a social lynchpin and a necessary component in the construction of inclusive, prosperous and solidarity-based societies. Many issues must be addressed in the region, including access to higher education, adolescent pregnancy and early unions.

The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) works jointly with other partners and United Nations agencies to jointly address the challenges of 2030 Agenda implementation, including —with ECLAC— identifying equity indicators for monitoring SDG 3 and —with the Organization of American States (OAS)— the mapping of joint actions for the realization of the 2030 Agenda. The Organization considers it essential to reduce health inequalities, especially among vulnerable groups such as rural and indigenous populations, and counts social security and lack of inclusion among the region’s greatest challenges.

The World Food Programme (WFP) views food security in the region as a key component in development. Furthermore, achieving the Sustainable Development Goals will require investment in social protection networks in order to build resilient societies. Women, with their fundamental role in poor and vulnerable communities, play a vital part in this process. Local communities must be empowered and more must be invested in the decentralization of social protection networks and in disaster preparedness and emergency response through these social protection networks.

In order to advance from an operational stage to a programmatic stage, governments must exercise leadership in reflecting implementations needs in budgets.

5. International agencies and financial institutions

The Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) views a revitalized global alliance as essential to ensure the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Official development assistance plays a strategic role in capacity-building for sustainable development, and the call for developed countries to allocate 0.7% of GDP to this assistance must not be forgotten. In this regard, CELAC will continue to engage in systematic follow-up and review processes on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The member countries of CELAC remain committed to achieving sustainable development in an integrated and balanced manner across its three dimensions, as agreed in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, by proposing shared solutions to regional and global challenges for the benefit of society. In this regard, it is vital to ensure the availability of financial resources and non-financial resources, such as capacity-building and the development, transfer and dissemination of clean technologies under favourable conditions.

6. Civil society, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders

The representatives of civil society, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders underscored that the 2030 Agenda called for collaborative efforts to achieve shared goals, targets and indicators. The challenges of sustainable development include economic, social and political elements that are interlinked and that require coordinated responses from all stakeholders.

Although governments are responsible for implementing the 2030 Agenda according to their national priorities and capacity, society also needs to play an active role. With a view to ensuring that no one is left behind, the inclusion of civil society is crucial, especially in the current context of setbacks with respect to discrimination and wealth concentration, and of growing conservatism that poses a threat to the social milestones achieved thus far, such as the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development.
The 2030 Agenda is promoting a new paradigm, placing individuals and the defence of their human rights at the centre of policies. States should encourage a new people-centred, governance-based sustainable development model. Moreover, the vital participation of civil society calls for an enabling environment and access to reliable statistics, as well as a participatory culture and accountability in policies relating to the Sustainable Development Goals.

The private sector’s commitment to achieving these Goals is indispensable. The United Nations Global Compact is helping to mobilize this sector in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda through local networks in 14 Latin American and Caribbean countries by building political momentum and capacity in businesses so that they can align their strategies with the Goals; ensuring that these companies participate in public-private forums; establishing partnerships with various entities; and promoting financial resources to fund the Goals.

7. Peer learning on voluntary national reviews of the member countries of the Forum (institutional arrangements, national measurements and challenges and priorities)

The three countries —the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Colombia and Mexico— that presented voluntary national reviews at the 2016 high-level political forum on sustainable development, convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, shared their experiences with the other countries. Meanwhile, the 11 countries that will present voluntary national reviews in 2017 reported on the progress made.

During the discussions, the participating countries reiterated that the 2030 Agenda was a global, long-term commitment that would require the State, not just the government, to take ownership of the framework. Policies must go beyond government terms of office and include all sectors.

The three main areas for ensuring progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals are institutional structures, planning mechanisms and the means of measurement and the development of indicators. The institutional inertia of viewing the State in a compartmentalized manner is a barrier that must be overcome, in order to develop a rationale of integration instead. National policies and plans must also be updated to align them with the Sustainable Development Goals, ensure sound planning and coordinate tasks among different institutions.

The countries in the region have chosen one of two options: either to create new institutions to follow up implementation of the 2030 Agenda or to modify the mandates of existing institutions. Most of those follow-up mechanisms are headed by the President and involve a variety of ministries and stakeholders. That demonstrates that the 2030 Agenda is not the sole preserve of one sector, that requires political will and leadership at the highest level, and that its inclusive nature calls for the participation of all sectors of the State.

Each country has established its own planning mechanisms, on the basis of its national capacities and priorities. The Goals are aspirational, and each country may choose how to implement them. Although some have chosen to divide the 17 Goals into thematic clusters, they all recognize their

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3 The discussion was organized into three panels. The first was moderated by Mexico and comprised the focal points for national implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Peru. The second was moderated by Colombia and the participating countries were El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Panama. The third panel was moderated by the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, with representatives of Belize, Costa Rica and Uruguay participating.
integrated nature and the indivisibility of the 2030 Agenda. By nature, this development framework will evolve over time and it will be necessary to analyse how it is implemented in the region over the years.

As well as the institutional arrangements, some countries have adapted their national development plans to the 2030 Agenda or even designed them on that basis.

In relation to financing, one of the major challenges lies in channelling specific resources towards implementing the 2030 Agenda. Some of the region’s countries are engaged in aligning their budgets to the Goals, given that budgetary resources are essential to achieving them. Governments must invest resources in the pursuit of the Goals. In addition, given the ambition of the 2030 Agenda and the scarcity of resources, the banking sector must be engaged in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, in order to achieve collaboration between public and private investment. Incentives must be created for the private sector to align with the public interest. It is important to optimize public resources, by improving the quality of public spending and fostering public-private partnerships.

The countries recognized the extreme importance of multi-stakeholder engagement for the implementation of the Agenda, especially the participation of civil society, including academia and the private sector, which tends to be absent. All the stakeholders must take ownership of the Sustainable Development Goals and create groups and networks to support their implementation. Parliaments play an essential role in approving budgets to support efforts aimed at achieving the Goals, and in ensuring accountability and reflecting the concerns of the population.

Given their importance, matters relating to financing and the means of implementation need to be widely discussed. For that reason, the countries commended the initiative put forward by ECLAC to hold a regional consultation on financing of the Sustainable Development Goals in the region. This would be an opportunity to discuss these issues with the banking sector and with regional and international financial agencies, and to coordinate the 2030 Agenda with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

The countries insisted that measurement was fundamental, since it was the only way to ascertain progress. Individuals must be able to access reliable and effective information. Efforts must be made to develop new information sources, such as tax information systems, and to improve national accounts systems. The greatest challenges refer to the disaggregation of statistical data, the strengthening of national statistical systems and the incorporation of the Sustainable Development Goals into budgeting and planning processes at the national, local and territorial levels.

8. Special session on artificial intelligence

This segment of the Forum’s agenda clearly showed that exponential technological change was one of the greatest challenges facing the international community. Technology can make a decisive contribution to fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals, but poses risks as well. Harmless in itself, technology has effects that depend on the use it is put to and the decisions taken.

It is calculated that 75 million jobs could be replaced by robots and new processes linked to artificial intelligence over the next 10 to 15 years. This may raise productivity while at the same time having pernicious effects on the production structure, as well as social consequences. Employment is one of the indispensable conditions for reducing world poverty. Technology, not migration, has been the greatest factor behind job losses in developed countries.
Digital technologies are not only exponential in themselves, but interact within a digital ecosystem and combine with others to create new ones. Accordingly, it is vital to know which of them are driving the deepest changes: quantum computing, so powerful that it can defeat all today’s asymmetric encryption systems; the Internet of things, connecting everyone on all devices; digital cloud interconnectivity, making information and connections available to everyone everywhere; robotics for service provision; big data for smart information management; self-driving vehicles, making more efficient and personal transportation available to persons with disabilities; and artificial intelligence, replacing human processes with robots. To predict the effect of exponential technologies, we need to set out from a clear diagnosis and invest more and better in areas of opportunity rather than being left chasing behind an unstoppable process.

The countries of Latin America and the Caribbean were not part of the industrial revolution or the knowledge economy. Now, however, they need to join the digital revolution. For this, public policies need to provide for sustained investment in research and development, which now totals less than 1% of GDP in the region (by comparison, the Republic of Korea spends 4.3% of GDP); the training of a new generation of scientists and technologists to make this change; and true broadband to facilitate connectivity. Besides public investment, public-private partnerships are essential if the targets envisaged are to be met. Profound changes and long-term commitment are needed.

The countries of Latin America and the Caribbean need to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the fourth industrial revolution and the 2030 Agenda to design public policies that can enhance people’s quality of life through the application of exponential technologies and innovations, on which sustainable development for all depends so much. The region’s countries can benefit from the development and use of big data to formulate more effective and comprehensive public policies that meet the needs of the population with long-term results. We need to make big data an instrument of the fourth industrial revolution, which can also become a social revolution.

Exponential technologies could become an essential tool for making good educational and staffing shortcomings in the area of research and development. There is a need for structural changes to enhance capacity-building and for knowledge to be imparted with a view to producing more globally competitive human resources and highly skilled migration. It is indispensable for solid infrastructure frameworks to be built to make these tools universally accessible.

Another imperative need is to ensure the subject is discussed and followed up at the highest level, since cooperation will be essential to prevent and forestall the possible negative effects of these technologies and see to it that they are employed to fulfil the 2030 Agenda. At the end of the special session, it was agreed that a working group of the region’s countries would be set up to reflect and decide on lines of action for exponential technologies and develop road maps. This working group could help in identifying and reaching an understanding of the great risks and opportunities entailed by technological change.
9. Dialogues on eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world
in the framework of sustainable development

Integrating the three dimensions of sustainable development is central to achieving the 2030 Agenda for
the Sustainable Development. There are four challenges to this integration: the conceptual challenge,
overcoming the region’s established practice of working by sector; the technical challenge, identifying the
priorities that define the three dimensions and their points of interaction; the institutional challenge,
addressing the fragmented nature and inertia of the institutions that should be focused on sustainable
development; and the challenge of evaluating the level of integration between economic, social and
environmental policies. To this end, efforts should be made at the national and regional levels and in the
framework of the United Nations to prepare for discussions on progress in this area at the next meeting of
the Forum.

The economic dimension

Economic growth remains slow in Latin America and the Caribbean, largely as a result of the
ineffectiveness of the traditional growth model followed by the region, based on exports of commodities
and manufactures and attracting foreign direct investment. Global geopolitical conditions are currently
highly complex and present new challenges. A new growth strategy is needed in which the domestic
market plays a central role throughout the business cycle, together with a renewed focus on investment
policies and better management of the investment cycle. Latin America needs a more developmental
macroeconomy in order to meet the commitments of the 2030 Agenda.

Poverty cannot be combated unless inequality is addressed. Growth must be made inclusive.
Because it is people-centred, the 2030 Agenda requires that a country’s economic growth should also
improve the quality of life of its citizens. The 2030 Agenda is universal and is not aimed solely at
developing countries.

In order to mobilize resources for sustainable development, developing countries will have to
exercise political will and the architecture of international financial institutions will have to be
redesigned. Furthermore, Latin America and the Caribbean must integrate further in order to counteract
protectionist trends, which are causing great uncertainty in the countries. Accordingly, in addition to
adopting a national approach to the 2030 Agenda, regional integration should be vigorously pursued.

Poverty has been reduced in the region; however, the picture changes when non-income factors
are taken into account. All countries must generate indicators that measure poverty in all its dimensions.

Growth is necessary, but not sufficient on its own: a structural change is needed. Faced with an
economic recession, productivity must be improved, social spending increased and informal employment
reduced. The State must also implement redistributive policies and strengthen social security systems.
Public-private partnerships will be key to infrastructure investment.

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4 The discussions addressed Goals 1, 2, 3, 5, 9 and 14 in three round tables developed to the three dimensions of
sustainable development; round table 1: the economic dimension; round table 2: the social dimension; and round
table 3: the environmental dimension.
**The social dimension**

At least 10 of the Sustainable Development Goals are linked to the social dimension. Social issues overlap, so social development is an investment with positive returns for economic growth and environmental protection.

A major achievement is that, in recent years, the idea of social welfare has spread throughout the region. Latin America and the Caribbean have moved away from clientelist policies towards a more social-rights-based approach. Social protection is important but not enough on its own; occupational training and job creation programmes must also be expanded. We must change the development model and change current production models to promote decent work, protect workers and train them in new technologies.

State action must be made stronger, in the sense of rethinking the State-market-society equation and looking for a model centred on rights and people. Regulatory frameworks for trade, finance and taxes must be in place and a fairer distribution of income ensured.

To enact social welfare, structural inequalities must be addressed, including socioeconomic, gender-based, ethnic, racial and territorial inequalities and those related to the human life cycle. Social goals must be aligned and made consistent with economic goals, as inequality is incompatible with growth. The 2030 Agenda seeks, above all, to leave no one behind. This will not be possible without social inclusion.

**The environmental dimension**

Development policies must take into account the environmental dimension. Production must rise to boost economic growth, but measures in that direction must take into account social welfare and environmental protection. All 17 Sustainable Development Goals include aspects of the environmental agenda and 86 targets relate directly to environmental issues.

Climate change has led to extreme weather events, loss of biodiversity and an increase in the number of endangered species. Moreover, as a highly urbanized region, Latin America produces a great deal of waste, more than 10% of the world total, owing, among other factors, to a lack of recycling. Policymaking requires four changes: (i) develop integrated programmes; (ii) break the link between production and pollution (decoupling); (iii) move towards low carbon economies (decarbonization); and (iv) detoxify the air, soil and water.

Disasters hit the most vulnerable populations the hardest. The effects of climate change, such as food insecurity, cascade down. Issues related to development, disaster risk and the environment must be linked, particularly in island countries. The most recent international agreements, such as the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, are a step towards integrating these concepts. Statistics show that unsustainable development, human and social behaviour and climate change combine to increase risks. The Sustainable Development Goal indicators must be integrated with those of the Sendai Framework in order to obtain information to adopt measures that are fit for purpose.
10. Special session on the means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Given its scope, achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development requires considerable financial and non-financial resources, which are scarce. International cooperation, the mobilization of resources and upgrading of tax systems are therefore crucial.

Partnerships with the private sector are also essential. The greatest challenge facing public policy is to reconcile the interests of the private sector with those of the public sector. The region also faces significant challenges with regard to resource mobilization, largely as a result of low levels of taxation.

International trade could be a driver of development, but resources must be distributed equitably. Foreign direct investment encourages growth, but growth alone is not enough. The fundamental issue is how to transform global liquidity into savings and use those savings to finance public works and development projects.

Since not all financing goes to development, governments must develop public policies to steer financing towards this aim.

A comprehensive analysis must be undertaken of United Nations agencies’ capacities in order to define the role that each agency should play in support of the 2030 Agenda. How United Nations agencies will finance the pillars of development and by how much must also be assessed, as currently only 5%-6% of the Organization’s budget is earmarked for the development pillar. The United Nations does not pursue goals on its own initiative —rather, the States do so, but it is the responsibility of the United Nations to have the necessary resources and competencies to support countries’ efforts.

Sustainable peace has been proposed as a transformative component of conflict prevention. The concept has accordingly been put forward as an important element in the agenda of the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

11. Conclusions on the regional challenges of implementing the 2030 Agenda

The international context in which Latin America and the Caribbean is undertaking to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is marked by trade imbalances, rising poverty and environmental degradation caused by hyperglobalization. This is compounded by the weakening of multilateralism and of international solidarity amid the resurgence of unilateralist worldviews, protectionist trends and xenophobic political forces. In our countries, inequality conspires against economic growth.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals offer a way to correct those imbalances, asymmetries and polarization, and to achieve inclusive and sustainable development that “leaves no one behind” and protects the environment.

In addition to the adverse international conditions, the challenges facing the region in terms of developing the global development framework are: (1) overcoming policy fragmentation; (2) achieving timely, accurate and open information and indicators; (3) dealing with the implications of exponential technological change; (4) directing financial and non-financial resources to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals; and (5) ending inequality.
Regional cooperation is the ideal way to achieve the Goals adopted two years ago by the United Nations General Assembly. Latin America and the Caribbean is setting an example to other regions, by matching the commitments undertaken in September 2015 with actions.

Every country has different approaches, visions of the future, models and instruments for achieving sustainable development, depending on its circumstances and national priorities. The representatives reaffirmed that the planet Earth and its ecosystems are our common home and that “Mother Earth” is an expression used in many countries and regions that acknowledges the rights of nature and recognizes that the most vulnerable, including indigenous populations, must be empowered.

The 2030 Agenda has a significant forerunner in our region. Popol Vuh, the holy book of the Mayas, says: “Let everyone arise, let everyone be called, let no one be left behind; not one, not two, but all as one”.

12. Conclusions and recommendations of the first meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development

The conclusions and recommendations of the first meeting of the Forum were discussed and agreed upon in a contact group, which met during the three days of the meeting. The agreed language was submitted to the plenary, where it was adopted unanimously. The conclusions and recommendations of the Forum will be presented by Mexico, as Chair of the Forum, to the high-level political forum of the United Nations at its meeting on 10-17 July 2017.
Annex 3

CIVIL SOCIETY DECLARATION

Documento de posicionamiento de las Organizaciones de la Sociedad Civil ante el Foro de los Países de América Latina y el Caribe sobre Desarrollo Sostenible

Nosotras, las organizaciones de la sociedad civil, redes y movimientos: Feministas, de trabajadores y trabajadoras, de niñez y juventud, campesinas, cooperativas, indígenas, de afrodescendientes, de la diversidad sexual, discapacidad, organizaciones religiosas, la academia y organizaciones no gubernamentales.

Desde nuestra experiencia como actores clave, comprometidas con el desarrollo de nuestros pueblos y comunidades, exhortamos que nuestra voz sea tomada en cuenta en la planificación, implementación, monitoreo y evaluación de la Agenda 2030 en todos sus niveles: local, nacional, regional y global.

Estamos en un contexto mundial de retrocesos e incertidumbre, en el cual un discurso patriarcal, xenófobo, clasista y racista ha tomado fuerza. El paradigma económico actual muestra su peor cara de exclusión y discriminación. Ha generado una concentración absoluta de la riqueza en manos de unos pocos; mediante Tratados de Libre Comercio ha saqueado nuestros países para beneficiar a las grandes corporaciones. Este sistema es la causa de las desigualdades económicas, étnico-raciales, de género, de clase y de territorio.

En la región somos testigos de un modelo de desarrollo extractivista basado en la explotación de las personas, de los territorios y de los bienes naturales, lo cual produce migraciones forzadas, limita el acceso a la tierra y al agua. Genera violencia, especialmente de género, y pone en riesgo a las personas defensoras de derechos humanos, a las comunidades y a los pueblos.

Los países de América Latina y el Caribe hemos sido catalogados como países de renta media; lo cual invisibiliza las brechas y desigualdades persistentes en nuestra región, que no permiten un desarrollo sostenible en el que nadie quede atrás.

Existe un deterioro en la democracia política y económica de nuestra región. El conservadurismo avanza y sigue vulnerando los derechos humanos, amenazando los logros alcanzados en la región, como en el Consenso de Montevideo sobre Población y Desarrollo, así como de los Tratados Internacionales de Derechos Humanos. Esta debilidad de la democracia en nuestros países, así como la falta de mecanismos de rendición de cuentas y transparencia permiten la corrupción y la captura empresarial del Estado.

Recomendaciones

La Agenda 2030 para el Desarrollo Sostenible promueve un nuevo paradigma del desarrollo con enfoque de derechos humanos, de justicia social, ambiental y enfoque de género.

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1 A translation by the secretariat follows immediately below.
Instamos a los Estados a elevar su nivel de compromiso en la implementación de la Agenda 2030 como garantes del desarrollo de los pueblos. En este sentido, los Estados deben:

- Impulsar una agenda por la igualdad de derechos.
- Garantizar la igualdad y equidad de género y el reconocimiento a la diversidad, en todas sus dimensiones.
- Garantizar la justicia y equidad intergeneracional e intercultural.
- Desarrollar procesos orientados a la justicia social, económica, ambiental y climática.
- Promover el trabajo decente, el diálogo social y los pisos de protección social.
- Eliminar toda forma de violencia para garantizar una sociedad democrática y pacífica.
- Garantizar el derecho acceso universal a la salud, y servicios públicos de calidad.
- Garantizar el derecho a la educación y la alimentación dentro de un enfoque de soberanía alimentaria.
- Asegurar un nuevo modelo de desarrollo sostenible, solidario y centrado en las personas y el medio ambiente en un escenario de la gobernanza.
- Promover otros modelos empresariales de la economía social y solidaria.

**Participación de la sociedad civil.** Para la implementación de la Agenda 2030 se debe garantizar la participación plena de las organizaciones de la sociedad civil en todos los niveles y etapas.

Para lograr esto se requiere un ambiente habilitante para las organizaciones. Esto incluye la participación en el diseño, la toma de decisiones, la implementación, el monitoreo y la evaluación, así como el acceso a la información y a datos estadísticos confiables, una cultura política participativa, así como la transparencia y rendición de cuentas en la ejecución de los programas y políticas relacionadas a los ODS.

La efectividad de la agenda exige un involucramiento a nivel local y para esto se requiere la participación activa de las organizaciones, movimientos, personas y comunidades. Instamos a los Estados a garantizar la plena participación en las políticas públicas en los ámbitos económico, político, social, cultural, educativo y ambiental tanto a nivel regional, nacional y, sobre todo, local. Esto permitirá las condiciones necesarias para que ellos mismos realicen el seguimiento y verificación a su implementación.

La plena participación de la sociedad civil también implica el respeto, la garantía y protección de las personas defensores de derechos humanos y ambientales, activistas, las organizaciones, y periodistas. En este sentido, exhortamos la no criminalización de la protesta social para garantizar este entorno propicio.

**Financiamiento.** Los Estados deben asegurar el financiamiento de la Agenda 2030 para lo cual se requiere de reformas fiscales progresivas y la regulación de sistemas financieros y de los bancos centrales. Los gobiernos deben emplear fuentes de financiamiento sostenibles y no seguir endeudando a nuestras naciones; para ello exigimos auditoría de las deudas públicas y mecanismos de resolución en el marco de Naciones Unidas.
Ante la injerencia e influencia del sector privado y la tendente privatización del desarrollo en la Agenda 2030, exigimos el reconocimiento de las responsabilidades diferenciadas de cada sector, y procesos de rendición de cuentas y transparencia. Rechazamos la evasión y elusión fiscal de las empresas y las grandes riquezas que impiden la movilización adecuada de los recursos domésticos.

Las alianzas público-privadas deben estar centradas en la perspectiva de respeto a los derechos humanos, en específico los derechos laborales y ambientales, priorizar la sustentabilidad, así como enfocarse a los sectores más vulnerados.

Nuestra región, América Latina y el Caribe, requiere también de un compromiso de la cooperación internacional para la implementación de los ODS que respete los principios de la cooperación eficaz al desarrollo.

Solicitamos un real compromiso político para hacer la Agenda 2030 realidad en cada una de las comunidades de nuestra región, garantizando así la democracia, el desarrollo equitativo y los derechos humanos. Ratificamos nuestro compromiso como sociedad civil de impulsar estrategias de participación diversas e inclusivas, tanto en el ámbito de seguimiento y la evaluación como en la estrategia de país en la implementación oportuna, armonizada y propositiva para promover políticas públicas garantes de los derechos humanos de todas las personas.

Ciudad de México a 25 de abril del 2017.
Translation by the secretariat of the civil society declaration

Position document of Civil Society Organizations presented to the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development

We, civil society organizations, networks and movements, in representation of feminist, workers’, children’s and young people’s, rural, cooperative, indigenous, Afrodescendant, sexual diversity, disability, religious and academic groups, and non-governmental organizations, as key players committed to the development of our people and communities, urge the Forum to ensure that our voices be heard in relation to the planning, implementation, monitoring and assessment of the 2030 Agenda, at the local, national, regional and global levels.

We are currently in a global context characterized by reversals and uncertainty, in which a patriarchal, xenophobic, classist and racist discourse has gained momentum. Today’s economic paradigm has shown its worst side, that of exclusion and discrimination; it has generated absolute concentration of wealth in the hands of a few, and free trade agreements that have plundered our countries for the benefit of large corporations. This system is responsible for the economic, racial, ethnic, gender, class and territorial inequalities of today.

Our region has witnessed the imposition of an extraction-based model that exploits people, territories and natural resources, resulting in forced migrations and limiting access to land and water. This model also generates violence, particularly gender-based violence, and puts human rights advocates, communities and people at risk.

The countries of Latin America and the Caribbean have been classified as middle-income countries, making the persistent gaps and inequalities in our region invisible and, as such, inhibiting a sustainable form of development in which no one is left behind.

Political and economic democracy in our region has been impaired; conservatism has advanced and continues to hinder human rights, threatening the region’s achievements, such as the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development, as well as international human rights treaties. This weakened state of democracy in our countries and the lack of accountability and transparency mechanisms have paved the way for corruption and State capture by business interests.

Recommendations

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development promotes a new development paradigm focused on human rights, social and environmental justice, and a gender-based approach.

We call on member States to enhance their commitment to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda as guarantors of the development of all people. Accordingly, member States must:

- Promote an agenda for equal rights.
- Guarantee gender equality and equity, and recognize diversity in all its dimensions.
- Guarantee intergenerational and intercultural justice and equality.
• Develop processes geared towards social, economic, environmental and climate justice.
• Promote decent work, social dialogue and social protection floors.
• Eliminate all forms of violence to guarantee a peaceful and democratic society.
• Guarantee the right to universal access to quality health and public services.
• Guarantee the right to education and to food, within a food sovereignty approach.
• Ensure a new development model based on sustainability and solidarity, which is also centred on people and the environment, in a context of overall governance.
• Promote other business models guided by the social and solidarity economy.

Participation of civil society. Implementation of the 2030 Agenda must guarantee full participation of civil society organizations at all levels and stages.

Organizations must enjoy an enabling environment for their full participation, which includes taking part in the design, decision-making, implementation, monitoring and assessment stages, as well as having access to reliable information and statistical data. Also essential are a participatory political culture, and transparency and accountability mechanisms for the execution of programmes and policies related to SDGs.

Agenda effectiveness is dependent on local involvement; therefore, active participation of organizations, movements, people and communities is needed. We urge member States to guarantee the full participation of civil society in the economic, political, social, cultural, educational and environmental spheres of public policies, at a regional, national, and especially, local level, as this will create the conditions for members of civil society to oversee and verify the implementation of these policies.

Full participation of civil society also implies respecting, safeguarding and protecting human rights and environmental defenders, activists, organizations and journalists. Accordingly, we urge member States to refrain from criminalizing social protest in order to guarantee a favourable environment.

Financing. Member States must ensure funding for the 2030 Agenda is in place, which requires progressive fiscal reforms, as well as regulation of financial systems and central banks. Governments must employ sustainable funding sources and refrain from expanding debt levels in our countries; in this regard, we demand full audits of public indebtedness, as well as resolution mechanisms under the auspices of the United Nations.

Given the interference and influence of the private sector and the tendency towards privatization of development in the 2030 Agenda, we demand recognition of the differentiated responsibilities of each sector, as well as accountability and transparency processes. We reject tax evasion and avoidance by corporations and the wealthy, as they prevent the proper movement of domestic resources.

Public-private partnerships must prioritize a human rights approach, specifically labour and environmental rights, sustainability aspects, and focus on the most vulnerable sectors.
The Latin American and Caribbean region also requires commitment from international cooperation players in order to implement the SDGs in a manner that respects the principles of effective development cooperation.

We ask for genuine political commitment to making the 2030 Agenda a reality in each and every one of our communities, to guarantee democracy, equitable development and human rights. We ratify our commitment as members of civil society to promote diverse and inclusive participation strategies, both in terms of oversight and assessment, and in our countries’ strategies for a timely, harmonized and purposeful implementation and promotion of public policies that guarantee human rights for all people.

Mexico City, 25 April 2017
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FRANCIA/FRANCE

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Representante/Representative:
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Miembros de la delegación/Delegation members:
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C. Secretaría de las Naciones Unidas
United Nations Secretariat

Centro de Información de las Naciones Unidas (CINU)/United Nations Information Centre (UNIC)
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Oficina de las Naciones Unidas de Servicios para Proyectos (UNOPS)/United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)
– Patrick Debels, Regional Coordinator, CLME+Project, Colombia, email: Patrick@unops.org

Oficina del Alto Comisionado para los Derechos Humanos (ACNUDH)/Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
– Amerigo Incalcaterra, Representante Regional para América del Sur/Regional Representative, Regional Office for South America, Santiago, email: aincalcaterra@ohchr.org
– Jan Jarab, Representante, México, email: jjarab@ohchr.org
– Denis Racicot, Representante, Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia, email: dracicot@ohchr.org
– Mila Paspalanova, Coordinadora de Indicadores, México, email: mpaspalanova@ohchr.org
– Jesús Peña, Representante Adjunto, México, email: jpena@ohchr.org

Oficina del Presidente de la Asamblea General/Office of the President of the General Assembly
– Fernando Zelner, Senior Adviser, SDG Financing, email: azelner@un.org
– Dessima Williams, Asesora Especial del Presidente de la Asamblea General sobre la Implementación de los ODS, email: williamsd@un.org

Oficina para la Coordinación de Asuntos Humanitarios/United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)
– Juan Pablo O’Farrill, Asesor de Respuesta a Desastres, México, email: ofarrill@un.org
D. Organismos de las Naciones Unidas
United Nations bodies

Entidad de las Naciones Unidas para la Igualdad de Género y el Empoderamiento de las Mujeres
(ONU-Mujeres)/United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
(UN-Women)
- Luiza María Salvi dos Santos Carvalho, Directora Regional, Panamá,
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- Ana Güezmes, Representante en México, email: alynn.cappon@unwomen.org
- Belén Sanz, Representante en Colombia, email: belen.sanz@unwomen.org
- Nadine Gasman, Representante en el Brasil, email: nadine.gasman@unwomen.org
- Tonni Ann Brodber, Representante en la Oficina Multipaís en Barbados,
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- Elisabeth Díaz, Especialista de Planeación Estratégica y Coordinación,
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- Emmanuel Fontalvo, Especialista de Coordinación, Colombia,
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- Pilar Campos Bolaño, Consultor, México, email: pilarcampos6@gmail.com
- Teres Guerra, Asociada de Programas, México, email: teresa.guerra@unwomen.org
- Miguel Trancozo, Especialista de Comunicaciones, México

Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para la Infancia (UNICEF)/United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)
- María Cristina Perceval, Directora Regional para América Latina y el Caribe, Panamá,
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- Christian Skoog, Representante en México, email: cskoog@unicef.org
- Kim Kyungsun, Representante en Panamá, email: kkim@unicef.org
- María Fernanda Paredes Hernández, Oficial Nacional de Políticas Públicas, México,
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- María M. Eleta, Senior Executive Assistant, Panamá, email: meleta@unicef.org
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Fondo de Población de las Naciones Unidas (UNFPA)/United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
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Oficina del Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas para los Refugiados (ACNUR)/
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
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Oficina de las Naciones Unidas contra la Droga y el Delito/United Nations Office on Drugs
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Oficina de las Naciones Unidas para la Reducción del Riesgo de Desastres (UNISDR)/
United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR)
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Programa Conjunto de las Naciones Unidas sobre el VIH/SIDA (ONUSIDA)/
Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)
- César Núñez, Director Regional para América Latina y el Caribe, Panamá, email: nunezc@unaids.org

Grupo de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo-América Latina y el Caribe (GNUD-LAC)/
United Nations Development Group-Latin America and the Caribbean (UNDG-LAC)
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– Harold Robinson, Coordinador Residente y Representante del PNUD en Panamá, email: Harold.robinson@one.un.org
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– Dolores Barrientos, Mexico Senior Officer, email: dolores.barrientos@unep.org
– Andrea Brusco, Coordinadora Regional Gobernanza Ambiental, Panamá, email: Andrea.brusco@unep.org
– Dorothee Georg, Oficial de Proyectos, México, email: dorothee.georg.affiliate@pnuma.org

**Programa de las Naciones Unidas para los Asentamientos Humanos (ONU-Hábitat)/United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)**
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– Pablo Vaggione, Coordinador para México y Cuba, email: pablo.vaggione@onuhabitat.org
– Luis Herrera Favela, Especialista Líder, México, email: luis.favela@onuhabitat.org
– Carolina Guimaraes, Gestora de Proyecto, Brasil, email: carolina.guimaraes@onuhabitat.org

**Programa Mundial de Alimentos (PMA)/World Food Programme (WFP)**
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– Hugo Farias, Asesor Regional, Panamá, email: hugo.farias@wfp.org
E. Organismos especializados
Specialized agencies

Organización Internacional del Trabajo (OIT)/International Labour Organization (ILO)
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- Gerardina González Marroquín, Directora Regional Adjunta para América Latina y el Caribe, Perú, email: muelle@ilo.org
- Helmut Schwarzer, Oficial a Cargo para México y Cuba, email: schwarzer@ilo.org
- Fabio Bertranou, Director Cono Sur, Chile, email: bertranou@ilo.org
- María José Chamorro, Especialista en temas de Género del Equipo de apoyo técnico sobre Trabajo Decente y de la Oficina para América Central, email: chamorro@ilo.org

Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Alimentación y la Agricultura (FAO)/Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
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- Eduardo García, asistente de Operaciones, México, email: Eduardo.garciamorales@fao.org
- José Fernando Reyes Pantoja, México, email: jose.reyespantoja@fao.org
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Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Educación, la Ciencia y la Cultura (UNESCO)/United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
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- Cecilia Barbieri, Directora a.i. de la Oficina Regional de Educación para América Latina y el Caribe, Santiago, email: cbarbieri@unesco.org
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Organización Mundial de la Salud (OMS)-Organización Panamericana de la Salud (OPS)/World Health Organization (WHO)-Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)
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– Anaclaudia Rossbach, Regional Adviser-LAC, Brasil, email: arossbach@citiesalliance.org
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– Lucía Balthazar, Analista de Inversión, Corporación Financiera Internacional (CFI), México, email: lbalthazar@ifc.org

**Unión Postal Universal (UPU)/Universal Postal Union (UPU)**
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F. Organizaciones intergubernamentales
Intergovernmental organizations

Alianza Bolivariana para los Pueblos de nuestra América. Tratado de Comercio de los Pueblos
(ALBA-TCP)/Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America-Peoples’ Trade Agreement
– David Marín Barón, Coordinador, República Bolivariana de Venezuela, email: david2021@gmail.com

Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo (BID)/Inter-American Development Bank (IADB)
– Juan Pablo Bonilla, Climate Change and Sustainable Development Sector Manager, Estados Unidos,
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CAF-Banco de Desarrollo de América Latina/CAF-Development Bank of Latin America
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Comunidad Andina (CAN)/Andean Community
– José Antonio Arróspide del Busto, Director General, Perú,
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Inter-American Institute for Co-operation on Agriculture (IICA)
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Organización de Estados Iberoamericanos para la Educación, la Ciencia y la Cultura (OEI)/
Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture
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Organización de los Estados Americanos (OEA)/Organization of American States (OAS)
– Ideli Salvatti, Secretaria de Acceso a Derechos y Equidad, Estados Unidos, email: isalvatti@oas.org
– Laura Elisa Pérez Gómez, Experta Independiente del Grupo de Trabajo Protocolo de San Salvador,
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Organismo Internacional de Juventud para Iberoamérica (OIJ)/Ibero-American Youth Organization
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– Paul Giovanni Rodríguez, Director de Cooperación, España, email: pgrodriguez@oij.org
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Secretaría General Iberoamericana (SEGIB)/Ibero-American Secretariat
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– Roberto Carlos Gutiérrez, Gerente de Cooperación, México, email: rregutierrez@segib.org
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Secretaría de la Integración Social Centroamericana (SISCA)/Central American Social Integration Secretariat
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G. Parlamentarios
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– Guillermo Francisco Mata Bennet, Diputado, Primer Secretario, Junta Directiva, Asamblea El Salvador, email: Guillermo_mata2@hotmail.com
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– Delia Emilda Bac Alvarado, Diputada por el Listado Nacional, Congreso de la República, Guatemala, email: venildadmonte@hotmail.com

H. Invitado de honor
Guest of honour
– Enrique Peña Nieto, Presidente de la República de México

I. Organizaciones no gubernamentales
Non-governmental organizations

Acción Ciudadana frente a la Pobreza
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ACT Alliance
– Carlos Efraín Rauda Ayala, Representante en América Latina y el Caribe, El Salvador, email: carlos.rauda@actalliance.org

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Alianza de Mujeres Indígenas por los Derechos Humanos y el Desarrollo Social
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Alianza Latinoamericana y Caribeña de Juventudes
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